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СУЧАВСЬКИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ  
ІМ. ШТЕФАНА ЧЕЛ МАРЕ

# АКТУАЛЬНІ ПИТАННЯ СУСПІЛЬНИХ НАУК ТА ІСТОРІЇ МЕДИЦИНИ

AKTUALINI PYTANNIA SUSPILINIH  
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CURRENT ISSUES OF SOCIAL  
STUDIES AND HISTORY OF  
MEDICINE

АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ ВОПРОСЫ  
ОБЩЕСТВЕННЫХ НАУК  
И ИСТОРИИ МЕДИЦИНЫ

ENJEUX ACTUELS DES SCIENCES  
SOCIALES ET DE L'HISTOIRE DE  
LA MEDECINE

Спільний українсько-румунський науковий журнал  
Joint Ukrainian-Romanian scientific journal

2022, 1 (33)

*Журнал засновано в 2013 р.  
Перереєстровано 27.07.2015 р. у Міністерстві  
юстиції України (Свід. № 21495-11295ПП – Сер. КВ)*

*Journal started publishing in 2013 year.  
Re-registered in the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine  
27.07.2015 p (Cert.of registr. № 21495-11295ПП – Ser. KB)*

*Журнал включено до Категорії "Б" Переліку  
наукових фахових видань України з історичних  
та філологічних наук (Наказ МОН України № 409  
від 17.03.2020р.).*

*Journal is on the List of Scientific Professional publication  
of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine  
Category «B», entitled to publish main results of  
dissertations in different fields of Historical sciences and  
Philological sciences (order № 409 of 17.03.2020)*

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INDEXING: Index Copernicus – 73,78 (2016) | Infobase Index – 2,8 (2016) | MIAR – 2,8 (2016) | SRJIF – 3,98 (2017) | JICIndex – 0,110 (2017) | SJIF – 5,952 (2020)

*Journal was registered in the international scientometric and bibliographical database Index Copernicus, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Ulrichs Web, Erih Plus, Scientific Indexing Services, Index of Turkish Education, Infobase Index, World Cat, DRJI, MIAR, Root indexing, has published in database: Google Scholar, SCIARY (World Wide Science Educational Library), Scientific periodicals of Ukraine, Central and Eastern European Online Library (Germany), e-library.*

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**Актуальні питання суспільних наук та історії медицини. Спільний українсько-румунський науковий журнал. Серія “Історичні та філологічні науки” || Current issues of Social studies and History of Medicine. Joint Ukrainian-Romanian scientific journal. Series “Historical and philological sciences”/ Редколегія: А. Мойсей, Ш. Пуріч. Чернівці–Сучава: БДМУ. 2022. №1 (33). 163 с.**

ISSN: 2311-9896; EISSN 2411-6181

The actual problems of world history, history of Ukraine, history of religion, ethnogenesis and traditional culture of peoples, archeology, philosophy, linguistics, literature and history of medicine are investigated in the journal. The journal is the international edition according to the sphere of extension and geography of the authors.

ББК 60я53+5г.я43

*The journal is published in paper and electronic version with the resolution of the academic council of Higher State Educational Establishment of Ukraine "Bukovinian State Medical University" (Decision № 10. Date: 26.05.2022).*

The authors are responsible for the selection, accuracy of given information, citations, proper names, geographical names and other data.

Publishing: 2-4 issues a year. Languages: Ukrainian, Russian, English, French.

