

## POSITION OF THE EVALUATIVE COMPONENT IN SEMANTICS

**Ilyin Denis Nikolaevich**

*Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor*

*Southern Federal University*

**Abstract.** Author analyzes the structure of lexical meaning. The place of the evaluative component in the semantics of the word is determined. Analyzing various points of view, the author examines the concept of connotation, its scope and content. The expediency of including evaluative and expressive components directly into the denotative-significative component of semantics is substantiated.

**Keywords:** semantics, denotation, signification, connotation, evaluation, expressiveness, emotiveness.

The structure of lexical meaning has been studied for a long time, there are points of view on what to include in the semantics of the word, and what is not, what is essential and mandatory, and what is optional.

Most linguists distinguish denotative and significative elements of meaning as constants. From this position, a signifier is the relation of a word to a concept, a generalized group of homogeneous objects, and a denotation is the relation of a word to a designated object in a specific speech situation. Each of these elements is the realization of the corresponding aspects of lexical meaning: the signifier – generalizing, abstracting; the denotation – subject, situational. The unity of the denotation (subjective) and the signification (objective, related to the concept) constitutes the signified.

Along with the conceptual (signification) and subject (denotation) elements of meaning, the pragmatic one is distinguished, which is detected due to the implementation of the communicative function by the language. Aimed at the implementation of the speaker's pragmatic attitudes is another important component of lexical meaning – connotation, the place of which in the semantic structure of the word among linguists is still being debated. The composition of the connotative element has not been fully defined, the full set of pragmatic attitudes that are reflected in it has not been clarified. In addition, semantic and pragmatic components often do not exist in isolation in a language sign and cannot be clearly distinguished from each other.

When they talk about the lexical meaning, first of all they mean a set of semes enclosed in the signified of a linguistic sign. The connotation is characterized as an optional, additional

element of meaning that complements the conceptual content and gives the word an expressive function. It seems that the connotation includes all the additional (emotive and expressive) shades of lexical meaning, which are realized, as a rule, in a specific speech situation and are beyond the limit of the meaning itself, that is, not included in either its denotative or its significative component.

Traditionally, along with the expressive and emotional elements of the connotation, an evaluative one is also distinguished. But is the assessment of the designated object or phenomenon of reality always concentrated exclusively in the connotation? This point of view is held by many researchers who consider the expression of the speaker's attitude to the so-called subject exclusively as an "overtone", "hidden meaning", part of a connotative element.

D. N. Shmelev suggests not to consider the connotative element as a single emotional-expressive-evaluative complex, but to divide it into components, according to the principle of entering / not entering into the structure of meaning [16]. The "incoming" component should characterize the attitude to the designated subject, and this is a specific feature of evaluation. But if evaluativeness is included in the structure of meaning as a separate sense, it is no longer "coloring", not additional "meanings".

A number of authors note the convergence of the elements traditionally distinguished in the connotation with the actual meaning of the word, and assigns these elements a significant place in semantics: "Since feelings, emotions are a form of reflection of reality and are closely related to human mental activity, they cannot but play an important role in changing the meanings of words" [9, p. 6]; "Emotional-evaluative imagery has, although indirect, but cognitive relevance, and therefore it is not necessarily connotative, that is, additional, secondary in the semantic structure of the vocabulary sign" [15, p. 30]. Evaluation and emotionality, from this point of view, play an important role in the actual lexical meaning.

As we can see, there is an ambiguity of approaches to the concept of "connotation" in the linguistic literature. Obviously, the reason for the ambiguous approach to the definition of connotation, apparently, is that the differentiation of the evaluative and emotional components proper is very difficult, since they usually act together and are connected within the meaning.

