

Parametric adjectives of Russian and English as representatives of the category of space

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Abstract

The lexico-semantic group of parametric adjectives, often called adjectives of general size or dimensional adjectives, is a universal class of words for all languages since spatial categories reflect the process of a person's world cognition. As it is known, lexico-semantic variants of the meanings of parametric adjectives enter into the sense groups with the semantics of space, distance, size or time. The choice of this group of lexical units is because parametric adjectives are actively metaphorized in the speech process and, therefore, with their figurative meanings they may intersect with the adjectives of other lexico-semantic groups. In the process of metaphorization, parametric adjectives can characterize the person, properties, or qualities of the personality, psychic, and mental state. The notions of parametric attributes of objects and space in general, coded in linguistic meanings and verbalized in words, reveal themselves in the processes of semantic derivation. The semantic study of the of identifying words, the specific features of their functioning in the language will allow us to approach the understanding of the language picture of the world of particular people, to reveal the originality of their worldview, the national and cultural specifics of the language, its connection with the material and spiritual life of the people. Parametric adjectives of Russian and English languages, such as *wide*, *narrow*, *long*, *short* are the objective of the study of this article, namely their specific semantic structure, cognitive characteristics, and compatibility properties.

Key words: parametric adjectives, semantics, polysemy, compatibility, metaphorical meaning

Introduction

As it is known, the vocabulary of each language has its own national identity, which is expressed both in the specific features of lexical units and in the ability to bundle the entire vocabulary into separate lexical strata. The systematic nature of vocabulary is manifested in the fact that words enter into different relationships with each other and form interacting groups and series. The adjective is included in the lexico-semantic class of predicate words denoting the non-process attribute (property) of an object, event, or other attribute denoted by a name. An adjective means either a qualitative attribute of an object, outside its relation to other objects, events or signs, or a relative sign that designates the property of an object through its relation to another object, feature, event (Linguistics, 1998).

According to R. Pustet, although adjectives are generally acknowledged as an important component of the description of the parts-of-speech system of any one language, it has often been argued, on morphosyntactic grounds, that many languages do not have adjectives. However, at the semantic level, every language seems to be equipped with adjectival concepts. These denote properties and can be characterized in terms of the notions of stativity, monotransitivity, and intermediate time-stability. Structural features that tend to be shared by the lexemic representations of property concepts across languages include compatibility with grammatical categories such as copulas, linkers, elements that code agreement with nouns, and gradation markers (Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics, 2006).

In Russian, the adjective as a part of speech is fairly clearly distinguished by three

criteria: the semantic (sign designation), the morphological (the presence of formal agreement with the noun by gender, number, case, the presence of comparative degrees in qualitative adjectives, the presence of special derivational affixes for relative and possessive adjectives) and the syntactic criterion (use in the function of the definition and the nominal part of the predicate) (Gurevich, 2007).

Unlike Russian, the English adjective does not have the forms of coordination with the noun, and only a few relative adjectives are formalized by a special word-building suffix (*wooden, sunny*). In English, the adjective is distinguished, first of all, by its semantic and syntactic characteristics. Adjectives of the English language, unlike the Russian, have only one category represented by the lexicon - qualitative adjectives (*white, large, strong*).

In English, due to the scarcity of morphological indicators, the boundaries between parts of speech are blurred, for example, between the adjective and the noun. In such models as a *stone wall, glass door*; the first noun is the definition to the next. On the semantic and syntactic characteristics, it resembles the relative adjective, although it can hardly be regarded as an indisputable adjective (Gurevich, 2007).

I.V. Arnold stated, that the smaller grammatical variability of words leads to that, when the Russian language forms a denominative adjective, the English language often simply uses a noun in the attributive function, resorting to affixal word-formation only when there is a significant semantic change, i. e. when not a combination of all the features expressed in the basis is taken into consideration, but the presence of only one or more of them: *family portrait - семейный портрет, familiar portrait - знакомый портрет; gold watch - золотые часы, golden hair - золотистые волосы* (Arnold, 2012).