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*The electronic version of the journal is available on the Web sites: <http://apsnim.bsmu.edu.ua>; <http://doaj.org> (DOAJ); <http://www.irbis-nbuv.gov.ua> (National V. Vernadskij library web-site); <http://e-apsnim.bsmu.edu.ua> (OJS); <https://journals.indexcopernicus.com/representative/issue/list> (Copernicus ICI).*

**ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ АСПЕКТИ КОМПАРАТИВНОГО СЕМАНТИЧНОГО ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ****Наталія СКРИЦЬКА,**Буковинський державний медичний університет,  
fedorukiv0@mail.ru**THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF COMPARATIVE SEMANTIC RESEARCH****Natalya SKRYTSKA,**Bukovinian State Medical University,  
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**Наталія Скрицька. Теоретичні аспекти компаративного семантичного дослідження.** У сучасних лінгвістичних дослідженнях посилюється увага дослідників до традиційних проблем компаративістики та семантичних досліджень з урахуванням сучасних підходів у взаємовідношенні між поняттям та лексичним значенням слова, зв'язків мови з психічними та логічними явищами тощо. Сучасні семантичні дослідження базуються на розвитку гуманітаризації сучасної наукової парадигми, а також фізичному та психоемоційному стані людини, а саме на вивченні логічної, психологічної та когнітивної людської природи та на вивченні семантики як результату когнітивних процесів. За останні роки було написано значну кількість дисертаційних робіт та монографій, присвячених компаративістиці семантичних досліджень, однак комплексний аналіз її як функціонально-семантичної категорії потребує дослідження глибинного змісту конструкцій порівняльної семантики. **Актуальність** даної проблематики зумовлена необхідністю дослідження компаративності семантичних теорій на основі сучасної наукової парадигми гуманітаризації наукового знання. **Метою** статті є дослідження компаративності семантичного знання на основі теорій українських та зарубіжних учених. **Методи дослідження:** дедуктивний, аналітичний, історичний, порівняльний. **Наукова новизна** полягає у необхідності вивчення теоретичних аспектів компаративності семантичного знання, виходячи із досліджень українських та зарубіжних учених з урахуванням сучасних підходів розвитку семантичної теорії. **Висновки.** У дослідженнях було проаналізовано теоретичні аспекти українських та зарубіжних учених, які працювали в галузі компаративістики семантичного знання та запропоновано нові підходи у вивченні цієї галузі знань у взаємодії з логічними, психологічними та когнітивними чинниками.

**Ключові слова:** семантика, компаративістика, компаративне знання, семантична теорія, лінгвістика.

**Problem statement and its connection with important scientific tasks.** Language is an integral attribute of human existence. It is both a material and spiritual aspect of human life. At the same time, each national language is unique and with its help a person “learns about the world around him, accumulates knowledge about him. Language preserves all intellectual achievements of previous generations, records the experience of predecessors”<sup>1</sup>. According to researchers, language in the life of every nation is a reliable support in its spiritual and material development, as well as a tool for creation culture. Every language is not only a knowledge system, a tool of communication, and a way of thinking and cognition, but, first of all, it is the strongest and most important connection that unites the people into a single whole.

**The urgency** of the problem is determined by the need to study the comparability of semantic theories based on the modern scientific paradigm of the humanization of scientific knowledge.

**The aim** of the article is to study the comparability of semantic knowledge based on the theories of Ukrainian and foreign scientists.

**The following methods were used in the research:** deductive, analytical, historical, and comparative.

**The analysis of the latest research and publications that initiated the solution to the problem.** Well-known Ukrainian researches who have made a significant contribution to the development of semantics as an independent discipline are V. Bogdanov and O. Potebnia. They investigated the internal forms of the word, the reproduction of meaning in

meaning, the etymological connections of semantics and more.

J. Katz, Jerry A. Fodor, Ray S. Jackendoff also worked towards the development of semantic as a science and studied individual semantic components of words and their meanings. Their research ranged from the formal structure of sentence construction to the semantic unit. From the 1970's to the 1980's, comparative linguistics as a separate branch of knowledge began to be formed by generative semantics (George Lakoff, James McCauley, James Bruce Ross), case grammar (Charles Fillmore), and the semantically oriented theory of the proposition of Charles Fillmore.

