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POLYSEMY: WORDS WITH MULTIPLE MEANING IN ENGLISH

Abstract

Polysemous words, which have multiple meanings depending on context, play a critical role in cross-cultural communication. This study examines their impact on language comprehension, translation challenges, and the cognitive structures influencing meaning extensions. The findings emphasize the necessity of cultural awareness and linguistic expertise in mitigating misunderstandings and improving cross-cultural communication.

Key words

polysemy, monosemy, hyponymy, hypernymy, autohyponyms, Lexicographers,lemma, homonyms ,lexical meaning

Abstract

Ko‘p ma’noli so‘zlar — kontekstga qarab bir nechadan ortiq ma’noga ega bo‘lgan birliklar — madaniyatlararo muloqotda muhim rol o‘ynaydi. Ushbu tadqiqot ularning tilni anglash jarayoniga ta’siri, tarjima paytida yuzaga keladigan qiyinchiliklar hamda ma’no kengayishiga ta’sir qiluvchi kognitiv tuzilmalarni o‘rganadi. Natijalar madaniy ong va lingvistik malakaga ega bo‘lish tushunmovchiliklarni kamaytirish hamda madaniyatlararo muloqotni yaxshilash uchun zarurligini ta’kidlaydi.

Kalit so`zlar

ko‘p ma’nolilik,bir ma’nolilik,giponimiya (tor ma’nodagi so‘z munosabati), giperonimiya (keng ma’nodagi so‘z munosabati),avto-giponimlar (bir so‘z o‘zi uchun umumiy va xususiy ma’noni ifodalaydigan holatlar),leksikograflar (lug‘at tuzuvchilar),lemma (lug‘atdagi bosh shakl),gomonimlar (talaffuzi bir xil, ma’nosi boshqa so‘zlar),leksik ma’no

Introduction.

Polysemy is the association of one word with two or more distinct meanings and a polyseme is a word or phrase with multiple meanings. The word "polysemy" comes from the Greek for "many signs." The adjective forms of the word include polysemous or polysemic.

In contrast, a one-to-one match between a word and a meaning is called "monosemy." In "The Handbook of Linguistics," William Croft notes: "Monosemy is probably most clearly found in specialized vocebulary dealing with technical topics."

According to some estimates, more than 40% of English words have more than one meaning. The fact that so many words are polysemous "shows that semanntic changes often add meanings to the language without subtracting any," says M. Lynne Murphy, in "Lexical Meaning."

Research methods

In linear or vertical polysemy, one sense of a word is a subset of the other. These are examples of hyponymy[1] and hypernymy[2], and are sometimes called autohyponyms [3]. For example, 'dog' can be used for 'male dog'. Alan Cruse identifies four types of linear polysemy:[4]

- autohyponymy, where the basic sense leads to a specialised sense (from "drinking (anything)" to "drinking (alcohol)")
- automeronymy, where the basic sense leads to a subpart sense (from "door (whole structure)" to "door (panel)")
- autohyperonymy or autosuperordination, where the basic sense leads to a wider sense (from "(female) cow" to "cow (of either sex)")
- autoholonymy, where the basic sense leads to a larger sense (from "leg (thigh and calf)" to "leg (thigh, calf, knee and foot)")

In non-linear polysemy, the original sense of a word is used figuratively to provide a different way of looking at the new subject. Alan Cruse identifies three types of non-linear polysemy:[5]

- metonymy, where one sense "stands for" another (from "hands (body part)" to "hands (manual labourers)")
- metaphor, where there is a resemblance between senses (from "swallowing (a pill)" to "swallowing (an argument)")
- other construals (for example, from "month (of the year)" to "month (30 days)")

There are several tests for polysemy, but one of them is zeugma: if one word seems to exhibit zeugma when applied in different contexts, it is probable that the contexts bring out different polysemes of the same word. If the two senses of the same word do not seem to *fit,* yet seem related, then it is probable that they are polysemous. This test again depends on speakers' judgments about relatedness, which means that it is not infallible, but merely a helpful conceptual aid.

