

## ASSOCIATION AS LINGUISTIC PHENOMENON

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**Abstract:** The article deals with the notion of association in linguistics. Various researchers looked for connections between thinking and language, conducting linguistic experiments and researches in the field of psycholinguistics, linguistics and, namely, associative groups.

Research of associations is mainly aimed at the conceptual and semantic structure of human memory. Study of associations has a long scientific tradition, for centuries they have been the object of study of philosophers, psychologists, linguists. Associative experiment is a technique aimed at identifying associations existing in an individual based on his previous experience. To analyze associations it is necessary to know and understand connections between words, therefore, explore the sphere of human consciousness and cognitive perception. The article looks into history of associations studies, analyzing the main achievements and key points in the research of links between words and images, connections and relations between semantic field and groups. Also attention is paid to external and internal associative links and their analysis. The other essential part of the study is focused on the insight into the nature of synonymy, antonymy and paronymy, the paradigms and their classifications. Understanding of associative and thematic groups helps us to conduct researches necessary for the understanding of the mechanism of interaction that exists between different lexical– semantic groups.

**Keywords:** association; contiguity; semantical features; semantic fields; associative links; classification of associations.

**Introduction.** The general theory of lexical–semantic system is finally formed by the middle of the twentieth century. Its main postulate is the position that the external force, organizing language as a system, is the system of the world, which is being reflected in the language, is governed strictly linguistic factors.

The development of technology makes the world change and alongside with it changes the perception of people. Nowadays words, notions and concepts produce associations among which some are slightly different from the ones found in past while the others have changed much. In modern hectic and ever-developing world even well-known and seemingly simple words like “success, morning, key” etc. The discussion can be held on topics like pragmatic and semantic changes that have happened in sphere

of linguistic analysis based on association cores of words and word-groups. This topical research can focus on better understanding not only the causeemes and reflexemes but enrich the scientific analysis of language signs, denotates and concept perception.

Man perceives the world including through associations, so the interest in him as an object of scientific research, has a long history dating back to Aristotle. As part of the toolkit of psychologists in semasiology association is interesting first and foremost to representatives of psychological direction. J. Deese [1] attempted to bring together the psychological and linguistic analysis of the association, has developed a new method for the analysis of associative structures, by applying one of the first associative experiment to prove the associative nature of the semantic component of words. For the occurrence of association between language units there should be a prerequisite for the existence of a semantic connection, although associated words are not always linked semantically. The present article deals with historical analysis of the research into associative links and provides examples of various approaches and studies.

**Linguistic studies of associations.** I. A. Boduen de Courtenay predicted lexicology to become a «creature of the twentieth century» and he was right. To date, lexicology became an independent linguistic discipline with its issues, the subject of the research, its own units and categories. Long-term studies of lexical material (different classes of lexical units, lexical-semantic groups of semantic fields, etc. in terms of synchrony and diachrony) showed that the lexical system of language is open and its development is dependent both on the actual linguistic and extralinguistic factors. The attention to the dynamics of language led to the need to address in scientific research activities of verbal and cogitative subject – a man with his experience of life, system of values, the sum of knowledge, communicative needs [14, p.23]. According to J. N. Karaulova only in our time linguists have become fully binding representations about the internal and external structures of the language to communicate with its social function “combatant” features [4, p.16].

The problems of lexicology were also deepened by data related sciences – socio–linguistics, psycholinguistics, ethnology, etc. And at the present stage, as V.P. Konetskaya notes, we can talk about “the transition to a new scientific paradigm – neofunctionalism – which presented cognitive and communicative areas.” [4, p.86].

It is well known that the basic unit of lexicology is the word, notion of which is presented in different aspects – denotative, significative, and connotative and others. Formation, structure, communication, operation of these aspects are included in the scope of the study of linguistics and psycholinguistics. However, along with the recognition of the “linguistic structure” psycholinguists speak of the existence of “psychological structure” that “correlation is determined by the system and contrasting words in the course of their use in the work, rather than in the process of comparing them as the vocabulary of units” [Leontieva A.A., 1969]. It has long been observed that the word not only refers to a particular object, but is a whole network of connotative related additional images that are similar in visual situation, previous experience, etc. Such values complexes are called “associative values”. The above mentioned system of “relatedness and contrasting words in the course of their use in the work” is a system of associative links among words. Complexes of associative values spontaneously arising from the perception of the word were studied in detail. One of the first in this area was an experiment J. Deese who tried to prove the associative nature of the semantic component of words [1].

