



Conventions And Change in Semantics

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the features of the appearance of semantic changes and conventions and the specifics of their functioning in the territorial version of the language. It defines the mechanism of semantic changes and the degree of influence of the English language on semantics.

Keywords:

semantic changes, conventions, mechanism of semantic changes, language forms, grammatical function, language contacts, bilingualism, mutual influence.

Semantic change (also semantic shift, semantic progression, semantic development, or semantic drift) is a form of language change in relation to the evolution of word usage—usually to the extent that the modern meaning is radically different from the original usage. In diachronic (or historical) linguistics, a semantic change is a change in one of the meanings of a word. Each word has many meanings and connotations that can be added, removed, or changed over time, often to the point of being related across space and time. They have very different meanings. The study of semantic changes can be considered as part of etymology, onomasiology, semantics and semantics.

Language forms are capable of expressing several meanings. This ability is an inexhaustible source of semantic ambiguity in vocabulary, the number of examples of which, as Z.A. Kharitonchik writes, in English, as well as in other languages, is unlimited: in the procedural aspect, semantic ambiguity is the result of semantic changes, when one meaning arises on the basis another [4, p. 43]. L. Bloomfield gives the following definition of semantic changes: “Innovations that affect not so much the grammatical function of a particular form as its

lexical meaning are defined as changes in meaning, or semantic changes” [1, p. 465].

In linguistics, there are many definitions of language contact, some scientists make a connection between such concepts as language contact, interaction of languages, bilingualism, mutual influence of languages, consider them synonymous. However, these are different concepts and should be separated.

So, the interaction of the languages of N.E. Semchinsky defines it as “a special process that arises as a result of the coexistence in the minds of individual speakers of two language systems that can mutually intersect and intertwine” [Semchinsky 1973: 20].

As for the concept of language contact, V.Y. Rosensweig gives the following definition: “language contact is verbal communication between two language communities” [Rosensweig 1972: 3].

Difference between language contact and interaction of languages Y.A. Zhluktenko sees the following: “Language contacts are a certain type of interlingual communication, and the interaction of languages is a complex of phenomena that develop as a result of its establishment” [Zhluktenko 1974: 171].

As noted by A.M. Molodkin in his monograph "Interaction of languages of different types in an ethno-cultural context", the range of issues related to language contacts, in general terms, boils down to three main problems: bilingualism, interference and convergence of languages in conditions of mutual influence [Molodkin 2001].

According to W. Weinrach, bilingualism is understood as "the practice of alternately using two languages." This definition was accepted by almost all linguists and became fundamental in the theory of language contacts. This researcher defines interference as follows: "Those cases of deviation from the norms of any of the languages that occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of the fact that they know more languages than one, that is, as a result of language contact" [Weinrach 1979: 2].

As for convergence, then, according to the definition of V.Y. Rosenzweig, this is "a change in contacting languages, which is linguistically described as an assimilation of the characteristics of their signifiers and signifieds and the rules for dealing with them, and is historically interpreted as the result of contacts." Speaking about language contacts, the scientist also notes such a phenomenon as divergence. Divergence - "a change in languages towards differentiation of the characteristics of their signifieds and signifiers and the rules for dealing with them." The researcher also introduces the concept of contact language. "Contact language - the language in which language contact is carried out." He distinguishes two types of contact languages, namely: the contact language is the language of one of the contacting groups, and it is assumed that, depending on the conditions of speech communication in a given society, this may be the language of either one or another group.

Thus, semantic changes are changes at the lexical level that occur due to the modification of the semantics of already existing words. According to O.N. Trubachev, changes in values over time are an indisputable fact [3, p. 112]. According to him, "all changes in the meanings of words (even the so-called "occasional ones") are natural in their own way, the whole point is in our knowledge or, more often, ignorance of

the entire semantic context, which consists not only of linguistic, but also of cultural links" [2, p. 158].

Z.A. Kharitonchik also notes: "Semantic changes perform a dual function. On the one hand, they act as a factor ensuring the continuity and constancy of the lexical composition of the language. On the other hand, they are an effective means of creating secondary meanings and ultimately lead to the emergence of polysemy of lexical units" [4, p. 52–53].

It seems possible to reveal the causes of semantic changes by studying the successive meanings of one or another separate form. One meaning arises on the basis of another according to certain models of semantic derivation and is associated with the latter by derivation relations. The causes and ways of semantic derivation are diverse. Among the reasons that cause the reuse of an already existing name with a meaning assigned to it, the main reasons are extra linguistic reasons: various historical, social, economic, technological and other changes in people's lives give rise to the need for new names [4, p. 44].

In addition to these factors that determine the development of polysemy of words, the psychological causes of semantic changes also deserve attention. This is, first of all, the existence of various kinds of prohibitions, or taboos, dictated by a sense of fear and religious beliefs (out of superstition, people avoid calling the devil, evil spirits, god, etc. by their proper names), a sense of delicacy when it comes to unpleasant topics, such as illness, death, etc., the desire to keep up appearances when talking about phenomena related to the sexual sphere of life, certain parts and functions of the human body, as well as various kinds of changes in the emotional assessment of objects and phenomena. For these reasons, speakers begin to use euphemisms to express the necessary meanings, that is, substitute words that, over time, acquire these meanings as their permanent semantic characteristics [4, p. 44–45].

Thus, various factors (taboos, decency, delicacy, etc.) in people's lives give rise to the need for euphemistic names. The answer to this

need is the use of nominations already existing in the language in new - euphemistic - meanings. An important source of the euphemistic meaning of a word is semantic changes, the causes of which can be both extralinguistic and intralinguistic factors. However, it should be noted that the influence of intralinguistic factors on the formation of the euphemistic meaning of a particular word is not as obvious as the influence of extralinguistic factors.

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