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INTEGRAL THEORY OF POLYSEMY

Integral Theory of Polysemy is agued which represents the most general view on the problem of polysemy. The notion of polysemy is essentially extended and is applied to both lexical and grammatical language levels. It is argued that polysemy regulates and systematizes both vocabulary and grammar and may be considered as a factor which is organizing the language system.

Keywords: polysemy, homonymy , lexical seme, part-of-speech seme, lexical and lexical-grammatical polysemy.

The definitions of polysemy existing in linguistic literature are practically identical — a word is considered to be polysemantic if it has several meanings that are semantically related to each other. Such definitions reveal the very essence of polysemy — coexistence in the semantic structure of a word of several meanings which relations with each other are those of semantic derivation.

The existence of polysemy is due to the law of asymmetric duality of a language sign, opened by S. Kartsevsky, according to which the signified and the signifier are asymmetric and exist in the state of unsteady equilibrium. The signified aspires to be expressed by new means while the signifier tries to attain new functions.

As far as the law of asymmetric duality of a language sign is universal, the universal character of polysemy should be considered obvious. The idea about the universal character of this linguistic phenomenon was stressed more than once (see the works of such prominent scholars as S. Ullmann, R. Budagov, A. Smirnitsky, V.Vinogradov).

Polysemy is justly considered to be a necessary means of language economy. As S. Ullmann puts it, "polysemy is an indispensable resource of language economy. It would be altogether impracticable to have separate terms for every referent" (Ullmann 1959, p. 118). It should be mentioned that the idea of polysemy as a means of language economy goes back to Aristotle who stressed that the number of words in a natural lan-

guage is limited while the number of objects in the real world is unlimited. Thus it is inevitable for a word to be polysemantic.

Speaking about the reasons of polysemy we should also point out that this phenomenon is closely connected with the very essence of the language and is a characteristic feature of speech. As S. Ullmann wrote, "The ability of the name to denote several senses is one of the basic peculiarities of human speech" (Ullmann 1951, p. 48).

The problem of studying polysemy is closely connected with that of homonymy. It should be pointed out that the definitions of homonymy, like those of polysemy, do not differ greatly. Words are considered to be homonymous if their form is identical while the meanings are not semantically related. Some scholars, however, insist that homonyms may be characterized not only by the absence of semantic derivation between their meanings, but also by differences in their grammatical (part-of-speech) meaning (see Malakhovsky 1989, p.7–8). Thus all cases of conversion or any other transitions at the part-of-speech level despite the obvious fact of close semantic relations of the meanings are considered to be homonyms.

Such point of view, though advocated by quite a number of linguists, may be disputed. The very fact of acquiring by a sememe a new part-of-speech seme can not necessarily lead to homonymy. The main (and the only!) indication of homonymy is that of absence of semantic relations between the meanings, like the main indication of polysemy is the fact of existence of semantic derivation.

The problem of differentiation between polysemy and homonymy has become traditional. The criteria of such differentiation are rather numerous. The most appropriate to our mind is the so-called semantic criterion, based on semantic derivation of the meanings of a polysemantic word. In case of semantic relations of the meanings we deal with polysemy, in case of absence of such relations — with homonymy. Other criteria of differentiation between polysemy and homonymy (word-building, syntactic, distributional, synonymous and antonymous) are not universal and may be considered additional, serving to confirm the results of the application of the semantic criterion. As far as semantic criterion is concerned, it is universal and may be applied to all cases when it is necessary to establish the difference between polysemy and homonymy. It should be mentioned that this criterion follows from the very essence of the language phenomena under consideration. As the definitions of polysemy and homonymy adopted in modern linguistics are of semantic character, it is quite obvious that the criterion of their differentiation should be also based on semantic principles.