At the present time reasonably topical is the description of the linguistic nature of the associations, which take place in the formation of the lexical paradigm, and identifying mechanisms for their implementation in the lexical–semantic system, which will allow to distinguish between objects of research semasiology and psycholinguists who are actively engaged in the study of associative connections between words, but relying primarily on extralinguistic factors (A.A. Zalevskaya, O.V. Ivanov, A.P. Klimenko, A.A. Leontiev, A.R. Luria, I.V. Rodneva, Y. Samarin, T. Slama–Cazacu,

Y. Sorokin, D.I. Terekhova, N.V. Ufimtsev, G.S. Schoor, E.P. Shubin, R.M. Frumkin et al.).

We set ourselves the goal to prove the possibility of allocating a lexical paradigm as associative–semantic group (ASG), which is part of the associative–semantic structure (ASS), and to identify the mechanism of semantic association of words within it. To do this, by component, definitional, logical and distribution analysis we determined the semantic structure of word "seasons" and the study can be interpreted as the top of the associative–semantic groups, and then by continuous sampling from the dictionaries has identified a group of words, semantically related words analyzed. Non–directional associative experiment was to determine the composition of words associated with the word–stimuli (winter, spring, summer, autumn), which was refined on the basis of the directed associative experiment. Among the experimentally obtained words associated with the word–stimulus, we were able to identify those in which the semantic associative connection gets confirmation that allows them to be regarded as a word relevant cause. In addition, there were identified the structure of associative semantic groups and architecture of the associative–semantic structures (ASS).

Thus, our research is aimed at identifying the specially organized lexical–semantic paradigm, the determination of its structure and the specific relationships between its members on the basis of differential and integral features. It should be noted that along with the standard lexical microsystems first isolated and described the associative–semantic groups and the associative–semantic structure as a way of paradigmatic organization of Russian vocabulary, which is determined by the structure and mechanism of association of tokens in such a paradigm.

The theoretical results are essential supplement of linguistics theory of lexical–semantic paradigms and could serve as a basis for further study of the actual nature of the language associated words. In addition, they can also serve as a basis for the study of the linguistic identity and national specificity of a language picture of the world.

In its turn, the actual material can be included in the thesaurus, dictionary of associative rules and vocabulary minimum, it can be used to determine the internal thesaurus, and in teaching practice – for the lecture course "Lexicology", various special courses and seminars on the problems of lexicology and semasiology as well as in the course "Linguistic" in teaching Russian as a foreign language.

Verbal association is the result of individual perception of objective reality through the prism of person's own life experience, its cultural and social level, membership of a particular ethnic group. Therefore, the emergence of a one– word response to a stimulus, in our opinion, can be caused by any of the above mentioned factors. However, in certain language situation a principle dominates. So, C. Bally said that the “human mind constantly varies between logical perception and emotion, we either understand or feel. Our opinion is often both logical ideas and feelings. Although these two elements can be combined in various proportions, yet in each case one thing prevails: either the logical perception or feeling” [7, p.82].

The associative experiment is one of the oldest methods of experimental psychology. In particular, even Carl Jung and Freud [10, p.23] used it in their clinical practice. This technique was used to study the psyche of the individual, establishing laws of thinking. The associative rules for abnormal psychology and psychiatry are used for the study of problems in the field of verbal behaviour, cognitive process, the formation of human speech ability. Over time, the association experiment has been used for research in linguistics lexical systemic, interaction of languages, ways to organize the material in memory (the internal structure of human thesaurus). The experiment can detect semantic links between the original words and associations, which realized the potential of initial valence of words, identify the various components of value.

Attempts to provide tools for associative experiments. There were a lot of attempts to conduct pure associative experiment and work out exact procedure and find the most appropriate tools and methods to get the result that could be further used for researching into associations and their nature. J. Deese [1, p.18] attempted to bring

together the psychological and linguistic analysis of associations and later developed a new method for the analysis of the associative structure. As Ch. Kofer and D. Bousfield, J. Deese did not consider individual reactions to the words, and the whole network of associated words. These words serve each other stimuli and responses, causing the appearance of a number of associates, either of which, in turn, can be an incentive, which is a response to the initial couple of words. On the basis of data in the course of the experiment, he introduces the concept of “associative values”. If two words have the same distribution of associative reactions, according to J. Deese their associative values are the same (in fact, the words are only partially overlapping sets of associations). Defining a group of associated words and examining them using factor analysis of relationships within these groups, researcher J. Deese formulated two laws of associations: I – the elements are associated, when they can be countered to some specific manner; II – the elements are associated when they can be grouped on the basis of two or more common characteristics [1, p.96].