On semantics adjectives are heterogeneous, their various classifications are based both on the meanings of the adjectives, and on the properties of denotata, which include the features, and also on the possibility of intensification. Traditionally the following groups of adjectives are distinguished: estimated adjectives: *good, bad*; parametric adjectives: *wide, narrow*; adjectives denoting color: *scarlet, pale, red, blue*; adjectives that reflect spatial and temporal qualities and relationships: *direct, right, short*; adjectives, indicating the properties and qualities of things, perceived by the senses: *spicy, sour, liquid, rare*; external or physical, bodily qualities of people: *barefoot, naked, nude, frail, full*; internal qualities, traits of character, psychological make-up: *good, evil, cunning, brave, cruel*, etc.

The semantic structure of parametric adjectives, their functional-pragmatic properties and cognitive characteristics always attracted the attention of researchers and linguists (Bierwisch M., 1989; Faller M., 1999; Fatkhutdinova V.G., 2014; Knyazev Yu.P., 1996; Korobeinikova V.A., 2002, 2009; Kustova G.I., 2004; Lang E., 1978, 1989; Rakhilina E.V., 2008; Shramm A.N., 1979; Zhundibayeva et al., 2013; Sosnina A.A., 2015; Tashlykova M.B., 2007; Dautov et al., 2018; Usmanov R.Sh., 2008, 2009). This is because these adjectives have complex, ambiguous semantics, and their derivatives actualize a different combination of meanings. According to the scientists, they reflect the processes of verbalization of mental (cognitive, conceptual) parametric representations of a person about the size in the language in general and in specific languages in particular. Being representatives of the category of space, these tokens belong to the class of actively used nominations. In the mind of an unsophisticated native speaker, - writes E.V. Rakhilina, - the idea of objectness is associated primarily with such properties of the object as size, shape, and color. However, in the lexical semantics, it is generally accepted that the object name can and should be characterized primarily in terms of size, shape, and color.

However, in the lexical semantics, it is generally accepted that the object name can and should be characterized primarily in terms of size, shape, and color. The researcher expresses the idea that the practical consequence of such representations is, in particular, the assumption of the free compatibility of the adjectives of the corresponding semantics with the object names. With some degree of the convention, we can assume that, by measuring the size of the object, we characterize the object concerning its length, width, height, thickness, and depth. According to E.V. Rakhilina, each of these parameters has two meanings: 'large' (in height, depth, thickness, etc.) and 'small'. These meanings correspond to pairs *high - low, deep - shallow*, etc. (Rakhilina, 2008).

Materials and Methods

In solving the problems posed in the study, descriptive-analytical, comparative-typological, and cognitive methods of analyzing linguistic facts were used, which allow the empirical material to be studied comprehensively, in different directions and depth.

In the lexico-semantic group of spatial adjectives three subgroups are distinguished: 1) with the main seme 'extended in space': *high - low, deep - shallow, wide - narrow, long - short*; 2) with the main seme 'located in space regarding something': *close - distant, upper - lower, left - right*, etc.; 3) with the main seme 'occupying a place in space, volume': *thick - thin, large - small, spacious - tight*, etc. (Korobeinikova, 2009).

All words related to the lexico-semantic group of parametric adjectives are polysemic lexemes. As A.M. Schramm pointed out, concerning each other, the meanings of a polysemic word differ as nominatively non-derivative (basic, initial value) and nominatively derivative, and also as metaphorical (always derived) value (Schram, 1979). Comparing the component composition of the initial and secondary meanings of the adjectives, one can come to the conclusion that the main, the most common is the kind of semantic connection of two meanings, in which they are united by a common semantic component (seme). That connection between the meanings of a polysemic word, which manifests itself in the presence of a common, identical seme, A.M. Schramm proposes to call an identical seme connection (attitude). The metaphorical meaning is combined with the original meaning by the real semantic component that is included in the structure of both meanings. The common semantic component for the initial and metaphorical meaning is a potential seme that is absent in the structure of the initial meaning, and that arises as a result of associative representations 'prompted' by the essence of the original meaning or by the character of the denotation with which the original meaning correlates.

According to A. Vicente and I. L. Falkum, polysemy proliferates in natural language, virtually every word is polysemous to some extent. Polysemy affects both content and function words. While deciding which sense is intended on a given occasion of use rarely seems to cause any difficulty for speakers of a language, polysemy has proved notoriously difficult to treat both theoretically and empirically (Vicente and Falkum, 2017).