Among Ukrainian scientists, semantic research was carried out by I. Melchuk, T. Alisova, Yu. Apresian, V. Gak, E. Paducheva, I. Susov, V. Bogdanov, V. Khrakovsky, N. Shredova and others. Scientists of Tver semantic-pragmatic school, combining statistical and dynamic approaches to semantic analysis, obtained quite interested results in describing the semantic structure of the sentence. Well-known Ukrainian scientists in the sphere of linguistic semantics were S. Sukhikh, V. Grigoreva, N. Anisimova, L. Drugova, V. Troyanov, V. Kalmykov, K. Rozova and others. The syntactic structure of a sentence in semantics was studied by N. Shvedova and O. Mukhin; sentence as a propositional component were studied by J. Lakoff, W. Chaif, D. Nielsen, W. Cook, R. Zimek, P. Adamets, V. Bogdanov, T. Alisova, V. Kasevych, V. Gak and others. The possibilities of comparative semantics are explored due to the pragmatic aspect – the purpose of the speaker, the use of linguistic cooperation and so on.

**Laying out of the main research material.** When we

<sup>1</sup> Kochergan M. P. Vstup do movoznavstva [Introduction to Linguistics], Kuiv: Akademiia, 2001, P. 21 [in Ukrainian].

learn a language, it is often difficult to interpret words because of their ambiguity, which is an integral feature of the national languages of the world, including Ukrainian and English. Language systems are reflected all without exception, the sphere of human life, their mentality, culture, and the specifics of human life.

Debate is a feature of ambiguity and may contradict each other. Debate is also manifestation of dissatisfaction, discussions, disputes, arguments, objections, refutations etc. However, it is through debates that conflict situations are resolved, and there is an opportunity for discussion, reflection, disputes, reasoning, and more. Therefore, a comprehensive study of the words denoting *debate* in non-related languages is an urgent and insufficiently solved problem of language science.

Linguistics of the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> century characterized by considerable attention to the study of semantics of words, phrases, and other groups of vocabulary etc. According to Yu. D. Apresian, “the modern epoch of linguistic development is, undoubtedly, the epoch of semantics, the central place of which in the circle of linguistic disciplines directly follow from the fact that human language is the first of all a means of communication, coding and decoding of certain information<sup>2</sup>.”

Semantics, also called semiology, the study of signs and sign-using behavior. It was defined by one of its founders, the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, as the study of “the life of signs within society”<sup>3</sup>. Although the word was used in this sense in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by the English philosopher John Locke, the idea of semantics as an interdisciplinary field of study emerged only in the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries with the independent work of Saussure and the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce.

Peirce’s seminal work in the field was anchored in pragmatism and logic. He defined a sign as “something which stands to somebody for something”<sup>4</sup>, and one of this major contributions to semiotics was the categorization of signs into three main types: a) *an icon* or *iconic signs*, which resembles its referent (such as a road sign for falling rocks). These signs can have their origin as an icon but can evolve to be a symbolic sign. b) *an index* or *indexical signs*, which is associated with its referent. Directional signs like arrows, which point to something other than itself, are indexical signs which refer to something that is understood as related or caused by it. 3) *a symbol* or *symbolic sign*, which is related its referent only by convention (as with words or traffic signals. There are relations between the signifier and signified is cultural. Often a matter of language and typically referring to words, but shapes can fall in this category. For example, the swastika has a very different meaning in Western cultures versus Eastern ones. Peirce also demonstrated that a sign can never have a definite meaning, for the meaning must be continuously qualified.

As an independent discipline, semantics (semasiology) appeared in the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the founders of which are the German scientist K. H. Reisig, M. Breal and the famous Russian scientist M. M. Pokrovsky. At this time linguist are becoming increasingly interested in the study of the semantic side of language. This is due to the loss of interest in descriptive linguistics which only descriptively and fragmentarily explained the semantic meaning of words and ignored any

research in this area. Well-known scientists G. Paul and Breal first began to identify as the subject of analysis of historical changes in the meaning of words.

