A WORD FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF LEXICOLOGY AND SYNTAX

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The article presents a positive characteristic of the word from the point of view of lexicology and, based on these data, the signs that distinguish the word from other linguistic units are established.

The main subject of this article is another linguistic unit, the phrase. In the specialized literature, it is often noted that a phrase is the most natural unit of language, since in the process of communication one has to deal with phrases, and not with individual words.

This article deals with the question of the word in theoretical linguistics. The analysis of various theories shows that the exclusion of the word from the composition of the basic units of the language in a number of authors (F.de Saussure, S. Bally, descriptivists) it follows from the peculiarities of their general linguistic concepts, and not from the real status of this unit in the language. The most common view of the word in the linguistic literature is its interpretation as the basic unit of language, which is a multidimensional construction, various aspects of which are studied in various branches of linguistics.

The word, which was a two-sided language sign, represents the unity of meaning and form (sound). As a result of nomination activity, and, consequently, a carrier of linguistic meaning, the word is the subject of lexicology.

A verbal sign, as already noted, represents the unity of meaning and sound expression. It could be expected that unambiguous relations are established between the above-mentioned two sides of the word and a separate meaning corresponds to each sound expression. There are indeed many such cases in the language. However, language is a specific phenomenon, its lexical fund is constantly changing, besides, units of lexical composition do not exist in isolation, but act in a variety of syntagmatic relationships in the flow of speech, and often the same sound form in different contexts acquires different meanings. Some linguists, in particular, A.A.Potebnya, define the slightest change in the meaning of a word as a new word[1]. And indeed, the role of context in language is so great that one could say: a word has as many meanings as it is used in speech and each new meaning forms a new word. If this point of view is taken to the extreme, it turns out that there are no words other than contextual and no language other than individual. However, in reality there are only three main types of "violation" of the unambiguous relationship between the sound form and its meaning: polysemy, homonymy and synonymy. When distinguishing between cases of polysemy and homonymy , not all linguists rely on the same principles[2]. We adhere to the point of view that polysemy should include those cases when a historically and phonetically identical form acquires different meanings, while homonymy should include words that are different in origin, but identical in sound form. Homonyms make up only a tiny percentage of the lexical fund of the language and usually their meanings easily differ in context. Also, in the case of polysemy of a word at the syntagmatic level, only one of

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[1] Потебня А.А. Из записок по русской грамматике. Т. I. –Воронеж, 1874. –С.13.

[2] См.об этом: Почхуа Б. Омонимия и полисемия. Иберийско-кавказское языкознание, IX-X, 1958, с.13-36; его же, К вопросу о полисемии. Иберийско-кавказское языкознание, XII, 1966, с.99-136.

the possible meanings of this word appears in the flow of speech and, therefore, the principle of the connection of one form with one meaning is not violated.

Synonyms are words that are different in sound form, but are close or almost identical in meaning. The source of synonyms are borrowings from other languages, new formations, names of identical objects that differ in their motivation, dialectal, professional, vernacular slang words, etc. It is noted that there are no synonyms in the language that are completely identical in meaning, since even if they have a common "subject" meaning, they differ in their expressive and stylistic coloring, being members of various stylistic paradigms. However, experts do not have a consensus on whether to include an expressive and stylistic nuance in the semantics of the word[3].

There is still no unified understanding of the term "meaning" in linguistics, and, as noted, this is partly due to the difficulty of unambiguous definition of the term "word", since "the polysemic nature of the meaning, which is a component of the term "word", makes this latter even more ambiguous and multifaceted than the term "meaning"[4].

The main reason for the lack of development of semantic categories and the semantic side of language itself is considered to be the atomistic, non-systematic study of vocabulary in semasiological science of the late XIX and early XX centuries. This disadvantage has not yet been overcome, although there are already many studies studying the internal, structural connections of lexical units, which are an example of a systematic approach to the study of vocabulary. No one disputed the fact that the basic unit of vocabulary (lexicology) is the word. However, in lexicology, only its semantic side has traditionally been studied, and not the word as a unity of its two sides – sound expression and linguistic meaning.

Consequently, it can be concluded that on the basis of meaning, a very essential property of the word as a linguistic sign, the word, however, does not differ from other linguistic units; without taking into account the morphological structure of its sound expression, it is impossible to contrast the word with the rest of the units of the language, which should be taken into account when establishing the characteristic features of the word.

A word, its relationship to other words in a phrase, is studied in syntax. If for morphology the word is the largest unit, which is divided by analysis into its constituent elements – morphemes, for syntax the word is the smallest, indivisible unit, isolated on the basis of the analysis of phrases.

We have already noted that certain syntactic relations are established between words in phrases, which basically boil down to the following three types: management, coordination and adjacency.

The difference between a word and a phrase is that the relations within a word between its components differ from the relations between the components of phrases – words: only ordinal relations are established between the components of a word – morphemes, whereas syntactic relations take place between the components of a phrase – management, coordination, adjacency.

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[3] См., например,: Звегинцев В.А. Семасиология. –М., 1957, с.201.; Шмелев Д.Н. Проблемы синтаксического анализа лексики. –М., 1973.с.108.
[4] Комлев Н.Г. Компоненты содержательной структуры слова. –М., 1969, с.25.

For syntax, as already noted, a phrase (a specific example of a phrase is a sentence) is the largest unit, due to the analysis that we receive words. Then the words in the syntax are classified according to their functions in the sentence. Such a classification of words is nothing but a classification of sentence members. It, like the classification of parts of speech, dates back to ancient times, and besides, as has been repeatedly noted in the specialized literature, it has a number of disadvantages. A critical analysis of the basic theories of sentence members is presented in the book by A.S.Chikobava: "The problem of a simple sentence in Georgian."[5] A.S. Chikobava divided syntactic theories into three main groups: 1. Logicism in the understanding of syntactic concepts; 2. Psychologism in the interpretation of syntactic concepts; 3. Morphologism and phonetism in the understanding of syntactic concepts, noting that none of these points of view is actually syntactic, whereas the classification of sentence members should be syntactic. This classification, as well as the classification of words by parts of speech, will be different in different languages, since syntactic relations and syntactic components – sentences – differ in different languages. As already noted, languages differ in terms of their morphology, and there is a certain relationship between morphology and syntax: the complex structure of a word in languages with rich morphology serves to express syntactic functions, whereas in languages with poor morphology, syntactic methods account for a large load. However, in affixal languages, neither morphology and, accordingly, nor syntactic relations are the same.

In definitions, a word is often characterized as the maximum minimum of a sentence, or the minimum syntactic unit, which emphasizes the ability of a word to perform the function of sentence members. However, not all words in the language are capable of performing this function. So, service words, particles, conjunctions, prepositions are deprived of this function. Particles represent transitional phenomena from morpheme to word. Other service words can be classified as "words" for a number of reasons (the presence of a certain phonetic form, morphological structure, formal independence, etc.), although from a syntactic point of view they are not independent units, since the function of the word in the sentence and its relation to other members of the sentence is important for syntax. Therefore, the external form of the word is also important for syntax, its terminal morpheme is a relational affix.

Therefore, from the point of view of syntax, a word is a mandatory form necessary for establishing syntactic relations between the components of a sentence. In addition, the relationship between the components of the word – morphemes, and the components of the phrase – words – are different. In the first case, ordinal relations are established, in the second – syntactic relations: management, coordination, adjacency. In addition, the components of the phrase are separately formed words, while the components of the word are combined into a single whole–formed complex.

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