The Image as an Initial Element of the Cognitive Understanding of Words

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Abstract—An analysis of word semantics focusing on the invariance of advanced imagery in several pressing problems. Interest in the language of imagery is caused by the introduction, in the linguistics sphere, of a new paradigm, the center of which is the personality of the speaker (the subject of the language). Particularly noteworthy is the question of the place of the image when discussing the lexical, phraseological values and the relationship of imagery and metaphors. In part, the formation of a metaphor, as an interaction between two intellective entities, occurs at a cognitive level, and it is the category of the image, having cognitive roots, which aides in the correct interpretation of the results of this process on the lexical-semantic level.

Keywords—Image, metaphor, concept, creation of a metaphor, cognitive linguistics, erased image, vivid image.

I. INTRODUCTION

IT is known that human consciousness is a peculiar indissoluble unity of logical and imaginative perceptions and a reflection of reality. Part of conceptual information is tied to language, but another part is linked to mental representations of a different type - images, pictures, diagrams, gestalts. Since the late 1970s, the question of lexical imagery has been actively developed and discussed in linguistic literature, and it has become the subject of analysis, not only by stylistic analysts of artistic speech, but, primarily, by lexicologists and lexicographists.

In the philosophical encyclopedic dictionary an image is described as the form the reflection of an object takes in human consciousness. On the sensory level of cognition, images are sensations, perceptions and ideas, at the level of thought they are understandings, judgments, concepts and theories. An image is objective in its source – the reflected object – and is ideal in the process (form) of its existence. The forms that the embodiment of the image takes are practical actions, language and different symbolic models. If images are sensation and perception, then such an understanding of imagery is very broad, that is, in the philosophical sense, an image is the ideal form of a reflection of the material world. With a wide spectrum of different approaches for understanding an image as the fundamental factor of a philosophical point of view, the problem becomes the secondary nature of an image in relation to reality and the

activity of the subject in the process of constructing this image [1]-[4].

The main contribution to the process of constructing the image of an object or situation is not made by individual sensory impressions, but rather, an image of the world as a whole. It is the constant and ever present background that precedes any sensual experience and on the basis of which, it alone can acquire the status of the component of the sensory image of an external object. Imagery, undoubtedly, functions as a link between reality, its representation and its comprehension. An image is the most dismissive and indirect representation of reality, but at the same time it is also a factor in the changing reality of a particular culture, as it is one of the levers of influence on the traditional understanding of said reality.

From the perspective of psycholinguistics, an image arising from a person's short-term memory is the primary image. Despite the fact that it is the culmination of the process of perception, such an image is not a unit of knowledge. Further information about this image proceeds into long-term memory. The result of this is the formation of a "secondary image," characterized by continuity. Details, inherent in the primary image, are lost and the image is them schematized and typified. Secondary images become a kind of "class portrait" created on the basis of "individual portrait(s)."

If the logical-conceptual understanding of the world is associated with the analytical, abstracting activity of the mind, with the quantification and classification of reality, then the imaginative perception is aimed at concretization, continuity and clarity. For example, if in the process of communication, someone mentions an animal (a cat or dog); we make sense of it not as a set of relevant features (small pet, covered with hair, catches mice, like milk and so on). More likely to go through our mind are images of these animals as pets; concepts of the given animals are primarily figurative. If the conversation requires it, these images can become more detailed, but, perhaps, the uttered sound evokes a particular reaction from the listener - an understanding of what the conversation is about.

II. TYPOLOGY OF IMAGES

The distinctive feature of an image of an individual is concreteness: It can be created in the human mind as a result of incorporating a variety of characteristics to form an image. The image of an individual can vary in the minds of different people, but it is always isolated and specific in the mind of one person at a certain time. Images of classes have both specificity and generality. Specificity, because these types of

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World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology
International Journal of Cognitive and Language Sciences
Vol:8, No:6, 2014

images appear as representations of a single object or are created based on a variety of different objects. Generality as a result of the fact that the image of the class has a more flexible range of incorporated distinguishing class features. The ideal image of a class occupies an intermediate position between the concrete concept of an individual and the abstract concept of the general. Appearing in the transition from a single reflection to the general, from the concrete to the abstract, from the finite to the variable, the image of a class combines understanding with reality and operationally provides two functions of understanding - to implement the conceptualization of things and to delineate the identity of a class.

