

FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF SEMANTIC FIELD OF WORDS RELATED TO “SPORTS” IN PRESENT DAY ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

In this article we have investigated the main functional problems of semantic field of words connected with sport in English and their semantic meanings.

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It is essential to have to analyze what is word. First, the word is a unit of speech which, as such, serves the purposes of human communication. Thus, the word can be defined as a unit of communication. Secondly, the word can be perceived as the total of the sounds which comprise it. Third, the word, viewed structurally, possesses several characteristics. The modern approach to word studies is based on distinguishing between the external and the internal structures of the word. By external structure of the word we mean its morphological structure. For example, in the word post-impressionists the following morphemes can be distinguished: the prefixes post-, im-, the root press, the noun-forming suffixes -ion, -ist, and the grammatical suffix of plurality -s.

The external structure of the word, and also typical word-formation patterns are studied in the framework of word-building. The internal structure of the word, or its meaning, is nowadays commonly referred to as the word's semantic structure. This is the world's main aspect. The area of lexicology specialising in the semantic studies of the word is called semantics. One of the main structural features of the word that it possesses both external (formal) unity and semantic unity. A further structural feature of the word is its susceptibility to grammatical employment. In speech most words can be used in different grammatical forms in which their interrelations are realized. Thus, the word is a speech unit used for the purposes of human communication, materially representing a group of sounds, possessing a meaning, susceptible to grammatical employment and characterized by formal and semantic unity. The difference between words and other two-facet units is not always clear. There are:

1. **Form words.** On the one hand, they fuse with notional words phonetically and do not function as sentence-members. On the other hand, they are position ally mobile, e.g. *a, to, and*.
2. **Loose compounds**, e.g. *speech sound, stone wall*. On the one hand, they are built in speech. On the other hand, they have one lexical stress.

3. **Phrasal words:** *his I-love-you's*. On the one hand, they are built in speech and are not reproducible. On the other, they have one lexical stress. The difference between variants of the same word and different words is also not always clear. Within the language system the word is a lexeme – an abstract unit which unites all its variant:

- a. *lexico-semantic variants* – different meanings of the same polysemantic word: *to give a pen, to give a smile, to give an answer*;
- b. *phonetic variants* – different pronunciation of the same word: *neither, either, often*;
- c. *orthographic variants* – different spelling of the same word: *jail – gaol*;
- d. *morphological variants* – different morphemic structure of the same word: *learned – learnt, geographic – geographical*.

Modern English has a very extensive vocabulary; the number of words according to the dictionary data is no less than 400,000. A question naturally arises whether this enormous word-stock is composed of separate independent lexical unit. It is a transfer of the meaning on the basis of comparison. Metaphor can be based on different types of similarity:

- a. **similarity of shape:** head (of a cabbage), bottleneck, teeth (of a saw, a comb);
- b. **similarity of position:** foot (of a page, of a mountain), head (of procession);
- c. **similarity of function, behaviour:** a whip (an official in the British Parliament whose duty is to see that members were present at the voting), a bookworm (a person who is fond of books);
- d. **similarity of colour:** orange, hazel, chestnut.

A special type of metaphor is when proper names become common nouns, e.g. philistine – a mercenary person, vandals – destructive people. Metonymy It is a transfer of the meaning on the basis of contiguity. There are different types of metonymy:

- a. the material of which an object is made may become the name of the object: a glass, boards;
- b. the name of the place may become the name of the people or of an object placed there: the House – members of Parliament, the White House – the Administration of the USA;
- c. names of musical instruments may become names of musicians when they are united in an orchestra: the violin, the saxophone;
- d. the name of some person may become a common noun, e.g. boycott was originally the name of an Irish family who were so much disliked by their neighbours that they did not mix with them.
- e. names of inventors very often become terms to denote things they invented, e.g. watt, om, roentgen;
- f. some geographical names can also become common nouns through metonymy, e.g. holland (linen fabrics), Brussels (a special kind of carpets), china (porcelain).

There are the following secondary ways of semantic changes:

1. **Elevation** : It is a transfer of the meaning when it becomes better in the course of time: knight originally meant a boy, then a young servant, then a military servant, then a noble man. Now it is a title of nobility given to outstanding people.

2. **Degradation:** It is a transfer of the meaning when it becomes worse in the course of time, e.g. villain originally meant working on a villa, now it means a scoundrel.

3. **Hyperbole:** It is a transfer of the meaning when the speaker uses exaggeration, e.g. to hate (doing something), not to see somebody for ages. hyperbole is often used to form phraseological units, e.g. to split hairs.

4. **Litotes:** It is a transfer of the meaning when the speaker expresses the affirmative with the negative or vice versa, e.g. not bad (it is good), no coward, not half as important.

