

Bio-Social Need To The Study Of Lexical Meaning

Shodiyev Sanat Ergashevich

Samarkand State Institute of foreign languages Associate professor, Uzbekistan, Samarkand

E-mail: shodiyev198004@gmail.com

Abstract: This article is devoted to understanding what lexical meaning is. Having a central place in linguistics this unit is investigated by linguists for a long time. But the author tries give own views, answers the questions as how lexical meaning appears, how meanings combine, what they mean, how they are used, and of course how they change. By answering to these questions the author makes us to change our understanding the fundamental theoretical assumptions and commitments.

Keywords: lexical meaning, reality, notion, word, meaning, place, time, abstract, concrete.

INTRODUCTION

In linguistics, language has been interpreted as a mirror of society, which shows all aspects of human social life. It should be noted that the events taking place in social reality form and enrich the language with their essence. As they are closely interconnected and interrelated to each other, it is best way to understand the essence of language how the process of inter influence take place. However, today's progress shows that it should be re-investigated the relationship among language units themselves and between language and society in general, to understand them more deeply and to reorganize our knowledge about how this process takes place.

Statement of Research Problem

For a long time linguists attempt to give their ideas about the issue which keeps central role not only in linguistics, but also in understanding of the meaningful creation of the whole universe, they tried to provide a clear description of what lexical meaning is. However there is no generally accepted definition of the term “lexical meaning”, in other words “meaning of the word”. The relationship among language units as a word, sound form of a

word, notion and object, and other units should be clarified and investigated deeply.

Purpose of Research Study

In this research study the following purpose are set: to clarify the definition of the term lexical meaning, to break up clear delimitation between language units and units which forms notions of social issues, the way of perceiving data about reality and interpretation of the reality through the language, try to realize the whole process of interrelationships.

Paradis (2012) establishes five questions that are of key importance to any theory of lexical semantics which makes claims to be a coherent framework within which lexical meanings can be described and explained:

- What is the nature of meaning in language?
- What is the relation between words and their meanings?
- How are meanings of words learned and stored?
- How are meanings of words communicated and understood by language users?
- How and why do meanings of words change?

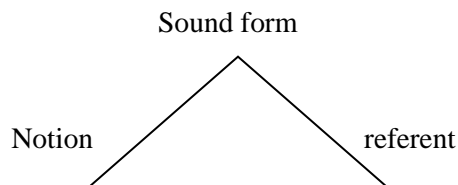
Research Question(s) and Hypothesis

To what extent do linguists follow the duality of units in understanding language?

Literature Review

When we investigated the viewpoints of most linguists, they quite differently defined lexical meaning, some of them used several language units and some omitted those terms in defining the lexical meaning. Looking through all these terms help us to widen our understanding in realizing and defining the meaning. However, it seems that there is obscure interpretation of the lexical meaning and the relationship among the units. For that, it should be considered not to utilize the semantic triangle (see Figure 1) to express the lexical meaning of the word and replace it with another form (see Figure 2). The investigation of the term lexical meaning above shows that there are large numbers of participants, that's why that triangle is not suitable for explanation. In addition, it is known that there are short comings of referential and functional approaches used in revealing the expression of meaning (Figure 1).

(Figure 1)



As we know the main problem is among a referent - a 'signifier', signifier and the notion 'signified'. The notion can't appear if there is no referent, and at the same time as mentioned above, there are abstract referents which can't be touched, smelled, tasted, and seen. For that reason we can say that referent isn't the central in realization and explanation of lexical meaning. If a notion and the referent are not principal in treating the meaning of words, there is a question: What is central?

METHODS

In the article, several linguistic methods were used here for assimilation (analysis) of facts: descriptive, distributive, trans-formational, and other methods.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

For centuries the term "meaning" is a subject of discussion among the linguists. Undoubtedly, when the lexical meaning of a word is studied, it must be started with the definition of a well-known Swiss linguist, F. de Saussure argues for a twofold understanding of the nature of lexical meaning. The first one is that meaning is realized as an interrelation between the sound-image and the concept (the signifier and the signified). As he says that "the meaning is the relation between the object or notion named and the name itself", it is clear that he stated the lexical meaning as the relations of following elements (units), meaning + object (thing) + notion named + the name. As it is known, this conception was later elaborated by Ullmann (1969) in his semantic triangle as one of the main principles of the communication process, as a model of how lexical meaning is realized between the speaker and the listener.

The second one includes the notion of the value that is in the core of language as a system. Language is a system of interdependent terms in which the value of each term results solely from the simultaneous presence of the others (Saussure 1986: 114). The value influences the meaning of the lexical item, but it is external to it. Its content is fixed by the association of everything that exists outside it. Being part of a system, the lexical item is endowed not only with a meaning but also with a value that determines the position of the lexical item with respect to other units in the language system (Saussure 1986:116).

Another well-known linguist L. Bloomfield stated that "the meaning indicates the situation in which the word is uttered". According to him, the situation encourages people to speak. The linguist refers to the word "apple" as proof of his opinion and put forward the opinion that a situation was

required to understand it. When we analyze the scientist's belief, three elements (units), meaning + word + situation are used.