It is possible to distinguish between linguistic and stylistic imagery, and with that, while using the stylistic approach in language, there forms, not only a logical, but an aesthetic way of thinking. An inadequate reflection of beings and objects in which those features are consciously chosen and relayed, through which it is possible to transfer a given concept into a concrete pictorial form. The lexical approach aims at identifying the nature of imagery as a phenomenon inherent in words, in particular, its ability to reflect an imaginative vision of reality.

Speaking of imagery, it is impossible to ignore such a stereotypical mechanism of thinking as schematization. When distracted, non-object phenomena are conceptualized through an image and likeness of the material world and in the lexicon of imagery they take on a concretely sensuous form. Here develops the anthropomorphism of image perception - the commensurability of the surrounding reality with images and symbols that are easily understood by humans: images and symbols which become value based stereotypes. Indeed, straight is seen as being honest, true, while crooked is false; soft is seen as weak and good, while solid represents resoluteness and stubbornness. Reflecting the traditional ethno-cultural figurative representations embodied in language, this vocabulary conveys the value relation of man to himself and to the world around him.

Data on the types and characteristics of these images can be found in works focusing on experimental psychological research. Using, M. A. Kholodnaya identifies the following fundamental variants in the imagery of words: no images, concretely associated images, object-structural images (the substantive, detailed image of a specified object, in which the subject focuses on any of the object's essential features), sensual-sensory images (emotional experience), generalized images (these are also the schemes in which the specified object is explained using a combination of highly generalized visual elements, such as vectors, points and geometric forms), conventional visual signs (maximally generalized images in the forms of alphabetic, numeric and algebraic symbols) [5].

Using the principles of specificity in semantics and expressive figurative words, some linguists present the classification of lexical items in decreasing order of brightness and expressive imagery: 1) expressive figurative words with specific meanings: a name - flirt, donkey, snake; a nickname - trough (about a ship), pigsty (about a dirty room); words

denoting properties and actions in a specific form: spineless, hairy; images of amounts: storm, avalanche, sea; intensives: frying, scratching; 2) expressive figurative words denoting abstract concepts: whirlwind (events), sour (expression); 3) non-expressive figurative words with specific meanings: hat (of a mushroom), nose (of a kettle) 4) non-expressive figurative words with an abstract meaning: worry, procrastination, depressed (mood).

M. I. Cheremisina identifies three types of words that "can claim the right to be called figurative": words with a bright inner form: idler, swindler, cheapskate, etc.; 2) words with metaphorical imagery, which include zoomorphisms and other projections on humans: bear, clown, beanpole; metaphoric figurative objects: barn, doghouse; images of sets, verbal metaphors, metaphorical designations of qualities, signs [6].

"Visual" words that do not have a different meaning: *hag, fifa (Russian for girly-girl), bloke.* If the words in the first two types are characterized by the "projection of certain characteristics that are owned or assigned to one denotative class, object or phenomenon, belonging to another denotative class," then the imagery of the third type of words is due to the fact that the given words bring out "typical," visual representations of the given objects because of the unusual sound and expressiveness of meaning. It can be stated that there is a fairly extensive stratum of figurative words in which the corresponding component of meaning constantly plays an essential role, enters into the meaning of the word or has a significant impact on its formation [7] - [13].

III. SPECIFIC PROPERTIES OF IMAGES

It is important to look to the specific properties and characteristics of images as well as to the types of words which may be called figurative. First, the undifferentiated character of the image should be noted: it is synthetic in the sense that it combines different aspects of sense and perceptibility of an object (its entire image), and in the sense that, alongside the form, the output from or substantial characteristics associated with it must be included. Moreover, the image has more to do with the objects in reality than with the categories of meaning; the image may be present in the mind only when the object is not in the field of direct perception; images are formed spontaneously in the mind, in which they are relatively independent of the will of man, the image - a model of a real object, taken in its entirety, but it is impossible to match it to the object exactly.

Figurative meaning has its own specific properties: 1) sensory, an appeal to the human sensory experience (priority is given to visual analysis, that is why the clarity of figurative meaning is discussed); 2) in the figurative meaning coexist two plans: the direct and indirect; the act of perceiving the indirect meaning is "wavering" and, therefore, the creative nature; 3) an image can cause intense creative intellectual activity; 4) an image is often evaluative and expressive, it conveys a particular vision of the world as seen by man, it is not an objective truth 5) imagery is a mobile feature, since it may be present in the meaning to greater or lesser degree. . .

