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SEMANTICS AND SYNTAX OF PREDICATES OF GRATIFICATION IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH AND POLISH

Semantyka i składnia predykatów gratyfikacji we współczesnym języku angielskim i polskim

Summary

This PhD project is part of the dynamically growing contrastive, corpus-based research on the semantics and syntax of lexical units (mainly verbs) including their lexicographic description. The analysis is based on descriptive and functional linguistics. More specifically, the methodological framework of the dissertation is founded on the assumptions of the Polish school of semantic syntax and its extended model ─ explicative syntax. Nevertheless, the issues investigated in this research are also largely connected with applied linguistics, mainly corpus linguistics and lexicography, including comparative analysis (Polish-English).

The aim of the research is to study the relationship between the semantic plane and the formal-grammatical plane of verbal predicates, with an emphasis on syntactic structures founded on the Polish verbs *NAGRODZIĆ/NAGRADZAĆ*, *WYNAGRODZIĆ/WYNAGRADZAĆ* and the English verbs: *REWARD* and *AWARD*.

In line with the adopted framework of explicative syntax, the examined formal-grammatical structures of simple and complex clauses in English and Polish are treated as forms of representation (explication) of basic, foundational semantic structures (propositional, predicate-argument structures). Pertaining to predicates of gratification, the following propositional structure *P* (*x*, *y*, *p*, *q*) is considered as the foundation (*tertium comparationis*), in which *P* stands for a predicate and (*x*, *y*, *p*, *q*) ─ refer to object and propositional arguments. Each argument manifests particular meaning of a semantic function (indicating the role of a participant in a referential situation): Agent, Beneficiary, Response Action and Cause.

The empirical evidence for the present study is derived from the analysis of sentence structures excerpted from various sources: the Corpus of Contemporary American English

(about 600 units); the National Corpus of Polish (NKJP) (about 800 units) as well as selected dictionaries (e.g. specialist — syntactic, valence) — in total about 1600 sentences, including texts of different genres: artistic, journalistic, colloquial, academic etc., which were accessible in printed or electronic form.

The work consists of two parts: the theoretical and the analytical. The theoretical presentation (Chapter 1) focuses on the key terminology, such as the notion of proposition, valence, predicate-argument structure, adjunct, diathesis, explicative patterns, etc. The system of annotating propositional and explicative structures which forms the basis for the empirical analysis carried out in the next two chapters is also presented here. The second chapter concentrates on the task of defining the predicates of gratification with an emphasis on the content of particular argument positions. This is preceded by a lexicographic analysis of selected specialist dictionaries such as the American computational, lexicographic project FrameNet and the valence dictionary of Polish — Walenty.

The third chapter reports on the research findings with respect to explicative structures noted in English and Polish sentences including the verbal exponent of the predicate *REWARD*. Different types of diathesis observed in English and Polish are presented. Much attention is devoted to describing the realization of propositional arguments. What is more, this chapter illustrates the predominant explicative patterns recorded for gratification predicates including detailed data on the number of occurrences and their exemplification.

The empirical part of the dissertation ends with some conclusions of a general nature, pertaining, amongst others, to the asymmetry between the conceptual level and the formal realizations of assumed ontological categories, in particular, the phenomena of agency and causality. Qualitative results, on the one hand, emphasize e.g. the noncanonicality of some types of realization of propositional elements (e.g. adjectival or adverbial). Quantitative analysis, on the other hand, exhibits frequency properties of particular explicative patterns, especially the dominating character of the processes of nominalization and condensation.