SOME PECULIARITIES OF LEXICO-GRAMMATICAL HOMONYMY

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Annotation. This article studies characteristic features of homonymy in contemporary English and Uzbek. It clarifies some peculiarities of lexico-grammatical homonymy in two languages.

Key words: word, grammatical meaning, singular, homonymy, meaning.

Homonyms may be also classified by the type of meaning into lexical, lexico-grammatical and grammatical homonyms.

In seal n and seal n, for example, the part-of-speech meaning of the word and the grammatical meanings of all its forms are identical. (seal [si:l] Common Case Singular, seal's [si:lz] Possessive Case Singular for both seal 1 and seal 2). The difference is confined to lexical meaning only or, to be more exact, to the denotational component: seal denotes 'a sea animal', 'the fur of this animal', etc., seal 2--'a design printed on paper, the stamp by which the design is made', etc. So we can say that seal 2 and seal are lexical homonyms as they differ in lexical meaning. [1]

If we compare seal --'a sea animal' and (to) seal 3--'to close tightly', we shall observe not only a difference in the lexical meaning of their homonymous word forms, but a difference in their grammatical meanings as well. Identical sound forms, seals [si:lz] (Common Case Plural of the noun) and (he) seals [si:lz] (third person Singular of the (verb) possess each of them different grammatical meanings. As both grammatical and lexical meanings differ we describe these homonymous word-forms as lexico-grammatical homonymy.

Lexico-grammatical homonymy generally implies that the homonyms in question belong to different parts of speech as the part-of-speech meaning is a blend of the lexical and grammatical semantic components. There may be cases however when lexico-grammatical homonymy is observed within the same part of speech as in the verbs (to) find [faind] and (to) found [faund], where homonymic word-forms: found [faund] – Past Tense of (to) find and found [faund] – Present Tense of (to) found differ both grammatically and lexically. [2]

All homonyms may be described on the basis of the two criteria--homonymy of all forms of the word or only some of the word-forms and the type of meaning in which homonymous words or word-forms differ.

So we speak of full lexical homonymy of seen and seal 2 n, of partial lexical homonymy of live and leave, and of partial lexico-grammatical homonymy of seen and seal 3. It should be pointed out that in the some classification discussed above one of Peculiarities the groups, namely lexico-grammatical of Lexico-Grammatical homonymy, is not homogeneous. This can be seen by analyzing the relationship between two pairs of lexico-grammatical homonyms, for example,

1. seal a sea animal'--seal 3 v--'to close tightly as with a seal;

2. seal 2 n--'a piece of wax, lead'--seal 3 v--'to close tightly as with a seal'.

We can see that seal n and seal 3 v actually differ in both grammatical and lexical meanings. We cannot establish any semantic connection between the meaning «a sea animal" and "to close tightly".

The lexical meanings of seal 2 n and seal 3 v are apprehended by speakers as closely related for both the noun and the verb denote something connected with "a piece of wax, lead, etc., a stamp by means of which a design is printed on paper and paper envelopes are tightly closed".

Consequently, the pair seal 3 n - seal 3 v does not answer the description of homonyms as words or word-forms that sound alike but differ in lexical meaning. This is true of a number of other cases of lexico-grammatical homonymy, for example, work

n-(to) work (v); paper (n)-(to) paper (v); love (n)-(to) love v and so on. As a matter of fact all homonyms arising from conversion have related meanings. [3]

It is sometimes argued that as a rule the whole of the semantic structure of such words is not identical. The noun paper, for example, has at least five meanings (1. material in the form of sheets, 2. a newspaper, 3. a document, 4. an essay, 5. a set of printed examination questions) whereas the verb paper possesses but one meaning "to cover with wall-paper". It follows that the whole of the semantic structure of the two words is essentially different, though individual meanings are related.

Considering this peculiarity of lexico-grammatical homonyms we may subdivide them into two groups: A. identical in sound-form but different in their grammatical and lexical meanings (seal n-seal v), and B. identical in sound-form but different in their grammatical meanings and partly different in their lexical meaning, partly different in their semantic structure (seal v; paper n-(to) paper v).

Thus the definition of homonyms as words possessing identical sound-form but different semantic structure seems to be more exact as it allows of a better understanding of complex cases of homonymy, for example, seal n--seal n--seal v – seal v which can be analyzed into homonymic pairs, for example, seal n-seal n lexical homonyms; seal n-seal v-lexico-grammatical homonyms, subgroup A; seals n—seal v – lexico-grammatical homonyms, subgroup B; etc.

In the discussion of the problem of graphic homonymy we proceeded from the as possessing both sound-form and meaning, and we deliberately disregarded their graphic form. Some linguists, however, argue that the graphic form of words in Modern English is just as important as their sound-form and should be taken into consideration in the analysis and classification of homonyms. [4]

Consequently they proceed from the definition of homonyms as words identical in sound-form or spelling but different in meaning. It follows that in their classification of homonyms all the three aspects: sound-form, graphic-form and meaning are taken into account. Accordingly they classify homonyms into homographs, homophones and perfect homonyms.

Homographs are words identical in spelling, but different both in their sound-form and meaning, for example, bow n [bou] - 'a piece of wood curved by a string and used for shooting arrows' and bow n (bail--'the bending of the head or body'; tear n [tia]--'a drop of water that comes from the eye' and tear v [teə]--'to pull apart by force'.

Homophones are words identical in sound-form but different both in spelling and in meaning, for example, sea n and see v; son n and sun n.

Perfect homonyms are words identical both in spelling and in sound-form but different in meaning, case in something that has happened' and case n--'a box, a container'. It may be readily observed that in this approach no distinction is made between homonymous words and homonymous word-forms or between full and partial homonymy. The description of various types of sources homonyms in Modern English word of homonymy incomplete if we did flat give flat brief outline of the diachronic processes that account for their appearance.

Convergent sound development is the most potent factor in the creation of homonyms. The great majority of homonyms arise as a result of converging sound development which leads to the coincidence of two or more words which were phonetically distinct at an AA earlier date.

For example: Old English I can be Old English cage have become identical in pronunciation (Modern English I [ai] and eye [ai], A number of lexico grammatical homonyms appeared as a result of convergent sound development of the verb and the noun (compare Modern English love--(to) love and OE. lufu- lufian). Homonymy exists in many languages, but in English it is particularly frequent, especially among monosyllabic words. In the list of 2540 homonyms given in the Oxford English Dictionary 89% are monosyllabic words and only 9,1% are words of two syllables. From the viewpoint of their morphological structure, they are mostly one-morpheme words. [5]

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