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## UNIVERSAL AND UNIQUE POLYSEMY MODELS OF VERBS OF UNRELATED LANGUAGES

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### *Abstract*

The article identifies and systematizes universal / unique polysemy models that are characteristic of physical verbal predicates in unrelated / non-related languages: Russian, English, Tatar. Based on the comparative analysis of the semantic structures of the sounding and melting verbs, the degree of productivity of the semantic shift models was determined, cases of similarities and differences of these models were identified. Moreover, the focus is also on metaphorical and metonymic transfers as the main types of secondary nomination, reflecting the cognitive mechanisms of association of concepts. Using the methods of linguistic and cognitive semantics, as well as semantic typology, the most productive polysemy models for correlative physical verbal predicates were identified in three named languages: “physical process → emotional sphere”, “physical process → physical action”, “physical process → physiological sphere”, etc. Compared with the unique models of metaphorical and metonymic transfers, there is a limited number of universal polysemy models: “physical process → social sphere”, “physical process → speech sphere”, “physical process → emotional sphere”, etc. It was also revealed that the set of metaphorical models is wider than the list of metonymic ones, however, the former are represented by a larger number of lexical units. The laws of semantic derivation of physical verbal predicates are anthropocentric, since the derived meanings of these units are associated with the nomination of various aspects of human life: social, psychological, physiological, speech, etc.

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**Keywords:** Polysemy, metaphor, metonymy, verb, unrelated languages, semantic universals.



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## **1. Introduction**

As research experience shows, the statement that words with similar meanings have a similar seismological history can be attributed to the phenomena of genetically and typologically different languages. This can be proven on the semantic development of correlative verbal predicates in languages of different systems, including Indo-European and Turkic. The proximity and identity of the semantic dynamics of verb lexemes is due to the fundamental similarity of the categorial components of meanings of these units. Moreover, there is a regularity of semantic processes and their verbalized results. The semantic potential of the verb in both Indo-European and Turkic languages is realized at two levels: lexical-semantic (word-building paradigms and nests) and purely semantic (a systemic polysemy objectified in the intra-word paradigm of a polysemous word). Our focus is the second level, the degree of productivity of semantic transition models characteristic of correlative verbs, types of relations between their derived meanings in three languages.

## **2. Problem Statement**

It is necessary to identify and systematize patterns of regular polysemy in unrelated multistructured languages, since the results can solve a number of urgent problems of the polysemy theory posed in linguistic semantics (Fillmore & Atkins, 2000; Klein & Murphy, 2001; Murphy, 2010), cognitive semantics (Beretta et al., 2005; Haser, 2000; Kiseleva & Todosienko, 2019), semantic typology (Koch, 2001; Zaliznyak, 2013), linguo-pragmatics (Peregrin, 2003), linguistic universology, etc. The issues include: dependence of semantic innovations on linguistic / extralinguistic factors (psychological, sociocultural, etc.); definition or specification of absolute and probabilistic (statistical) semantic universals; the regular nature of the semantic dynamics of lexemes related to certain denotative spheres; the rate of semantic changes in the lexemes of one group in different historical periods, etc. One of the most important problems is the identification of universal and unique models of semantic derivation in genetically and typologically distant languages, which allows us to identify general and ethnospecific aspects of secondary nomination, its dependence on cognitive factors characteristic of native speakers.

## **3. Research Questions**

The focus of the study is regular polysemy models of physical verbal predicates in three languages: Russian, English, and Tatar. All these languages have a wide semantic potential, demonstrating the laws of development of figurative meanings in the direction from concrete to abstract. In addition, it is relevant to compare the semantic structures of the physical predicates in three languages and determine semantic spheres associated with the derived meanings of these units.

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the work is to compare semantic structures of physical verbal predicates in the Russian, English and Tatar languages, identify their universal and unique polysemy models. The focus is also on such types of secondary nomination as metaphor and metonymy.

