



THE CATEGORY OF GRADATION IN ENGLISH LINGUISTICS

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The object of the study is the English gradation dialects. The subject of the study is the typology of English gradation dialects, in the semantics of which the seme "degree" stands out. The expression of a specific degree of a graded feature depends on the type of gradator. The selection of the semes "to the highest degree", "to the high degree", "to the required degree", "to some degree" provides a basis for their classification. The hypothesis of the study is that the gradual meaning is formed under the influence of the semantic factor (the presence in the lexical meaning of the language units with which the gradator is combined, qualitative or quantitative semes) and the syntactic factor (the ability of the grading adverb to enter into a syntagmatic connection with the words of different parts of speech). The relevance of the study is due to the fact that the phenomenon of gradualness is considered from the point of view of a cognitive approach. This approach involves the

ABSTRACT

The paper under review is devoted to the study of the processes of formation of the meaning of "gradation" in the English language and the specifics of its verbalization by adverbs.

inclusion in the analysis of the conceptual framework of the category of gradualness, the establishment of its cognitive context, as well as the description of the linguistic and cognitive mechanisms for the formation of the meaning of "graduality" and the consideration of factors that influence the formation of this meaning in a sentence-statement. The cognitive approach allows us to show the multidimensionality of the content plan of the category of gradualness and reveal the specifics of gradual categorization in English.

The purpose of the work is to identify the linguistic and cognitive mechanisms of the formation of gradualness in modern English. The goal is achieved by solving the following tasks:

- 1) determine the status of the category of gradation;**
- 2) establish the cognitive context for understanding the gradualness;**



3) describe the cognitive and linguistic mechanisms of the formation of the meaning of "graduality";

4) to substantiate the factors influencing the formation of the meaning of "gradation" in the sentence-statement;

5) to reveal the functional potential of English gradation dialects;

6) to characterize the features of the transmission of gradual meanings by English dialects.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the application of a cognitive approach to the analysis of grading adverbs, which makes it possible to describe the cognitive foundations of gradation and determine the status of this category in the language. What is new is the substantiation of the role of the relational profile in the construction of gradients. The novelty is also ensured by the establishment of the level organization of the processes of gradual categorization, which covers the basic, superordinate and subordinate levels. The solution of the tasks set determined the content of the work and made it possible to formulate the main provisions submitted for defense:

The category of gradualness in English represents the knowledge of a complex format that combines several conceptual areas that create a cognitive context for understanding the gradualness. These include the conceptual areas "quantity", "scale", "norm". This category is organized on the basis of the concept "graduality", in the content plan of which the following characteristics are distinguished: the presence of stages in the development of an event or degrees in the manifestation of a feature by an object; the existence of a certain standard (norm),

which correlates with changes in the development of an event or changes in the manifestation of a sign; selection of quantitative characteristics in the displayed feature. Gradual categorization reveals the level principle of organization. With the help of English adverbs, the representation of gradualness is realized at the basic and subordinate levels of categorization. The formation of the meaning of "gradation" in the English language is based on the cognitive mechanisms of scaling and profiling. Scaling refers to the correlation of any change in an object with a certain a point on the scale, under profiling - highlighting a certain characteristic or a number of characteristics of the object being evaluated against the background of others. The lexical meaning of the gradator adverb acts as a linguistic mechanism. The formation of the meaning of "gradation" in the statement is influenced by the semantic factor (the presence in the lexical meaning of language units that are combined with the gradator, qualitative or quantitative semes) and the syntactic factor (the ability of the language unit to enter into syntactic relations with the gradator).

The sphere of gradient is heterogeneous, and both focal meanings and those that occupy intermediate positions between focal meanings on the scale of gradualness are singled out in it, since they allow variation of the graded feature. In this regard, the presence of transition zones is noted on the graduation scale. The focal zones include the marginal, high, sufficient and low degree of manifestation of the trait. As transitional zones, the maximum-high, sufficiently-high and insufficient degrees are noted. A special place in the sphere of gradation is



occupied by the diffuse zone. Unlike the transitional zones, the diffuse zone is projected not onto adjacent zones, but onto distant zones of quantitative manifestations of the graded trait. Adverbs-graders function as means of representing different gradual meanings. At the same time, the linguistic context plays an important role in the verbalization of diffuse gradual meanings in English.

Combinations of English gradation adverbs with various parts of speech reflect the features of the interpretive activity of human consciousness. Orientation both to the natural and to the value picture of the world in the processes of cognition gives grounds to single out a graded-evaluative fragment of the picture of the world, revealing the specifics of the gradual categorization. Graduated areas of knowledge include: physiological state, mental, evaluative, temporal and parametric characteristics, manner, method and mode of action, change in state, change in position in space, effectiveness of physical action, uncertainty and unboundedness, lack of availability, orientation in space, verbal causation, relativity, individual belonging, human needs, causation of a new state, temperature characteristics, physical action (including movement), measure, degree and quantity, attitude/point of view, temporal relationships, intellectual abilities. Combinations of English gradation adverbs with various parts of speech reflect the features of the interpretive activity of human consciousness. Orientation both to the natural and to the value picture of the world in the processes of cognition gives grounds to single out a graded-evaluative fragment of the picture of the world, revealing the specifics of the

gradual categorization. Graduated areas of knowledge include: physiological state, mental, evaluative, temporal and parametric characteristics, manner, method and mode of action, change in state, change in position in space, effectiveness of physical action, uncertainty and unboundedness, lack of availability, orientation in space, verbal causation, relativity, individual belonging, human needs, causation of a new state, temperature characteristics, physical action (including movement), measure, degree and quantity, attitude/point of view, temporal relationships, intellectual abilities.