Thanks to the achievements of structuralists, linguistic semantic first began to develop as structural lexicology and structural lexical semantics. Gradually, the theory of semantic and lexical semantic fields and the method of component analysis of interconnected words, which opposed the oppositional analysis, emerged. This was followed by syntactic semantics, which quickly took the lead in linguistic semantics. All language processes began to develop in dynamics. However, the development of lexical and semantic units was greatly influenced by philosophy, ethno linguistics, ethnography of speech, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, semantic logic, computer science, automatic word processing, artificial intelligence and so on.

The most famous linguist Saussure treated language as a sign-system, and his work in linguistics supplied the concepts and methods that semiotics applied to sign-systems other than language. One such basic semiotic concept is Saussure’s distinction between two inseparable components of a sign: the signifier, which in language is a set of speech sounds or marks on a page, and the signified, which is the concept or idea behind the sign. Scientist also distinguished parole, or actual individual utterances, from langue, the underlying system of conventions that makes such utterances understandable; it is this underlying langue that most interests semioticians.

Saussure’s theories were thus also considered fundamental to structuralism (especially structure linguistics) and to poststructuralism.

It should be said that the problem of studying of the meaning, language, thinking and reality have interested scientists since ancient times, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Almost until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century problems of semantics have been studied in philosophy, grammar, lexicography, logic and rhetoric. At the beginning of its existence, semantics was considered mainly a historical discipline and only in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Under the influence of F. de Saussure’s “Course in General Linguistics” and the works of I. Baudouin de Courtenay, it began to be introduced into the synchronous study of primary living languages and dialects.

Lexical semantics considered the study of semantic etymology and history of individual words or groups of words as its first task, as a result of which there was an interest in compiling etymological and historical dictionaries. Along with traditional lexical semantics, which deals mainly with the study of meanings of individual words or groups of words in the process of their functioning and historical development, its other areas are successfully developing: structural semantics, interpretive semantics, conceptual semantics, communicative semantics, psycholinguistic semantics and others. Successfully developing and comparative historical, comparative (contrastive) and typological semantics (R. Bugadov, V. Gak, S. Katznelson, M. Kochergan, A. Luchic, B. Serebrennikov, V. Yartseva, etc)<sup>5</sup>.

By definition, semiotics is the study of signs. The word “sign” is a part of the word design. It’s here for a reason. Design is the thinking and the making of signs. Every sign we designed, and the meaning we attached to it, is an artificial

<sup>2</sup> Ibidem, P. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Mygalets O.I. Lexyko-semantychna grupa “Konfliktni dii”: systemno-strukturnyi pidhid. Dysertatsiia na zdobuttia nauk. stupeniia kandydatura filolog.nauk [Lexico-semantic group “Conflict Actions”: System-structural Approach. Dissertation for the Degree of Candidate of Philological Sciences], 2018, 46 p. [in Ukrainian]

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>5</sup> Ibidem.

construct. Design comprises two components: *the signifier*, related to the physical appearance of an object – this can be images, words, materials, sounds, tasted, and *the signified*, pertaining to the mental construct of the object, or the connotations of what the signifier implies.

By exploring the semantic relationships between signifiers and the signified, designers can better understand the emotional reactions or interpretations a user may have upon experiencing the design. And develop more effective designs that roots on a subconscious level. To truly leverage the power of semiotics, designers need the awareness of the three types of signs they can design so they know when to use each of them. Semiotics helps designers rearrange their ideas and think differently whilst imaging all other points of view. It helps enhance the meaning that matters – the most important one being that which matters for the user.

In the dictionary of the Ukrainian Language (SUM) semantics is defined as “the meaning of language units – individual words, phrases, constituent parts of the word, etc.”<sup>6</sup>

There is also written that “common in the semantics of all verb information is the expression of a dynamic feature in its relation to the figure and to the object of action”.

In the Dictionary of the English language, First Edition semiotics defines as “the theory and study of signs and symbols, especially as elements of language or other systems of communication, and comprising semantics, syntactics, and pragmatics”<sup>7</sup>.

