Semantic Features of Homonymy and Polysemy in English and Uzbek

Ibrohimova Durdona Sherzod Qizi

Andijan state foreign languages institute, student of the Faculty of Andijan state foreign languages KF Korean 24-1 group

Pazilova Nasibaxon Muxammadkasimovna

Scientific supervisor, Andijan state foreign languages institute

Abstract. *This article studies the challenges posed by homonymy and polysemy in contemporary English and Uzbek. It clarifies the distinctions between these two linguistic phenomena and explores methods for differentiating between words exhibiting homonymy and those exhibiting polysemy in the two languages.*

Key words: *semantic criteria, semantic structure, grammatical homonyms.*

A persistent and difficult issue in the study of meaning (semasiology) is distinguishing between polysemy (multiple meanings of a single word) and homonymy (words with the same form but unrelated meanings). From a historical perspective (diachronic view), any instance where two or more words with distinct origins come to sound alike can be classified as homonymy; for example, "race" referring to competition and "race" referring to ethnicity have separate etymological roots. However, instances of semantic divergence—where a single word develops distinct meanings over time—are more complex. The shift from polysemy to homonymy is a gradual evolution, making it nearly impossible to pinpoint the exact moment when diverging semantic development completely severs the connection between the various meanings, resulting in two entirely separate words. In the case of flower, flour, for example, it is mainly the resultant divergence of graphic forms that gives us grounds to assert that the two meanings which originally made up the semantic structure of o n e word are now apprehended as belonging to two different words. For example: bel- I (kishi tanasining a'zosi) - bel- II (ish quroli), yoz- I (fasl nomi) - yoz- II (xatni yoz-) – yoz III (dasturxonni yoz-), ellik- I (beshinchi o_nlikning nomi) - ellik- II (ikki ellik xat).

From a synchronic (present-day) perspective, distinguishing between homonymy and polysemy relies primarily on semantics. The conventional view is that if a speaker perceives a connection between a word's various meanings, then those meanings constitute the semantic structure of a polysemous word. Otherwise, the word is considered a homonym, not a polysem. [1] This semantic criterion essentially reduces the distinction to whether meanings are related or unrelated. However, this approach is unreliable for several reasons. First, speakers may perceive various meanings of a single word and the meanings of distinct words as equally unrelated. For example, the meaning "a change in the form of a noun or pronoun," typically listed as a meaning of "case1," might seem as synchronically unrelated to the other meanings of "case1" as "something that has happened" or "a question decided in a court of law" is to the meaning of "case2" (a box, a container). Second, as discussed in the context of lexico-grammatical homonymy, some meanings of homonyms arising from conversion (e.g., "seal2 n" and "seal3 v"; "paper n" and "paper v") *are* related. Therefore, the traditional semantic criterion cannot be applied universally to homonymous word-forms in Modern

English. This criterion is also inadequate for analyzing other borderline cases synchronically, such as "brother" (plural: "brothers" - sons of the same parent) and "brethren" (fellow members of a religious society). If the meanings are perceived as related, we might consider it polysemy, noting that the morphological difference in the plural form reflects a semantic nuance. Conversely, we could view it as a case of partial lexical homonymy. It's often suggested that the relatability of meanings in polysemous words is generally observable.

One key observation is that the various meanings of a single word tend to exhibit a stable relationship not found between the meanings of homonyms. For instance, a clear connection exists between the metaphoric or metonymic senses of a polysemous word (e.g., "foot of the man" vs. "foot of the mountain," "loud voice" vs. "loud colors," "deep well" vs. "deep knowledge"). Such semantic relationships are typical of polysemy. It's also been proposed that semantic connections can be described using features like form and function (e.g., "horn" of an animal and a musical "horn"), or process and result (e.g., "to run" - move quickly, and "a run" - the act of running). However, similar relationships can be observed between the meanings of partially homonymic words (e.g., "to run" and "a run" in a stocking).

