

THE MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND SECONDARY SPECIAL
EDUCATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

THE UZBEK STATE WORLD LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY
ENGLISH FACULTY II
ENGLISH LEXICOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Referat

**“LEXICO – SEMANTIC FEATURES OF ANTONYMS IN MODERN
ENGLISH”**

Written by the student of the 2nd faculty, 308- group

Muratova Iroda

Scientific supervisor:

Senior teacher: Mukhamedova N.A

Tashkent 2016

Introduction

There is no doubt that the future of the country whose youth are intelligent and well-educated is great and bright. Knowing the exact meaning of these words, from the very beginning of our independence day our president tried to develop and improve educational system, make great facilities and give opportunities to the young generation. Especially, many concerns were done; attempts were made in the sphere of learning and teaching foreign languages. Taking good and recent examples, 18.75 and 19.71 president decrees were profoundly momentous in this branch.

Signed by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan – Islam Karimov on December 10, 2012, 18.75 decrees is “On measures to further improvement of foreign language learning system”. It is written that according to the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On education” and the National Program for Training in the country, a comprehensive foreign languages’ teaching system, directed to creating amicable developed, highly educated, modern – thinking young generation, further integration of the country to the world community, has been formed. Since the independence years, over 51.7 thousand teachers of foreign languages graduated from universities, English, German and French multimedia tutorials and textbooks for 5-9 grades of secondary schools, electronic resources for learning English in primary schools were created, more than 5000 secondary schools, professional colleges and academic lyceums were equipped with language laboratories. According to the decree, beginning from 2013-2014 school year foreign languages, mainly English considering the growth of the demand to this language, step by step throughout the country will be taught from the first year of schooling in the form of lesson-games and speaking games, continuing to learning the alphabet, reading and spelling in the second year. In order to improve teaching standards in distant rural areas, the higher educational institutions are allowed targeted admission of people living in distant areas to foreign language programs on the condition that they will oblige themselves to work in the acquired specialty at their residence area for at least 5 years after graduation. The decree also

envisages 30 % salary increase for foreign language teachers in rural areas, 15% increase for those in other areas. After the presidential decree 18.75 about Enhancement of learning foreign Languages was adapted this bachelor work focuses on a methodological field, namely on the techniques and basic principles of teaching Common Grammar, as nowadays acquiring language by means of using real life, authentic materials is decisive owing to its effectiveness.

Chapter I Lexico-Semantic Features of Antonyms in Modern English

1.1 The Concept of Polarity of Meaning

Thanks to the differences between our two hemispheres of our brains (emotional and rational), we react to different thing in a different way, but we do that more readily to the emotional than the rational. Similarity or polarity of meaning catches our attention and stick it with what we see and feel with our right brain too. That's why many different systems which describe semantic features of antonyms in modern English have been appeared. But the investigation problems of the concept of polarity of meaning is not the main task of this Course Paper, therefore this problem has been described briefly.

Stylistic features of words and problems of stylistic stratification in general were discussed in connection with different types of meaning. Synonyms and antonyms are usually felt to be correlative notions: firstly because the criterion of synonyms is semantic similarity which is in exact opposition to the criterion of antonyms - semantic polarity; secondly because synonyms and antonyms seem to overlap in a number of cases. When we speak of the words “daddy” and “parent” as synonyms, we do so because of the similarity of their denotation meaning and polarity of their stylistic reference (ex. “daddy” - colloquial, “parent” - bookish).

In most cases the grammatical features of a word reveals itself in a context. There are, however, words which do not acquire grammatical meaning even in the context. We will speak of them when we analyze the relations between lexical and

grammatical meanings in words. Our subject-matter is lexico-Semantic meaning of a word. It is possible to distinguish three essential types of lexical meaning of words:

- Nominative meaning determined by reality. The direct nominative meaning stands in one-to-one relationship with a word. For instance: “cat”, “table”, “sun”.
- Phraseological bound meaning of words depending on the peculiarities of their usage in a given language, e.g. “to take care”, “to have a smoke”, “to catch cold”.
- Syntactically conditioned meanings of words are those which change with the change of the environment. For instance: “to look” - “to look for” - “to look after”.