Research

All the parametric adjectives analyzed by us are characterized by branching, the complexity of the semantic structure. They have several, sometimes far apart meanings, which allow to include these lexemes in different lexical-semantic groups. The analyzed adjectives with their lexical-semantic variants can enter into different sense groups: *long - short* (size, time intervals, distance); *wide - narrow* (space, size, extent).

Parametric adjectives, being polysemantic entities, can enter into an antonymous relationship. Parametric adjectives are adjectives that form antonymous pairs such as

large - small, high - low, wide - narrow, frequent - rare, deep - shallow, etc., the difference between which can be raised to the opposition 'more than normal' - 'less than normal'; for such adjectives, the norm is the average degree of manifestation of the named trait in representatives of a given class of objects (Knyazev, 1996). "For example, in *a wide road*, the width is greater than the average for roads; for ribbons, which can also be wide and narrow, another width norm is established" (Kustova, 2004). In the definition of the norm, as the researcher believes, somehow the person participates, at least because the norm is determined by a person and from the point of view of a person. These criteria are finally 'external' in relation to a person: roads are compared with roads, and ribbons with ribbons. However, the 'closer' some class of objects to a person, the more he 'interferes' in the establishment of criteria for the norm and deviations from it. "For example, *a wide skirt* is not just wider than a middle one, - this is a skirt that loosely covers the body. Here the norm (an average value) is already established relative to a person, although, for the present, any person and class of skirts in general (style) is meant" (Kustova, 2004).

Russian parametric adjectives actively act as 'personality measuring units'. Such adjectives are used to characterize a person: *широкий / узкий специалист* ('an expert who is devoted to one (or more) occupation or branch of learning'), *мелкий торговец* ('petty', 'private trader'), *мелкий негодяй* ('petty villain'); internals and qualities of personality: *широкий кругозор* ('broad outlook'), *глубокий ум* ('deep intellect'), *высокий интеллект* ('high intelligence'); psychic and mental states: *большое удовольствие* ('great pleasure'), *глубокое отчаяние* ('deep despair'), *мелкие огорчения* ('petty afflictions'). Thus, the study of M.B. Tashlykova (2007) examines the use of parametric adjectives with the names of several semantic classes, for example, a combination with the noun *soul*. In attributive uses, parametric adjectives call a certain property of personality: following the ethical and aesthetic ideal, nobility of feelings, striving for the common good (*high soul*); responsiveness, generosity, hospitality, uncompromising, daring (*broad soul*); the ability for concentrated experiences, for fullness of the feeling (*deep soul*).

The modern stage of the development of linguistic semantics is characterized by the close attention of scientists to the nature and character of metaphorical transfers as a means of conceptualizing a new experience. Parametric adjectives are characterized by a high degree of metaphorization of their meanings, which leads to a weakening and often to a loss in their semantics of a parametric feature. The metaphor, according to J. Lakoff and M. Johnson (2004), permeates our entire daily life and manifests itself not only in language but also in thinking and acting. At the same time, the activity aspect of the metaphor is most directly connected with the 'human factor in the language': thanks to it, all the national and cultural wealth accumulated by the language community in the process of its historical development is imprinted in the language means (Kubryakova, 1988).

At the heart of metaphor, there are various physical and social phenomena. It seems that coherence within the general system partly explains the choice of one of them. For example, the state of happiness in a physical environment, as a rule, correlates with a smile and a general state of expansiveness (openness). This could serve as the basis for the metaphor *Happy is wide; sad is narrow*. However, for the expression of the corresponding state in the language, there is an association of happiness with the *height*; we are talking about 'the height of happiness,' and not about the 'breadth of happiness.' The metaphor *happiness - height (top)* is as harmonized as possible with metaphors *good - height (top)*, *health - height (top)*, etc. (Lakoff, 2004). In this connection, parametric adjectives in Russian and English should also be considered in the aspect of their metaphorical nomination.

Among the group of adjectives, which call the parametric features of the object, in our view, of particular interest from comparative analysis is the *wide / narrow*

correlation. Both adjectives are characterized by heterogeneous lexical compatibility, which is reflected at the level of their correspondences in other languages.

