



Концептуально-таксономический анализ времени в английском языке

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Conceptual-Taxonomical Analysis of Time in the English Language

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Аннотация

Статья посвящена особенностям концептуализации и категоризации времени в английском языке, которые рассматриваются при помощи концептуально-таксономического анализа. Данный анализ позволяет рассмотреть особенности восприятия времени на трех уровнях: базовом, суперординатном и субординатном.

Abstract

In this paper, we state that conceptual-taxonomical analysis allows to carry out a profound time analysis. Three levels of categorization are examined: 1. Base level that is the starting point of the analysis, level of prototypes: lexical, grammatical, linguocognitive and conceptual; 2. Upper superordinate level that presents the concept of time in general, taken as a unity, gestalt in its broad sense; 3. Subordinate level of specification that reveals secondary spatial, metaphorical and metonymical linguocognitive models of time.

Ключевые слова: время, категоризация, концептуально-таксономический анализ.

Keywords: time, categorization, conceptual-taxonomical analysis.

(1) The notion of time exists in all languages and cultures. It is an essential phenomenon for English speakers. The word time is the most frequent word in English: 719690 examples of contextual usage in Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). To analyze the category of time we choose Conceptual-Taxonomical Analysis (CTA) elaborated by N.N. Boldirev. CTA is a system of methods to scrutinize hierarchally organized linguistic objects along with conceptual hierarchy, i.e. the hierarchy of concepts conveyed with the help of linguistic means. The taxonomy distinguishes three levels of categorization: base (middle) level, superordinate (upper) and subordinate (lower); characteristics and elements of every level are outlined; semantic analysis of language units is carried out;



taxonomical modelling of lexical subsystems is performed [Болдырев, 2014. С. 140–147].

(2) CTA starts with the analysis of the base prototype level of taxonomy. The direction of classification goes up to the superordinate level and generalization and down to the subordinate level and specification. In this paper, we focus mainly on the base level and just enumerate units of the other levels. It appears that two types of conceptualization take place: primary and secondary nomination [Болдырев, Магировская, 2009. С. 7–16]. Primary nomination is represented by the system of tense-aspect forms of the verbs. These grammatical prototypes provide general structure and generate conceptual meanings. They represent language models for configuration of knowledge. The dominating type for English is the usage of the tense-aspect forms in the Active Voice. We suppose that a person in English speaking social environment is posed as an active doer. Language data prove our claim. To begin with, we note that the number of tense-aspect forms of the active voice is bigger than of the passive (there are 12 active forms and 8 passive). Further more, only transitive verbs are used in the passive, while some of them still can't form the passive, e.g., *have*, *suit* and some others. Additional evidence is provided by the corpus. We choose the third person singular forms in the active (V3SG) and passive voice (VP3SG) for modelling. The salient factor is verification of the data. To solve the problem we propose to select five most frequent transitive verbs like *say*, *do*, *make*, *take*, and *know*. The results are the following: *say*: V3SG – 643594, VP3SG – 4502; *do*: V3SG – 420505, VP3SG – 5525; *make*: V3SG – 126736, VP3SG – 8254; *take*: V3SG – 82777, VP3SG – 2623; *know*: V3SG – 64704, VP3SG – 8048. The data validate the

claim that the usage of the active voice forms is the representation of time conceptualized as a secondary phenomenon comparing to a man having the leading position.

(3) Next, we claim that secondary nomination is represented lexically via «simple» temporal lexemes, which are gestalts that can collocate extensively. They are morphologically simple, stylistically neutral, can be used in the definitions of the lower level, e.g., *period*, *day*, *tense*, *today*, *now*, *present*, etc. Such units are revealed through definition, etymological, component analysis. This level comprises **primary spatial linguocognitive models** (LCM). The theoretical background is the theory of idealized cognitive models by G.Lakoff [Lakoff, 1990. Pp. 68–76] and theory of cognitive models by V.Evans [Evans, 2004. P. 223]. We propose that LC Misacognitive model representing generalized level of conceptual organization and reflecting a certain set of lexical concepts and their embodiment along with language means of their representation. Primary spatial LCMs are the following: (a) Spatial: entity, part-whole, cycle model: circle and spiral; line, pecked line, vector, segment, dot [Маховикова, 2012. С. 5]. (b) Axial: writing arranged from left to right and horizontally influences the time laying out; spatiallinguocognitive models place the past events behind the observer and the future events in the front (e.g., behind; in front of/ahead of). The COCA provides the following results: behind – 177 examples of contextual usage, ahead – 48. The results allow us to state that while conceptualizing time English speakers put emphasis on the previous experience and past events since these events are familiar to the observer, whereas the future is unknown and unpredictable. (c) Duration represented with the help of linear distance (e.g., a



short time, a long time) [Бородицки, 2015. С. 201–206]. The corpus provides the following results: a short time – 3650 examples, a long time – 28630. Furthermore, the duration is represented by the verbs denoting duration, e.g., *to last*, that is the prominent element of the Duration Sense concept. Collocations with this verb and lexemes *short/long* demonstrate that the emphasis is placed on the longer periods. These results prove that English speakers conceptualize time duration as an event that lasts longer rather than shorter. It can be explained by the fact that a great amount of the incoming information is new knowledge that makes the brain perform new tasks, construct new neuron circuits and requires the usage of a greater amount of energy for its processing. It is subjectively perceived as protracted. Supplementary to the described elements, the primary concepts of time are revealed: the Duration Sense, the Moment Sense, the Instant Sense, the Event Sense along with the concepts of the present, past and future [Evans, 2004. Pp. 107–140; 185–200].

(4) The subordinate level of specification allows to work out specific cases of time categorization. Such cases primarily include secondary temporal concepts: Matrix Sense; Agentive Sense; Measurement-system Sense; Commodity Sense and concepts like Christmas, Graduation, Summer, Her Prime, etc. [Evans, 2004. Pp. 141–184]. Next, secondary spatial-motion LCMs are presented: the Complex Moving Time model; the Complex Moving Ego model; the Complex Temporal Sequence model [Evans, 2004. Pp. 211–236]. Metaphorical and metonymical LCMs are analyzed.

(5) The prominent element of the upper super ordinate level is the concept of time taken as a unity, gestalt in its broad sense.

(6) Results presented in this paper allow us to claim that CTA contributes to the systematizing of a broad range of time knowledge. Such a taxonomy and three-level organization of categorization and conceptualization help to put emphasis on the certain time characteristics to understand the peculiarities of English speakers' time perception.

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