

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18454/RULB.2020.23.3.24>**ЭНАНТИОСЕМИЯ В АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ**

Научная статья

Романчук Ю.В. *

Минский государственный лингвистический университет, Минск, Республика Беларусь

* Корреспондирующий автор ([julia_romachka\[at\]mail.ru](mailto:julia_romachka[at]mail.ru))**Аннотация**

Статья посвящена рассмотрению энантиосемии в английском языке. Представлен краткий обзор первичных и вторичных сущностных признаков данного феномена. Проанализирована частеречная принадлежность энантионимов английского языка. Выявлено, что наиболее распространенной является глагольная, субстантивная и адъективная энантиосемия. Выделены группы отглагольных энантионимов на основе имеющихся в их семантической структуре семных оппозиций. Обнаружено, что в основе семантики большинства отглагольных энантионимов английского языка находятся контрастирующие семы 'добавить – удалить', 'дать – взять', 'положительная эмоция – отрицательная эмоция', 'субъект – объект', 'действие – нейтрализация действия', 'действие с положительной оценкой – действие с отрицательной оценкой'.

Практическая значимость исследования заключается в возможности использования полученных результатов в университетских курсах лексикологии, стилистики и прагматики.

Ключевые слова: энантиосемия, признаки энантиосемии, отглагольная энантиосемия, семная оппозиция, контрастирующие семы.

ENANTIOSEMY IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Research article

Romanchuk Ju.V. *

Minsk State Linguistic University, Minsk, Belarus

* Corresponding author ([julia_romachka\[at\]mail.ru](mailto:julia_romachka[at]mail.ru))**Abstract**

The article is devoted to the consideration of enantiosemy in English. An overview of the primary and secondary categorical features of this phenomenon is given. The part-of-speech affiliation of the enantionyms of the English language is analyzed. Verbal, substantival and adjectival types of enantiosemy are revealed as the most common. The groups of verbal enantionyms are distinguished on the basis of the same oppositions in their semantic structure. It is found out that the semantics of most verbal enantionyms of the English language is built on the contrasting semes 'add – remove, 'give – get', 'positive emotion – negative emotion', 'subject – object', 'action – counteraction', 'positive action – negative action'.

The practical significance of the study lies in the possibility of using the obtained results in university courses of lexicology, stylistics and pragmatics.

Keywords: enantiosemy, features of enantiosemy, verbal enantiosemy, seme opposition, contrasting semes.

Introduction

In linguistics the term 'enantiosemy' appeared at the end of the 19th century due to the publication of the works of the Czech-Russian philologist V. Sherzl and the German researcher K. Abel.

Subsequently, the problem of enantiosemy in languages attracted the attention of many linguists in different countries. For instance, foreign researchers T. Balkanski (1979), R. Hogenraad (2018), B. Karaman (2008), A. Klegr (2013), P. Lutzeier (1997, 2001), V. Meid (1979), R. Meyer (1979), T. Nöldeke (1910), E. Pernishka (1981), etc. alongside with Russian linguists L. E. Bessonova (1983), Ja. I. Gel'blu (1965), L. I. Klimova (1975), N. B. Lavrent'eva (1978), E. A. Litvinova (2012), Ju. Melikjan (1996), V. N. Prohorova (1976), N. K. Salihova (1989), O. I. Smirnova (1976), etc. in their works describe the essence and specifics of enantiosemic relations within a word in language and speech and speculate on reasons for its occurrence. M. Ju. Brodskij (1998), E. H. Zharkova (1988), V. Ju. Kravcova (2006), L. R. Mahmutova (2009), G. N. Ostrikova (2014), V. N. Coller (1998), etc. also distinguish types of enantiosemy according to various characteristics based on different languages.

In modern developed languages enantiosemy occurs quite often and embodies an extremely progressive tendency. According to A. D. Shmelev, it is incorrect to consider enantiosemy 'a rare and unproductive phenomenon' [10, P. 3], because it has a regular character and is based on the general principles of human cognitive ability and human communication in general. V. K. Gak relates enantiosemy to linguistic laws as one of the semantic processes existing in all languages [7, P. 454]. Belgian linguist R. Hogenraad considers enantiosemy to be such a paradoxical feature of the language, without which it would be difficult to do [6].