Strictly speaking, there is even no need in singling out the special criterion of differentiation between polysemy and homonymy. As Yu. Apresyan rightly puts it, any search of criteria for differentiation of linguistic objects (a word, a sentence, a homonym, an idiom, etc.) more vividly than anything else designates that there are no strict definitions of the corresponding linguistic phenomena. If such strict definitions existed there would be no need in finding any additional (those not used in the definitions themselves) "criteria" for their differentiation. In case of absence of strict definitions no additional criteria would save the situation (Apresyan 1974, p.184).

We have already stated that the definitions of both polysemy and homonymy are of semantic character. Consistent application of these definitions to each concrete case of material identity of lexemes will answer the question whether the word identity is preserved or torn.

The above-mentioned will hold if applied to all cases of polysemy — "ordinary" lexical and lexical-grammatical polysemy. The terms "lexical-grammatical polysemy" or "categorical polysemy" were introduced not long ago. The first of these terms was used by prof. V. Abaev in his famous paper on homonyms which started the discussion on homonymy in the Soviet Union (Abaev 1957, p. 43). The second one was introduced by S. Katsnelson (Katsnelson 1972, p. 173–174). Both of the authors use these terms to denote practically the same — polysemy at the part-of-speech level. To denote such kind of polysemy we would prefer to use the first of the above-mentioned terms — "lexical-grammatical polysemy" as it better reflects the essence of the phenomenon under consideration — polysemy at the part-of-speech level, i.e. at the level of lexical-grammatical classes. As for the term "categorical polysemy" it doesn't make accent on the part-of-speech character of this kind of polysemy and thus is considered to be less convenient. Besides, as it will be shown below, S. Katsnelson applies this term not to all cases of polysemy at the part-of-speech level, but only to a special type of such polysemy.

Lexical-grammatical polysemy may be illustrated at the example of the substantive and verbal sememes of the lexeme _measure_ — _in a great measure_ (substantive sememe) and _to measure one's desires by one's means_ (verbal sememe).

The semantic ties between these sememes are obvious which makes it possible to admit the fact of existence here of a particular type of polysemy — lexical-grammatical polysemy. Inclusion of sememes with different part-of-speech semes into the semantic structure of one and the same word is due in this case, as in case of ordinary lexical polysemy, to semantic ties between the sememes, i.e. to semantic derivation.

It should be noted, that the phenomenon which we define as lexical-grammatical polysemy was studied by many linguists. However, most of these investigations were not connected with the problem of polysemy and didn't even try to examine the phenomenon under consideration from this the point of view. There prevails structurally morphological approach to the phenomenon and it is considered mainly within the theory of parts of speech. This can be vividly illustrated by the terminology used by linguists: *part of speech transition, transformation, lexical-grammatical substitution, functional shift, syntactic derivation, polyfunctionality, polycategorisation, conversion.* Some authors use the terms *substantivation, adverbialisation, adjectivation, prepositionalisation, etc.* to designate transition into a concrete part of speech.

Despite a great variety of points of view on this phenomenon, the essence of all of them is practically the same — they all declare its word-formation character and admit that the lexemes got as the result of it are homonyms (grammatical, lexical-grammatical, morphological, functional, transpositional, etc.).

It should be noted that the treatment of part of speech transition as a special kind of homonymy or a word-formation process is debatable. The thing is that semantic relations between sememes with different part-of-speech semes are usually preserved, that's why we can't speak about homonymy. This phenomenon can't be treated as a word-formation process either, as in many cases changing of part-of-speech status is not followed by any lexico-semantic changes which are usually supposed by the word-formation process.

One can assume that in case of a unit functioning as different parts of speech we deal not with homonyms and not with word-formation, but with a special type of polysemy — the polysemy at the part-of-speech level or lexical-grammatical polysemy. It should be noted that the possibility of such type of polysemy was mentioned by many Russian and foreign linguists. Thus academician Shcherba wrote that formal features of grammatical categories are not reduced to purely morphological ones, so one and the same word may represent different categories (Shcherba 1974, p. 81). V. Nikitevich writes that in case of semantic identity transposition doesn't form a new lexeme (Nikitevich 1971, p. 107). E.Kovalevskaya speaks about a possibility for a word to function as two parts of speech (Kovalevskaya 1977, p. 59). N. Gvishiani admits the ability of English words to be correlated with categorical meaning of different parts of speech (Gvishiani 1979, p. 175). I. Tyshler points that words produced by means of conversion are not lexical-grammatical homonyms as in this case there is no semantic gap between them (Tyshler 1966, p. 3–4).