Theory of J. Deese was highly appreciated by specialists (Ch. Kofer, S. Ervin-Tripp, D. Slobina, A. A. Leont’ev) because it presents a new look at an association, revealed a hierarchy of associative reactions, as well as conducted a parallel between associative and semantic characteristics of the words, which, according to A. A. Leont’ev [9], is the proof of the unity of their psychological nature.

However, J. Deese was not the first who addressed the issue of association. Attention to this issue was paid in the early twentieth century. One of the first and most important experiments in this area was the experiment of G. Kent and A. Rozanova (1910), during which there was a list of stimuli words, which was taken as a basis by subsequent researchers who studied the nature of both mental and lexical associations.

**Latest developments.** In the second half of the twentieth century structural approach is getting more wide – spread and common in studying the linguistic units of different levels, which could not but affect the association study. Linguists and psycholinguists tried to identify objective factors that associate together around the

word– stimulus. As it turned out, one of these factors is the existence of a common or partially similar semantics. The researches have shown that the idea of having a semantic proximity between members of separate associative series has some basis, but this does not mean that the members of any associative group may have a general value (especially nouns). Therefore, the study of associative groups and rows began to use the concept of “associative field”, which was first introduced by C. Bally, who noted that «language system seems to have the form of a vast network of permanent mnemonical associations which are very similar to each other in all speaking subjects – associations, which are distributed to all parts of the language» [9, p.30].

Sometimes, instead of the term “associative field” the term “semantic field” is used. But the identification of these concepts are not entirely justified: in contrast to the semantic associative field is determined in the course of the experiment (rather than analysis vocables or text), and includes a word– stimulus and his associates, and the volume of the field depends on extralinguistic factors (the subjects of the psyche, their social and personal experience, cultural level, etc.) In addition to these extra– linguistic factors, on the amount of the associative field, it affects the degree of motivation of the sign. It has been observed that “the usual sign of a reasoned, the more focused attention on its internal structure, thereby reducing the number and role of external associations of its associative field”. The essence of a fully motivated sign is that it relies on a mandatory internal association, but the essence of it is the completely arbitrary feature that mentally it communicates with all the other characters using the optional external associations” [2, p.154]. The question arises: what is the union of the words that should be considered an associative field. After all, various associative groups are unequal in nature because they are paradigmatic or syntagmatic. In their turn, the paradigmatic groups (which are often characterized by semantic unity) can be either functional or structural nature. Syntagmatic associations are not always the result of an associative process, as the nature of stable combinations of words is determined by extralinguistic factors – not the presence in them the sense of community, and the correlation of their

components with reality. So it would be the wrong interpretation of the associative field as an association having both syntagmatic and paradigmatic nature, it would be wrong to identify associative field with associative group.

On this basis, G. S. Schur [15, p.43] talks about the need for “a differential approach to the establishment of associations and their types, as well as the delineation of the term “association” of values in the sense of “unity” (grouping of words), and “associate”, when it comes to mental associations. “Both psychologists and linguists who have studied the association, attempted to organize them on the basis of experimental data. As a result, we can talk about three principles of classification, which nevertheless does not exhaust the whole variety of associations and ordering possibilities logic (Wundt, Trautsholdt), psychological (Wells, Woodworth) and linguistic (Bourdon, Woodrow, Lovell). Sometimes there is a mixture of these principles (Jung Rilkin).

An example of proper psychological classification can serve as a classification by F. Galton [6, p.127] that stands out purely on verbal associations, associations, defined images, etc. W. Wundt [11, p.168] divides association on the external and internal: external associations reflect the prior experience of the relationship in the world, and the interior – the result of an individual thinking process. The terms “external” and “internal” associative relation are used by A. R. Luria [10]. However, using the term “external” associative links he means “association by contiguity”, “when the word is a component of the visual situation, which includes the named object” (10, p.110) (examples of such associations may be “house – roof”, “dog – tail”, etc.). “Internal” associative connections are “those connections, which are caused by the inclusion of the words in a certain category” [10, p.111] (for example, “pet– dog”, “chair– furniture”, and “oak– tree”). C. Bally [12, p.72] distinguishes between loose and remote association.