From our point of view, we should focus on the approach outlined by D. N. Shmelev. The solution is to include the evaluative component, traditionally related to the connotation, in the structure of the lexical meaning proper. A similar position is held by S. S. Khidekel and G. G. Koshel, who put forward the thesis that "the evaluative component acts as a mandatory semantic component of the meaning of the word" [13, p. 8]. That is, scientists talk about evaluativeness as a permanent element of semantics. Moreover, according to different evaluation grounds, three types of evaluation components are distinguished: intellectual-logical (the properties are

objectively inherent in the referent), emotional (the attributed properties are objectively not inherent in the referent), emotional-intellectual (rationality and emotions coexist in organic unity).

The identification of such types is also based on psychological and logical approaches to assessment, which has a twofold, emotional and intellectual nature.

The idea of distinguishing evaluativeness as the main, rather than an additional, connotative element of meaning, was developed and scientifically substantiated in the works of V. I. Shakhovsky. The author believes that the evaluative and expressive components are not actually connotative, they are components of denotation. The semantic core of connotation is the emotive component, and emotion, according to V. I. Shakhovsky, is always both evaluative and expressive.

Thus, unlike emotion, evaluation can have its own referent, that is, it can find an objective reflection in the reality perceived by native speakers, in turn, expression is an expression of the degree of intensity of the sign indicated by the word and therefore it enters into the structure of the meaning itself, and is not part of the connotation, which in this case is a coded emotion of the speaker. The evaluative component of the meaning, as well as the expressive one, qualifies as objectively logical, part of the structure of the signified.

According to V. N. Telia, very often an assessment, itself included in the denotative macro component of meaning, is accompanied by various emotional connotations. Moreover, "connotation in ontogenesis" is preceded by "evaluative semantics of language units". That is, from this point of view, evaluativeness initially arises in a person's mind (in this case, subjective), and only then, when it is expressed, it acquires certain emotional connotations. In reality, it can be very difficult to determine what was primary at the time of a particular emotive nomination – the desire to express an assessment of the object of speech or the emotions caused by it. The evaluative value is "information containing information about the value attitude of the subject of speech to a certain property of the designated, highlighted in relation to one or another aspect of the consideration of some object" [11, p. 54]. Two important points are reflected in this definition. Firstly, the evaluative component of meaning is considered here as closely related to certain properties of the subject already reflected in the semantic structure of the word; secondly, the potential mobility of evaluativeness is stipulated, that is, the possibility of its essential variation depending on the pragmatic attitudes of an individual or the whole society united by a single linguistic and cultural space.

If we agree that evaluativeness can be expressed with a zero indicator, then it can be argued that in the structure of a linguistic sign, the evaluative component of the meaning is mandatory (positive, negative or neutral evaluation of the signified). Intellectual, logical

evaluation is not an optional, additional element of semantics. Here, the assessment is concentrated in the signifier (a generalized representation of the feature included in the concept). Such evaluation is an integral component of semantics, does not depend on a specific speech situation, is fixed in the language system. The paradigmaticity of the evaluation component is confirmed by the fact that such an assessment has its own referent, that is, it finds an objective reflection in the reality perceived by native speakers, is logically justified. In contrast to objective evaluation, subjective, emotional expression of attitude to the designated object is not included in the signified and is a constituent element of connotation.

Emotive connotative elements are beyond the meaning proper, and their occurrence, on the one hand, is due to the specific use of the word (for example, in metaphorization), on the other hand, is in close relationship with the denotative and significative components of the meaning, since any figurative word usage is based on the inner form of the word, and it is the signified of the generating basis.

Logical objective evaluation, from our point of view, is always present in the meaning. It is part of the significative component of the meaning, connected with the concept. Opponents of this approach may say that the assessment of a particular subject, a phenomenon of the surrounding reality as good or bad is not part of this subject, phenomenon itself. And if so, then all that is "over" are connotations, insignificant additions. However, the meaning is neither exclusively an equivalent of the concept, nor a description of the physical, external features of the denoted; its components can be the most abstract signs, including good / bad. These signs can be very important, often the main ones, for distinguishing synonyms. And even if they (these synonyms) are called stylistic, the essence does not change.