S. Bogdanov notes that we shouldn't oppose to each other the lexemes which are materially identical and differ only by syntactic functions (Bogdanov 1998, p. 31).

Analogous thoughts are also displayed by some foreign authors. Thus Henry Sweet pointed out that the mere change of a verb into noun can hardly be said to make a new word of it (Sweet 1900, p. 38). A. Kennedy mentions that at times a word becomes a sort of hybrid, simultaneously functioning as two different parts of speech (Kennedy 1935, p. 317). Robert Waddel points out "that when a word is shifted from one function to another, it retains its own essential meaning: the word *water* conveys the idea of wetness … whether it is used as a noun or as a verb: *He will carry the water* (n) *in a pail* and *water* (v) *the bush*. The difference is in the grammatical or functional meaning, the part played in the sentence pattern. Or, we may say, *water* is here used as two different parts of speech" (Waddel 1951, p. 31).

However practically all these authors, both Russian and foreign, actually describing the phenomenon of lexical-grammatical polysemy, do not consider it within the framework of the theory of polysemy and do not study the correlation between lexical and lexical-grammatical polysemy. Due to this the notion of lexical-grammatical polysemy remains theoretically undefined which negatively influences both the development of the theory of polysemy and practical interpretation of the concrete cases of polyfunctional lexemes.

The term "polysemy" with reference to this phenomenon, besides V. Abaev and S. Katsnelson, is used by S. Ullmann and G. Vorontsova. Thus, S. Ullmann calls conversion syntactic polysemy (Ullmann 1962, c.32). G. Vorontsova states, that polyfunctionality represents a special kind of grammatical polysemy (Vorontsova 1960, p. 50).

Indeed in case of semantic relations between the sememes of a lexeme regardless of the fact whether they belong to one and the same or different parts of speech we should speak about polysemy. This is a special kind of polysemy — lexical-grammatical one.

It must be mentioned that such point of view does not contradict the parts of speech theory and does not doubt the existence of parts of speech as lexical-grammatical classes of words. Parts of speech can be represented as intersecting circles, some areas of which overlap. Words demonstrating lexical-grammatical polysemy will be situated in the intersecting parts of these circles.

Sememes possessing different part-of-speech semes have as a rule different morphological indication. But we should point out that these morphological indicators of lexical-grammatical meaning are only formal

signs of parts of speech. They just confirm functioning of the word in a new lexical-grammatical meaning but not determine it. The main criterion of ascribing the word to this or that part of speech is the semantic one, i.e. presence of a certain part-of-speech seme. Morphological indicators of part-of-speech status are additional, secondary, supplementary.

We should also mention that lexical-grammatical polysemy does not doubt the question of the word borders. As it is known, the main conditions for preservation of the word identity are those of the common sound form and semantic ties between the sememes. In case of lexical-grammatical polysemy both criteria are observed as the very notion of polysemy presupposes both the existence of one lexeme and semantic derivation of its sememes.

The problem of lexical-grammatical polysemy is closely connected with that of lexical-grammatical variation. If within the frames of lexical-grammatical polysemy proper sememes being semantically related to each other differ in both lexical meaning and lexical-grammatical semes, in case of lexical-grammatical variants sememes have the same lexical meaning but different part-of-speech semes.

Compare: *1) He went __up__.*
          2) He went __up__ the stairs.

