

BASIC THEORY OF VALENCE OF LEXICAL UNITS IN CROSS-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

The article deals with the general theory of the valency of lexical units. Valency provides a syntagmatic link between language units, a position that reflects the properties of the language, as well as functions that predetermine the positions of lexical units.

Keywords: *valency, actant, adjuncts, semantic valence, syntactic valence, potential, function.*

АННОТАЦИЯ

В статье рассматривается общая теория валентности лексических единиц. Валентность обеспечивает синтагматическую связь между языковыми единицами, позицию, отражающую свойства языка, а также функции, предопределяющие позиции лексических единиц.

Ключевые слова: *валентность, актант, дополнения, семантическая валентность, синтаксическая валентность, потенциал, функция.*

INTRODUCTION

The term valence was introduced into linguistics in 1948 by S.D. Katsnelson, who in the article "On grammatical category" expressed the idea that "a full-fledged real word in every language is not a word at all, but a word with specific syntactic potentials that allow it to be used only in a strictly defined way, a predetermined level of development of grammatical relations in language. This property of a word to be realized in a certain way in a sentence and enter into certain combinations with other words could be called its syntactic valence" [2].

Valence, in its simplest form, is a "unit of unification of forces". The use of the chemical term "valence" to describe the interaction of a verb with its nominal associates was first proposed by Tesnier. This is a particularly apt term for the linguistic phenomena for which it is intended to describe. Most verbs also have a fixed number of endings or slots that need to be "combined" or filled with the necessary number of noun phrases to create a "stable"—or grammatical—sentence. Kalinina O.N., notes that "the voice of a verb depends crucially on the number of arguments it can consist of," and it is information about these relationships that he includes in the concept of valence [1].

Katsnelson S.D., describes “the concept of valence... as a basis for describing — on a more comprehensive basis — the various possibilities that individual verbs have for appearing in various sentence structures” [2]. This is a good start for building a working definition of valence. However, there are difficulties with the question of where this concept is located, at what level of the linguistic structure. Indeed, valence-altering devices have become one of the key motivating sources for determining additional levels of syntactic structure in syntax theories. Katsnelson S.D., notes an important problem with the analysis of Tesnier's liabilities and activities. Namely, “tries to deal with three levels of description, "surface" grammar, "deep" grammar (i.e. valence grammar) and semantic template within a single analysis.”

Katsnelson, S.D., divides the nonverbal elements of a sentence into two groups: actants, better known now as arguments that satisfy the requirements of verb valence, and adverbial circonstants, commonly known as adjuncts, which are optional and flexible, are considered capable of appearing with any verb in any context. Katsnelson S.D. further divides actants into primary actant, second actant and actant levels. This division corresponds to the traditional grammatical categories of subject, direct object and indirect object, and it occupies a central place in the relationship between semantic and syntactic valence, but it is not entirely clear how to identify these categories, and it is consistent in its application of these terms to syntactic or semantic concepts.

Katsnelson S.D., distinguishes between actants in an active sentence semantically (essentially describing the main actant as an actor), whereas in the case of a passive verb, the main actant no longer distinguishes the actor, but rather the subject [2]. The task of identifying semantic and syntactic valence and determining how many levels of structure are needed in linguistic theory to account for data goes through half a century of valence research, until now no consensus was reached. At a minimum, the contrast of the active and passive voice suggests that it is necessary to distinguish between semantic and syntactic valence — semantic roles and syntactic relations.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Allerton (along with many other scientists, such as Chomsky, and Perlmutter and Postal) comes to the conclusion that two syntactic levels are required: a superficial and a deep structure. According to Allerton, deep grammatical roles are determined by the requirements for the valence of the verb, and therefore a distinction is proposed between the subject of the surface and the subject of the valence. The key point here is that valence is given a syntactic meaning and it is

placed at an intermediate level between semantic roles and surface structures. The choice of voice connects valence structures with surface structures, and the lexicon connects valence structures with semantic-level information. The grammar of role and reference solves the same dilemma semantically by placing valence information directly into the lexical semantics of the verb.

It is generally recognized that voice is a phenomenon that occurs at the intersection of semantics and syntax, regardless of whether it is considered essentially as a verbal category or an operation at the predicate level. Valence, on the other hand, refers to information related to the verb. This information can be stored in a dictionary. Since the lexicon is a concept that cannot be observed directly (the "mental dictionary" component of the language), its description and the type of information available in it are open to various theoretical interpretations.

It can also be said that information about valence is not stored together with the verbal lexeme in the lexicon, but rather as part of the syntactic processes involved in the formation of a predicate or sentence, being associated with the verb in the process of choosing an argument. Since valence information refers to elements occurring simultaneously with the verb, this information can be written into the rules concerning the union of components, the very part of the syntax where information is required. The differences in valence explain the peculiar difference between English active and passive sentences, for example:

- A. Charlie ate the prize profiteroles
- B. the prize profiteroles were eaten (Charlie)

Transformational theories explain this difference by moving the direct object in (a) to the position of the subject in (b), thereby placing the contrast of the voice in the domain of syntactic rules and considering the unmarked active construction as underlying marked voice constructions similar to (b).

Syntactic valence is the ability of a word to appear in various syntactic structures. The minimal syntactic context in which words are used when combined into word groups is described as a sample of word groups. For example, the verb offer can be followed by an infinitive (to offer to do something) and a noun (to offer a cup of tea). The verb to suggest can be accompanied by a gerund (to suggest doing something) and a noun (to suggest an idea). The syntactic valence of these verbs is different.

It is believed that the adjectives "smart" and "intelligent" have different syntactic valence, since "smart" can be used in groups of words having a pattern:

Preposition-adjective: smart in mathematics, whereas intelligent can never be found in exactly the same sample of a group of words. The syntactic valence of

correlated words varies in different languages, cf.: in English, to influence a person, a decision, a choice (verb + noun) - in Russian, to influence a person, a decision, a choice (verb + preposition + noun).

Thus, the theory of valence of lexical units determined by valence determines its function in these constructively more complex forms than it is itself.

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