As for the psycholinguistic classifications, among them are the laws of association of J. Deese mentioned above, as well as the classification of D. Jenkins and S. Saport [11, p.167] separating associations on paradigmatic and syntagmatic. More focus is put on the classification G. S. Schur [15, p.79–83], who relied not only on the experimental



data, but also on the theoretical understanding of other facts of language, and also took into account the results of other researchers.

G. S. Schur distinguishes 3 types of associations: ontological, empirical, and purely mental. The term “ontological association” means “a way to combine elements into groups with common (invariant) properties or characteristics in terms of their reflection in the consciousness of the individual” [12, p.88]. These associations are a reflection of the objective of the principles underlying the association of subjects possessing any common characteristics or common features. These associative groups are determined by the individual's social experience (the subjective experience only determines its volume).

In accordance with the subjective experience “empirical” association arise – paradigmatic and syntagmatic. In contrast to the members of the ontological elements of associative groups empirical paradigmatic groups often share common structural features or functions and composition of these groups varies in different individuals, since they reflect “a certain set of tools and effects, know this individual,” [12, p.90]. Extralinguistic factors determine the composition and syntagmatic groups. It is noticed that the composition and the ratio of paradigmatic and syntagmatic groups affected by such extralinguistic factors as the age of the subjects, place of residence, gender, etc. Non–ontological and non–empirical associations belong to the third kind – “mental associations”. G. S. Schur [12, p.95] treats them as “random” (“individual”) association and consociation.

However, along with the above mentioned classifications of associations, psychologists and psycholinguists discussed the question which is focused on the typology of verbal associations and the principles of their classification. The basis for these associations is the nature of semantic relations and relations between the word – stimulus and associates.

**Classifications of associations.** From the point of view of identifying semantic features (parameters) first classification of the association was made by G. Miller. He identified ten types of associative relations in the “stimulus– response” pairs [2, p.392]:

- Contrast (wet – dry)
- Similarity (courage – courage)
- Subordination (apple – peach)
- Generalization (tomato – vegetables)
- Assonance (the year – a cat)
- Part– whole (day – week)
- Addition (rail – road)
- Self– centeredness (success – it is necessary, loneliness – never)
- Cognates (deep – depth)
- Predication (dog – barking).

Obviously, the linguistic classification of the relationship in a pair of “stimulus – reaction” should have a semantic framework, as indicated by A. P. Klimenko. Therefore, the main goal is not the allocation of class associations and identification typology of semantic relationship between stimulus and response. Based on this, the following relationships are allocated: substitutability, entry / inclusion, syntagmatic and marginal. Building a classification on the basis of these criteria helps in the study of associative and semantic connections and relationships identified in the lexical system [15, p.47–67].

Studying of association already has a certain history. It creates a circle of familiar– governmental issues, a set of material analysis techniques. Established and put into practice by psychologists association experiment not only inherited psycholinguists, but is increasingly being used as one of the linguistic research methods. The value of this method for linguists is that it allows you to identify the specificity of the semantic structure of a single word, as well as a hierarchy of semantic relationships of words in groups.

The basis of the research is the hypothesis that any word is a member of one of the groups, and there are several types of these groups. Numerous studies have revealed about forty linguistic categories: sets of subsystems, layers, categories, classes, cycles, groups, series, etc. However, for the study of the systems of vocabulary, it is not sufficient to determine the set of words, it is important to identify the main types of relations of the members of these groups.

In modern lexicology there are traditionally allocated lexical– semantic groups, thematic groups and semantic fields depending on their semantic relationships. They include the words selected on the basis of common semantic characteristics. In the “Dictionary of linguistic terms” O. S. Akhmanova gives the term “paradigmatics” along with a synonym “associative plan”, which implies that the paradigmatic relationship is a relationship built on certain associations. However, accepting the idea that the paradigmatic associations include synonyms series and antonymous, homonymous, hyper– hyponymic couples, linguists believe that polysemy and homonymy are formed on the base of associative– semantic relationships, and antonymy, synonymy, semantic fields are the result of substantial– semantic “conceptual” link [14, p.127].