In the formation of linguistic imagery, visual representation

World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology
International Journal of Cognitive and Language Sciences
Vol:8, No:6, 2014

plays a decisive role. Visual imagery is characterized by reproducibility: pictures in the imagination can be recreated over and over again, at different times and on different occasions. Furthermore, the multitude of imagery responses should be noted. So, the word "grass" can evoke in the imagination not one, but a whole gallery of figurative images, depending on various circumstances and, above all, on the context. The next property is the plasticity images, i.e. their ability to reincarnate themselves in all possible ways. The final feature of linguistic imagery is its variable focus i.e., the image may have varying degrees of clarity - from bright to very vague - indefinite, as though seen as through a clouded glass [14]. However, it remains unclear whether the author made the distinction between "language" and "speech," and in that case, what is "the imagery of speech."

IV. THE MECHANISM FOR CREATING AN IMAGE

Undoubtedly, one of the most difficult problems in the sphere of imagery is still the imagery response to words that do not describe an object. The figurative response, arising from the expression, "thoughts were spinning in my head," is tied to an image of a head. However, this visual incarnation of this abstract situation is different from the head that is imagined in situations where the focus is the head as a physical, visible object. This visual embodiment is less clear: fleeting, elusive. The image of the head slips fleetingly through the consciousness, allowing only a schematic outline to be caught. It is not a complete picture furnished by certain signs of individuality. A hint at the visual image, rather than a full picturesque image appears in my mind. This visual hint, however, is enough for me to feel that the expression "thoughts were spinning in my head" received an image in response. According to the author, in the given examples, a visual response of an object to a phrase where an object is not in the meaning, has specific characteristics, the which, in such an image, may be called hieroglyphic. It looks, not like an imagined object or a memory, but rather like a hint at such an object.

Images can be dim or half obliterated, they are often "difficult to discern" (for example, images of homes, forests and villages in general). If the object itself is unknown to us, but how to use it in language is known, we readily accept it into our image library, including it in the makeup of appropriate situations, prompted by linguistic memory, even if the object itself, in the given situation, is seen only as vague hint. For instance, a city dweller is not capable of recognizing a sedge or juniper as a concrete object, but "when confronted with the phrase, "thickets of coastal sedge, sweet juniper," "I recognize them as objects known to me." "Vague" images carry us into the sphere of the subconscious.

It is interesting to consider a metaphor as a mechanism which helps combine the representation of heterogeneous objects, with the mandatory preservation of the double meaning, and the element of imagery. To label the given phenomenon in works, several categories are used: "dual denotation," "dual vision effect," "dual perception," "semantics with dual meanings." The following points of view

reflect the objective existence in semantics of a figurative word with dual meanings - one associated with the nominative meaning and the other with the associative understanding. Thus, there is an indication of understanding through another concept or idea of the subject, or a transfer/isolation of a common feature. The image content can be viewed as the combination of two ideas in one visual image which is based on associative thinking. During the "double vision" of the object, the signifier is associated with another object because of a similarity of a real or perceived (imagined) feature.

V. METAPHORICAL IMAGERY

A metaphor is a powerful language tool, able to adapt to the goals and objectives of a person. It "anthropomorphizes" the social and physical reality of man, allowing him to adapt to reality. Metaphors allow for the maximum "humanization" of reality, minimizing the difference between language and object. In this connection, the following question arises: is the meaning of a metaphor a function of the non-derivative-nominative meaning or does it bring about its own unique meaning? There exists a point of view that states that only the metaphorical transfer of a name can form the figurative meaning: the figurative understanding is expressed through a metaphorical inner form and cannot be expressed in any other way.

A metaphor is a linguistic mechanism, allowing for the combination of representations of heterogeneous objects, within the meaning of a figurative word, while maintaining semantics with dual meanings with the figurative element. To label the given phenomenon in works, several categories are used: "combined vision of two images," "dual denotation," "dual vision effect"/"dual perception," "semantics with dual meanings." The following points of view reflect the existence of dual meanings - one associated with the nominative meaning of a word and the other with the associative understanding coming from a particular situation. Thus, there is an indication of an understanding through another concept or idea of the subject, or a transfer/isolation of a common feature.

The thesis upheld thus far of "dual vision," when discussing metaphors, goes against traditional points of view, which state that in creating a metaphor the two definitions "merge," or conversely, that the new metaphorical definition displaces the original. From this, one can only regret that the authors of the above points of view are often limited by their constatation.

