ГЕРМАНСЬКІ МОВИ

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SEMANTIC AND PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT OF *FREEDOM*

*The article deals with the philosophical notion and semantic analysis of the concept of **freedom**. It is aimed at regarding the concept of **freedom** covering its complexity from the point of view of lexical semantics as well as the interpretation of this notion highly dependent on philosophical and sociological context. To embrace and understand **freedom** as a lexical unit in its whole integrity it is necessary to study it in terms of semantic analysis, paying attention to polysemy, synonymy and etymology. The etymology reveals the social aspect of the notion of **freedom** in the context of philosophical analysis.*

*General concept of **freedom** from the philosophical point of view is regarded in the Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy where it is treated in two aspects, i.e. as positive and negative. Positive **freedom** belongs to the area within which 'the individual is self-determining' (i.e. having control over one's life, ruling oneself) while negative **freedom** is incorporated by the area characterised as such where the individual 'is left free from interference by others' (i.e. not prevented from doing something by others). Philosophical aspects of **freedom** as a notion are reflected also in its senses as (a) the quality, esp of the will or the individual, of not being totally constrained; able to choose between alternative actions in identical circumstances [Br.E] and (b) the power to exercise choice and make decisions without constraint from within or without; autonomy; self-determination [Am.E].*

*Talking about the semantic analysis of the concept of **freedom** it is necessary to mention that the primary goal is to present the polysemantic aspect of this lexical unit and the vast range of possible meanings that can be attributed to the word due to its developed lexical-semantic structure.*

*The word **freedom** means a lot but always something valuable. It is generally known that there is one **freedom** which is the fundamental one, the **freedom** which is desired by all people. It is **freedom** in itself, **freedom** as the basis of human life. Further research could be focused more on the contextual philosophical meanings of the concept.*

***Key words:** freedom as a lexical unit, lexical-semantic structure, polysemy, synonymy, philosophical concept of freedom.*

The problem being regarded: *Freedom* is a very broad subject. It appears in many books, films and is a part of human life. The concept of *freedom* is frequently seen in completely different ways. It is scientifically appropriate to present *freedom* from different viewpoints, which will help to understand the complexity of the notion approaching the subject in terms of semantic analysis of the word *freedom*, analysing polysemy, synonymy and etymology of this lexical unit. The etymology reveals the social aspect of the notion of *freedom* considered in the context of philosophical analysis.

Research and publications review: The concept of *freedom* was the subject of linguistic and philosophical investigation for centuries. It goes back to the famous English philosopher T. Hobbes who did research on the issues of political liberty and freedom not differentiating these two notions and defining freedom in his work

"Elements of Law, Natural and Politic" as 'employments of honour' [10]. Q. Skinner, a famous scholar, professor of the Humanities continued semantic analysis of the concept of *freedom* in his book "Hobbes and Republican Liberty" focusing

the changes in identifying some shifts in the world outlook of humankind [18]. The issue in question was being investigated by P. Pettit, who came to the conclusion that the conceptual shifts traced in contextualist analysis may be connected more with semantics rather than metaphysics; they may signal changes in applying certain words and concepts to the social world. He gives the definition of *freedom* as 'non-domination' [14]. I. Berlin defines *freedom* in a dichotomous way, he introduces the semantic analysis of two contrasting notions: a positive notion of *freedom* characterised by self-guidance and negative notion introduced as non-interference [1]. Such questions about who is *free* and who is the subject of *freedom* are also central to Nancy Hirschmann's feminist concept of *freedom* [9].

The aim of the article. The paper is aimed at showing the complexity of the concept of *freedom* in different situations from the point of view of lexical semantics as well as the interpretation of this concept highly dependent on sociological, philosophical and cultural context.

The main body. Lexical unit *freedom* as a notion can be found in Wikipedia where it is defined as 'either having the ability to act or change without constraint or to possess the power and resources to fulfil one's purposes' [22]. Freedom is often associated with liberty, autonomy in the sense of "giving oneself their own laws", and with having rights and civil liberties.

General concept of *freedom* from the philosophical point of view is regarded in the Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy [20] where it is treated in two aspects, i.e. as positive and negative. Positive *freedom* belongs to the area within which 'the individual is self-determining' (i.e. having control over one's life, ruling oneself) while negative *freedom* is incorporated by the area characterised as such where the individual 'is left free from interference by others' (i.e. not prevented from doing something by others) [20, p. 723].

