

The Category of Opposition and its Linguistic Nature

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Abstract: The article discusses the logical and philosophical aspect of the opposition category, its linguistic nature, the interpretations of the semantic opposition category given by Uzbek and Russian linguists, and their controversial issues. In addition, the role of semantic opposition in the lexical system of the language, its connection with other lexical-semantic relations is studied.

1 INTRODUCTION

It is known that the relationships between things, events, processes, etc. are as real as the things, events, and processes themselves [20]. Opposition is characterized as the highest manifestation of such relations. As language, as one of the living forms of existence, reflects the phenomena of existence, the role of the category of opposition in language is incomparable. It provides an important semantic-systemic relation of language units. The phenomenon of antonymy is mainly recognized as a linguistic representative of the category of opposition.

There has always been a debate among linguists about the logical and linguistic nature of antonymy, that is, whether antonymy is a linguistic phenomenon or a purely logical phenomenon. Many linguists put more emphasis on the logical aspect of this category. In particular, L.A. Novikov analyzes several types of antonymy according to its logical aspect, such as contrarian (based on gradual relations), complementary (based on contradictory relations), converse and vector [24]. V.A. Mikhaylov uses the terms qualitative (on the basis of gradual relations) and complementary (on the basis of binary (double) relations) in this regard [19].

As time passed, the linguistic interpretation of the phenomenon of antonymy became more widespread. The initial works were mainly devoted to determining the nature of this phenomenon, but later the following issues related to antonymy began to emerge as an object of study: the interaction of

antonymy with other phenomena in the lexical system, in particular, the categories of synonymy and polysemy, antonymic relations in derivational paradigms, specific antonymy interpretation within the word group and antonymy of grammatical units, etc. In addition, the study of antonymy in various aspects began to appear, for example: the function of antonyms in scientific discourse, their role in literary and publicity texts [7,16,17,25], in religious discourse[1], their relationship to the phenomenon of enantiosemy[18], paradigmatic features of antonyms[8], the linguocognitive aspect of antonyms[9], phonosemantic features of opposite-meaning lexemes[34], comparative-semantic analysis of antonyms in different languages[14], etc.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological basis of this article is the laws of dialectical philosophy about unity and conflict opposites, unity of form and content, generality and particularity. The methods of description, comparison, component analysis, and linguopoetic analysis were used in the work.

In order to reveal the linguistic nature of the category of opposition, the article analyzed many scientific literatures conducted in Russian and Uzbek linguistics.

The phenomenon of antonymy in Uzbek linguistics was initially interpreted in some articles, textbooks and scientific works [22] based on different

opinions. In particular, S.Mutallibov's article "Antonyms" is one of the first works devoted to the study of antonyms in the Uzbek language. This article analyzes the antonymic paradigms in the Uzbek language of the 11th century. But in this case, we observe that the linguist in some places includes words that do not meet the requirements of antonyms. For example, he distinguishes between the words *fire* and *water* as antonyms. A similar situation can be found in S.Usmonov's scientific views. In his article "Antonyms", types of antonymy are distinguished such as "full" and "half". If the linguist takes pairs like *high - low*, *night - day* as "full antonyms", he includes words such as *chol (old man) - kampir (old woman)*, *fire - water* among "half antonyms". In addition, S.Usmonov also pays attention to the structural classification of antonyms such as "same root" and "different root". In this case, the antonyms of *hearty - heartless* are interpreted as having one root, and the antonyms of *brave - coward*, *wise - stupid* are interpreted as antonyms with different roots. In the article, the author divided antonyms into ten parts according to the types of meaning. To explain the existence of similar antonyms (homo antonyms) in the Uzbek language, the verbs to ride and fall are given as examples. In this work, the phenomenon of language is mixed with the phenomenon of speech, as well as the phenomena of language itself. In particular, there are places where linguistic phenomena such as antonymy and correlation, antonymy and negation are mixed. Nevertheless, this article is valuable as it is the first major theoretical article devoted to antonyms in Uzbek linguistics.

LOGICAL AND PHILOSOFICAL ASPECTS OF THE CATEGORY OF OPPOSITION

In the study of the category of opposition, it is necessary to refer to its logical and philosophical aspect. From a philosophical point of view, opposition is the manifestation of similarity and difference as a phenomenon. On the one hand, the opposition shows the difference of one existence to the last limit, on the other hand, as two sides of the same phenomenon, it expresses not only the difference, but also the commonality.

