

## MODEL OF LEXEME IDENTITY

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Artykuł jest efektem badań nad semantyką języka i poszukiwań teoretyczno-metodologicznych przynoszących rozwiązanie problemu funkcjonowania języka w warunkach istnienia w jego systemie bliźniaczych jednostek leksykalnych. Istotą dociekań były kluczowe dla badań nad znaczeniem leksykalnym kwestie, jakimi są homonimia i polisemia. Gruntem, na którym zrodziła się myśl o konieczności zrewidowania tych pojęć lingwistycznych, była praktyka kontaktów międzyjęzykowych i międzykulturowych. Efektem badań było stworzenie modelu tożsamości wyrazu, którego zastosowanie pozwala empirycznie zweryfikować dowolną jednostkę mowną (dowolny leksem użyty w mowie).

Słowa kluczowe: tożsamość leksemu, homonimia, polisemia, znaczenie leksykalne, onomazjologia, podejście dyskursywne.

Стаття представляє результати дослідження семантики мови і методологічно-теоретичних пошуків, спрямованих на вирішення проблеми функціонування мови в умовах існування у її лексичній системі одиниць з тотожною формою. Суть дослідження полягає у розв'язку питання омонімії і полісемії. Підставою наших висновків, пов'язаних з ревізією цих лінгвістичних понять, була практика міжмовної та міжкультурної комунікації. У результаті було створено модель тотожності слова, застосування котрої дозволяє емпірично верифікувати довільну мовленнєву одиницю (довільну лексему, вжиту у мовленні).

Ключові слова: тотожність лексичної одиниці, омонімія, полісемія, лексичне значення, ономасіологія, дискурсивний підхід.

The article is the result of research on semantics of the language and theoretical-methodological search coming up with the solution to the problem of functioning of a language while two twin lexical items exist at its system. The essence of the quest were homonymy and polysemy being the key questions for lexical meaning. The background for the thought of the necessity to revise these linguistic terms was the experience in interlingual and intercultural contacts. The result of research was creating of the model of lexeme identity. Using this model it is possible to empirically check identity of the examined speech unit (of a lexeme used in speech).

Key words: lexeme identity, homonymy, polysemy, lexical meaning, onomazjology, discursive approach.

Communication situations, when, despite using so-called lexical twins (homonymic units, which may include units considered ambiguous), there are no obstacles to achieve communication between users of different languages, were the starting point of research. Experience in teaching a foreign language and intercultural communication proves that a form of sign, which language polysemy theory supporters consider primary to meaning, is completely dependent on semantics. Misunderstandings, which are possible in case of the lack of relevant context, communicative in-

terference or insufficient language competence are the only situations when a formal aspect of a sign seems to dominate in the discourse — when we cannot distinctively hear a message, when we cannot locate it in the discourse-pragmatic space or when we do not know most of words of the statement we concentrate on sounds trying to create a certain lexical-semantic whole, which is a word. It may remind us of a Chinese telephone game, in which the first and the last word or compound to get are different. As most times, these are similar utterances, but sometimes significantly different, as players change misheard words trying to make alike sounds they hear to meaningful clusters, which constitute words already known to them. Even here the priority of form over content is only apparent. Though we concentrate on the sound, it is important only as far as the meaning goes.

It needs to be mentioned here, though, that the discussed cases are only extreme communicative situations. Most usually, however, comprehensive communication is based on the fact that the participants of the act of communication know where, with whom and about what they are talking and this situation-cultural limitation allows for pragmatic, sociolectal-discursive location of utterance. This, in turn, allows for precise locating verbalized terms of this utterance in a cognitive net. Thanks to that, not only are we undisturbed by the existence of homonymic units or the ones that are called ambiguous or by suppletivity in speech, we are even able to come before a speaker, finish a word for him/her or suggest a lacking word. It is a proof of primacy of the meaning over the form of linguistic sign as well as of the fact that the meaning unifies and supports the integrity of a word. [The result of research on the primacy of the meaning of linguistic sign over its form is my monograph „Typology of language homonymy in onomasiological and discursive aspects” (Król 2014), which contains a thorough analysis of semantic and semiotic concepts, as the question of homonymy is closely connected with the theory of meaning and the theory of sign]. Following, the meaning cannot be „attached” to a word in an unlimited amount as it is its undetachable part.

