

REFLECTIONS ON THE STUDY OF LEXICAL UNITS IN THE STRUCTURE OF A LITERARY TEXT

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Abstract: This article presents reflections on the study of lexical units within a text, discussing changes in form and meaning in their analysis, the significance of polysemy, and its function within the structure of the text.

Keywords: lexical unit, form, content, semantics, sema, sememe, connotative, denotative, polysemy.

In world linguistics, the study of the structure of a literary text and an understanding of the nature of the lexical units within it constitute one of the fundamental issues. Today, cognitive linguistics—developing both globally and in Uzbek linguistics—and the anthropocentric approach formed on its basis demonstrate that at the core of any unit being studied stands the human factor. Taking this into account, various independent branches of linguistics have emerged and continue to develop in order to examine language from different linguistic aspects. These include sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, linguoculturology, and linguopragmatics.

Although it cannot be denied that the analysis of language units at the morphological and syntactic levels performs certain functions in identifying and understanding the human factor, it has become clear that this alone is insufficient for a comprehensive study. Therefore, conducting lexical analysis of language structure and applying semasiological methods in this research have become urgent tasks. In world and Uzbek linguistics, revealing the essence of polysemy and identifying the connotative and denotative features of language units are among the most important functions.

Studying the nature of polysemy enables a comprehensive analysis of any language unit from a diachronic perspective as well. Alongside synchronic analysis, this approach creates a basis for uncovering the diachronic nature of such units. Up to the present, various authors have created works of different genres and levels. Whether scientific or literary, understanding their essence requires a thorough comprehension of the denotative features of language, clarification of lexical meaning, and identification of the sememes that may be expressed through it.

Researching the semantic nature of language makes it possible to identify the following series of changes:

- a) clarification of the historical and evolutionary development tendencies of language;
- b) identification of formal changes in language units;
- c) determination and clarification of semantic development within language units;
- d) identification of changes in language units arising from interlingual relations, including their phonetic-phonological, morphological, and syntactic aspects.

As a “living” entity, language is constantly subject to change. Certain views in linguistics recognize that language is in a continuous state of development; however, the perspective from which this process is approached is of great importance. Historical processes and interactions among various nations and peoples naturally lead to changes in language. Representatives of our classical and ancient language lived for centuries under various political, social, economic, ideological, and other influences, which resulted in changes in the structure of the language in accordance with the principles mentioned above. Such variation can be observed not only in interlingual relations but also in intralingual factors.

For example, the lexical unit “oyoq” (leg/foot), which today denotes a body part, has undergone formal changes throughout historical development while preserving its connotative sema. In *Devoni lug‘otit turk* by Mahmud al-Kashgari, the following proverb is cited:

“O‘kuzzu adag‘i bo‘lg‘uncha,

Buzavu bashi bo‘lsa yik”. This means: “It is better to be the head of a calf than the hind leg of an ox.” In Old Turkic and Old Uzbek, the form “ayoq” (modern Uzbek “oyoq”) derives from the ancient Turkic forms “adaq” and “adzaq,” which underwent phonetic change. A related form, “adoq,” also exists and expresses the denotative meaning of the ancient unit. Thus, from one lexeme two separate lexical units—“adoq” and “oyoq”—developed. As a result, two lexemes emerged that did not become entirely semantically disconnected from one another.

Words convey not only their literal (real) meaning but also figurative meanings. Figurative meaning arises from the primary meaning of words. When used figuratively, words not only name objects and phenomena but also perform a descriptive function. From this, it follows that the emergence of denotative meaning involves not merely naming but also filling semantic gaps and clarifying modes of expression.

Among expressive devices, personification is one of the most widespread and has been used in literary speech since ancient times. Personification is a special type of metaphor. As a specific form of metaphor, it is employed both in colloquial and literary speech, similar to simile. Therefore, some scholarly sources classify personification as a type of metaphor (metonymy/istiora), while others compare it with allegory and apostrophe and describe the differences among them.

Polysemy does not imply a complete change in the meaning of a lexical unit; rather, it indicates the possibility of realizing various purposes through it. Conducting research on the works of Sidqiy Xondayliqiy, one of the prominent figures of early twentieth-century literature, yields productive results.

The imbalance between form and content in teaching arises because the essence of linguistic signs is determined not merely by the connection between form and content but also by relations of similarity and contiguity among language units. To determine the correlation between form and content, selecting a specific source is essential for revealing the essence of the study.

In general, when analyzing lexical units, focusing not only on their connotative semas but also on their polysemantic features contributes significantly to a deeper understanding of developing areas of modern linguistics and to further research in this field.

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