Obviously, and synonyms and antonyms, and paronymy are all results of association (by G.Miller these are relations of similarity, contrast, subordination and generalization). The essence of these relations is that synonymous words, for example, are sure to have a common semantic feature that they have a nuclear and peripheral has a different volume: to go (move) – run (move fast) – race (to move very quickly). When there is antonymy of two words they possess a common semantic feature that is nuclear in the semantic structure of both words, such as “movement” [14, p.174].

**Conclusions.** Therefore, while studying language and perception of words, the intergal part of the studies should be focused on investigating into thinking process. The psycholinguistics deals with general associative relations among words and produces grounds for further developing of semantic links. Such studies have been conducted by many researchers, although one combined system is yet to be created.

Recognition of associative and thematic groups leads us to the understanding of the mechanism of interaction between different lexical–semantic groups that are comprehended as an isolated cell of one large static system. For the occurrence of association between language units there should be a prerequisite for the existence of a semantic connection, although associated words are not always linked semantically, which leads to psychological studies of this subject.

Psycholinguistics tries to identify associative relations between words which are used in associative experiment. Group of words resulting from non–directional associative experiment forms associative field.

In the present study, released in the lexical paradigm, called associative–semantic group of words interact at the level of correlation of the core and the periphery of semantic structures. The set of reflexes at all levels forms the associative–semantic structure. Therefore, the further research is aimed at the deep analysis of causeemes and reflexemes and their correlation as well as the attempt to create one universal system for revealing and analysing associative and semantic links between words.

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**Аннотация:** Статья рассматривает понятие ассоциации в лингвистике. Исследование ассоциаций направлено в основном на концептуальном и семантической структуры человеческой памяти. Изучение ассоциаций имеет давние научные традиции, в течение многих столетий они были объектом исследования философов, психологов, лингвистов. Ассоциативный эксперимент представляет собой метод, направленный на выявление ассоциаций, существующих в человека на основе его предыдущего опыта. Для анализа ассоциаций необходимо знать и понимать связь между словами, поэтому, исследовать сферу человеческого сознания и когнитивного восприятия. В статье рассматриваются в истории ассоциации исследований, анализ основных достижений и ключевых моментов в исследовании связей между словами и образами, связей и отношений между семантическим полем и группами. Также внимание уделяется внешних и внутренних ассоциативных связей и их анализ. Понимание ассоциативных и тематических групп, помогает нам проводить исследования, необходимые для понимания механизма взаимодействия, которое существует между различными лексико-семантическими группами.

**Ключевые слова:** объединение; семантические особенности; семантические поля; ассоциативные связи; классификация ассоциаций.

Инна Ахмад, Виктория Чмель Ассоциация как лингвистическое явление

**Анотація:** У статті розглядається поняття асоціації в лінгвістиці. Даній темі приділялось багато уваги як і у минулому, так і у теперішньому столітті. Різні дослідники шукали зв'язок між мисленням і мовою, проведення лінгвістичних експериментів і досліджень в області психолінгвістики, лінгвістики і, а саме, асоціативних груп.

Дослідження асоціацій направлено в основному на концептуальному і семантичної структури людської пам'яті. Вивчення асоціацій має давні наукові традиції, протягом багатьох століть вони були об'єктом дослідження філософів, психологів, лінгвістів. Асоціативний експеримент являє собою метод, спрямований на виявлення асоціацій, існуючих в людини на основі його попереднього досвіду. Для аналізу асоціацій необхідно знати і розуміти зв'язок між словами, тому, досліджувати сферу людської свідомості і когнітивного сприйняття.

У статті розглядаються дослідження відомих лінгвістів та психолінгвістів, їх спроби аналізу асоціацій, результати асоціативних експериментів та внесок в історію досліджень асоціації, аналіз основних досягнень і ключових моментів в дослідженні зв'язків між словами і образами, зв'язків і відносин між семантичним полем і групами. Також увага приділяється



осмисленню зовнішніх і внутрішніх асоціативних зв'язків і їх аналіз. Розуміння асоціативних і тематичних груп, допомагає нам проводити дослідження, необхідні для розуміння механізму взаємодії, який існує між різними лексико–семантичних груп, що, в свою чергу, дає можливість глибше і чіткіше розуміти мову та її роль у житті людини.

Ключові слова: об'єднання; семантичні особливості; семантичні поля; асоціативні зв'язки; класифікація асоціацій.

Інна Ахмад, Вікторія Чмель Асоціація як лінгвістичне явище.