It is obvious that the given thesis refers only and exclusively to the language seen anthropocentrically, being a language existing and functioning in human psyche. It is not about a language as a scientific construction, which is a research object in formal-descriptive linguistics since in such a language it is possible to order words in a free way, thus it is possible to attribute ambiguity to them. It is not a method, though, which will make us come closer to the scientific truth about functioning of a language.

Examining „word twins” has to be based on these theory-cognitive grounds being fundamental for explanation of formally convergent words with divergent semantics within the experience of one or more language users. Methodological grounds of a research are just as important because of the choice of suitable methodological tools that would take into consideration the natural way of language functioning and make it possible to explain all cases of coming into being of homonymic units and their use allows for achieving a reliable description according to the needs of contemporary linguistics. The most important determinants for the methodological view realized in this article are: the theory of nomination (onomasiology) and the discursive approach. Both the onomasiological and discursive analysis and the typology of a phenomenon of homonymy have been carried out based on fundamental thesis of anthropocentrism and functional pragmatism.

#### Methodological tools of research

Functional-pragmatic characteristics of methodology has influence on comprehension of analyzed lexemes through their systemic relations. At the same time, consistently, invariant language units and actual speech units are marked out.

Taking this fact into consideration, the analysis concerns both mutual relations among the elements of the sign itself and relations which the sign has with other language and speech signs within language activity as well as relations with extralingual elements — cognitive (concepts, images, judgments) and physical (material acoustic form) ones. According to the guidelines of functional pragmatism, the analyzed lexemes are depicted from the point of view of their functionality for a speaker whose language activity is always intention-oriented and has a specified goal. Achieving the goal determines pragmatic attitude of the discourse participants and decides about their insistence on successful communication.

Anthropocentric approach to the research is determined by perceiving a language as psychological and at the same time social phenomenon within human activity. This results in the necessity to perceive the analyzed lexical units as dependent on peculiarity of mental determinants of humans and, at the same time, in their involvement in social-cultural bonds, visible on each level of semiotic activity. The consequence of that attitude is treating the analyzed lexemes with relevance to psycho-social characteristics of a language. Genetically, or ontologically, the language is a psychological phenomenon and it does not exist outside the memory of its users. Teleologically and causatively, on the other hand, a language serves humans as a tool for functioning in society in every aspect of their life activity. Thus, neither a language in its full extent nor any of its elements can be seen by anthropologically oriented linguists as a being existing independently on a man, who is its creator, user and at the same time addressee of linguistically shaped messages. Anthropocentrism is thus an ontological determinant of linguistics.

Onomasiology or nomination theory determines, in turn, the essence of the carried out research, drawing attention to the element of speech activity which lies at the grounds of verbalization of new concepts. Additionally, the peculiarity of nominative processes in onomasiological depiction lies in dynamic way of perceiving word-formation (when speaking of analytical lexical units as well, we should be talking about sign-formation).

Such research consists of two stages. The first one is a diachronic analysis of lexemes from the point of view of the processes resulting with coming into being of those lexemes. The second one, based on the first one, coming up with models, algorithms of speech procedure within nomination. These procedures are necessary to find evidence for the hypothesis concerning creating new signs in language activity as a result of the nomination of adjacent concepts or concepts similar to others. The theory of nomination is the key epistemological and gnoseological category in the conception of a new typology of homonymy, opposing to the existence of polysemy in a language.