In the works of Haiman and Langacker, it is said that "Some, though by no means all, semanticisms have proposed that lexical meaning are encyclopedic in character" (Haiman 1980; Langacker 1987). In this interpretation, lexical + meaning = encyclopedic + (meaningful) in character. Linguistic unit having lexical meaning is said to be "an encyclopedic + in character (meaningful)", and word meaning that expresses knowledge about a concept that is not a linguistic unit. It is unit of cognition.

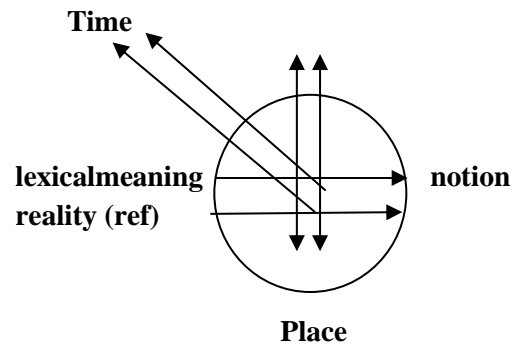
According to Langacker, "Although it is difficult to draw a line between these units, it is clear that some semantic features are more important than others in the meaning of a word; especially those properties which apply to (almost) all and only cases of this type, which are typical of the type, and which are the traditional knowledge of (almost) all speech communities (Langacker 1987: 158-161)".

The meaning of the structure of a word or a sentence is independent of the meanings of the lexical signs that instantiate this structure." (Sebastian Shaumyan, Signs, Mind, and Reality. John Benjamins, 2006). From this definition it is visible that there are meaning+structure of a word or a sentence +lexical sign are used. According to I.V. Arnold, the relation between the lexical meaning and the logical notion deserves special attention not only because they are apt to be confused but also because in comparing and contrasting them it is possible to achieve a better insight into the essence of both. And I.V. Arnold gave 6 differences in his work. (I.V. Arnold. 1986. 42-47). Taking into account all above mentioned, another form should be suggested here to visualize the relationship among units and following form can be helpful.

(Figure -2)

Bio-social need

Speaker's Material va functional need
(spiritual need)



It should be mentioned here that consequence of the process of understanding reality is shown here. As a speaker's biological need divided into two material and functional, everything is twofold here, form and meaning of words, lexical meaning is divided into connotational and denotational meanings. Notion is divided into content and scope. Reality is understood as a material and non material. Time and place are interconnected and they are dual.

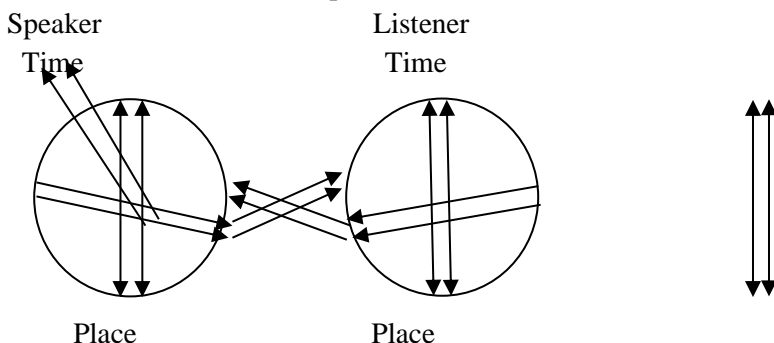
With the help of this form it is clear that lexical meaning is complex issue and all those units are dual and parallel as linguists define languages in their works.

According to our understanding and investigation, it is human bio-social need plays fundamental role in realization of referents, phenomena's in their essential features. People's bio-social need push people to understand reality and interpret it through language.

At the same time, as we mentioned above, it is visible that all the units are dual in the form, it shows the duality of language units, those concepts are in pairs, lexis to meaning, notion to reality, your understanding of things and objects, time and space, the relationship between the speaker and the listener, the concepts of form and content, the presence of duality, contradiction and dependence are evident. Based on this, the relationship between language and society is more deeply demonstrated in the next following form (Fig. 3).

(Figure-3)**Bio-social need**

Material vs functional need (spiritual need)

Form and meaning = **lexical** ↔ **meaning**

= connotational and denotational

content and scope = **notion** ↔ **reality**= (**referent**) material and non material

The structural paradigm has a clear stance about how lexical meaning changes. Coseriu (1973) makes a clear distinction between innovations that are driven by individuals in language use, on the one hand, and meaning change that amounts to an innovation that has become an element of the language system, thus influencing other (lexical) meanings within the system (Acquaviva, P., Lenci, A., Paradis, C., & Raffaelli, I. (2020)). It shows that lexical meaning is changeable, as the notions of people changes in a course of time. There are interpersonal relations and other changes in humans' surrounding influence on their minds and notion.

It's known that notion came into linguistics from psychology and logic. A notion is described as a reflection in the mind of real objects and phenomena in their essential features and relations. Notions are usually described in terms of scope and content. This is because notions are often created in response to empirical observations or experiments of co-varying trends among variables. But why do we need observations or experiments—another question appears logically?