Opposition is characterized as a category that has attracted the attention of philosophers since ancient times. This category has been interpreted differently in the scientific views of philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Protagoras, Democritus. For example, Heraclitus thinks that opposites are related to each other on the basis of one basis, while

Parmenides and Empedocles "separated the following dilemmas: unity and plurality, static and dynamic, full and empty, visible and invisible. Democritus emphasized that the opposition has a relative character" [9]. Plato reflects on the transmissibility of opposites, their symmetry and equality. Aristotle's scientific views on contradiction are especially noteworthy. T.F.Chursunova, assessing Aristotle's philosophical views, says: "The study of antonymy began with the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle" [12] says that the types of contradictions under the terms of contradiction and complementarity were already distinguished by Aristotle at that time [12]. These scientific views of the linguist have their basis, because Aristotle made the following points in his work "Categories": "If the opposition is such that, according to the quality given to them by nature, it is definitely required that one of them exists, then there is no middle ground in such an opposition. If one of these (of the two) does not necessarily exist, there is certainly some middle ground between such an opposition. For example, *disease* and *health* exist in the body of a living organism. Equally, the opposite of *odd* and *even* can be cited, one of these must exist in any situation, any number is either odd or even, and there is no intermediate state between them: neither *sickness* and *health*, nor between *odd* and *even*. While one side of the opposition does not necessarily exist in every situation, in such a case there may be something intermediate between them; for example, *white* and *black* are characteristic of an object, but an object does not necessarily have one of these, because not every object is either white or black. Aristotle also says that opposites can be transferred to each other: "Indeed, *health* can become *sick*, *white* can turn into *black*, *cold* can turn into *heat*, and in the same way *good* can be produced from *bad* and *bad* can be produced from *good*." [3]. After that, Aristotle also dwells on the "next two ways of opposing each other": deprivation and possession, or affirmation and denial. Deprivation and possession are taken in relation to one event. For example, *sight* and *blindness* are defined in relation to the eye, and in general, whatever a sign embodies in nature, one can talk about deprivation and possession. By deprivation we mean that an event does not have an aspect that should be given by nature. The opposition of deprivation and possession is in relation to each other. Aristotle says that negation and affirmation do not correspond to any of the above: in relation, nor in deprivation and possession, one sign does not have to be true and the other false [3].

In this way, it would not be a mistake to say that Aristotle laid the foundation for phenomena that were later interpreted in science under the name of contrary, contradiction and complementarity. In formal logic, opinions are put forward about the existence of these forms of contradiction. For example, V.A. Mikhaylov, expressing his opinion on contrary and contradiction, emphasizes that contrary is a contradiction in a narrow sense, and contradiction can express opposition in a broad sense [20].

In linguistics, in this regard, mainly the manifestations of contrarian and complementary opposition are noteworthy. They are interpreted as follows: Contrary (from Latin *contrarius* - opposite) content is expressed as follows: between "X" and "Y" there is a third concept - "Z". For example, like *black* and *white*. Between these there is a third character (eg: gray) that does not belong to either. Complementary (from the Latin *complementum* - to fill) resistance is shown in the form of "X" and "Y". In this type of opposition, the components completely negate each other, there is no place for an intermediate concept between them. For example, truth – lie. In this case, the denial of one confirms the other: it is not true, so it is false or vice versa.

Asmus's scientific views are also based on the above points, in addition, he scientifically substantiates that at the core of the contradictory contradiction lies the law of the exclusion of the third: "The contradictory opposition is based on the denial of one, which confirms the other... Said two - affirmation and negation - one truth, the other must be false" [4]. But not every denial creates such a contradiction. For example, *young* – *not young*, in this case it is impossible to talk about the opposite, because not young does not mean old.

The linguist E.N. Chernega, referring to Aristotle's services in the formation of the theory of opposition, adds the following: "It was Aristotle who summarized the issues related to the concept of opposition in ancient philosophy and drew a conclusion. Its service is that it distinguishes not only contradictions, but also the contradictory character of the surrounding existence" [9].

M.N. Chupanovskaya emphasizes Hegel's work more. The linguist says, "The model of opposition that arose in ancient times later found its development in various philosophical systems. But its relatively complete view is reflected in Hegel's

works... Hegel understands opposition as an inner negation [18].