In both cases one and the same lexical meaning "upwards" is realized. This lexical meaning presupposes indication of a certain centre of spatial coordination relative to which location or direction is determined. This centre of coordination may be expressed in the sentence explicitly or may be left implicit. In case of explicit expression of the centre of coordination the prepositional variant of the lexical meaning is realized (see example 2), in case there is no indication of this centre of coordination in the sentence, the same lexical meaning is realized, but in its adverbial variant (see example 1).

The phenomenon of lexical-grammatical variation in this case may be illustrated by the following scheme —

Lexical meaning	Part-of-speech semes
upwards	adverbial prepositional

As it can be seen from the scheme, in case of lexical-grammatical variation one and the same lexical meaning corresponds to two (or more) different part-of-speech semes. These part-of-speech semes are in comple-

mentary distribution and are realized in different contexts. In case of lexical-grammatical polysemy proper each lexical meaning corresponds to a separate part-of-speech seme.

The correlation of lexical and grammatical semes in case of polysemy at the part-of-speech level thus has a double character: in case of lexical-grammatical polysemy proper a separate lexical meaning corresponds to a definite lexical-grammatical seme, in case of lexical-grammatical variants one lexical meaning corresponds to two or more different part-of-speech semes. Realization of this or that lexical-grammatical seme in this case depends on the context.

It should be noted that S. Katsnelson, defining what he calls categorical polysemy, in reality defines the phenomenon of lexical-grammatical variation (Katsnelson 1972, p. 173–174). Such simplified understanding of polysemy at the part-of-speech level doesn't seem quite appropriate. Lexical-grammatical variation certainly represents derivation at the part-of-speech level, but it should be considered a special, simpler case of lexical-grammatical polysemy proper — while lexical-grammatical polysemy proper demands both lexical and part-of-speech derivation, lexical-grammatical variation presupposes only part-of-speech derivation, lexical meaning of lexical-grammatical variants is identical. The reason of considering sememes with different part-of-speech semes belonging to one and the same lexeme in case of lexical-grammatical variation is the identity of lexical meanings, in case of lexical-grammatical polysemy — their semantic derivation.
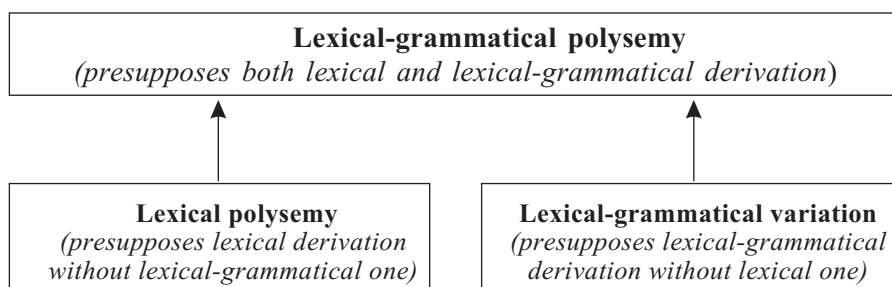
Thus we can speak about two types of lexical-grammatical polysemy — lexical-grammatical polysemy proper and lexical-grammatical variation, the latter being a special, simpler case of lexical-grammatical polysemy as it presupposes only part-of-speech derivation without the semantic one.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned we may expand the notion of polysemy and propose its hierarchical description. As we have just stated, lexical-grammatical variation is a special, simpler case of lexical-grammatical polysemy. If in case of lexical-grammatical polysemy proper the sememes, being semantically derived from each other, differ in both lexical-grammatical and lexical semes, in case of lexical-grammatical variation lexical semes are the same and the sememes differ only in their lexical-grammatical semes. Thus in case of lexical-grammatical polysemy proper both possible types of polysemy — lexical and lexical-grammatical are realized, while in case of lexical-grammatical variation we witness realization of only one type of polysemy — lexical-grammatical one.

