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Associating Of Verbs In The Linguistic Consciousness
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Abstract

The work is concerned with associative-derivational potential of verbs with the meaning "to deprive of life" in four languages of different structures: English, Turkish, Tatar and Russian. Basic verbs of this lexical-semantic group are "kill" in the English language, "öldürmek" in Turkish, "үтерергə" in Tatar and "убить" in Russian. The work deals with the verbal derivatives that were formed on the basis of this seem of deprivation of life. Dynamics of semantic development of a verb depends on an image-association similarity, which in its turn is affected by attributes (or a number of them) relevant for a new meaning. The data obtained during analysis allows tracing changes in attitude of native speakers to such a negative and destructive action as deprivation of life and eliciting adjacent spheres that are associated in speakers' minds with deprivation of life.

Introduction

Process of semantic derivation represents such a linguistic phenomenon, which accumulates not only information about the language but also about the culture. The latter one is of special interest for lexical-semantic analysis since all the semantic changes and shifts that happen in a language reflect mentality of the people who speak this language. The work is concerned with associative-derivational potential of verbs with the meaning "to deprive of life" in four languages of different structures: English, Turkish, Tatar and Russian. Basic verbs of this lexical-semantic group are "kill" in the English language, "öldürmek" in Turkish, "үтерергə" in Tatar and "убить" in Russian. The work deals with the verbal derivatives that were formed on the basis of this seme of deprivation of life. Factual data has been collected from the dictionaries of Russian (Bolshoi tolkovy slovar russkogo yazyka, 2009), English (Oxford dictionary of English, 2010), Turkish (Türkçe sözlük, 2005) and Tatar languages (Tatar telenen anlatmaly suzlege, 2005). The data obtained during analysis allows tracing changes in attitude of native speakers to such a negative and destructive action as deprivation of life and eliciting adjacent spheres that are associated in speakers’ minds with deprivation of life.

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Semantic development of verbs

Dynamics of semantic development of a verb depends on an image-association similarity, which in its turn is affected by attributes (or a number of them) relevant for a new meaning. One of such attributes is connotative meaning, which is essential for semantic derivation as emotional component is the basic one for associative row and for the expression of the attitude to surroundings.

Connotation of verbs with the meaning of deprivation of life implies some negative element, which in most cases (but not in all cases) is preserved even in new meanings. It is interesting to note that some derivatives have not only lost their negative connotation but also obtained the positive one. This is particularly peculiar to the verb "kill" and its equivalents in other languages, e.g. You really killed them tonight. I killed that exam. In these sentences "kill" loses its negative component and acquires the utterly positive meaning "do well at", "succeed". Initially, this meaning could be traced back to the phrase "to kill with laughter", when it was used in the meaning 'to make a positive impression on the audience' but gradually it started to be used in relation not only to laughter-provoking events, what can be clearly seen in colloquial speech. At the same time this derivation model is also productive in other languages what proves its universal character, for example Мы убили своей речью. (You killed with your speech); травить "poison" in the collocation травить байки "tell tall tales". In Russian уморить, derivative of the verb морить "exterminate" is also used in this meaning. When the given lexem is used with an object in most cases it functions in its initial meaning and negative connotation. Otherwise it is used in the meaning of emotional state causative like in the following sentence Нырну, так полоний как зваль. [Г-жа Простакова (не себя)]! Умори! Умори! Бог с тобой! [Д. И. Фонвизин. Недоросль (1782)] (I will drown myself, and you will even forget my name. [Madam Prostakova (outraged)]. You are killing! Killing! For Heaven's sake!" [D.I.Fonvizin. The minor (1782)]. In such cases the verbs are used with positive connotation.

Since verbs with the meaning of deprivation of life denote quick and sometimes sudden action it is not surprising that we can explicit the same sense of intense action in their semantics. The latter one enables acquisition of the sense of emotional state causative by verbs of this group preserving their negative connotation. It can be illustrated by the next examples: Bizi rahatsız ediyor, bazen düşünsesiyle öldürtür (Makes us feel ill at ease, sometimes killing with his thoughts). Bu adam benim can düşmanımdır. Hakıksız yere beni katlediyor. (This man is my deadly enemy then. He makes me feel uncomfortable for no reason). O.S.Orhon. Тавышы, аңдағы моң!!! Явятшийгрен, сицерен биючелерен умере бит! (His voice, its soulful sadness! He simply killed (=defeated) his peers, those who dance jumping on the stage!) Мени просто убило это известие, — грустно заговорил Бахарев. Д. Н. Мамин-Сибiryак. (I was simply devastated by the news, - sadly said Baharev. D.N.Mamin-Sibiryak). Трудно было предположить, что монарх может еще больше разглаживать, но веселый смех Дороти окончательно добил его, и он зарычал на нее, как дикий зверь. Л. Фрэнк Баум. (Perhaps the little monarch could not be more furious than he was before, but the girl's laughter nearly drove him frantic [=добыл], and he roared at her like a savage beast". L. Frank Baum).