In the structure of lexical meaning of a word we distinguish two main components:

- Denotative;
- Connotative.

Denotative meaning is the conceptual nuclear of the word meaning. Denotative meaning is bound up with its referent. Referent is an object or phenomenon in our world which the given word names. Denotative meaning may have one constant referent. (“Moon”), but also it can have several referents (ex. “a hand” - firstly its referents a part of human arm; its second referent is the pointer on a clock; its third referent is a person.

Denotative meaning may have diffusive character, as in the case with the words: “good”, “bad”, “clever”, “progressive”. The denotative meaning is sometimes called: logical meaning; referential meaning, cognitive meaning; conceptual meaning or simply speaking, the literal meaning of a word.

If the denotative meaning is the nuclear part of the lexical meaning of a word, then the connotative meaning is its shell. Simply speaking, the connotative meaning is what we call additional, non-literal meaning of a word. It contains various shades. For example, the denotative component of the lexical meaning of the word “awful”, is "very bad".

According to the subject-matter of the Course Paper, let us examine a question “the Concept of Polarity of Meaning”.

The investigation problems of the concept of polarity of meaning is not the main task, therefore this problem has been described briefly. The term “polarity” exists in such fields of human knowledge as physics, mathematics, chemistry, psychology and etc. In linguistic this term can be found in semantic classification of the words.

The problem of the polarity of semantic meaning may be viewed in the Course Paper as a theoretical base to describe some classifications in various ways. The matter is that semantic classifications are generally based on the semantic similarity (or polarity) of words (or their component - morphemes).

1.2 Morphological Classification of Antonyms

Antonyms have traditionally been defined as words of opposite meaning. This definition, however, is not sufficiently accurate as it only shifts the problem to the question of what words may be regarded as words of opposite meaning. Therefore the latest linguistic investigations emphasize, that antonyms are similar as words belonging to the same part of speech and the same semantic field, having the same grammatical meaning and functions, as well as similar collocations. According to their morphological structure antonyms may be classified into:

- Root antonyms (having different roots): “to love” - “to hate”, “long” - “short”, “day” - “night”;
- Derivational antonyms (having the same roots but different derivational affixes): “regular” - “irregular”, “fruitful” - “fruitless”.

Absolute or Root Antonyms So, V.N. Comissarov in his dictionary of antonyms classified them into two groups: absolute or root antonyms and derivational antonyms.

Absolute antonyms have different roots and derivational antonyms have the same roots but different affixes.

We can find in Collins Cobuild dictionary such definition: “The antonym of word is another word which means the opposite”.

There is another term, which is quite interesting to our opinion: “Words that are antonymous are opposite in meaning.”

Such, the pair of words should be called antonymous, but one of them, which is not always just one, has a name antonym. Kinds and examples of root antonyms are observed in the second part of the Course Paper. But in the theoretical part we want to refer to a very interesting source.

In dealing with antonymic oppositions it may be helpful to treat antonyms in terms of “marked” and “unmarked” members. The unmarked member can be more widely used and very often can include the referents of the marked member but not vice versa. This proves that their meanings have some components in common. In the antonymic pair “old” - “young” the unmarked member is old. We've found an interesting example on one of studied sources:

“It is possible to ask: “How old is the girl?”, without implying that she is no longer young. “Some authors, Lyons among them, suggest a different terminology. They distinguish antonyms proper and complementary antonyms. The chief characteristic feature of antonyms proper is that they are regularly gradable. Antonyms proper, therefore, represent contrary notions. Grading is based on the operation of comparison. One can compare the intensity of feeling as in love -- attachment -- liking -- indifference -- antipathy -- hate. Whenever a sentence contains an antonym or an antonymic pair, it implicitly or explicitly contains comparison.”