Talking about the semantic analysis of the concept of *freedom* we have to mention that the primary goal is to present the polysemantic aspect of this lexical unit and the vast range of possible meanings that can be attributed to the word. Besides, some attention is to be devoted to synonyms and the etymology of the word *freedom*.

The broad lexical-semantic structure of of the word *freedom* is registered in New Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus of the English Language by Lexicon Publications [13] containing its eleven lexical-semantic variants, namely: (1) enjoyment of personal liberty, of not being a slave nor a prisoner; (2) the enjoyment of civil rights (freedom of speech <…>

etc.) generally associated with constitutional government; (3) the state of not being subject to determining forces; (4) liberty in acting and choosing; (5) immunity to or release from obligations, undesirable states of being <…>, *freedom from fear*; (6) ability to move with ease; (7) excessive familiarity; (8) unrestricted use or enjoyment <…>; (9) (with 'from') an absence of *c from controls*; (10) (in the arts) spontaneity unfettered by rules and conventions; (11) a privilege (e.g. honorary citizenship) conferred on someone to do him honour. Some of the components of meaning mentioned above appeared later in the course of lexical-semantic structure development (e.g. excessive familiarity; unrestricted use or enjoyment; (in the arts) spontaneity unfettered by rules and conventions.

Collins English Dictionary [2] differentiates British and American English, the former containing eleven lexical-semantic variants of the word *freedom* while the latter seventeen. Philosophical aspects of *freedom* as a notion are reflected in its senses as (a) the quality, esp of the will or the individual, of not being totally constrained; able to choose between alternative actions in identical circumstances [Br.E] and (b) the power to exercise choice and make decisions without constraint from within or without; autonomy; self-determination [Am.E].

Polysemy of a word depends on the richness of vocabulary of a language. As Slack says, "The more potential meanings that can be attributed to a word, the more polysemic that word is" [19, p. 98]. Polysemy is one of the major reasons for misunderstandings in language. On average, a word form has three to four meanings [4], which often leads to linguistic ambiguity. Polysemy is especially widespread in verbal communication. The main reason is that linguistic items are used 'economically': humans try to use already known terms, instead of creating complex sentences for each intended meaning they want to express.

Lyons distinguishes several kinds of meaning. First of all, there is the lexical meaning and the sentence meaning. It means that the meaning of a sentence depends on the meaning of its constituent words and the meaning of words depends on the meaning of the sentence in which they occur. Secondly, there is a grammatical meaning i.e. the meaning of a word may be determined by its grammatical structure. Thirdly, it is essential to know that words have not only a literal meaning but also, they may have an idiomatic, metaphorical or figurative meaning [12]. Nevertheless, according to Seidenberg, a correct understanding is possible, "Contexts provide structurally different types of information which indicate the meaning of an ambiguous word" [16, p. 49]. In other words, the

proper meaning of a polysemous word is determined by other words in a sentence. This knowledge is fundamental especially for translators. The first definition of a word found in a dictionary is not always the proper one. Multiplicity of meanings allows people to use one word in different contexts. Nevertheless, different interpretations of one word may sometimes lead to misunderstandings, which are quite frequent especially among translators.

A political language is a good example where we can find many kinds of *freedom*. For instance, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Book says:

Article 18: Everyone shall have the right to *freedom* of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include *freedom* to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and *freedom*, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practise and teaching [8]. This fragment presents some *freedoms* which shall be guaranteed to all people.

There is religious freedom, political freedom, economic freedom, internal and external freedom, etc. Because of the number of kinds of *freedom* it is impossible to give only one definition of this word. The polysemy of this word gives people the possibility of using this word in many various contexts.

The definition of synonymy being simple and not complicated, "Synonyms are different phonological words which have the same or very similar meanings" [15, p. 65], some scholars distinguish two types of synonyms: synonyms with identical senses (full synonyms and sense synonyms) and synonyms with similar senses (near synonyms).

Full synonyms are words which are identical in every sense. If they exist at all, they are very rare and result from different dialects or different registers. Sense synonyms are more common, they share one or more senses but differ in other senses.