Modern semantics has tasks like a) the study of the semiotic, psychological, logical, cognitive nature of the meaning of the word; b) distinguishing between meaning and establishing the typology of the meaning of the words; c) determination of the semantic structure and the lexical-semantic variant; d) identification of factors of lexical paradigm and syntagmatics; e) research of metonymy and metaphor in the text; f) revealing the nature of the semantic meaning of words in a sentence and text; g) study of semantics as a result of cognitive processes; h) analysis of the features of individual meanings and their functioning in discourse.

Modern semantics as a science of the 20<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> centuries has received a new plane of development, namely, the humanization of the modern scientific paradigm, at the center of which as human activity and anthropocentrism. Due to the human factor there is a practical assimilation of various processes of external reality. The verbs denoting debate are included in the vocabulary of modern Ukrainian and English. They reflected the process of transmission of dissatisfaction, confrontation, different opinions and views, objections, as well as discussion, reflection, proofs, persuasion, competition in conversation, controversy, self-belief, and so on. The studied lexical units reveal the diversity of existing actions in their temporal and spatial plane.

The words denoting *debate* can be considered as independent language units, a product of the historical development of the studied language systems. The complete vocabulary of modern Ukrainian and English language is an extensive and complex combination of words and lexical-semantic groups formed on the basis of semantic relations between words.

The studied lexical units are characterized by specific semantics and are interconnected by the relations of synonymy, antonymy. Any changes in these relations as a result of various reasons lead to a narrowing or expansion of the lexical semantics of words to denote a dispute, reduce or increase the number of elements, their disintegration or replacement of some words with

others in the lexical-semantic group. Words are not separated from each other, but are grouped into different groups with their direct and opposite meanings. It is important in the study to “identify the internal connections of words within the semantic system of language to determine the structure and specific semantic connections of the last”.

Any theory of natural language semantics requires a theory of word meaning. This is because, on standard assumptions of composition, the meaning of a linguistic expression is a function (in a broad sense) of the meanings of its component words and the way that they are combined. Neither model-theoretic nor cognitive theories are committed to a particular view of word meaning, and this is reflected in the range of approaches represented within the fields. How, precisely, the reference of a term is determined or constrained is left open.

Lexical semantics is an academic discipline concerned with the meaning of words. Lexical semanticists are interested in what words mean, why they mean what they mean, how they are represented in speakers' minds and how they are used in text and discourse. Outside linguistics proper, lexical semantics overlaps with disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, anthropology, computer science and pedagogy. Lexical semantics also provides the foundation for various fields of applied research, such as research in language acquisition and learning, i.e. how we as native speakers and learners of foreign languages acquire lexical knowledge, with computational linguistics, and with lexicography – the art and science of dictionary-making.

Language units having in their lexical meanings both implicit and explicit indications on forms and means of expressing *debate* are taken out from the up-to-date Ukrainian and English explanatory dictionaries (Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language in 11 volumes and the Oxford Learner's Dictionary) by means of sampling data method.

The whole language material chosen from the lexicographical sources helps us to investigate the lexical semantics of the verbs denoting *debate* in Ukrainian and English. We can enrich our vocabulary on the basis of studying the meaning of *debate* from different dictionaries.

**Conclusions.** In research was analyzed the theoretical aspects of Ukrainian and foreign scientists who worked in the field of comparative semantic knowledge and proposed new approaches to the study of this field of knowledge in interaction with logical, psychological, and cognitive factors.

**Скрицька Наталія** – викладачка кафедри суспільних наук та українознавства Буковинського державного медичного університету. Авторка та співавторка монографії, 4 навчально-методичних посібників, 2 довідників з історії України та понад 50 наукових статей і тез. **Наукові інтереси:** історія філософії, метафізика, філософія мови, формальна логіка, історія англійського мовознавства, проблеми соціолінгвістики, соціолінгвістичні основи перекладу.

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Received: 11.05.2022

Advance Access Published: June, 2022

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