In the process of analysis, it is established that certain components of the meanings of the Russian adjectives reveal different structural and semantic correspondences in the English language. In English, to the adjective *широкий*, in general, correspond the following lexemes: *wide, broad, extensive, general*, less commonly: *loose, generous* (Webster, 1986; Macmillan, 2007).

Parametric adjectives in the function of the measurement of a material object in Russian and English are used in the original meaning in the following cases: *wide road, wide hall, wide coat*, etc. However, it should be noted that in the English language, there is a tendency to a detailed differentiation of physical space. In particular, in order to clarify the sizes of clothes or shoes, the following nominative units are more adequate from the point of view of compatibility: *loose 'wide': loose clothing* (Webster, 1986). These equivalents provide an opportunity to express the parametric feature more specifically: 'larger or smaller than it is required.'

In the study of the semantics of parametric adjectives, including *wide / narrow*, E.V. Rakhilina (2000) points out that *wide* is applicable, first of all, to elongated surfaces and objects that have such a surface as functionally significant: *a wide staircase, bench, ski, palm*, but not: *a wide circle, ball, rope*. *Wide* characterizes 'boundless spaces': *a wide space, expanses, steppe*. According to R.Sh.Usmanov, *wide* can be extended surfaces or objective things, which is also applicable for English: *a wide street, wide window, wide back, wide spade, wide table*; *wide* can denote the diameter of hollow objects, the size of the hole: *a wide hole, wide burrow*; relatively unlimited concepts: *a wide field, wide steppe* (Usmanov, 2008).

In some cases, the semantics of the parametric feature is modified. As a result of the analysis, some units were singled out, in the semantic structure of which various modifications of the parametric component were observed. So, depending on the compatibility in English, the adjective *wide* actualizes the specific components of the meaning, which is reflected in its Russian equivalents: *wide difference - huge* (literally: broad) difference; *this is wide of the truth - this is far from the truth*; *views wide of ours - views very different from ours*; *wide opening - significantly different courses* (for securities) (Collins, 1996; Macmillan, 2007).

Among the English meanings of the adjectives under study, there are units characterized by the phraseological type of semantics: *the wide fellow* 'the dodger,' *the wide females* 'the indecent women'. In both languages, differences in the cultural significance of spatial concepts can be reflected in the corpus of set phrases with these words. A set word combination *товары широкого потребления* is more relevant for the Russian language consciousness, as evidenced by its English translation: *consumers' goods*.

As it was already noted, parametric adjectives actively act as 'personality measuring units'. In Russian they characterize a person, properties and qualities of a person: (Evgenjeva, 1985) *широкий специалист* (a 'broad' specialist in various fields), *широкий кругозор* (a broad outlook); the adjective *широкий* (wide / broad) refers to something that is devoid of narrowness: *широкий взгляд на вещи* (a broad view of things), *в широком смысле слова* (in the broadest sense of the word); *широкий* (wide / broad) is commensurable with the manifestation of feelings: *широкая душа* (a 'broad' soul), *широкая натура* (a 'broad' nature). In English, some adjectival derivatives have similar semantics: *a width of mind*.

Several meanings of the Russian adjective form phrases, the semantics of which are sufficiently idiomatic. Almost all such units in the English language do not find lexical-structural correspondences and are transmitted with the help of other lexical units: (Modestov, 2005) *широким фронтом* (everywhere, with a large coverage) - *on a large scale*; *жить на широкую ногу* - *live in (grand) style, live in opulence*; *широкой рукой* (generously, with a sweep) - *lavishly*, etc.

The Russian adjective *узкий* (narrow) in the English language can correspond to the lexemes *narrow*, *tight*. These equivalents provide an opportunity to express the parametric feature in more detail. The interpretation of the adjective *narrow* as 'having a limited scope' (in a combinations: *a narrow field*, *narrow scope of activities*) seems, in the opinion of M.B. Tashlykova (2006), unsuccessful, since the idea of 'sphere of application' does not correspond with the concepts of *a field and scope of activity*.