Near synonyms do not have exactly the same senses, "but each member of a near-synonym pair has a sense that is much like a sense of its counterpart, such that something described by one of the pair can often be described by the other" [7, p. 187]. They are called context-dependent synonyms because their usage is bound to the context. Some words fit better in a specific sentence [11]. Choosing a word which fits less may change the meaning of a sentence.

What is more, in spite of the similarity between meanings, not all words which are considered as synonyms can be used interchangeably. Collocations are words that co-occur and sound natural for native speakers.

Synonyms, moreover, enable people to portray their positive or negative attitudes and feelings.

Thus, synonymy is another aspect that needs investigation in the semantic analysis of the concept of *freedom*. Thesaurus of the English Language [13] offers the following sixteen synonyms of this lexical unit: deliverance, emancipation, exemption, familiarity, franchise, frankness, immunity, independence, liberation, liberty, licence, openness, prerogative, privilege, right, unrestraint. They correspond to different lexical-semantic variants of the meaning and are characterised by different lexical-semantic distances ranging from the core to the peripheral sphere.

Now we will analyse two synonymous concepts – *freedom* and *liberty*. We will try to show that in spite of the similarity, these words differ.

As we have clarified, the word *freedom* is ambiguous. Polysemantic aspect of the word leads to more than one definition of the word *freedom* and in consequence to many synonyms:

1. *Freedom* – independence, licence to do as one wants; synonyms: abandonment, carte blanche, flexibility, immunity, indulgence, laissez faire, liberty, opportunity, own accord, privilege, unrestraint, etc.

2. *Freedom* – political independence; synonyms: abolition, autonomy, democracy, discharge, emancipation, impunity, liberty, privilege, representative government, self-determination, self-government, sovereignty, etc.

3. *Freedom* – easy attitude; synonyms: abandon, boldness, ease, familiarity, forthrightness, lack of reserve, lack of restraint, openness, overfamiliarity, presumption, unconstraint, etc [6].

The level of similarity of synonyms is different and that is why not all synonyms can be used interchangeably. For example, *freedom* and *liberty* are words which have a very similar meaning (state of being free) but still there are differences:

"Freedom is personal; *liberty* is public. The *freedom* of the city is the privilege granted by the city to individuals; the *liberties* of the city are the immunities enjoyed by the city. By the same rule of distinction, we speak of the *freedom* of the will, the *freedom* of manners, the *freedom* of conversation, or the *freedom* of debate; but the *liberty* of conscience, the *liberty* of the press, the *liberty* of the subject. *Freedom* serves, moreover, to qualify for action; *liberty* is applied only to the agent; hence we say, to speak or think with *freedom*; but to have the *liberty* of speaking, thinking and acting" [3, p. 370]. Generally speaking, it may be said that *freedom* is unconditional, *liberty* conditional; *freedom* is the absence of restriction, *liberty* is primarily the removal of restriction. Thus, the more polyse-

mic the word is, the more synonyms the word has. The word *liberty* stands very close to the word *freedom* and many people use these words interchangeably. Nevertheless, despite the similarity there are differences which show that the word *liberty* cannot be the substitution for the word *freedom* in all cases.

Within the semantic analysis it would be appropriate to have a look at the etymology of the word *freedom* which is connected with one of its synonyms – *liberty*. One of the sources leads to this word, which derives from Latin *libertas*, from *liber*, 'free'. Romans used *liberi* to mean 'children', who were free as members of a community of *free* persons (as opposed to slaves). Another source of *free* and *freedom* is Indo-European *pryios*, meaning *dear*. There is also Sanskrit *prinati* – pleases and Slavic *prijatel* – friend [21]. The word *freedom* derives from words which are associated with living in small communities: *dear, one's own, friends, children* or from adjectives like *amiable*. So, Freedom is a sociological concept. It is meaningless to apply it to conditions outside society.

To conclude, the word freedom has always meant something valuable. The meanings of *freedom* were connected with friendship, family or love. The search for the origin of the word *freedom* leads us to the conclusion that the word has a sociological and philosophical aspect as well. To confirm this statement, we will perform the philosophical analysis of the word *freedom* based on the work of prominent figure, namely, Viktor E. Frankl. He was one who survived in the fascist concentration camp during the second world war. He was an Austrian professor of psychology, psychotherapist, and the creator of logotherapy who decided to analyse his tragic experiences.