Discursive depiction can be described as an important analytical category, as it makes it possible to present the examined lexemes in a more clear and ordered manner than in the case of traditional classifications of homonyms and words that are treated as ambiguous. Those classifications are based mostly on a purely formal criterion, taking into consideration stylistic placement at the most, which is not so obvious in contemporary languages used by speakers in various kinds of discourse. The media have their part in mixing styles, fighting for their ratings and adjusting the

vocabulary of their programs to the less sophisticated viewers. This took the differential value away from the stylistic criterion. Its place was taken by the discursive criterion, being superior in its approach to the language content — from the point of view of a performed activity. It allows for the analysis of a given language phenomenon and creating its typology in a paradigm of pragmatics, which is superior to semantics and syntax. The discursive approach is specially significant for the research of a phenomenon called polysemy as it prevents from getting deceived and charmed by poetic metaphors as their role is completely different than in non-artistic discourses. Poetic metaphors, similarly to other means of artistic expression, aim at making the language of literary works draw attention to itself, not to be transparent, while in everyday communication the language ought to be absolutely transparent in order to fulfill its functions concerning extralingual area and so to be only a tool, not a goal itself as it is in the case of poetry. Because of that, literature theoreticians treat metaphors as the abundance of a language while the language ability to extend meanings, which leads to polysemy, results from semantic flexibility of words and is a means of artistic expression. It is then impossible to equal even identical lexemes used in different discourses as they have different axiological indices. Metaphors are imperceptible in colloquial discourse (so called conventional metaphors) and are attributed to the general characteristics of a language, which makes a person capable of describing an infinite amount of different, changing situations. Researching and analyzing formally convergent units having different meanings, based on the above methodological assumptions led me to both theoretical and empirical conclusions.

#### Theoretical conclusions

The article aims creating a theoretical model of lexeme identity. It is a response to the conceptual demand of linguistics semantics, which has been lacking fixed solutions allowing for separating an invariant, systemic lexical meaning of a word from its actual speech variants of meaning. The lack of a system solution to the given question contributed significantly to strengthening the theory of language polysemy. Besides, thanks to developing a given model it is possible to figure out why identical lexical units should be considered homonyms, not just different lexical meanings of a word.

Presented model of lexeme identity test is a proposal of researching all formally convergent word speech units separated from utterances of contemporary users of Polish in order to define their ontological status or, in other words, to differentiate independent lexical units from word speech varieties functioning only by referring to an invariant lexical units from word speech varieties functioning only by means of referring to an invariant lexical unit. A lexeme identity model is based on the evidence of word identification as a semantically independent nominative unit having specified structural (phonetic, morfosyntax), systemic and pragmatic features.

The word identity model is formed respectively from the most external, formal, conspicuous sign features to the internal features, disclosure of which requires detailed comparative analysis of the uses of the examined sign. Apart from that, such a way of making up criteria of defining the lexical unit identity facilitates the test so that entering a higher, more complex level of analysis will be possible only when testing the unit on lower levels does not bring positive results and does not provide any information about features differentiating the analyzed sign from others that it can be identified with.

There are two main groups of evidence of word identity: functional evidence and pragmatic evidence. Each of those groups defines linguistic sign identity by ascribing some value to the sign.

The evidence of the first kind regards the functional, i.e. relational essence of linguistic signs. The first type of functional evidence refers to internal relations within the structure of linguistic sign while the second type is based on external relations of signs with other signs in the language system. Within this type of word identity evaluation criteria structural and systemic evidence types have been marked off.