5. **The word-combination (WC)** is the largest two-facet lexical unit observed on the syntagmatic level of analysis. By the degree of their structural and semantic cohesion WCs are classified into three WCs and phraseological units, cf.: at least, point of view, by means of, to take place. Lexical combinability (collocation) is the aptness of a word to appear in certain lexical contexts, e.g. the word question combines with certain adjectives: delicate, vital and important. Each word has a certain norm of collocation. Any departure from this norm is felt as a stylistic device: to shove a question. The collocations of correlated words in different languages are not identical, e.g. both the English flower and its Russian counterpart *цветок* can be combined with a number of words denoting the place where the flowers are grown: garden-flowers, hot-house flowers; *садовые цветы, оранжерейные цветы*. But the English word cannot enter into combination with the word room to denote flowers growing in the rooms, cf.: *комнатные цветы* – pot flowers. Grammatical combinability (colligation) is the aptness of a word to appear in certain grammatical contexts, e.g. the adjective heavy can be followed by a noun (heavy storm), by an infinitive (heavy to lift). Each grammatical unit has a certain norm of colligation: nouns combine with pre-positional adjectives (a new dress), relative adjectives combine with pre-positional adverbs of degree (dreadfully tired). The departure from the norm of colligation is usually impossible: mathematics at clever is a meaningless string of words because English nouns do not allow of the structure N + at + A.

6. **Native words**, though they constitute only 30% of the English vocabulary, are the most frequently used words. Native words are subdivided into two groups: Indo-European and Common Germanic. The oldest layer of words in English is words met in Indo-European languages. There are several semantic groups of them:

- a. words denoting kinship: father, mother, son, daughter;
- b. words denoting important objects and phenomena of nature: the sun, water;
- c. names of animals and birds: cat, goose, wolf;
- d. names of parts of a human body: heart;
- e. some of the most often used verb: sit, stand;
- f. some numerals: two, three.

A much larger group of native vocabulary are Common Germanic words (German, Norwegian, Dutch, Icelandic). Here we can find the nouns: summer, winter, storm, rain, ice, ground, bridge, house, life, shoe; the verbs: bake, burn, buy, drive, hear, keep, learn; the adjectives: broad, dead, deaf, deep. Native words have a great world-building capacity, form a lot of phraseological units, they are mostly polysemantic¹. More than two thirds of the

¹Jackson, H. and Amvela E.Z., "Words, Meaning and Vocabulary". New York, Continuum, 2007, p 81.

English vocabulary are borrowings. Mostly they are words of Romanic origin (Latin, French, Italian, Spanish). Borrowed words are different from native ones by their phonetic structure, by their morphological structure and also by their grammatical forms. It is also characteristic of borrowings to be non-motivated semantically. English history is very rich in different types of contacts with other countries, that is why it is very rich in borrowings. Borrowings can be classified according to different criteria:

- a. according to the aspect which is borrowed;
- b. according to the degree of assimilation;
- c. according to the language from which the word was borrowed.

Sometimes a word is borrowed twice from the same language. As a result, we have two different words with different spellings and meanings but historically they come back to one and the same word. Such words are called etymological doublets: Latino-French doublets, Franco-French doublets. The analysis of the distributional meaning of tense-aspect verbal forms in present-day English, brief as it is, will remind us of the constitutional value of syntactic morphology whose subject matter is «grammar in context». Variations in the use of the tense-aspect verbal forms, their potential polysemy and transpositions conditioned by the mode of the speaker's representation of the verbal idea are a source of constant linguistic interest. Different tense-aspect forms are not yet finally and absolutely fixed. Now let's analyse the words and idioms based on sport.

Word	Example sentence	Meaning
arena	The arena was full of excited spectators cheering on their team.	a level area for holding sports events, surrounded by seats for spectators
amateur	The Olympic Games were originally for amateur athletes only.	engaged in something, like playing sports, without payment; non-professional
competition	The English Premiership League is one of the world's top football competitions.	an organized event in which people compete to win
cup	After they won the final game, the winners were awarded the Championship Cup.	a cup-shaped trophy, awarded as a prize in a contest
defeat	Our players were very happy after they defeated their opponents in the final game.	to win a victory over opponents in a game or contest; to beat
leisure	It's good for kids to spend some of their leisure time playing sports.	free time, or the use of free time for enjoyment
offside	Forwards have to learn how to avoid being caught in an offside position.	In an illegal position ahead of the ball (in football, rugby, hockey, etc.)
pass	A defender tries to pass the ball to a forward in a good position to score.	to throw or kick the ball to another player on one's own team
penalty	The penalty for abusing a referee is usually a one-match suspension.	a punishment imposed on a player or team for breaking the rules of a sport
performance	Venus Williams put in one the best performances of her life to win the tournament.	an instance of competing in a sports event in public

physique	Rugby players work hard in the gym to build up their physiques.	the form or shape of a person's body
referee	The referee saw a foul, blew his whistle and awarded a free kick.	a sports official with authority to make rulings during a contest
skill	Ken has gone to a boxing camp to improve his boxing skills.	the ability to do something well
sportsmanship	Good managers know how to teach their players sportsmanship.	an attitude of fairness, respect for opponents, and graciousness in winning or losing
whistle	The referee blew his whistle twice to signal the end of the match.	a small instrument that makes a high-pitched noise when blown

The process of scientific research consists of the following stages: observation, classification, generalization and verification. Observation is the collection of data. Classification is the orderly arrangement of these data. Generalization is the formulation of a hypothesis, rule or law. Verification seeks the proof for the generalization. Various methods of lexicological research are used for classification, generalization and verification: contrastive analysis, statistical methods of analysis, Immediate Constituents analysis, distributional analysis, transformational analysis, componental analysis.

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