Having analyzed and generalized all available definitions of enantiosemy, in our research we understand it as the combination of opposite or contrasted meanings or shades of meanings within the same linguistic unit. The actualization of these meanings is conditioned by the context or the situation of communication.

Enantiosemy has a number of primary and secondary features.

Primary features are typical of all enantionyms. They are the following: one expression plan and several content plans, polar divergence in the content plan, common (integral) semes in opposite or contrasted meanings, and context conditionality.

Secondary features are observed only in a separate series of enantionyms. These features include: several pairs of antonymous meanings within one linguistic unit, asymmetry of the main and peripheral meanings, and different stylistic marking of opposite or contrasted meanings [8].

Enantiosemy in English is a widespread phenomenon, which is represented by different parts of speech. For our research we selected 458 enantiosemic lexical units. The words were mainly taken from Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, Collins English Dictionary Online, and Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online.

Of these, 154 cases are substantive enantionyms, 140 cases are verbal enantionyms and 118 cases are adjective enantionyms. The remaining 46 enantionyms are expressed by adverbs, pronouns and interjections.

As a percentage, the part-of-speech affiliation of the enantionyms of the English language is represented in Fig. 1.

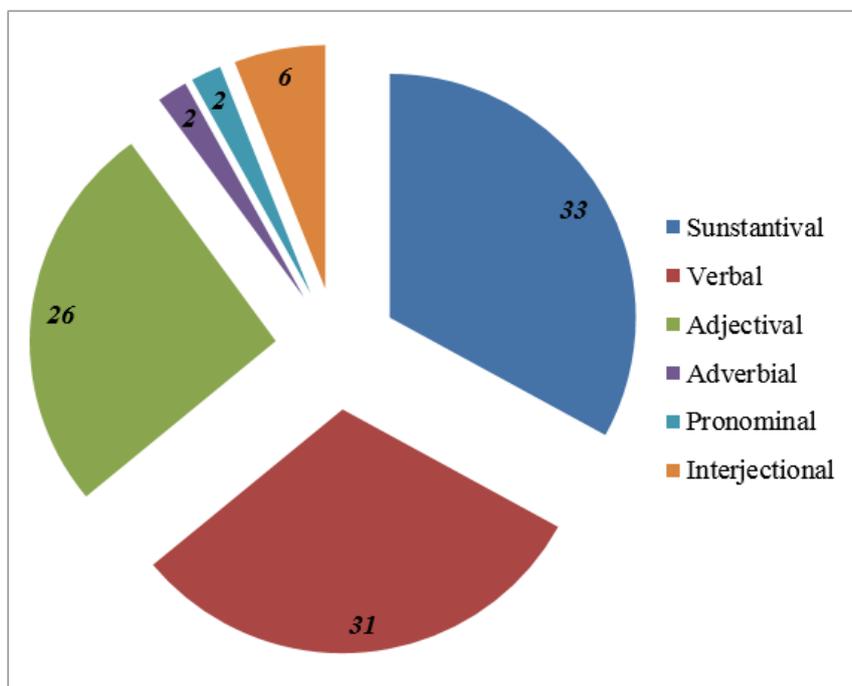


Fig. 1 – Part-of-speech affiliation of the English enantionyms, %

According to the diagram, substantival and verbal enantiosemy are represented in English in almost equal proportions. However, it cannot help being mentioned that a considerable part of substantival as well as adjectival enantionyms are formed from the corresponding verb forms (*appropriate – appropriation; fly – flyer, flying; excite – excited; smuggle – smuggler, smuggling; undress – undressed; shriek (v) – shriek (n), etc.*). In this regard, it is verbal enantiosemy that is of particular interest for our research.

Enantiosemic lexical units can be grouped in accordance with the seme opposition within the semantic structure of words. In English, we distinguished 9 such groups of verbal enantionyms (see Table 1).