Analogous phenomenon may be observed if we compare lexical-grammatical polysemy with the "ordinary" lexical one. While the sememes demonstrating lexical-grammatical polysemy differ in both lexical and lexical-grammatical semes, in case of lexical polysemy the sememes differ only in lexical semes, their lexical-grammatical meaning is identical. Thus lexical polysemy, like lexical-grammatical variation realizes only one type of polysemy out of the two possible.

The comparison of lexical, lexical-grammatical polysemy and lexical-grammatical variation makes it possible to propose the two-level hierarchical description of polysemy. Lexical-grammatical variation together with lexical polysemy, each of which realizes only one type of polysemy out of the two possible, will constitute the lower level in this hierarchy while lexical-grammatical polysemy realizing both possible types of derivation — lexical and lexical-grammatical will form its upper level.

Schematically it may be illustrated as follows:

Lexical-grammatical polysemy *(presupposes both lexical and lexical-grammatical derivation*)

Lexical polysemy *(presupposes lexical derivation* *without lexical-grammatical one)*	**Lexical-grammatical variation** *(presupposes lexical-grammatical* *derivation without lexical one)*

As it is seen from the scheme, lexical-grammatical polysemy may actually be considered to be the highest level of polysemy while lexical polysemy and lexical-grammatical variation constitute its lower level.

Two-level hierarchical description of polysemy allows us to raise the question of creation of Integral Theory of Polysemy encompassing all levels and all cases of polysemy. Polysemy according to this theory should be considered as a factor regulating not only lexical-semantic, but also lexical-grammatical language system as it systemizes words not only according to their individual meanings, but according to lexical-grammatical classes as well.

It should be mentioned that all previous studies of polysemy were one-sided and incomplete as they were devoted to only one type of polysemy — lexical one. Meanwhile as our research showed there exist two more types of polysemy — lexical-grammatical polysemy and lexical-grammatical variation.

The Integral Theory of Polysemy proposed by us encompasses both levels of polysemy and all its types — lexical polysemy, lexical-grammatical polysemy and lexical-grammatical variation. Lexical-grammatical variation presupposing derivation at the part-of-speech level and identity of the set of lexical semes together with lexical polysemy presupposing lexical derivation and identity of the part-of-speech semes constitute the lower level of polysemy while lexical-grammatical polysemy demonstrating both lexical and lexical-grammatical derivation form its upper, higher level. Lexical-grammatical polysemy presupposing derivation at both lexical and lexical-grammatical levels integrates, unites in itself both lexical polysemy and lexical-grammatical variation, hence the very name of the theory of polysemy — integral. As for lexical polysemy and lexical-grammatical variation, both of them may be considered to be special cases of lexical-grammatical polysemy as each of them realizes only one of the two possible types of derivation (lexical polysemy demonstrates derivation only at lexical level while lexical-grammatical variation demonstrates derivation only at the part-of-speech, i.e. grammatical level).

The mechanism of derivation in all kinds of polysemy is identical — in each case one or two of the semes are replaced: a lexical seme is replaced in case of lexical polysemy, a part-of-speech seme is replaced in case of lexico-grammatical variation, both lexical and part-of-speech semes are replaced in case of lexico-grammatical polysemy proper. Thus there is a common mechanism of polysemy which is realized both at the level of a lexeme and the level of word classes.

The reasons of all kinds of polysemy mentioned are also common and are due to the asymmetric duality of a language sign and the language tendency to economy.

The undoubted commonness of these three types of polysemy allows us to unite them within the frames of one theory — the Integral Theory of Polysemy which represents the most general view on the problem of polysemy. The notion of polysemy in this theory is essentially extended and is applied to both lexical and grammatical language levels. Polysemy regulates and systematizes both vocabulary and grammar and may be considered as a certain core organizing the language system.

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Р е з ю м е

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ИНТЕГРАЛЬНАЯ ТЕОРИЯ ПОЛИСЕМИИ

В статье предлагается концепция полисемии, интегрирующая лексическую и лексико-грамматическую полисемию в общую полисемантическую парадигму. Исследование проводится на материале русского и английского языков.