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LEXOCO-SEMANTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ADJECTIVE IN ITALIAN

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ABSTRACT

The structural and semantic criterion of differentiation of qualitative and relative adjectives in Italian is considered. It is argued that relative adjectives are derived from other words, which they are motivated by, whereas qualitative adjectives are primitive in the form of expression and polysemous in the language system.

KEYWORDS: *Semantic Criterion, Subject Attribute, Native Adjective, Modal Features, Motivation, Semantic Derivation.*

INTRODUCTION

An adjective is a linguistic category that serves to characterize objects and phenomena of reality and is associated with the anthropocentric paradigm in linguistics. An adjective, characterizing a noun, is "attached" to it and in some languages acquires its grammatical features, for example, gender and number in Russian, German and Romance languages. In other languages, for example, English, the adjective remains free from this agreement with the noun. At the same time, in both cases, the adjective, unlike the noun, does not have its own denotation. By characterizing a thing, an adjective informatively enriches a noun with its semantic or evaluative feature defined by the subject in relation to the object, subject, his actions or their description.

Based on the semantic criterion in Italian, different lexical and semantic groups of adjectives can be distinguished: adjectives of the form (rotondo - round, quadrato - square), colors (rosso - red, pego - black), parametric adjectives (basso - low, alto - high). A significant group is represented by evaluative adjectives (buono - good, malo - bad, intelligente - smart, stupido - stupid), they also include adjectives denoting the physical and mental properties of people or animals (vigiloso - strong, debole - weak, malato - painful, nervoso - nervous).

In this study, we will focus on two groups of adjectives: qualitative and relative, which have an evaluative character and assume an anthropocentric approach to the study of this lexical and grammatical category.

Qualitative adjectives denote the signs of objects and events inherent in the things themselves, including the properties of objects perceived by the senses: color, space, physical properties. And in this regard, qualitative adjectives are considered primitive in the form of expression, primary and at the same time complex in their content, since they are initially characterized by ambiguity. That is why the denotative component of the meaning of qualitative adjectives is leveled, tends to zero. For example, any object and any phenomenon can be beautiful: a person, a flower, a sunrise, a river, a forest. In other words, qualitative adjectives, characterizing the internal properties of objects, can also be comprehended in abstraction from the objects themselves. At the same time, in addition to the cognitive and semantic component of a qualitative adjective expressing the main feature of beauty, there is also its subjective assessment.

Qualitative adjectives are extremely diverse in semantic features. As we have already noted earlier, the denotative block of information of a polysemous word is associated with a typical image, and, consequently, its semantic space, growing out of the basic archetypal or prototypical meaning, is able to acquire a number of other meanings [2]. Such semantic features of the main meanings of the adjectives we study include adjectives with the meaning of a sign of shape, size, property, color, taste, smell, etc.

For example, the adjective *diritto* (direct) indicates the primary sign of the form.

In Italian, the adjective *diritto* has the following meanings: 1) straight in the form of a line (*via diritta* - a straight path); 2) straight, honest, fair (*rigare/filaredritto* - behave flawlessly); 3) right; 4) dexterous, resourceful; 5) literal (about the meaning of the word).

In Russian, the adjective *direct* has no meaning: 1) прямой по линии; 2) без сутулости, 3) имеющий поступательное направление; 4) осуществляемый без промежуточных этапов; 5) буквальный (о значении слова); 6) правдивый, откровенный, нелицемерный; 7) подлинный, настоящий, неподдельный.

Let's compare the meaningful volume of adjectives with the denotative value of the *stretto* (narrow) size.

In Italian: 1) narrow, tight (*scarpestrette* - narrow shoes), 2) compressed (*pug-nistretti* - clenched fists), 3) strict, precise (*strettaregola* - strict rule), 4) urgent, urgent (*lo strettonecessario* - the most necessary), 5) close (*parentestretto* - close relative), 6) phonetic term *vocalestretta* "closed vowel".

In Russian: 1) небольшой по ширине; 2) тесный (об одежде, обуви и т. п.); 3) ограниченный; 4) лишенный широты взглядов, кругозора; 5) лингвистический термин узкий гласный звук.

Consider adjectives with a denotative property value using the example of *fragile*.

In Italian: 1) fragile, brittle (*merce fragile* - fragile goods), 2) weak, fragile (*salute fragile* - poor health), 3) weak, malleable (*la fragile natura umana* - weak human nature), 4) short-lived (*una fragile speranza* - weak hope).

In Russian: 1) ломкий; 2) недолговечный. 3) требующий бережного обращения; 4) нежный, изящный; 5) болезненный, слабый.

Unlike qualitative adjectives, relative adjectives express qualities and properties by indicating a relation to another subject.

Recall the semantic characteristic of a relative adjective given by E.M. Wolf: "the relation established between an object (or feature) and another object whose feature is indicated by an adjective" [3. p. 397]. A similar definition is found in the Italian linguist Marcello Marinucci: "Gliaggettivi di relazione non designano qualità, bensì esprimono la relazione che intercorre tra il nome a cui si riferiscono e il nome da cui derivano: popolo italiano, cucina francese, unione europea" (Relative adjectives do not mean qualities, but rather express the relationship that is introduced between the name, to which they belong and the name from which they are produced: Italian people, French cuisine, the European Union, etc.) [5. p. 111].

Indeed, the distinguishing feature between the meanings of qualitative and relative adjectives is the introduction of the following predicates for the definition of relative adjectives: "consisting of" or "made of", "similar to" or "related to", etc. Yu. D. Apresyan described in sufficient detail such types of relative adjectives in models of regular polysemy: 1) being X (military operations), 2) containing X (gold sand), 3) made of X (gold ring), 4) causing X (gold mine)..., 7) intended for X (military operation) [1. pp. 509-523].

M. Marinucci also gives a detailed description of relative adjectives, considering the types of relations between a noun and an adjective derived from it. This is a relation with the meaning of the territory: *zona periferica* (peripheral zone), *via centrale* (central street); the relationship between object and matter: *statua marmorea* (marble statue), *scultura lignea* (wooden sculpture)-, the relationship between the disease and the diseased organ *enfisema polmonare* (emphysema of the lungs or pulmonary)-, the relationship between the action and the organ that is subjected to it: *trapianto cardiaco* (heart transplant)-, the relationship between the individual and the institution: *studente liceale, universitario* (student of the lyceum, university) [5. p. 111].

As we can see, relative adjectives characterize objects and phenomena through a network of relationships and connections with objects of the real world. That is why relative adjectives are based on their motivation by other units of the language, that is why they are semantically, morphologically and syntactically derived, that is why they can be structurally and/or semantically segmented.

Thus, the differentiation of qualitative and relative adjectives is based on a certain difference in the semantic essence of each of the categories. Qualitative adjectives are most often native adjectives, characterizing, and relative adjectives are derived and specifying in content. And this is typical of both Russian and Italian adjectives.

In conclusion, we note that the semantic boundary between qualitative and relative adjectives is not always clearly expressed, because both tend to acquire each other's meanings. So, qualitative adjectives develop relative signs of meaning, for example, a deaf consonant, thumb, high fashion. And, accordingly, relative adjectives are able to acquire qualitative signs of meaning: a heart of stone, nerves of steel, a disservice. The similarity in meaning of qualitative and relative adjectives is explained by the fact that behind this class of words there is a single, fundamentally

indivisible concept of "quality", various conceptual features of which are reflected in the semantics of both qualitative and relative adjectives.

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