## 5. Research Methods

The study was carried out by using the “Systematic semantic dictionary of the Russian language” by Vasiliev (2009); for Russian physical verbs, English and Tatar analogues are provided. The analysis of linguistic units is based on a number of research methods: 1) the methods of contrastive linguistics, in particular the identification of interlingual lexical correspondences and their subsequent seminal analysis; 2) methods of linguistic semantics, including the method of semantic field aimed at identifying the relationship and interdependence of the meanings of lexemes belonging to the same conceptual field; 3) the methods of cognitive linguistics, including modeling the relationship of the main and derived meanings of a conceptual metaphor (Lakoff, Johnson, 1980); 4) the methods of semantic typology, in particular the identification of a set of semantic transitions, according to which the structure of a polysemant can be schematically represented as a system of unidirectional relationships of its individual meanings ‘схватить’ → ‘понять’, ‘пустой’ → ‘тикетный’ etc. (Zaliznyak, 2013). In analyzing the physical verbal predicates, all the above methods are applied to identify universal (for three / two languages) and unique polysemy models that represent the laws of derivative meanings: “physical process → emotional sphere”, “physical process → social sphere”, etc., where the first member means the original conceptual sphere associated with the primary meaning, and the second one - the resulting sphere related to the secondary meaning.

## 6. Findings

The universality / uniqueness of polysemy models in Russian, English and Tatar languages was revealed on the physical verbs related to the semantic groups “Sounding” and “Melting”. We identified the following models of semantic derivation, characteristic of the verbs of sounding.

### I. Metaphorical models:

#### 1. Universal:

1.1. “Physical process → social sphere”. For example, the Tatar verb *яңгырау* has the same metaphorical meaning as the Russian verb *звучать / зазвучать –таралу, билгеле булу* (‘become well-known’) (Chernyshev et al., 1965): *Геройның исеме бөтен дөньяга яңгырады.*

#### 2. Unique:

2.1. “Physical process → social sphere”. The Russian verb *греметь* has a metaphorical meaning “to become widely known”: *Пушкин достиг в то время апогея своей зрелости, и слава его гремела по всей России.* Saltykov-Shchedrin, Poshekhon antiquity.

2.2. “The physical process → the emotional sphere.” When transferred to the specified sphere, the Russian verb develops the secondary meaning *звучать* “to express itself, to manifest, to be revealed (about feelings, mood, etc.)”: *В голосе её звучала такая несомненная пронизательность, что Иудушка невольно поднял на неё глаза.* Saltykov-Shchedrin, The Golovlevs. In addition, the English predicate *buzz* develops a unique metaphorical meaning representing the specified model– “if a group of people or a place is buzzing, there is a lot of activity or excitement”: *A classroom buzzing with activity.*

2.3. “Physical process → physical action.” This polysemy model is represented primarily in English. The verb *buzz* has a unique secondary meaning “to call someone by pressing a buzzer”: *Kramer*

buzzed at the security door, and I let him in ; the verb *squeak* means “to succeed, win, or pass a test by a very small amount so that you only just avoid failure”: *She just squeaked through her math test.*

2.4. “Physical process → speech sphere”. The Russian verb *пицать* develops the unique metaphorical meaning *плаксиво, надоедливо жаловаться на что-либо (tearfully, annoyingly complain about anything)*: *После смерти Ленского Онегин отправляется путешествовать по России, везде хмурится и пицтит.* Pisarev, Pushkin and Belinsky.

2.5. “Physical process → movement”. The English predicate *buzz* develops a figurative meaning “to move quickly around a place”: *Pamela buzzed around checking that everything was ready.*

2.6. “Physical process → physiological sphere”. An example is the English verb *buzz*, which has the secondary meaning "if your head or mind is buzzing with thoughts, ideas etc, you cannot stop thinking about them: *My mind was buzzing with new ideas.*

## II. Metonymic models:

### 1. Universal:

1.1. “Physical process → physical process”: the Tatar verb *yagyrau*, the Russian verb *звучать* and the English verb *to sound* have a secondary meaning “to be heard”.

1.2. “Physical process → speech sphere”. The Russian verb *жуужжать* and the Tatar *byzldau* develop a similar metonymic meaning "persistently repeat something about something": *Толпа холодная поэта окружала И равнодушные хвалы ему жуужжала.* Pushkin, *The cold crowd...; Орчыкның өзлексез бызылдавы да ул тынлыкны бозмый.* I. Gazi.