Structural evidence is to prove the unity of meaning and form of a linguistic sign. This unity was indicated in the binary conception of linguistic sign, although the editors of "Cours de linguistique générale" changed the idea of de Saussure, suggesting that a linguistic sign is made of unity of a concept and an acoustic image. Yet, de Saussure's dychotomic conception of a linguistic sign, which reflected only some stage of consideration over a sign as an element of linguistic activity, assumed only unity of purely linguistic elements: meaning and form. Both a concept as an element of the cognitive view of the world and an acoustic image (an actual psychophysiological impression at the moment of uttering or receiving an utterance) and even more sounds themselves (an air wave produced while breathing out) as a component of the material word were moved by de Saussure out of the sign in the full tetradic conception of a linguistic sign. It is worth noticing, though, that the sign of linguistic activity does not constitute homogeneous unity in causative-teleological respect, as its structure is a compound of different elements in regard to the origin (causative factor) and in regard to destination (teleological factor). In the ontic respect a sign is differentiated only temporarily. In the vertical division the sign of linguistic activity is a relation of a linguistic sign (panchronic) to a speech sign (idiosynchronic-diachronic), but in the horizontal division it is made up by meaning and form (that is information). Each separate element itself is also heterogeneous in causative-teleological respect. Speaking of unity of meaning and form, it must be taken into consideration that it sets the relation between a paradigmatic unity of meaning (differentiation of meanings) and a paradigmatic unity of form (differentiation of forms). This particular conception of linguistic meaning and linguistic form as components of linguistic sign makes it possible to explain those facts (considered mainly with respect to speech), explanation of which was not possible based on binary theory of linguistic sign known from "Cours de linguistique générale" (de Saussure 1996, 2002) as according to this theory a concept was unity with an acoustic image [The thorough original theory of sign by Ferdinand de Saussure can be found in his compilation *Écrits de linguistique générale* (2002)]. We are talking about such issues as suppletivity, formal syncretism or the fact that when saying or hearing "a tree" we do not have in mind any specific tree or actualize the word's full lexical meaning 'a perennial plant having a permanent woody, self-supporting main stem or trunk, ordinarily growing to a considerable height and usually developing branches at some distance from the ground', but we are able to generalize and specify at the same time the meaning of a linguistic sign. The paradigm of form can be depicted here as a set (overall differences) of potential grammar meanings of a lexeme, meanings that come into being in a particular act of speech. The paradigm of meaning, on the other hand, is a comparison (and contrast) of possible speech meanings of which each one is realized also in separate acts of communication. The term 'paradigm of form' is particularly relevant with respect to synthetic, inflected languages, where grammar meaning (also syntactic one) is included in particular elements of a sign, i.e. in either an ending or a suffix, such as

in Slavic languages. The paradigm of form is thus particularly needed in order to explain the fact that in Slavic languages the form of a linguistic sign is not the only and unchangeable one (it is so only in the case of uninflected parts of speech) but it is made of the whole phonetic-morphosyntactic paradigm. And so the language form of a lexeme *norka* ('a mink') is a set: *norka* — *norki* — *norce* — *norkę* — *norką* — *norki* — *norek* — *norkom* — *norkami* — *norkach*, which at the same time refers to various acoustic-articulatory realizations and many syntax functions. Yet, the word *norki* 'a woman's coat made of mink's fur' has a paradigm that is limited to plural forms, so it is a different paradigm of forms. According to the rule of the unity of a particular paradigm of forms with a particular paradigm of meanings, the lexeme *norka* and the word *norki* do not make up a "community" but each of them has a separate identity. This result in recognizing them as homonyms, not as an ambiguous word. Similarly, in the case of noun names of actions as well as nomination of the results of these actions there is asymmetry in a paradigm of form. This asymmetry is based on a deficiency of forms in one of the homonyms: *przeżycie* 'survival' as an action does not have plural forms while *przeżycie* 'an adventure, an experience' is a word with a full paradigm of grammar number.

Each sign of linguistic activity apart from being a relation between a paradigm of meaning and a paradigm of form participates as well in a number of systemic relations, both internal and external. Systemic evidence concerns relations between linguistic signs within a system and within overall linguistic activity. The necessity to separate two groups of systemic evidence results from the complexity of functioning of a sign of linguistic activity which exists both in human psyche and in social sphere, which, in turn, is determined by the psychosocial nature of linguistic activity. Functioning in the mental sphere is connected with creating in a language system a net of relations which refer to the "upper" part in a horizontal division of linguistic activity, that means they concern its meaning (it is a natural consequence that these relations influence the formal potential so the presence of lexical relations is also connected with a sign form but this function is secondary). Linguistic meaning as the paradigm of categorical and referential meaning creates numerous relations with meanings of other signs within a language system. These relations are internal in the sense of being created inside ontologically psychological (mental) language system of each man, so it easy to notice some discrepancies in these relations in single users of a given language. The evidence obtained in the course of analyzing internal systemic relations result from systemic value of a sign. The unity of systemic potential proves the unity of a sign and recognition of discrepancies within this potential gives grounds for qualifying words as separate lexical units.