B. Spinoza in the work "Ethics" makes good use of opposition to reveal the nature of emotions and explains their expression by opposing words: "Emotions arise due to the increase or decrease of desire. If the desire to live (to exist) is realized at a higher level, a person experiences a feeling of joy. On the contrary, if a person knows that the possibility of existence has decreased, he will be possessed by a feeling of sadness" [29]. The philosopher justifies his approach to events on the basis of contrast through the following thought: "To determine is to oppose" [20].

PSYCHOLINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF THE CATEGORY OF OPPOSITION

Another important aspect in the definition of the contrast category is its psycholinguistic aspect. Psychologists put forward the view that the formation of any concept, differentiating the characteristics of various objects and phenomena and comparing them with each other, determining their common aspects is carried out on the basis of the imagination in our thinking. For example, our perception of *light*, *small*, *wide* marks enable us to identify *heavy*, *large*, *narrow* marks. G.P. Melnikov emphasizes that the opposition in the mind is realized on the basis of language tools, that is, antonymic language units play the main role in this case [19].

It is worth saying that the existence of the category of opposition occurs not only in the way of perception of the phenomena of objective existence, but also as a product of the world of thought. "Objective differences between objects, properties, and relations are among the antonyms expressing objective opposition, based on subjective thinking, on the basis of similarity with objective opposition, and from the standard of evaluation of this or that fact established in society, specific life requirements, centuries-old customs and traditions. Example, *beautiful* - *ugly*, *real* - *fake*..." [22].

E.N. Miller asserts that the objective differences between objects, features, relations are defined in our thinking subjectively, on the basis of similarity with objective opposition and based on the standard of evaluation of one or another fact established in society, based on specific life requirements, centuries-old customs and traditions

[2;20]. For example, *big* - *small* are universally recognized antonyms, but nevertheless, it can be said that what they mean is not an absolute opposite. In existence, the small sign can be used for *hedgehogs*, *kittens*, and *flies*, and the large sign can be used for *elephants*, *calves*, and *eagles*. But the biggest *hedgehog* is smaller than the smallest *elephant*, etc. The same object can be assessed by the same person at different times as big in one place and small in another [21]. The system of antonymic opposition is not completely consistent in different languages, which is determined by geographical, social and other external factors, as well as by the laws of the system of consciousness. The integration of science, the development of interdisciplinary relations is noteworthy as it is a characteristic aspect of scientific research conducted at the current stage. Including, linguistics cannot develop without psychology and its experiments, without extensive biological information on the way of this integration. Psycholinguistics studies the occurrence and perception of speech situations and their interaction with language structure. Therefore, in order to get deeper into the essence of antonymy as a linguistic category, it is necessary to study the psycholinguistic factor of associative (interconnected, reminiscent of each other) relationships of opposite meanings. The principle of association is the universality of all mental processes, including higher forms of mental activity. In this case, two or more under the term association.

The connection between psychic phenomena (sensation, perception, imagination, thought, image, etc.) manifested reflexively is understood; in the association, the actualization of one member in certain conditions leads to the manifestation of another. Associations based on similarity, dependence and contrast are the main forms of psychological association. On the basis of contrast association, it is understood the reflection and combination of images that have a sign of opposition in thinking (memory). Thus, the opposition is situated in our thinking as an essential difference in connection, each of which can give an impression of the other.

LINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF THE CATEGORY OF OPPOSITION

The phenomenon of opposition is interpreted in linguistics mainly under the name of antonymy. Antonymic relationship is one of the most complex phenomena in language and has always attracted the

attention of linguists. As a result of the work done, a system of certain criteria was formed for defining this event. These criteria are determined on two levels: paradigmatic and syntagmatic.

As a rule, paradigmatic relations are associated with language features, while syntagmatic features are characterized by speech. Both of these aspects are important for language units and ensure the integrity of the language in different aspects.

In the paradigmatic plan, the most important feature of antonyms is their expression of semantic opposition. This aspect has always been the main factor in defining antonyms. Antonyms are words that semantically contradict their common sign and at the same time are located at two peaks of a certain lexical-semantic paradigm. They are opposite, but related words, different in appearance.

M.D. Lesnik says: "...the state of antonymy should be between one type of events that are in a certain relationship, connection. "*Bad* - *good*, *old* - *new* - these are interconnected, correlative concepts, one cannot be understood without the other" he admits. [15]. In this regard, D.N. Shmelev's opinion is particularly noteworthy: "In antonymic opposition, each member is defined as a lexical-semantic unit in the language by its antonymic pair. The meaning of "*big*" exists as well as the meaning of "*small*" and, conversely, both words in their basic meaning require each other and depend on the other [27]. Following L. Elmslev, D.N. Shmelev calls this semantic connection complementarity.