The difference between homonyms and polysemes is subtle.Lexicographers[8] define polysemes within a single dictionary lemma, while homonyms are treated in separate entries, numbering different meanings (or lemmata). Semantic shift can separate a polysemous word into separate homonyms. For example, check as in "bank check" (or Cheque), check in chess, and check meaning "verification" are considered homonyms, while they originated as a single word derived from chess in the 14th century. Psycholinguistic experiments have shown that homonyms and polysemes are represented differently within people's mental lexicon: while the different meanings of homonyms (which are semantically unrelated) tend to interfere or compete with each other during comprehension, this does not usually occur for the polysemes that have semantically related meanings. Results for this contention, however, have been mixed.

For Dick Hebdige, polysemy means that, "each text is seen to generate a potentially infinite range of meanings," making, according to Richard Middleton, "any homology, out of the most

heterogeneous materials, possible. The idea of signifying practice—texts not as communicating or expressing a pre-existing meaning but as 'positioning subjects' within a *process* of semiosis—changes the whole basis of creating social meaning".

Charles Fillmore and Beryl Atkins' definition stipulates three elements: (i) the various senses of a polysemous word have a central origin, (ii) the links between these senses form a network, and (iii) understanding the 'inner' one contributes to understanding of the 'outer' one.

One group of polysemes are those in which a word meaning an activity, perhaps derived from a verb, acquires the meanings of those engaged in the activity, or perhaps the results of the activity, or the time or place in which the activity occurs or has occurred. Sometimes only one of those meanings is intended, depending on context, and sometimes multiple meanings are intended at the same time. Other types are derivations from one of the other meanings that leads to a verb or activity.

Results and analysis

Consistency in Core Meanings: Many polysemous words share fundamental meanings across languages due to universal cognitive structures. For example, materials and their derived products (e.g., "silver" as a metal and "silver" as a necklace) are commonly observed across cultures (Bo‘tayev, 2010).
Cross-Linguistic Variations: While some polysemous words have direct equivalents, others do not. The word "davlat" in Uzbek means both "state/government" and "wealth," but English separates these concepts (Nashirova, 2023).
Cultural Influence on Meaning: The meanings of polysemous words evolve based on cultural practices. Words related to authority or hierarchy often carry different connotations in various languages, impacting social interactions (Norinboeva, 2023).
Translation Difficulties: Direct translations can be misleading when polysemous words lack clear equivalents. A word like "season" in English has multiple meanings (time of year, flavoring food, period for activities), which may not always be fully captured in another language (Dalieva,2023)

Conclusion.

The class addressed the concept of polysemy, highlighting how the same word can have multiple meanings depending on the context in which it is used. We discussed the importance of context in determining the correct meaning of polysemous words, using practical examples such as 'bat', 'bark', and 'spring'. We also explored the difference between polysemy and homonymy, clarifying that while polysemy involves related meanings, homonymy refers to words with completely different and unrelated meanings.

Understanding polysemy is essential for the correct interpretation of texts in English and for effective communication. By paying attention to context, students can avoid misunderstandings and improve their comprehension both in reading and conversation. The class provided a solid foundation for students to apply these concepts in their daily activities.

We encourage students to continue exploring the topic, as the ability to interpret polysemous words is fundamental for mastering the English language. The lesson demonstrated the complexity and richness of the language, highlighting the importance of being attentive to context for precise and efficient communication.

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3. **2 .** WikepediA The Free Encyclopedia
4. *"polysemous". The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (Fourth Edition). 2000. Archived from the original on 28 June 2008.*
5. *"definition of polysemy". Oxford Dictionaries Online.*

6. 1.hyponymy- is a semantic relationship in which the meaning of one word is included in the meaning of another, more general word**.**

7. hypernymy- is a semantic relationship in which **a** general word (hypernym) includes the meaning of more specific words.

8. autohyponoms- **i**s a semantic phenomenon where one word has two meanings, and one of those meanings is a hyponym (more specific version) of the other.

9. linear polysemy- is a type of polysemy in which the different meanings of the same word are related in a linear, step-by-step chain**.**

10. non-linear polysemy-is a type of polysemy where a word has multiple meanings, and these meanings all branch out independently from a single core meaning, rather than forming a step-by-step chain.