Graduators of a high degree of manifestation of a trait can be combined with adjectives, verbs, participles and prepositions. The following are subject to graduation: mental characteristics, verbal causation, effectiveness, relativity, individual affiliation, human needs, evaluative characteristics (quality or property of an object, compliance / non-compliance with the standard). Adverbs of a sufficient degree of manifestation of the attribute are characterized by their use with adverbs, participles, nouns, verbs and adjectives. There were no cases of using gradators of a sufficient degree of manifestation of a feature with pronouns and prepositions, which gives grounds to believe that these combinations are uncharacteristic for native speakers. The areas of knowledge that are subject to grading by adverbs to a sufficient degree are the following: emotional state, evaluative and temporal characteristics, mental state, causation of a new state, relativity, temperature characteristics, manner, method, mode of action. For a group of gradators of a low degree of



manifestation of a trait, it is natural to use it with nouns, adjectives and adverbs. There were also cases of using gradators of this group with participles and prepositions. Moreover, the adverbs-graders are most often used a little, a bit, while cases of using poorly are quite rare.

It has been established that the ability to grading is manifested by such areas of knowledge as: mental, spatial and temporal characteristics, physical action (including movement), physical state, measure and quantity, subjective attitude/point of view, evaluative characteristics (quality or property of an object, compliance / non-compliance with the standard).

Adverbs representing the gradualness at the subordinate level, expressing the highest degree of manifestation of the trait, show a tendency to combine with adjectives, verbs, participles and sometimes with adverbs. The areas of knowledge subject to grading by the adverbs of this zone were also identified: temporal relations, mental characteristics, measure, degree and quantity, physical state, temperature characteristics, changes in state and properties, impact, causation, evaluative characteristics (quality or property of an object, compliance-inconsistency standard). A few gradators of a sufficiently high degree of manifestation of a feature can only be combined with participles, adverbs and nouns. However, despite the narrow combination possibilities, such areas of knowledge as parametric characteristics, evaluative characteristics (quality or property of an object, compliance / non-compliance with the standard), physical characteristics, intellectual abilities, emotional state,

method, image, manner of action are subjected to grading.

Adverbs-graders of an insufficient degree of manifestation of a feature are few and unable to be combined with a large number of different parts of speech. So, in the course of the analysis of the material, cases of the use of gradators of this group with adjectives, verbs and participles were noted. Evaluative characteristics (quality or property of an object, compliance / non-compliance with the standard), relativity, causation, parametric characteristics are subject to graduation. Diffuse zone adverbs tend to be used most often with nouns. Occasionally there are cases of using these gradators with adjectives, adverbs and pronouns. The areas of knowledge graded by the adverbs of the diffuse zone are as follows: evaluative characteristics (qualities or properties of an object, compliance / non-compliance with the standard); mental characteristics; intellectual abilities; way, way of doing things. Gradators of a sufficiently high degree of manifestation of a feature are combined with participles, adverbs and nouns. Such areas of knowledge as parametric characteristics, evaluative characteristics (quality or property of an object, compliance / non-compliance with the standard), physical characteristics, intellectual abilities, emotional state, method, image, manner of action are subjected to grading.

Graduating adverbs of an insufficient degree of manifestation of a feature are unable to be combined with a large number of different parts of speech. Cases of use with adjectives, verbs and participles have been noted. Evaluative characteristics (quality or property of an object, compliance / non-compliance with the



standard), causation, relativity and parametric characteristics are subject to graduation. Diffuse adverbs tend to be used most often with nouns and sometimes with adjectives, adverbs and pronouns. The areas of knowledge graded by the adverbs of the diffuse zone are as follows: evaluation characteristics (quality or property of an object, compliance / non-compliance with the standard), intellectual abilities, way, manner of action.

For the adverbs of gradators of all levels, the most frequently used part of speech is the adjective. On the basis of the analyzed factual material, three areas of human existence can be noted that are most often subject to graduation: 1) feelings and emotions of people, 2) physical states of a person, 3) interaction of an individual with the surrounding reality. As

the study showed, in the processes of gradual categorization of the world, a person most often refers to the ultimate, ultimate-high, high and low degrees of manifestation of the trait. Sufficient degree is less often emphasized. This is due to the selective nature of human attention. Ordinarity, standardity, compliance with the norm do not attract attention, but any deviation from the rules, being extraordinary, is an object for evaluation. The analysis of adverbs as a means of representing gradualness in modern English is promising for studying this phenomenon in other languages, both from the standpoint of studying the national specifics of this phenomenon and from the point of view of representing gradualness by other parts of speech.

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