A sign of linguistic activity, apart from a linguistic sign (invariant relations) also provides for speech signs (variant relations), which allows it to create external systemic relations, i.e. relations with other signs within one system. These relations are created by each sign of linguistic activity taken as a whole, without division into form and meaning, by belonging in a particular sociolectal code. The qualification of a sign in the internal system depends on defining the social value of each sign, and because of the fact that languages users (or most of them) speak a few varieties of a language (at least two) which they use in specific communicative situations, they must associate lexemes by referring them to a sociolectal system. Certainly, they do not even need to be aware of the existence of sociolects but they have some associations concerning a given lexeme as the one that is used in specific place, at specific situation and in specific type of communication with a defined group of people.

Unity of sociolectal potential is the evidence of word identity while the lack of such unity proves that we are dealing with two or more homonyms instead of one word.

For that reason, the evidence within the systemic criterion for verifying lexeme identity should be divided into two groups:

- 1) microsystem evidence;
- 2) macrosystem evidence.

Microsystem evidence is obtained in the course of analysis of internal relations between paradigms of meaning of particular signs. The analysis is based on verifying the following factors:

a) onomasiological position — the analysis consists in placing an examined unit in a certain phenomenon category by describing its categorial meaning; it is the analysis of paradigmatic lexical relations (the differences of a kind: concrete — abstract or attributive — processive). A word *waga* 1 'scales' marks substance [Kupiłem wagę — I bought the scales], the word *waga* 2 'weighting' marks action [Oszukują na wadze — They cheat while weighing], the word *waga* 3 'weight' marks parameter [Twoja waga jest idealna — Your weight is perfect];

b) synonymy, antonymy — the analysis is based on describing semantic potential of the examined units by referring to their synonyms and antonyms, so this analysis applies to the referential part of a concept (*waga* 1 does not have synonyms, in a text it can only be replaced with hyperonyms *przyrząd*, *urządzenie* 'device, appliance'; *waga* 2 can be replaced with *ważenie* 'weighting' and *waga* 3 with words *masa* or *ciężar* 'heaviness; load');

c) epidigmatics / derivation — the analysis consists in describing word-formation potential of the examined units; that is the analysis of epidigmatic relations which also partially constitute the referential part of a lexical concept (*pokojowy* 1 is a derivative of a lexeme *pokój* 1 'peace; the state of not being at war' and *pokojowy* 2 is a derivative of *pokój* 2 'a room');

d) semantic valency (lexical connectivity) — the analysis is based on placing the examined unit in the semantic field by describing its referential meaning; that is the analysis of syntagmatic lexical relations (a lexeme *paść* — *padać* 1 'to change position suddenly from standing to lying' can be used in certain contexts, most often concerning a person and his/her accidental fall, a fall resulting from tiredness or fainting as well as a fall of a big, tall object. A lexeme *paść* — *padać* 2 'fall' concerns a narrow category of objects — grain, seed that can fall onto the ground, so lexical environment of this unit is strictly limited. A word *paść* — *padać* 3 concerning people, meaning 'die suddenly' is found in phrases suggesting sudden death. A word *paść* — *padać* 4 refers to animals' death. Lexical connectivity of a homonym *paść* — *padać* 5 'to be conquered, beaten by the enemy' shows that it refers to a certain territory or a military defensive element. Connections of the analyzed verb with names and descriptions of companies suggest that there is one more word: *paść* — *padać* 6 'to go bankrupt'. Evidence coming from the syntagmatic analysis of expressions concerning breakdowns of some systems or electronic equipment shows the necessity of separating a lexeme *paść* — *padać* 7 'to stop working' as a distinct lexical unit. The meaning 'to discharge, lose power' results from metonymic lexical transformation i.e. actualization of the referential relation of a concept 'stop working' so in this way a new lexical unit does not come into being, A homonym *paść* — *padać* 8 'to stop by, to get to' also has its specific semantic valency, which concerns lexemes associated with the concept of light, shadow and look and metaphorically, as a result of secondary nomination, it concerns suspicion, too. *Paść* —

padać 9 'be uttered aloud' regarding a word, a slogan or a "go-ahead" may be used in a text in specific syntagmatic relations).