### 2. Unique:

2.1. “Physical process → physical process”. As a result of semantic derivation, the verbs *звучать* and *звенеть* develop the following metonymic meaning: “звучать (to be heard - about voice, conversation, song, etc.)”: *Наташа в эту зиму в первый раз начала серьёзно петь. Когда звучал этот необработанный голос, даже знатоки-судьи ничего не говорили и только наслаждались.* L. Tolstoy, *War and Peace*; and *раздаваться, звучать* (to be heard, sound): *Однообразный тон её голоса начинал присекаться, в нём слышалась какая-то нервически звенящая нотка.* Ertel, *Gardenins.*

2.2. “Physical process → speech sphere”. When transferred to this sphere, the English verb *sound* has unique metonymic meanings - “to publicly give a warning or tell people to be careful”: *Several earlier studies had sounded similar warnings*; and “to make the sound of a letter in a word”: *The 's' in 'island' is not sounded.*

2.3. «Физический процесс → физическое действие». Английский глагол *ring* развивает уникальные метонимические значения, репрезентирующие данную модели полисемии: «to make a bell make a sound, especially to call someone's attention to you or to call someone to help you»: *I rang the doorbell but no one came*; «to make a telephone call to someone»: *I was going to ring you but I don't have your number.*

2.4. “Physical process → physiological sphere”. The verb *ring* has a specific metonymic meaning – if your ears ring, they make a continuous sound that only you can hear, after you have been somewhere very noisy or heard a loud sound: *The explosion made our ears ring.*

Let us consider the verb predicates belonging to the group “Melting”.

### I. Metaphorical models:

## 1. Universal:

1.1. "The physical process → the emotional sphere." There are similar metaphorical meanings characteristic of the Tatar verb *эрү* – “нинди дә булса тәэсирләндерә торган нәрсә йогынтысында йомшару, ягымлыланып китү”: *Нәфисә исенә төшү белән, Зиннәт туңып барган күңеленең язгы боз кебек акрын-акрын эри баруын тоя башлады*; the Russian verbs *оттаивать/оттаять* and the English verb *mellow* – if someone mellows or is mellowed, they become gentler and more sympathetic: *Paul is certainly mellowed over the years.*

## 2. Unique:

2.1. “Physical process → physical process”. The Russian verbs *таять/оттаивать* have a unique metaphorical meaning: *постепенно замирать, делаться неслышным – о звуках "gradually freeze, become inaudible - about sounds": Мелодия вся сияла, вся томилась вдохновением, счастьем, красотой, она росла и таяла.* Turgenev, Noble Nest.

2.2. “Physical process → physical action.” The Russian verbs *таять/оттаивать* have a unique figurative meaning "gradually disappear, becoming invisible": *Золочёный крест колокольни таял в синем небе, потеряв свои очертания.* М. Горьку.

2.3. “Physical process → physiological sphere”. As a result of the semantic derivation, the verbs *таять/оттаивать* develop the meaning “lose weight, wither away as a result of illness or grief”: *Кузнецова дочка, Феклуша, таяла с каждым днём; она лежала совсем чахленькая, жёлтая, с лицом старушки.* Gladkov, Volnitsa

## II. Metonymic models:

### 1. Unique:

1.1. “Physical process → physical state”. The English verb *mellow* develops the secondary meaning *if wine mellows or is mellowed it gets a smooth taste.*

1.2. “Physical process → physical action.” The English verb *thaw* develops the unique metonymic meaning “to let frozen food unfreeze until it is ready to cook”: *Thaw frozen meat in its packet and then cook as soon as possible.*

1.3. “Physical process → physical state”. The Tatar verb *ерү* has a unique secondary meaning “әчегән сәтнең esselek тәсире белән еремчәкк әйләнүе, аерулуы” (“turn into cottage cheese – about sour milk”): *Сәтнең өсте ябусыз торган, кайната гына башлаган идем, эреде дә төште.* М. Fayzi.

## 7. Conclusion

The analysis shows that Russian, English and Tatar physical verbs have both universal and unique models of polysemy, but the number of the first ones is rather limited (in particular, such models as “physical process → social sphere”, “physical process → speech sphere”, “physical process → emotional sphere” and some others). Complete synonymization of the semantic structures of these verbs, i.e. the parallel development of a similar set of secondary meanings is not fixed. Verb predicates have the greatest semantic potential, they have a simple form and indicate phenomena and processes that are relevant to everyday experience. It was established that metaphorical and metonymic polysemy models often coincide (for example, “physical process → social sphere”, “physical process → speech sphere”), which confirms the thesis about the close relationship between metaphorical and metonymic processes of

the secondary nomination. At the same time, the qualitative content of metaphorical and metonymic models is different. In addition, the set of metaphorical transfer models is wider; they reflect the principle of anthropocentrism, since they are related to semantic spheres primarily associated with various aspects of human life: psychological (emotional), social, speech, physiological, etc.

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