In the book "Man's search for meaning" Frankl describes his feelings and conclusions relating to *freedom* and the meaning of human life. His concept of *freedom* concerns the human interior. According to him even in extreme external enslavement a person may be free.

As Frankl says, personal freedom may be shown in many ways, for him a possibility of choice always exists. An enslaved and foredoomed man can decide what to choose, even if the decision concerns the last slice of bread given to a friend, which in such conditions could be a great devotion. Such a deed determines human nature in contrast to a typical prisoner without internal freedom who is nothing else but 'the plaything of circumstance' [5, p. 66]. It appears that not the exterior but the sum of inner and free choices determines humanity and internal, personal *freedom*. Finding a sense of suffering was one of the bases of logotherapy, which was a therapeutic method created by Frankl for people who lost all hope.

In his further career V. Frankl helped people with depression and suicidal thoughts. According to him the philosophy that underlies his concept is that *freedom* is not connected with exterior but with the state of human psyche and with finding the meaning of life. Here we come back to the difference between synonyms *freedom* and *liberty* which is incorporated into Frankl's adage:

"*A man in jail, for example, has almost zero liberty but retains all his freedom in the sense that he has not lost the ability to choose among myriad options, attitudes, and values*" [17]. So, Victor Frankl presents the value of *freedom* as the most important thing in human life.

Conclusions and recommendations: This article is devoted to the philosophical notion and semantic analysis of the concept *freedom*. The word *freedom* means a lot but always something valuable. The polysemy shows many kinds of *freedom*, the synonymy presents the vast range of possible meanings connected with *freedom*, whereas the etymology introduces the original meanings. But all the meanings are not equal. *Freedom* means different things for every man; one *freedom* may be more important than the other one. But it is generally known that there is one *freedom* which is the fundamental one, the *freedom* which is desired by all people. It is *freedom* in itself, *freedom* in general, *freedom* as the basis of human life. Further research could be focused more on the contextual philosophical meanings of the concept. The choices are hidden in complex relationships of people, and the concept of *freedom* as non-oppression is a tool alert to important cultural and political issues.

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Байбакова І. М., Гасько О. Л. СЕМАНТИЧНИЙ ТА ФІЛОСОФСЬКИЙ АНАЛІЗ ПОНЯТТЯ *FREEDOM*

Дана стаття присвячена філософському концепту та семантичному аналізу поняття freedom, яке розглянуте у ній як полісемантична лексична одиниця з широко розвинутою семантичною структурою, а також з філософської точки зору як поняття, тлумачення якого суттєво залежить від культурно-соціологічного контексту. З метою всебічного і цілісного розуміння лексичної одиниці freedom необхідно вивчати її із врахуванням відповідного лексико-семантичного аналізу, беручи до уваги полісемію, синонімію та етимологію. Етимологія розкриває соціальний аспект поняття freedom у контексті філософського аналізу.

Загальне поняття freedom з філософської точки зору розглядається у Кембриджському філософському словнику, де воно представлене у двох аспектах, а саме, як positive freedom і negative freedom. Positive freedom належить до сфери, в якій «індивідуальність самовизначається» (тобто має контроль над своїм життям, керує собою), у той час як negative freedom включене до області, що характеризується як така, де індивід «залишений вільним від втручання інших», (тобто інші не заважають щось робити). Філософські аспекти freedom як поняття відображаються також у таких лексико-семантичних варіантах як: (а) якість, особливо волі чи особистості, не повністю обмеженої; здатної вибирати між альтернативними діями за ідентичних обставин [брит. англ.] і (б) право здійснювати вибір і приймати рішення без обмежень зсередини чи ззовні; автономія; самовизначення [амер. англ.].

Полісемантичність даної лексичної одиниці та відповідний широкий спектр допустимих тлумачень, що можна приписати слову, є результатом його розвинутої лексико-семантичної структури.

Слово freedom, маючи значну кількість трактувань у відповідності до лексико-семантичних варіантів своєї семантичної структури, завжди означає щось цінне. Загальновідомо, що є єдина засаднича свобода, свобода, якої бажають усі люди. Це свобода сама по собі, свобода як основа людського життя. Слід зазначити, що подальші дослідження доцільно було б більше зосередити на контекстуальних філософських значеннях цього поняття.

Ключові слова: *freedom як лексична одиниця, лексико-семантична структура, полісемія, синонімія, філософське поняття freedom.*