

THE STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT OF SEMANTICS AS A LINGUISTIC DISCIPLINE

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Abstract:

This article discusses the origin and development of the semantics as an independent linguistic field conducted by foreign and Uzbek scholars. It also deals with general analysis of linguistic works related to the semantics which studies the framework of the development of meaning, fundamental studies, broad study of semasiology in a certain languages. Furthermore, it is analyzed the views about semantics and semasiology as a linguistic term.

Keywords: semantics, semasiology, lexical meaning, synonymy, polysemy, sense, definition, science, lexical unit.

INTRODUCTION

Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies the semantic meaning of language units. Semantic analysis is used as a learning tool. At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, semantics was also often called semasiology. Scientists who study semantics are still commonly referred to as semasiologists. Also, "semantics" can mean the very range of meanings of a certain class of linguistic units.

MATERIALS

The term "semantics" was first introduced into linguistics in 1897 by the famous French linguist M.Breal.¹ Although the term semantics was used in linguistics before the term semasiology, the first works were written on semasiology. It is known that the term semasiology is used in two different senses. In the first sense, this is a field that studies the meaning of linguistic units and is synonymous with the term semantics. V.G.Sudilovskaya agrees with this opinion and argues that "Semantics is an absolute synonym for the word semasiology".² In the second sense, he names the branch of lexical semantics. For this reason, many linguists call the field that studies the meaning of linguistic units not semasiology, but semantics. The term "semasiology" was first used by K.Reisig in 1939 and given that the term "semasiology" was later used in linguistics to refer to the field that studies the meaning of "semantics" as well as the branch of lexicology, the field that studies the meaning of linguistic units should be called semantics, not semasiology.

The first book devoted to semasiology in world linguistics, entitled "Introduction to the Theory of Meaning", was created by the German linguist H.Sperber in 1923. Although this work does not fully cover the field of semasiology, it cannot be denied that it is a valuable source from the point of view that time. Commenting on the work, M.Mirtodjiev says: "It was a book that sheds light on the stated points of view regarding the development and types of meaning, the types of words in terms of the number of meanings and categories of meaning in the case of that period".³ The book "Handbook of Semasiology" written after him, was created by the German linguist H.Kronasser, in which the field of semasiology was studied only within the framework of the development of meaning. The difference

between this book and the first work “Introduction to the Theory of Meaning” was that the author paid attention to polysemy and synonymy. Shortly after the creation of this work, in 1957, the German linguist K.Baldinger published a book called “Semasiology”. In addition to scientific research carried out in the framework of the development of the meaning of the word, the phenomenon of polysemy is widely covered in the work.

Also by 1972, T.Shippan’s book entitled “Introduction to Semasiology” was published, in which the semasiology of the German language was covered in a much broader sense. By that time, the work was perfect. But this cannot be said from the scientific point of view of the present time. In the work, the author gave a scientific interpretation of the place of the word in the language, the relationship between the word and lexeme, lexical meaning and sememe. But the semantic analysis of meaning, the analysis of polysemantic words, has not been fully elucidated.

After a short break, in 1998, M.Philip’s monograph “The Semantics of the German Language” was published. This work contains detailed information about the word seme. In addition, the achievements of German linguistics are discussed. It is known that semasiology is an absolute synonym for semantics as a field that studies the meaning of language units. It is enough to understand them from the definition given in the dictionaries: “Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies the semantic side of various linguistic units; semasiology”.⁴ However, the linguist M.Mirtodjiev, sharing his thoughts on the monograph, writes: “We should not forget that this work was created not in a semasiological, but in a semantic field. Since valence reveals the semantic connection of words, it is not a purely semantic phenomenon. In this work, on the contrary, conversion, derivation, etc. took place. They have no place in semasiology”.

It can be seen above that German linguistics was one of the first to make significant progress in this area, but scientific views, innovations and achievements in the field of semasiology remained limited within this language. Unlike German linguistics, the first work of V.A.Zvyagintsev in Russian linguistics under the title “Semasiology” was not the semasiology of the Russian language, but semasiology in general. Also, the works of D.N.Shmelev, L.A.Novikov, B.A.Plotnikov, devoted to semasiology, helped to solve problems that have not yet been resolved in this area.

In 1951, S.Ullman created the first “Fundamentals of Semantics” in the field of semantics of English linguistics with his scientific views, and then in 1962 he created the book “Semantics: An Introduction to the Science of Meaning”. These works became the real foundation of the semantics of the English language. It served as a guide for the works created after that. For example, J.Lyons, fully approving the scientific views of his colleague, wrote the work “Semantics” in 1977 and supplemented it with his scientific views on the semantic structure of lexical meaning.

In the field of semantics, not all scientists conducted research in one direction. For example, V.A.Zvyagintsev focused his research on diachronic semantics, and H.Kronasser and S.Ullman in their first book try to combine different concepts of semantics and present a holistic picture of modern science. In his second book, S.Ullman mainly talks about linguistic synchronic semantics.

Due to the rapid development of this linguistic sphere, despite the fact that many theoretical chapters of generalizing works have lost their relevance, all of the works which given above are still of great interest to researchers.

By the 21st century, scientific views in this field have expanded and many works on semantics have been created in world linguistics. They were enriched with additional classifications, new

scientific views. For example, M.A.Krongauz notes that, despite the fact that the term semasiology is used in a narrow sense, it remains in scientific use. It should also be said that in the 19th and early 20th centuries, semantics or semasiology was considered only as a diachronic science. His main task was to study the change and development of the meaning of individual words. Modern semantics is almost a synchronous science.

Reference books have also appeared in recent years. Some of them are entirely devoted to semantics, others devote an important place to the discussion of semantic problems. For example, in 1991, in the HSK series (Handbücher zur Sprach – und Kommunikationswissenschaft), a reference book “Semantics” was published with a volume of almost a thousand pages.

Several books on semasiology such as the works of academician A.Khodjiev, professors M.Mirtodjiev, Sh.Safarov have been published in Uzbek linguistics.

Uzbek linguist Professor Sh.Safarov, before giving a clear definition of semantics in his book “Semantics”, wrote to M.Breal: I want to define the main directions of a field that has not yet been studied and should be formed as a result of the work of many generations of linguistics, give a general description of its parts and draw up a preliminary plan. Therefore, I ask my reader to accept this book as an introduction to the science that I propose to call “Semantics”.⁵ There are several reasons for this “stagnation”. First, scientists, following M.Breal, looked at semantics as a science that deals with the fate of the emergence and change in the meaning of words and phrases. Secondly, semantics is still predominantly the science of lexical meaning, and its attention is drawn to such phenomena as the polysemy of words, antonymy, synonym relations, homonymous series, valence possibilities. But these events are beyond the scope of the study of lexical semantics, as are the events called by such names as “expansion”, “narrowing”, “strengthening”, “weakening”, “smoothing”, “coarseness” when studying the stages of change and shifts in the meaning of lexical units remains the source.

CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that the scope of the study of the content layer of the language is expanding and growing, there is no clear idea about the object of study of the science of semantics. We even see that the definitions given to him in books on the semantics of some well-known linguists are uncertain. For instance, in the two-volume book “Semantics” by one of the largest linguists in the world, J.Lyons, the author proposes to conditionally define semantics as “the science of meaning”. The reason for this is primarily that the category of meaning itself needs to be clarified. In addition, it is important to note that, despite the publication of a number of articles on this issue, there are still unresolved questions.

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