Thus, discussing the group of root antonyms, we should to speak about complementary antonyms and contrary notions, a semantic classification of antonyms.

Derivational Antonyms

Derivational antonyms are more difficult to study. As we mentioned above, derivational antonyms have the same roots but different affixes.

Negative prefixes for antonyms are “un-“, “dis-“, “non-“, but sometimes they are

formed by means of suffixes “-ful” and “-less”. The number of antonyms with the suffixes -ful and -less is not very large, e.g. "successful" - "unsuccessful", "selfless" - "selfish". The same is true about antonyms with negative prefixes, e.g. "to man" is not an antonym of the word "to unman", "to disappoint" is not an antonym of the word "to appoint".

The difference between derivational and root antonyms is not only in their structure, but in semantics as well. Group of derivational antonyms express contradictory notions, one of them excludes the other, e.g. "active"- "inactive". Absolute antonyms express contrary notions. If some notions can be arranged in a group of more than two members, the most distant members of the group will be absolute antonyms, e.g. "ugly", "plain", "good-looking", "pretty", "beautiful", the antonyms are "ugly" and "beautiful".

Leonard Lipka in the book “Outline of English Lexicology” defines types of oppositeness, which we study in the next chapter of this Course Paper. Thus, we should to study now some characteristics of Semantic Classification of Antonyms.

1.3 Semantic Classification of Antonyms

Leonard Lipka is one of the linguists, who describes different types of oppositeness, and subdivides them into three types:

- a) complementary, e.g. male -female, married -single,
- b) antonyms, e.g. good -bad,
- c) converseness, e.g. to buy - to sell.

He does that in the following way. The denial of the one implies the assertion of the other, and vice versa. “John is not married” implies that “John is single”. The type of oppositeness is based on yes/no decision. This concerns pairs of lexical units.

Antonyms are the second class of oppositeness. It is distinguished from complementarity by being based on different logical relationships. For pairs of antonyms like “good” - “bad”, “big” - “small” only the second one of the above mentioned relations of implication holds. The assertion containing one member implies the negation of the other, but not vice versa. “John is good” implies that

“John is not bad”, but “John is not good” does not imply that “John is bad”. The negation of one term does not necessarily implies the assertion of the other.

Converseness is mirror-image relations or functions, e.g. “husband” - “wife”, “pupil” - “teacher”, “precede” - “follow”, “above” - “below”, “before” - “after” etc.

L. Lipka also describes the type which is called as:

- Directional opposition, ex. “up” - “down”;
- Consequence opposition, ex. “learn” - “know”;
- antipodal opposition, ex. “North” - “South”, “East” - “West”, (it is based on contrary motion, in opposite directions.)
- oppositions, which involve motion in different directions, ex. “come” - “go”, “arrive” - “depart”.

L. Lipka also points out non-binary contrast or many-member lexical sets. Here he points out serially ordered sets, such as:

- scales, ex. “hot”- “warm”, “cool” - “cold” ;
- colour words, ex. “black”, “grey”, “white” ;
- ranks, ex. “marshal”, “general”, “colonel”, “major”, “captain” etc.;
- gradable examination marks, ex. “excellent”, “good”, “average”, “fair”, “poor”;
- units of time, ex. “spring”, “summer”, “autumn”, “winter” .

Thus, let's investigate the complementary, proper antonyms, and converseness differences in details.

Antonyms Proper

Some authors, J.Lyons among them, suggest a different terminology. They distinguish antonyms proper and complementary antonyms. The chief characteristic feature of antonyms proper is that they are regularly gradable. This kind of antonyms proper represents contrary notions. They say, that grading is based on the operation of comparison. The group of words, which name intensity of feeling, ex. “love -- attachment -- liking -- indifference -- antipathy -- hate”, can be compared. [27]

Whenever a sentence contains an antonym or an antonymic pair, it contains

comparison. J. Lyons discusses an interesting example of antonyms also dealing with elephants: A small elephant is a large animal. The size-norm for elephants is not the same as that for all animals in general: the elephant which is small in comparison with other elephants may be big in comparison with animals as a class.