The emergence of emotivity and expressiveness is most often due to the need for a certain evaluation nomination, that is, evaluation, as a rule, is primary in relation to the appearance of connotations. It is a logical component of the signification, superimposed on the direct, objective semantics.

Objective assessment characterizes the real features of objects, it is denotative (in a broad sense). Subjective evaluation, as a rule, is enclosed in a sign that is used for secondary nomination, and the content of the denotation in this case loses its concreteness, narrows. For example, we can consider the word hat in the meaning of 'clumsy'. Here the denotation is blurred, but the signification is concretized due to the actualization of peripheral senses of evaluativeness. In this case, the nomination is largely determined not by real reality, but by the internal form of a new meaning, various kinds of cultural associations that have led to a shift in semantics. And this, in many ways, is the specificity of the secondary nomination, in which the nominative units already existing in the language are taken as the generating basis. The new

meaning, especially in the first stages of its existence, has more abstraction, it is more significant.

Regardless of whether the assessment is rational or emotional, its motive (the observed properties of the object, the facts related to the object, the attitude to the goal, etc.) always has an objective character. N. D. Arutyunova believes that "the evaluative value is due to the actual properties of the object to the extent that it is motivated by them" [3, p. 57]. Between the evaluation motive and the evaluation itself is a person who, in order to evaluate an object, "passes" it through himself. In such a situation, there is no need to talk about the strict logic of evaluation, but, as already noted, its motive is always objective, which indicates its importance in the structure of the lexical meaning of nominative units. Evaluation, strictly speaking, is not inherent in the subjects themselves. It is an expression of the relation of the subject of speech to its object. This attitude, evaluativeness "materializes" in the language, entering as a special component into the lexical meaning of the language unit – as a component of the significative (correlates with the general idea of the class to which the so-called subject belongs) the sides of the language sign.

Thus, it is more rational to assume that the evaluation component is not homogeneous. Objective evaluativeness is included in the lexical meaning and is reflected in its significative side. The positive / negative attitude of native speakers to the designated phenomena is fixed in dictionary definitions: by means of special droppings (e.g., high, disapproving, unich., etc.) or by means of proper evaluative words in interpretation ("good", "bad", "excellent", "disgusting", adverbs correlated with them, etc. – for example, they can be found in the interpretations of the words intelligible, stink, misfortune, etc.). And there is no need to talk here about evaluation as a connotation.

Evaluativeness can be complicated by emotivity, which, as a rule, is an additional element of meaning, located outside the signified language sign. In this case, evaluativeness is subjective, enters into connotation and is beyond the proper lexical meaning. Expressiveness, as an indicator of the intensity of expression in the meaning of a feature, is closer to logical evaluativeness, since most often it acts as a kind of intensifier of the evaluative component. Intensity is also often justified by real signs of objects, so the question remains debatable about the possibility of its intersection with the signified, that is, whether it interacts with the denotation and the signifier as closely as the evaluative component of the connotation.

Evaluation can be initially, at the primary nomination, embedded in the lexical meaning, being only a secondary seme in its structure, and subsequently becoming one of the main ones. As well as with its "zero" expression or subjectivity, occasionality, it can become active and gain a foothold in the meaning as objective.

It is quite obvious that the new component of semantics complicates its semantic structure of the word, sometimes changes its stylistic characteristics. This process is gradual: at first, the new semantic component is not regular and can be realized only in certain contextual conditions, but later in a number of words this component is fixed in the semantic structure of the word and determines its meaning.

So, evaluativeness is a component of the signifier, it does not seem appropriate to refer it to connotative elements of semantics. The assessment can be intellectual (objective) or emotional (subjective), fixed in dictionaries or not (emotional assessment, as a rule, is not fixed by dictionaries, since it depends on a specific speech situation, context). Finally, it can change in one direction or another, and then these processes are included in the range of different types of changes in the semantic structure of the word.

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