Table 1 – Groups of verbal enantionyms according to the seme opposition within their semantic structure

Group №	Seme opposition	Number of Enantionyms, %
1	‘add – remove’	17
2	‘give – get’	16
3	‘positive emotion – negative emotion’	15
4	‘subject – object’	10
5	‘action – counteraction’	10
6	‘positive action – negative action’	10
7	‘approach – distance’	6
8	‘do – not do’	5
9	others	11

The polarity of one of the largest groups of enantionyms is based on the opposition ‘**add – remove**’. Our research showed that there are 25 lexemes in this group: *blot, brush, bark, cap, dredge, dust, muck, scratch, slip, skin, wax, etc.*

The verb *brush* can serve as an appropriate example here. The meaning ‘to put smth (oil, milk, egg) on smth using a brush’ is opposed to the meaning ‘to remove smth from a surface with a brush or with your hand’. The seme ‘add on the surface’ is represented in the first meaning (*brush the pastry with milk, brush the dough with melted butter*) while the seme ‘remove from the surface’ is revealed in the second meaning, respectively (*brush one’s teeth, brush the dirt off the jacket*) [6].

The second largest group includes enantionyms based on the opposition ‘**give – get**’.

As an example, let us consider the verb *graduate*. Its semantics includes the under-mentioned meanings: ‘to give a degree, diploma, etc. to smb’ (*The college **graduated** 100 students last year*) and ‘to get a degree from a university or college’ (*She **graduated** from Harvard*) [6]. The contrast is built by categorical semes ‘give – get’, which are diametrically opposite [2].

The verb *option* means ‘to sell the right to own or use smth, at some time in the future’ (*He has **optioned** his novel for the screen*) and ‘to buy the right to own or use smth, at some time in the future’ (*The studio has **optioned** his latest novel for film adaptation*) [3]. Here the ‘give – get’ opposition can be revealed with the help of the seme analysis of both meanings (see Fig. 2).

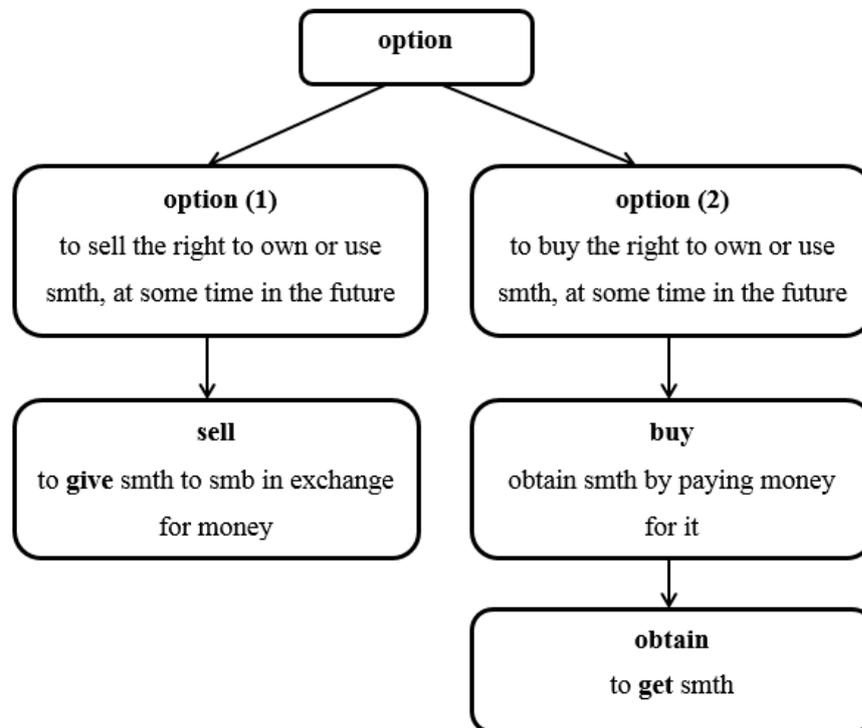


Fig. 2 – Meaning components of the enantionym *option*

The group under consideration also includes such verbs as *exempt, jar, score, lease, milk, nurse, rearm, rent, suckle, etc.* Overall, in this group there are 24 lexemes.

The third group is formed by enantionyms with the opposition ‘**positive emotion – negative emotion**’.