This example may also serve to show the difference and parallelism between antonyms proper and complementarity (expressing contradictory notions). The semantic polarity in antonyms proper is relative, the opposition is gradual, it may embrace several elements characterized by different degrees of the same property. The comparison they imply is clear from the context. “Large” and “little” denote polar degrees of the same notion. The same referent which may be “small” as an elephant is a comparatively “big” animal, but it cannot be “male” as an elephant and “female” as an animal: a male elephant is a male animal.

Having noted the difference between complementary antonyms and antonyms proper, we must also take into consideration that they have much in common so that in a wider sense both groups are taken as antonyms.¹

Complementaries

J. Lyons among also describes complementaries. Like other antonyms they are regularly contrasted in speech (ex. “male”- “female”), and the elements of a complementary pair have similar distribution. According to him, the assertion of a sentence containing an antonymous or complementary term implies the denial of a corresponding sentence containing the other antonym or complementary:

“The poem is good > The poem is not bad (good: bad -- antonyms proper)” This is prose > This is not poetry (prose: poetry -- complementaries)

As to the difference in negation it is optional with antonyms proper: by saying that the poem is not good the speaker does not always mean that it is positively bad. Though more often we are inclined to take into consideration only the opposite ends of the scale and by saying that something is not bad we even, using litotes, say it is good. So complementaries are a subset of antonyms taken in a wider sense.

The complementary opposite, sometimes is known as the contradictory. Like

the gradable adjectives, the complementary adjectives share a semantic dimension, but it is a dimension which has no middle values. As Cruse describes it:

“The essence of a pair of complementariness is that between them they exhaustively divide some conceptual domain into two mutually exclusive compartments, so that what does not fall into one of the compartments must necessarily fall into the other”.

Conclusions

In most cases the grammatical features of a word reveals itself in a context. There are three essential types of lexical meaning of words:

- Nominative meaning determined by reality.
- Phraseological bound meaning of words depending on the peculiarities of their usage in a given language.
- Syntactically conditioned meanings of words are those which change with the change of the environment.

In the structure of lexical meaning of a word we distinguish two main components: denotative and connotative.

We can base on the definition antonyms as two or more words belonging to the same part of speech, contradictory or contrary in meaning, and interchangeable at least at some contexts. However, polysemantic word may have an antonym or several antonyms for each of its meanings.

According to their morphological structure antonyms may be classified into:

- root antonyms (having different roots);
- Derivational antonyms (having the same roots but different derivational affixes).

There is the describing of different types of oppositeness, and subdivides them into three types: complementary, antonyms, and conversances.

Complementariness (like other antonyms) are regularly contrasted in speech and the elements of a complementary pair have similar distribution. Converses (or relational opposites) denote one and the same referent or situation as viewed from different points of view, with a reversal of the order of participants and their roles.

The list of used literature

1. Антрушина, Г. Б. и др. Лексикологияанглийскогоязыка :
Учебноепособиедлявузов / Г. Б. Антрушина, О. В. Афанасьева, Н. Н.
Морозова. - 3-е изд., стереотип. - М. : Дрофа, 2001. - 287 с.
2. Арнольд, И. В. Лексикологиясовременногоанглийскогоязыка :
Учебникдляинститутов и факультетовиностранныхязыков : [наангл. языке] /
И. В. Арнольд. - 3-е изд., перераб. и доп. - М. : Высш. шк., 1986. - 295 с.
3. АрнольдИ.В. Семантическаяструктураслова в
современноманглийскомязыке и методикееееисследования. 2-е издание. - Л..
2002.
4. АпресянЮ.Д. Лексическаясемантика. -М. Наука, 1974.-с.324 - 325.