In Russian, some of the meanings of the adjective *узкий* (narrow) form word combinations that have idiomatic semantics. Almost all such units in English do not find structural and semantic correspondences and are transmitted with the help of other lexical units: *узкое место* (the weakest side in the case, creating difficulties, complications, etc.) - *bottleneck*; *встретиться на узкой дороге* (Evgenjeva, 1985) ('to meet or collide on a narrow road'; about the collision of someone's hostile interests) - *the collision of hostile interests*.

In Russian and English, the adjective *narrow* characterizes a material object: *a narrow window*, *a narrow gauge*, *a narrow ribbon*. *Narrow* denotes the natural object parameters which size is 'less than normal,' if they are functionally allocated in this type of names, i.e. when the process of using a narrow object coincides with the process of measuring its width: *a narrow door*, *a narrow passage* (Usmanov, 2008).

In the Russian language *narrow* in a figurative meaning is used for the professional characterization of the subject: *узкий специалист* ('a narrow' specialist, a specialist in a particular narrow field); it can characterize a limited, near-minded person: *человек с узким кругозором* ('a person with a narrow outlook'). In English, dimensional adjectives also have similar semantics: *narrow mind* (spiritual limitations, narrow-mindedness); *narrow opinions*; *narrow understanding*. Differences in the cultural significance of spatial concepts can be reflected in the corpus of set word combinations with these words in both languages. Carriers of two languages resort to different ways of objectifying the surrounding reality. In English, the adjective *narrow* in describing a person can mean 'stingy,' 'miserly': *to be narrow with one's money* ('not to like to part with money,' 'to be stingy').

It should also be highlighted that some English nominative units by virtue of their metaphorical meaning, do not have structural equivalents in Russian: *narrow circumstances* ('constrained circumstances'); *narrow means* (literally: 'limited means'); *narrow choice* ('limited choice'); *to have a narrow escape* ('barely to escape', 'miraculously to avoid death'); *narrow victory* (literally: 'victory with a slight advantage') (Americana, 1996; Macmillan, 2007).

Next, we go on to describe the parametric adjectives *long* and *short* in Russian and English. The adjective *long* in English is used, for example, to express the meanings 'ongoing', 'lasting', 'continuous': *long reign* ('a lasting reign'); *long custom* ('a long-standing custom'); *long halt* (military: 'a large halt'); *long service* ('long, lasting service'). In Russian and English, one can identify similarities and differences in the lexical compatibility of adjectives: *long dress*, *long song*, *long hair*; but: *длинный молодой человек* ('a long young man') - *a tall man*; *длинный день* ('a long day') - *a lasting day*; *длинный доклад* ('a long report') - *a lengthy report* (Webster, 1986).

Speaking about the peculiarities of the semantic structure of the Russian adjective *long*, V.A. Korobeinikova (2002) draws attention to the origin of this word. In particular, she points out that *long*, actually a Russian word, in the meaning 'extended in space' was recorded only in the XVII century; in the Old Russian language, as an antonym to the word *short* the adjective *lingering* (долгий) was used. According to E.V. Rakhilina (2002), *long* (in comparison with other parametric adjectives) characterizes objects that are not necessarily fixed in space, it is sufficient that they have an elongated shape (with a considerable excess of a normal

length over the normal width): *a long rope, nail, stick*. However, objects with other initial parameters again cannot be characterized by this adjective: **long sea, *long journal*.

In the lexicalization of concepts, native speakers of Russian and English use similar metaphors: *to have a long tongue; to make a long nose; the long arm* ('having great influence, power'); *the long arm of the law*. However, when comparing the two languages, different ways of reinterpreting the spatial relations are observed: a set phrase *длинный рубль* 'a long ruble' (about easy and big earnings: *chasing a long ruble, hunting for a long ruble*) is more relevant for the Russian language consciousness, as evidenced by its English correspondence: *to be only out for money*. (literally: 'lack of money'). In English, the adjective *long*, depending on its compatibility with certain nouns, can have a high degree of metaphoricity: cf. *long memory* ('good memory'); *long home* ('grave'); *long green* (Am.: 'paper money'). Such an ability is largely possessed by English nominative units characterizing a person: *to have a long head* ('to be perceptive,' 'prudent'); *to take long views* ('to be long-sighted'); *long face* ('a dull, gloomy face,' 'elongated face').