Macrosystem evidence is obtained in the course of analysis of sociolectal potential, i.e. analyzing participation of lexemes in certain sociolects. The units with the initial form *żaba* have to be described as homonyms as they belong to different social varieties of Polish (*żaba* 1 'an animal of tailless amphibians, of Neobatrachia' — literary language; *żaba* 2 'a gentle expression of a close person' — colloquial language; *żaba* 3 'a container with a blood sample' — medical jargon; *żaba* 4 'green light' — police jargon).

Among pragmatic evidence there have been separated two kinds of evidence: discourse and situation evidence. The discourse evidence come from the analysis of lexical units from the point of view of their capability of serving different types of discourse (*dyskretny* 1 'able to keep a secret' — colloquial discourse, public discourse; *dyskretny* 2 — mathematical scientific discourse). Situation evidence should be separated with respect to the way the examined lexical unit is used as it may be the result of deliberate action or the lack of consideration over accuracy of its use.

Occasionalisms of the first kind are metaphors that are made up and used in artistic or political discourse or in advertising public discourse; they may enter the language and reinforce its lexical system. Original, single use of words sharing the same form with other words do not constitute new homonyms, however, they confirm speech polysemy being reference of two actual units to one lexical unit (*Trimline w krótkim czasie spalił moje kompleksy* — *Trimline burnt my complexes in short time* — an advertisement of dietary supplement reinforcing losing weight). An accidental use of a speech sign referring at the same time to two linguistic signs in one text is not easy to depict for a researcher. Accidents of that kind come to light most often because of a communicative failure being the result of polysemy.

The word identity test based on the proposed model is characterized by a complex approach taking into consideration all aspects of functioning of lexical units. It is necessary in those questionable cases when, while separating a linguistic unit from a speech unit and within systemic signs — separating homonyms from units between which there is a living motivation bond, one, two, or even three criteria do not answer given questions and do not guarantee effectiveness.

#### Empirical conclusions

The theoretical model of lexeme identity has empirical value as with its help it is possible to verify the status of meaning of any speech unit formally identical with another one, i.e. to determine its independence (which results with separating a homonym) or to state its dependence on an invariant lexeme (which causes qualifying the meaning as a speech variant of lexical meaning).

The lexeme identity test based on the proposed model is a negative verification as its operation principles lead to falsifying polysemy of analyzed linguistic units or questioning homonymy in the case of stating that the examined speech unit is an actual meaning variant. As a result of confirming functional or pragmatic differences in the analyzed lexemes, the existence of ambiguity in a language is being denied. Tested units described as one word of many lexical meanings because of their significant differentiation turn out to be twin lexical units. In this respect, they should be described as homonyms. However, stating the lack of differences on functional or pragmatic level in the case of specific speech units eliminates them as separate



language signs and leads to accepting them as actual text variant of the same invariant sign.

Using the above model it is possible to empirically check identity of the examined speech unit. Profil 1 'the image of somebody's face seen from a side (with a clear line of forehead, nose, mouth and chin)' differs from profil 2 understood as 'a part of a social networking service including information about a user' in functional-structural respect because the first one is used only in singular forms and in functional-systemic respect as their onomasiological positions are different (the first word is a name of a phenomenon in the physical world, the other one — in the virtual world), they create different synonymic and antonomic relations (the opposite of the first one is 'en face') and they are of different lexical valency (only the second word can be found in compounds *założyć profil* 'to open a profile', *zlikwidować profil* 'to close a profile', *mieć na profilu* 'to have sth on one's profile'). Evidence obtained in this way clearly shows the necessity to consider the examined units as independent lexical units of convergent form and different meanings, i.e. homonyms.

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