The veracity of this opinion can be proven in the explanation of antonyms in dictionaries, first of all, according to the principle of using their opposite. A comparative analysis of the definitions of antonyms in dictionaries fully proves that they are interconnected and mutually demanding concepts. Despite all the progress made in the field of antonymy, this phenomenon has many controversial, unexplored aspects. For example, there are controversial opinions among linguists about whether gendered words are antonyms or not. Some sources emphasize that *male-female* correlative pairs cannot express an antonymic relationship, while others include such pairs as antonyms. For example, S.Usmanov considers pairs of *husband-wife*, *sister-sister*, *boy-girl* types as "semi-antonyms"[33], so he still includes them among antonyms. We cite the scientific views of L.A. Novikov

and Y.D. Apresyan as an example of conflicting opinions on this issue:

L.A. Novikov considers the type of words *male* — *female*, *husband* — *wife* to be complementary antonyms: "Non-gradual opposition is antonyms expressing complementarity (*married* — *single*, *alive* — *dead*, *wet* — *dry*, *sighted* — *blind*, *male* - *female*, *husband* - *wife*)». [27].

Yu.D. Apresyan admits that the negation of the sign "male" is not equal to "female", each gender has its own physiological and anatomical signs. He draws the following conclusion on this issue: "Either the words denoting gender should be removed from the antonyms, or a completely new type of antonymy should be distinguished, but in this case, it will be difficult to give a general description of antonyms"[2].

We also approve the scientific views of Yu.D. Apresyan. Because antonymy is specific only to the category of sign (of course, sign in this place is broad), and correlative words consist mainly of nouns with concrete semantics. In their semes, the primary semes are not 'signs', but 'concrete objects', and they contradict each other with the known, secondary semes of 'signs'. For example: *aka*(older brother)-*uka* (younger brother) pair cannot be an example of an antonymic relationship, because an antonym should be a unit representing a sign in relation to a certain phenomenon, but the words *aka*(older brother)-*uka* (younger brother) themselves represent the event, and the sign is only a certain part of sememes. Generally speaking, these words do not have the potential of antonyms.

Yu.D. Apresyan emphasizes the opposite opinion. As another aspect that caused discussions in the early works on antonymy, it is possible to mention the issue of considering partite and part less forms of verbs as antonyms. For example: *came* – *did not come*. In our opinion, participle in verbs cannot be an antonymic case anyway. First, in any case, we are not studying opposition as a logical category, but as a way of expressing it in linguistic units. As a linguistic phenomenon, antonyms should be separate lexemes that have opposite meanings to each other and exist in the language. *Came* – *did not come* are two forms of the same word in the language.

M.I. Sidorenko puts forward the opinion that "words expressing a specific concept are not considered antonyms if they are characteristic of different styles or different emotional-expressive

colors"[31]. V. A. Ivanova develops this idea and says that "an antonymic series consisting of two words should naturally have the same stylistic color." At this point, the linguist emphasizes that if stylistic color is one of the main differential signs for synonyms, this aspect must be integral in antonyms, because antonyms are used together and must be at the same stylistic stage in order to ensure the stylistic compatibility of the text. According to him, "opposite words characteristic of different speech styles cannot form an antonymic series, because they cannot systematically appear in the same antonymic context."

It should be said that to approach the semantic opposition between lexical units from this position is to limit the linguistic position of the phenomenon.

CONCLUSIONS

The category of opposition is one of the main criteria in existence. The role of the category of opposition in the understanding of the world is incomparable. The study of any phenomenon from a philosophical point of view sooner or later leads to an appeal to their opposite side. Nothing is more important in uncovering the essence of phenomena than the use of their opposites. Opposition occurs not only in the way of the perception of the phenomena of objective existence, but also as a result of thinking. Therefore, in order to fully illuminate the linguistic nature of this phenomenon, we will also need to study its logical-philosophical and psychological character.

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The theoretical conclusions summarized in this study served to clarify the nature of lexical semantic relations in the language system. At the moment, the results of the article are important in teaching such courses as "Lexicology", "Semasiology", "Stylistics", "Linguistic analysis of artistic text", creating textbooks, teaching-methodical manuals, scientific pamphlets. The main results and materials of the article are recommended to be widely used for students of Uzbek philology faculties of higher educational institutions and in lexicology and semasiology classes held in graduate courses.

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