Furthermore, synchronic analysis of polysemous words often reveals unrelated meanings, as exemplified by the various meanings of "case" discussed earlier. Consequently, the semantic criterion is not only theoretically weak but also practically vague, making it difficult to reliably distinguish between the multiple meanings of a single word and the meanings of distinct words. [2]

The distributional criterion, suggested by some linguists, is useful, particularly for lexico-grammatical and grammatical homonymy. For example, in the homonymic pair "paper n" and "to paper v," the noun can be preceded by an article and followed by a verb, while "to paper" can never occur in the same distribution. This formal criterion can distinguish between lexico-grammatical and grammatical homonyms, but it often fails with lexical homonyms not differentiated by spelling. Lexical homonyms with distinct graphic forms, such as "knight" and "night" or "flower" and "flour," are easily recognized as separate lexical units because any formal difference is interpreted as evidence of distinct words. Conversely, lexical homonyms identical in both pronunciation and spelling are often perceived as different meanings of the same word.

It's often argued that context usually suffices to differentiate homonyms, as in "several cases of robbery" (case1) versus "a jewel case, a glass case" (case2). However, this is equally true of different meanings of a single polysemous word, as evidenced by comparing "the case will be tried in the law-court" and "the possessive case of the noun." Therefore, while context can differentiate meanings, it offers limited assistance in distinguishing between homonymy and polysemy.

In conclusion, no formal method has yet been discovered to definitively distinguish between the various meanings of a single word and the meanings of its homonyms. Our discussion has assumed that the word is the fundamental unit of language. However, some linguists argue that the basic semantic units are the lexico-semantic variants (LSVs) of a word, i.e., individual word-meanings. If this is the case, we can only discuss homonymy at the level of these individual LSVs, because polysemy, by definition (at least synchronically), is the co-existence of multiple meanings within the semantic structure of a single word.

Many words, particularly those used frequently, do not have a one-to-one relationship with meaning. Instead, a single word often represents several different meanings. This phenomenon can be viewed as the opposite of synonymy, where multiple words correspond to a single meaning.

Homonymy can also arise through phonetic convergence, where words borrowed from different languages come to sound alike. For example, Old Norse "has" and French "race" are homonymous in Modern English, resulting in "race1" (running) and "race2" (a distinct ethnical stock).

Consider the word "sound." Modern English has four homonymous words spelled "sound." "Sound" meaning "healthy" was already homonymous in Old English with "sound" meaning "a narrow passage of water," even though they have unrelated etymologies. Later, two more homonymous

words spelled "sound" entered the language: one from Old French "son" (Latin "sonus") denoting "that which is or may be heard," and the other from the French "sond," referring to a surgeon's probe.

As a final note, the most persistent and debated question in semasiology remains: how to clearly draw the line between homonymy and polysemy, between different meanings of a single word and the meanings of two entirely distinct words.

In contemporary language analysis (synchronically), the key distinction between homonymy and polysemy rests on semantic relatedness. Typically, if a language user perceives a connection between a word's different meanings, it's considered a polysemous word with a complex semantic structure. Conversely, if no such connection is perceived, it's classified as homonymy. Therefore, the semantic criterion equates the difference between polysemy and homonymy to the differentiation between related and unrelated meanings. However, this traditional approach is problematic. First, speakers may perceive the various meanings of a single word as being as unrelated as the meanings of two entirely different words. For example, the grammatical sense of "case" (as in, the case of a noun) seems as disconnected from its other meanings as it is from the meaning of "case" as a box or container. Second, when considering homonyms that arise from grammatical shifts (conversion, like "seal" as a noun versus "seal" as a verb), some of their meanings are actually related. This means the semantic criterion doesn't apply to a significant number of homonymic words in Modern English. Furthermore, it's insufficient for borderline cases, such as the distinction between "brothers" (biological siblings) and "brethren" (members of a group), where relatedness is subjective and the morphological differences (plural forms) reflect semantic nuances [3].

Alternatively, we could classify this as a case of partial lexical homonymy. The same applies to instances like "hang - hung - hung" (to be supported from above) and "hang - hanged - hanged" (to execute someone by hanging), which are often viewed as distinct meanings of a single polysemous word. [4] Some argue that the difference between related and unrelated meanings is apparent in how readily the meanings of polysemous words connect to each other. A clear and obvious relationship exists between the metaphorical or metonymic senses of a word (e.g., "foot of the man" versus "foot of the mountain," "loud voice" versus "loud colors," and "deep well" versus "deep knowledge"). These kinds of semantic connections are commonly found in polysemy and are considered strong indicators of it. Furthermore, semantic connections can be described using features such as form and function (compare the "horn" of an animal to a musical "horn") or process and result ("to run" as moving quickly and "a run" as the act of running).