For example, the word *groan* combines the following meanings: 1. ‘to make a long deep sound because you are annoyed, upset or in pain’ and 2. ‘to make a long deep sound with pleasure’. In this case, we can talk about the opposition of the peripheral semes. The components of meaning 1 ‘annoyed, upset or in pain’, which are associated with negative emotional states and are represented by the corresponding semes (annoyed → angry; upset → unhappy, anxious, annoyed; pain → hurt, ill, suffering) are opposed to the component of meaning 2 ‘pleasure’, which involves the manifestation of positive emotions (pleasure → happy, satisfied, enjoying yourself). Compare: *We all **groaned** at his terrible jokes* [6] and *As she kissed him, Gary **groaned** with pleasure* [5].

Other examples for this group are *howl, flap, inflame, palpitate, scream, s*

nort, shriek, squeak, yell, etc. In total, the group numbers 22 enantiosemic verbs.

The verbs like *audition, fly, reskill, train, model, dog, spook, etc.* presuppose the realization of the conversive opposition, when the same action is described from the point of view of the opposed to each other participants of the communicative situation. In these verbs there is a shift in subject-object relations, so we can talk about oppositional meanings in the framework of the ‘**subject – object**’ relationship. For example, in the sentence *She’s **auditioning** for Ophelia in ‘Hamlet’* [5] the verb has the meaning ‘to take part in an audition’. Meanwhile, in the sentence *We **auditioned** more than 200 actresses before deciding on Ophelia* the meaning of the verb is ‘to judge an audition’. In total, 15 enantionyms belong to the group under consideration.

It should be noted that conversive enantiosemy is also represented in the above-described group of verbs with the seme opposition ‘give – get’.

The group where enantiosemic meanings are represented by the semes ‘**action – counteraction**’ includes 14 verbs: *argue, barrack, chill, enjoin, nickel-and-dime, paddle, proportionate, etc.*

For example, one of the meanings of the verb *draw* is ‘to open curtains, etc.’, and the other one is ‘to close curtains, etc.’ It turns out that the action ‘open’ neutralizes the result of the action ‘close’. Compare: *She **drew** the curtains to let the light in* and *After **drawing** the curtains, she lit a candle* [3].

One more group of 14 verbs is represented by enantionyms with the seme opposition ‘**positive action – negative action**’. It includes the verbs *kill, ravish, relieve, sustain, swear, top, touch, boast, etc.* For instance, the verb *relieve* combines the meanings ‘to help smb by taking smth heavy or difficult for them’ and ‘to steal smth from smb’. The integral seme ‘take’ in the first meaning is associated with a positive emotional response, because it is associated with the concept of ‘help’ (*A porter **relieved** her of the three large cases* [3]). In the contrasted meaning the same seme assumes the implementation of a

negative action and is associated with the concept ‘stealing’ (*He was relieved of his wallet*). Hence the corresponding opposition of meanings occurs.

The seventh group amounts 9 enantionyms with the seme opposition ‘**approach – distance**’: *flood, go, pour, smuggle, take, turn, etc*. For example, the word combination *smuggle diamonds* [6] may mean either 1. ‘to bring diamonds into the country illegally’ or 2. ‘to send diamonds from the country illegally’. In meaning 1 with the help of the seme analysis it is possible to distinguish the seme ‘approach’ while in meaning 2 the seme ‘distance’ is actualized.

The seme opposition ‘**do – not do**’ is represented in the semantic structure of 7 enantiosemic words: *overlook, scan, go, warn, ckeck, promise, etc*. Let us take the verb *go* as a good example here. It combines two antonymous meanings: ‘to work (*This clock goes*) – to not work; to stop working correctly; to get worse’ (*This clock is beginning to go*) [6].

The ‘**Others**’ group includes verbs that embody isolated cases (from 1 to 3 lexemes) of the realization of one or another semantic opposition not mentioned above.

Conclusion

So, according to our research, verbal, substantival and adjectival types of enantiosemy are the most typical of the English language. We divided all the verbal enantionyms into 9 groups on the basis of the seme oppositions in their semantic structure. In terms of our own analysis of enantiosemic lexemes we draw a conclusion that most verbal enantionyms have in their semantics the contrasting semes ‘add – remove’, ‘give – get’, ‘positive emotion – negative emotion’, ‘subject – object’, ‘action – counteraction’, ‘positive action – negative action’. These semes are prevailing within the semantic structure of English enantionyms.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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