The lexico-semantic variants of the adjective *short* enter into the semantic groups with the meaning of space, size, or time. According to scientists, the adjective *short* in Russian is opposed to the adjective *long* and is used in both characteristic classes of use - with flat elongated objects and with flexible 'rope-shaped' (Rakhilina, 2000). However, the adjective *short* retains the requirements for the shape of the object, which, compared to *long*, leads to prohibited combinations: *a long / *short mountain range, a long / *short aircraft, a long / *short puddle*. If the object of the elongated form is shortened, it will cease to satisfy the restrictions on the form, such as *premises, fence*, etc., but not such as *finger, tail, beak, road, corridor*. These prohibitions on compatibility are also peculiar to English: *a short plane**, *a short pool** (Usmanov, 2008).

A comparative analysis of the adjective *short* in Russian and in English indicates the similarity and specificity of its semantic structure. In the designation of certain concepts, native speakers of Russian and English use the same resources: *short (poor) memory; one's hand (arm) is short* (who does not have sufficient power, the opportunity to do something) (Apperson, 2006; Webster, 1986). At the same time, in comparable languages, there are different ways of lexicalization of concepts within phraseological units: (Evgenjeva, 1985) *короткий ум* (literally: 'a short mind'; about a hidebound person) - *to have not got the brains; короткое знакомство* (literally: 'short acquaintance') - *terms of intimacy*.

Some set phrases are more relevant for the Russian language consciousness, as evidenced by their English translation: *на короткой ноге* (literally: 'to be with someone "on a short leg"', 'to be friends with somebody') - *be (well) in with somebody / be on friendly terms with somebody*; *убирать урожай в короткие сроки* (literally: 'to harvest in short time') - *to do the harvest in good time*. The analysis of the proverbs with *short* as a component in Russian also indicates a specific vision and assessment of the world: *коротко да ясно, оттого и прекрасно; короткую речь слушать хорошо, под долгую речь думать хорошо* (literally: 'briefly and clearly', 'a short speech is well to listen, a long speech is well to think'). The English proverb *Brevity is the soul of wit* has a similar meaning (Apperson, 2006; Modestov, 2005).

Findings

Parametric adjectives in Russian and English, being language representations of the category of space, are a universal and communicatively significant class of nominative units. They are often characterized by a high degree of metaphORIZATION of their meanings, but the specifics of their lexical compatibility testifies to different ways of rethinking spatial relationships. Parametric adjectives in the Russian and

English languages reveal similarities and differences in both semantic structure and compatibility. In the composition of some set phrases, the studied adjectives can characterize objects in different ways; their heterogeneous lexical compatibility indicates different ways of lexicalization of concepts. One or another combination of meanings in the framework of attribute phrases sometimes can be inherited by their derivatives.

Discussion

Parametric adjectives are a universal class of nominative units in both languages: Russian and English. Being qualitative adjectives, the analyzed words ascribe to objects and phenomena the functional qualities and properties that are actualized in the sphere of the cognitive and practical activity of a person and represent for him a vital and social value. In both languages, the parametric adjectives have a complex semantic structure and enter into an antonymic relationship. With their lexical and semantic components of the meaning, these lexemes enter into one or another sense group (size, distance, space, volume, extension), which allows us to interpret them as adjectives with volume-spatial meaning.

Conclusion

In Russian and English, the adjectives under study are often used in a figurative sense, and in this way, their semantics shows a weakening or loss of a parametric feature. In the process of metaphorization, parametric adjectives act as 'personality measuring units': they can characterize the person, properties, or qualities of the personality, psychic, and mental states. English parametric adjectives are characterized by a higher degree of metaphoricity, which does not find an adequate expression in the Russian language. Relative tokens show similarities and differences in both the semantic structure and compatibility. Analyzed lexical units in one of the languages can have national-specific meanings, analogs of which are not found in the other. Often they are transmitted to English with the help of lexical units of another semantic sphere, i.e., with the help of other bases. Russian and English parametric adjectives can be part of set phrases, the semantics of which are sufficiently idiomatic. Inhomogeneous lexical compatibility indicates different ways of lexicalization of concepts, which is reflected at the level of their correspondences in the language being compared.

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