However, a more objective distributional criterion proposed by some linguists, while helpful, is primarily effective in distinguishing lexico-grammatical and grammatical homonymy [5]. For example, in the homonymic pair "paper n" and "(to) paper v," the noun can be preceded by an article and followed by a verb, while "(to) paper" cannot occur in the same distribution. This formal criterion effectively differentiates not only lexico-grammatical but also grammatical homonyms. However, it often fails in cases of lexical homonymy, especially those not differentiated by spelling, as exemplified by the Uzbek examples of "yor- I (to split)" and "yor- II (sweetheart)" or "bog'- I (a bunch of onions)" and "bog'- II (orchard)."

Some linguists believe that the fundamental units at the semantic level of language are lexico-semantic variants (LSVs), or individual word-meanings. In this view, we can only speak of homonymy at the level of individual LSVs because polysemy is defined (at least synchronically) as the co-existence of multiple meanings within the semantic structure of a single word.

In conclusion, a thorough critique of this perspective lies outside the scope of simply examining differing semantic structures. The core issue in homonymy is distinguishing between the distinct semantic structures of words that sound the same.

REFERENCES

1. Schlauch, Margaret. The English Language in Modern Times. Warszava, 1965. p.342

2. Sheard, John. The Words we Use. N.Y..,1954. p.39

3. Smirnitsky A.I. Homonyms in English. -M. 1977. p. 68-72

4. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English. -Oxford 1964. pp. 147-148

5. Ullmann S. Semantics. An Introduction to the Science of Meaning. -Oxford, 1962. p. 139-141

6. V.D. Arakin English Russian Dictionary M.Russky Yazyk 1978 pp. 23-24, 117-119, 133-134

7. Vesnik D., Khidekel S. Exercises in Modern English Word-Building. -M., 1964. p. 167 34. World Book Encyclopedia. -NY Vol 8 1993 p. 321

8. Pazilova N TEACHING SPEAKING SKILLS - OVERCOMING CLASSROOM PROBLEMS. TEACHING SPEAKING SKILLS - OVERCOMING CLASSROOM PROBLEMS. ResearchJet Journal of Analysis and Inventions. ISSN: 2776-0960 Impact Factor: 7.655. VOLUME 2, ISSUE 5 , MAY-2021. Website: http://reserchjet.academiascience.org

9. Pazilova N EFFECTIVE METHODS OF TEACHING WRITING SKILLS IN DIFFERENT CLASSES. EFFECTIVE METHODS OF TEACHING WRITING SKILLS IN DIFFERENT CLASSES. ResearchJet Journal of Analysis and Inventions. ISSN: 2776-0960. Impact Factor: 7.655. VOLUME 2, ISSUE 5 , MAY-2021.Website: http://reserchjet.academiascience.org

10. Pazilova NEFFECTIVE WAYS OF TEACHING AND EXPANDING VOCABULARY. ResearchJet Journal of Analysis and Inventions. ISSN: 2776-0960. Impact Factor: 7.655. VOLUME 2, ISSUE 5 , MAY-2021. Website: http://reserchjet.academiascience.org

11. Pazilova NEFFECTIVE METHODS OF TEACHING WRITING (THE USE OF "CHARACTER WHEEL" METHOD)EURASIAN JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH. Volume 1, Issue 2. Part 2 May 2021. The official website of the journal. www.innacademy.uz. Volume 1 Issue 02, May 2021 ISSN 2181-2020. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4904069

12. Pazilova NO'rganilayotgan til stilistikasi fanidan elektron qo'llanma"– "Электрон ўкув қўлланма. Ўзбекистон Республикаси Адлия вазирлиги ҳузуридаги интеллектуал мулк агентлиги. №ДГУ 14247. 17.12.2021.

13. Pazilova N THE INVESTIGATION OF SYNTACTICAL EXPRESSIVE MEANS AND STYLISTIC DEVICES IN MODERN ENGLISH AND UZBEK International Journal of Research in commerce, IT, Engineering and Social Sciences ISSN No: 2349-7793 VOLUME16, Issue 01 January, 2022