

PHILOSOPHICO-LINGUISTIC BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM NOTHING

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A range of sciences and disciplines deal with the problem NOTHING, among them there are philosophy, logics, psychology, linguistics. Each science finds its own background in the existence of the category of nothing, in accordance with the dominating current in the certain academic sphere. At the moment there is a tendency to dedicate researches to the linguistic and philosophical background.

The problem NOTHING was in the center of attention of George Hegel, Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Heidegger and many other famous philosophers and researches in Ukraine and abroad.

The universality of negation finds its reflection in nature, society and human consciousness, that is why there is a wide range of the ways of how to define the category NOTHING. At the present stage of research the tendency is to pay more attention to philosophical and linguistic background of this notions.

Democritus supposed that nothing can emerge out of nothing. The non-existence according to him contains the moment of existence. He even defines spheres of two kinds of NOTHING – the objective NOTHING, containing the moment of existence and the absolute NOTHING.

Hegel who brought the dialectical method to its pinnacle of development, dealt with the problem NOTHING. On a greater scale he declared the interwovenness between NOTHING and SOMETHING, there's no pure NOTHING, there's no pure ABSOLUTE, that's why ABSOLUTE has to include NOTHING [1].

Another wave of attention to the problem NOTHING was arisen by existentialists. Influenced by the works of Martin Heidegger, one of the most prominent figures of the existential philosophy and literature Jean-Paul Sartre in his phenomenological ontology comes to the conclusion, that absence, non-being possess the same existence as presence and being, because the existence is impossible to be determined only by the physical presence, but as a mental category [2], that is why non-existence has its place in the ontological being of the universe and is a part of its existence.

To understand fully the linguistic aspect of the problem NOTHING one needs to pay attention to semantic means of realization of this category in speech. This realization is impossible without defining senses, semantic fields and metasigns of category NOTHING.

Considering the philosophical and logical understanding of opposition, semantic dichotomies being::non-being, present::absent, explicit::implicit, positive::negative, affirmative::negative can be

considered as the extreme elements of the scaling opposition, and all the elements on the scale in between those two, create the bridge from existence to non-existence, from clear to obscure, from knowing to not-knowing.

Semantic field is the biggest paradigmatic unity, it is the “the aggregate of the words characterized by the same semantic features [3] The most stylistically neutral word from a chain, which in our case is NOTHING. The lexemes, that can be included in this semantic field are the metasigns of the category NOTHING.

Among the metasigns of the category NOTHING the most frequent ones are *negation, absence (nothing), non-existence, irreality, lacunarity (lack, shortage), negativism, ban (prohibition, denial), untruth, emptiness (vacuum), silence, etc.*

Negation is the element of the meaning of the sentence, identifying that the connection represented in the sentence seems unreal to the speaker (writer), or that the affirmation is false [3]. If viewed as the exchange of the old notion for the new one, that denies the old one, negation is inseparable with the category SOMETHING.

For example: *A man who would violate his own sister, murder his king, and fling an innocent child to his death deserves no other name* [5].

The word combination *no other* is used not only in the meaning of denying anything, but in the meaning of emphasizing something, it indicates the absence of alternative, but not the total absence of everything.

Another metasign of the category NOTHING is non-existence. Non-existence is ontological category opposite to the existence, e.i. the state when being, life, existence come to an end [3]. Category of non-existence correlates with concepts of death, withering.

Thus, while investigating the philosophical and linguistic background of the problem NOTHING we come to the conclusion, that this problem is multi- dimensional. The metasigns by which this category is represented in the language include unreality, lacunarity (lack, shortage), negativism, ban (prohibition, denial), untruth, fail, loss, emptiness (vacuum), silence, etc. But the complex research of the problem NOTHING is scarcely possible without taking into account its dichotomy opposition, category SOMETHING, and the complex analysis should be carried out on the basis of semantic oppositions being::non-being, present::absent, explicit::implicit, positive::negative, affirmative::negative. The further research of these categories and their interrelations looks promising.

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