The mechanism to combine two images can be found in the basis of a metaphor. For example, when trying to understand the meaning of "man-bear," we "combine" the man and the bear and, after leaving the man with the trait of clumsiness, we eradicate all other bear-like qualities. The same idea is present when discussing the palimpsest effect of overlaying one figurative representation over another. The less the combination of overlying images is expected, the more vibrant the effect prompted by such an overlay, and the stronger the metaphor comes across. The most important questions in this linguistics sphere deal with the type of characteristics that the

World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology
International Journal of Cognitive and Language Sciences
Vol:8, No:6, 2014

initial and final images have and to which sphere of meaning the features, the underlying transfer, refer.

Continuing, let us look at an example of how two approaches of explaining the mechanism of a metaphor come together and intertwine. On one side, the initial semes and, consequently, the images, corresponding to the two meaning, are kept, while, on the other side (corresponding to the traditional approach), one of the semes seems to "weaken." So, when using the word *snake* to describe a person, in the structure of meaning there appears a new seme - the seme of a face. If the other semes corresponding to features not characteristic of a human would dissipate upon the appearance of the face seme, then the new meaning would not acquire the pragmatic effect or imagery. Therefore, the previous semes do not disappear, they only fade in their intensity and move, within the framework of meaning, to the background. The two planes within the structure of meaning correlate in our understanding thanks to the seme "cause harm by using tricks and treachery," which exists in both planes of meaning. That is why, when we say the word *snake*, when talking of a person, in our mind an image of the animal appears as well, denoted by the same word. The correlation in our minds of the two meanings, the direct and indirect, according to the author, leads to the formation in the structure of meaning of the seme, "similarity."

The roots of linguistic imagery lay, not in semantics, as many linguists believe, but in a thesaurus, in the system of knowledge. On a verbal-associative level, imagery is available for observation (for instance, *pawn* is about a person without initiative, who is weak and dependant) and we perceive it as its own semantic creation, having melted within itself, during the geological epochs, the existence of language, the movement of thought and cognition itself. So that the movement from one area of the thesaurus to another area can occur, knowledge of characteristics is needed - a snake is sneaky, a rabbit is cowardly, a bear is clumsy, but strong. This transfer isn't an affiliation of the verbal-associative level, but rather a generation of knowledge. Each image can be translated on a semantic level, verbalized, its meaning - its cognitive and emotional content, understood by creating an appropriate text, but in its origin and emergence it is beholden only to knowledge and appears when we leave the surface-associative level.

The verbal associative, that is, the semantic level, is minimally fraught with imagery (and so, to a small degree, it includes and reflects knowledge of the world). Associations, as accessories at the semantic level, are standard, ordinary, generally accepted and validated, while an image, appearing at the overlap of thesaurus areas, is unique, uncommon. Visualizations are a fusion of visual signals with converted signals of other modalities. In truth, vision works as an integrator and converter of signals from all modalities.

The presence of imagery is one of the criteria used to differentiate between metaphors, metonymy and other non-figurative meanings. Using the term "figurative," the following linguistic ideas are described: those which contain a sensual-visual element, have a double meaning, are understood associatively and fulfill the functions of expressiveness and inventiveness of speech. In fact, all figurative linguistic terms, and the semantic terms connected to them, are located on a kind of "scale" of imagery, on one side of which is the genetic metaphor and on the other is the individual metaphor of the author. To be fair, some linguists also study the ability of the metonymy (mainly verbal) to form images. They believe that the metonymic transfer leads to the compactness of statements, which sharpens the listener's attention and activates his sensory thinking, leading to a certain level of imagery.

The principal difference between an image and a metaphor is that an image does not allow for a categorical mistake, while a metaphor appears only when the boundaries between categories are broken. A metaphor's resource is an object's shift in classification, entering it into a class in which it is not a member. Metaphors use images formed in one class of objects, in the other class or when referring to a specific representative of the other class: using the image of a wolf or bear when talking about a person. A metaphor is often followed by imagery, but this is the essence of a different order. In addition to the imagery, a metaphor is also based in the merging or even the comparison of concepts.