The sense of intense action enabled the usage of some verbs of this group to denote speech actions, e.g. перебить "slaughter, slay" - Зимовский хотел сказать что-то, но его перебила Василиса. Г.Марков. "Зимовский wanted to say something but was interrupted by Vasiliisa". G.Markov); The lawyer shot a series of questions. We can also find this meaning in collocation of Turkish verb kismek (slaughter, pierce with a knife) with bıçak gibi (like a knife) e.g. sözü bıçak gibi kesildi (suddenly stopped talking), konuşması bıçak gibi kesildi (the conversation suddenly stopped). The equivalent of this collocation in Russian как ножом отрезать is also used to denote speech actions, but unlike the Turkish collocation where the sense of sudden action is more prominent the Russian phrase implies "to say something in a confident unquestioning and undoubted way".

Since all verbs can be divided to limited and limitless verbs, verbs with the main meaning of life deprivation are referred to limited ones as they imply limited aimed activity. (Tatar grammaticasy, 2002). This feature of verbs of this group allowed them to develop the meaning of process termination, for example добить проект (finish a project), обезглавить восстание (stop a riot), перебить (As soon as we have finished kulubayka, not to slacken the appetite, bring on shchi soup. А.Chekhov); shoot (Thanks to this law the process has been shot); kill (Nothing that the doctor gives me kills the pain. They killed the article after getting threats of a lawsuit); stifle (rules and regulations that стifle initiative), murder (Murder thy breath in middle of a word. W.Shakespeare.)
It is interesting to note that in Russian and English languages some verbs of this group having developed the meaning of process termination also obtained the meaning "to finish drink/beverages", e.g. прыкыйнчый натык (to kill the drink, to slaughter sandwich; to murder an ice-cream (=to consume it totally); moreover this tendency is carrying on and we can come across such expression as прыкыйнчый сигарет (to kill the cigarette). In Turkish we can also find such expressions as yemeği öldürmek (finish food) but its functionality is limited to food sphere, whereas in Tatar in colloquial speech the usage of the collocation бутылка сытарга (to drink up) is limited to alcoholic drinks. In studies by Arutyunova N.D. (1999) this is explained by the fact that derivatives for expressive and characteristic purposes appear with the less combining power and narrow range of collocations. As for the verb kill it is also the only verb of the group in all the four languages to be used in the meaning "to turn something off", e.g. Kill the engine. He killed the lights.

Another derivative meaning which is common for the languages concerned is the meaning of damaging, changing the state, destroying something. It can be explained by the original meaning of this group of verbs, since the action of taking somebody's life is closely associated with damaging something or somebody. We can see that verbs in the following sentences are used in these meanings: Как не убить подвеску на машине? (How not to damage the suspension of your car?) He assassinated (=destroyed) his enemy's character. Her lively color kill'd with deadly cares. (W. Shakespeare). The text is not butchered by misprinting. This was an experience which poisoned his whole life. It's a beautiful song, but they murdered it. Too much garlic killed the taste of the meat.

Process of deprivation of life implies something unnecessary and this meaning is kept in such a phrase as kill the time ("to make time pass quickly, mostly in aimless activity), e.g. When you had nothing to do but kill time, it dragged incredibly slowly. E. Richmond. This phrase has got equivalents in all the four languages, e.g. Заман ошлөрмөн икен чешит болуу ойлар сөйлөдү. (He told some stories to kill the time); И вечером, чтобы убить время, я шел в казино, где собирались красивые женщины. Г. Хабаров. (And in the evening to kill time I went to the casino where the most beautiful women gathered. G. Khabarov.); Вакытыны "утеру" очен салоңа керерге бұлым. Э. Еники. (I decided to go to the salon to kill the time. A. Eniki). In all the examples we can see low negative coloring, sometimes even neutral one, whereas in Russian this verb is also used in collocations like убить годы/ деньги (to waste years/money) where not high speed of an action is emphasized but - the volume of wasted object, senselessness of an action and very negative connotation.

Conclusion

Comparative analysis of the verbs with the sense of deprivation of life in different languages showed tendencies of semantic shifts in this group of verbs. One of the common features of these verbs is that they have additional sense of causation of emotional state and the sense of process termination. Among other tendencies of semantic derivation of universal character which have been found in all the four compared languages collocation kill time and its equivalents in other languages can be named. Surprising as it may seem, the verb kill and its equivalents are very productive in developing new meanings, especially in colloquial speech. In present-day languages they are used to denote food/drink consumption, speech activity, succeeding in some activity. These new derivatives do not contain negative connotation and in some cases we can even single out positive connotation in their structure what allows us to trace the tendency that main sense of deprivation of life is getting less stable. The less number of derivatives based on Tatar and Turkish verbs of this group may be explained by the fact that these two languages are of Turkic origin and had their own way of development because of their history.

References