Person's natural, biological needs encourage for observations or experiments in order to survive

in this world. Need is something that is necessary for organisms to live a healthy life. Needs are distinguished from wants because a deficiency would cause a clear negative outcome, such as dysfunction or death. To most psychologists, need is a psychological feature that arouses an organism to action toward a goal, giving purpose and direction to behavior.

These needs are divided into physical needs as well as moral, emotional and intellectual needs. So, we may say that it is human's social need make people to realize everything which surround them according to their own nature.

An observation from the philosopher Susanne Langer (who was not referring to Saussure's theories) may be useful here. Note that like most contemporary commentators, Langer uses the term 'symbol' to refer to the linguistic sign (a term which Saussure himself avoided): 'Symbols are not proxy for their objects but are vehicles for the conception of objects... In talking about things we have conceptions of them, not the things themselves; and it is the conceptions, not the things, that symbols directly mean. Language behavior towards conceptions is what words normally evoke; this is the typical process of thinking'. She adds that 'If I

say "Napoleon", you do not bow to the conqueror of Europe as though I had introduced him but merely think of him' (Langer 1951, 61).

As it was mentioned above understanding gives us an idea that we do not name notion, object or phenomena, but our needs themselves. Another well-known American linguist L. Bloomfield, points out that the meaning is the situation in which the word is uttered. The situations prompt people to utter speech. Ex. if we want to know the meaning of the word «apple» we must make a situation for it.

For above reasons we suggest the following form and we think it's useful for clearly realization and explanation of lexical meaning. There are several synonyms concerning terms used by linguists in description of meaning of a word. And we don't think that it is at random. For that reason the name can be dissimilar and we try to take apart them according to reality.

It seems that we are as a species to be driven by a desire to make meanings: above all, we are surely Homo-significant - meaning-makers. Distinctively, we make meanings through our creation and interpretation of 'signs'. Indeed, according to Peirce, 'we think only in signs' (Peirce 1931 -58, 2.302). Signs take the form of words, images, sounds, odors, flavors, acts or objects, but such things have no intrinsic meaning and become signs only when we invest them with meaning.

"Nothing is a sign unless it is interpreted as a sign', declares Peirce (Peirce 1931 -58, 2.172). Anything can be a sign as long as someone interprets it as 'signifying' something - referring to or standing for something other than itself. We interpret things as signs largely unconsciously by relating them to familiar systems of conventions. It is this meaningful use of signs which is at the heart of the concerns of semiotics.

Of course, we are meaning-makers but we can't be agreeing with Peirce fully when he said that "things haven't intrinsic meaning and become signs only when we invest them with meaning". If we can't realize world around us, it doesn't mean that the world is meaningless or it hasn't sign. Individuals

realize it according to own perspective, age, gender, knowledge and others. At the same time, individual vision can't be interpreted as a general. For generalization, there should be agreement among groups and whole society. It would be supportive if we give here, a pair of examples which help clearly realize these notions concerning lexical meaning. For example: a tree. As I mentioned above our needs divided into material and non-material. In a certain situation, need for shelter and shadow make us to start realizing that bushy tree can provide us with it, because materially a tree is big and can hide the sun behind itself. In another situation our need for food can be satisfied by tree. Tree's fruit is a substance which is capable and can feed us. In a word, both our material and non-material needs make us to realize a tree and then we nominate it as a tree.

It seems that we name our needs, rather than the world around us, for that reason we have our own vision and the world. We nominate our needs, not the referents and from different perspective people in this way differs them and differentiate. If we named referent there wouldn't be phenomena like synonymy. Because, when we need to speak about special features of referent, we can't use any word we like, each time we can use only one synonym of synonymic group and this way we may express special features of referent and phenomena.

Another example is abstract notion which expressed by a word God; We are so weak that we need power in our life, that's why this need makes us to look for the source of power and everyone begin to realize it according to own need, Referent can be different and features of it can be described in a different way. There would appear various notions concerning power of the referent which we need in our life.

As I mentioned above we name not referent here, but our need is named. So the meaning of God is a being regarded as a creator and ruler of the universe, the object of worship in any religions. Still it is up to every person what notion to have but lexical meaning is general understanding of notions.

Notions belong to individuals but lexical meaning to social groups and it has general understanding of notions. In order to satisfy our needs we act or express our attitude negatively or positively towards surrounding, lexical meaning can express these negative and positive notions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it should be concluded that language is bio-social phenomena and there is a need of human being in the center of it. As an intellectual creature in order to satisfy own needs a person try to realize objects and phenomena's in the meaningful world. If there is no need, any sign will remain as a sign unless it is interpreted as a sign.

As a need interconnects a notion with referent and phenomena, there appears our attitude towards surrounding, until we give a name to it and then it serves to a word. Lexical meaning can express different notions in different social settings.

So, lexical meaning is a notion and generalized views of people about meaningful world which appear according to their worldly bio-social needs in different social settings. Worldly human needs are divided into material, and non-material or it can be called functional as well.

The dualities of units are innate, connected with biology and mind set of human being, the language is realized and produced in dual. At the same time interpersonal relations and inter language bearers' relations shows duality of the language units.

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