Widely used, known by native speakers and entrenched in the thesaurus of metaphoric and metonymic transfers is symbolism. For instance, the symbol of a metaphor may have varying degrees of complexity. It can present a specific feature, which is easily singled out, that ties the metaphorical meaning to the original. There is the opinion that images created by the imagination can serve as a sensual support for thought. These images grow into symbols which, in their turn, contribute to generalizations and aide in the understanding of the multiple meanings of an event.

VI. The Difference between A "Live" and "Worn Down" Image

In linguistic literature, the border between a "live" and "worn down" image has long been a topic of discussion. There is an opinion which states that, in the beginning, a figurative expression retains its imagery. This is a particular, sensual image. It awakens the imagination and paints a picture. Next comes to the emotional image, in which the particular content has been erased and only the emotional colors remain. Finally, the "dead," worn down images appear. In them, the transferred meaning can only be found etymologically.

The "wearing out" of metaphor comes from frequency of use of certain metaphorical meanings. These types of metaphors, according to some researchers, no longer possess any imagery. They point to the lack of imagery of an "identifying" metaphor (the eyeball, the conch(a) of an ear, etc). Many linguists believe that even poetic metaphors are not always figurative, they may not evoke sense-perception (for instance *lead thoughts*. Therefore for a pictorial representation to be possible, it is imperative for the words themselves to evoke sensory associations, which is not always the case with metaphors.

There is a point of view according to which, a metaphor

retains its imagery, that is, it remains itself despite of the changing of the reference word, the first time it happens as well as the thousandth time it does. The following is an example of this situation as described by D. Davidson [15]. He states that the worn out metaphor *he burned up* does not have the same meaning as the once "live" metaphor did. Right now this expression simply means that a person was very angry. We can object: First of all, relying on the "state of affairs" in the world, a more "live" image (but already starting to dull) can be imagined as the burning of the man's body. Secondly, which metaphor can have an exact meaning, anyway? They are not created for that purpose. Thirdly, not attempting to defend the vividness of the image, it is still possible, however, to note that no matter how "worn down" the metaphor is, it remains a metaphor because the "connection to the class" remains. If the assertion that D. Davidson attempts to make is that this phrase simply means "he is angry," then this is a case of catachresis - imbibing old words with a new meaning. In this case the verb *burn up* should be included in the conceptual field of "anger". "However, no one is hurrying to do that because compilers of dictionaries and native speakers understand that a change in the definition is not necessary in this case. Accepting a metaphor as "worn down" would cause the breakdown of the polysemy of the verb *burn up*, because in the saying he *burned up* the given verb would have become associated with *burn*, "be consumed by flames".

It is important to state that a metaphor plays an important role in the genesis of word meanings and understandings, in which there is a general mechanism which is necessary for creating forms of judgment and knowledge, presupposing the intrusion of synthesis onto the sphere of analysis, the image onto the sphere of understanding, the single onto the whole. The language of metaphors, images, symbols may be that common basis for all languages which will tie together man and the world. It explains nature, characteristics of language ability and models of communication. Metaphorical constructions have the capability to ensure the integrity of contexts, including communicative acts, which is the most important language feature organizing any community.

VII. Conclusion

A conclusion section is not required. Although a conclusion may review the main points of the paper, do not replicate the abstract as the conclusion. A conclusion might elaborate on the importance of the work or suggest applications and extensions.

Thus, the study of meanings from cognitive positions determined the need for addressing the problem of the role of imagery in comprehension of both individual meanings and the substantial core of polysemantic. A literary analysis led to the conclusion that images associated with a concrete meaning are more precise than those associated with more abstract concepts. Images associated with abstract concepts are more general and less precise in character. The generality and abstractness of an image develop the more a word is used to describe new objects in a certain order, that is, in the process of understanding the meaning of an ambiguous word. It should

also be noted that the system of imagery has a sufficiently subjective character.

Using the presence of imagery to understand the presence of a word in semantics, which is a generalized sensual-visual image of the object it refers to, psycholinguists state that words which refer to objects found in nature (dirt, river, apple), artifacts (scissors, book, bread) and zoomorphisms (dog, cat, horse) have the highest levels of imagery. This is a concrete lexicon that describes the reality which is closest to practical human activity. As a result, it has been concluded that, for an individual consciousness, the division of words such as the above into those with imagery and those without is not relevant. When we hear words like, tree, bear, sand, etc. in our mind's eye the primary image appears, before all else, as a picture, which shows a very generic example of the corresponding object's class. In this case, the "invariable nature of an object" is what discussed [16] - [22].

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World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology
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