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HISTORY OF THE STUDY OF THE GRADUONYMY PHENOMENON

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This article covers the history of the study of the phenomenon of graduonymy in linguistics. The article also analyzes the study of the phenomenon of graduonymy in English and Russian linguistics, the main criterion for determining gradation is the decrease or increase in the number of signs (phenomena) in a certain direction, the philosophical foundations of gradation and the scope of formation, the scientific views of linguists on the relationship between language types and all levels, units, general and specific systems of the language.

Keywords: phenomenon of graduonymy, gradation, lexical-semantic relations, history of linguistics, philosophical foundations, semantic level.

The unique national wealth of every nation is primarily and clearly manifested in the natural and unique lexical units and phraseological expressions of its language. Under the influence of temporal and spatial factors, the lexical composition of a language is regarded as a dynamic system that constantly changes, renews, and enriches itself. As a result of social lifestyles, living conditions, socio-economic development processes, scientific and technical discoveries, and cultural transformations, new concepts and lexemes continuously enter the language, while certain words and expressions gradually lose their relevance and fall out of active use. This phenomenon constitutes an inseparable part of the natural evolution and developmental laws of language. In this way, the lexical richness of a language manifests itself as a sensitive indicator reflecting the intellectual and cultural progress of society [1:45].

The concept of the word is studied deeply and comprehensively as a central research object in nearly all branches of linguistics – lexicology, semasiology, phraseology, stylistics, and especially lexicography. The overall development of language, in turn, is evaluated as an important indicator and criterion reflecting the level of formation of human civilization and the culture of thinking. Lexicography occupies a special place in systematizing, preserving, researching, and transmitting the lexical wealth of a language to future generations. In this respect, dictionaries not only record the current state of the language but also delineate the directions of its historical development.

World lexicography possesses a rich history spanning a thousand years, although the principal stage of its scientific-methodological and practical development corresponds to the last two or three centuries. Nevertheless, the roots of lexicography extend far back to pre-Christian eras. In linguistics, the experience of compiling explanatory and linguistic dictionaries related to synonyms was first observed in Chinese lexicography. Chinese scholars scientifically substantiated the phenomenon of synonymy within the lexical system by creating the first synonym dictionary intended for the broad use of poets and writers. In addition, Arabic linguistics produced special lexicographic works devoted to synonymous lexemes, which served to analyze and systematize synonymic relations in depth. The great thinker and encyclopedist Abu Rayhan Beruni paid particular attention to the phenomenon of synonymy in his works, especially drawing on examples from Indian linguistics, and scientifically substantiated his theoretical views with numerous precise and reliable examples [2:72].

This ancient and medieval lexicographic experience provides a solid theoretical and practical foundation for modern lexicography. In particular, it enables the full and accurate reflection of euphemistic graduonymic series in the Uzbek language within the lexical system and allows synonymic and graduonymic relations to be illuminated more deeply in contemporary explanatory

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dictionaries. This, in turn, ensures the organic integration of national linguistics with world linguistics, contributes to raising Uzbek lexicographic research to an international level, and plays a significant role in preserving the cultural heritage of the language and transmitting it to future generations.

In pre-Christian times, the ancient Sumerians compiled systematized lists of special words and expressions used to explain phenomena and situations that were complex in terms of human understanding and expression. Such lists were called glossaries or vocabularies and occupy an important place in the history of linguistics as one of the earliest forms of lexicography. The modern form and structure of dictionaries began to take shape in the sixteenth century, when the scientific-methodological foundations of dictionary compilation gradually started to develop. By the twentieth century, substantial experience had been accumulated in lexicography, clearly manifested in the publication of numerous dictionaries of various types – explanatory, synonym, antonym, phraseological, specialized, and others. This process marked a new stage in systematizing the lexical wealth of language and presenting it to users in a convenient form.

By the middle of the twentieth century, the need to create a lexicographic theory had sufficiently matured, and this theory was formed on a scientific basis. According to V.V. Morovkin, lexicographic theory encompasses the following main directions: "– reconsideration of the scope, content, and structure of the concept of lexicography; – information on dictionary types and genres; – the doctrine concerning elements and parameters; – the doctrine on the foundations of lexicographic construction and the possibilities of computerization; – information on typical dictionary materials; – the doctrine on the planning and organization of dictionary work; – the development and formation of rules for compiling dictionaries" [3:193].

These components are of great importance in shaping lexicography not merely as a practical activity but as an independent scientific discipline. These historical and theoretical stages of development constitute the principal factors determining the current state of lexicography. They are especially significant for fully and accurately reflecting euphemistic graduonymic units in the Uzbek language within the lexical system, for the scientific analysis of synonymic-graduonymic series, and for compiling modern explanatory dictionaries. As a result, lexicographic theory not only generalizes past experience but also creates a solid foundation for the development of national linguistics at the level of world standards. Research has produced dictionaries covering all lexical-semantic layers of language; these dictionaries are constantly revised, adapted to contemporary requirements, and presented in forms that meet users' needs. Synonym dictionaries, in particular, serve as an important scientific and practical tool in the in-depth study of linguistic theory, in expanding the vocabulary of foreign-language learners, and in assisting translators to select the most appropriate nuanced and stylistically polished lexical variants for the semantic and stylistic content of a text. This contributes to the further development of the applied branches of linguistics [3].

The task of improving dictionaries and raising them to the level of modern requirements remains one of the most urgent and priority tasks in linguistic science. Lexical wealth, which constitutes the largest and most dynamic part of the language system, differs sharply from other language levels – phonetic, morphological, and syntactic – owing to its rapid variability, the constant emergence of new lexical units, and the obsolescence of words that fall out of active use. Therefore, lexicographic research must undoubtedly be regularly updated from a contemporary perspective, improved, and adapted to the changing needs of modern users. This process requires not only the preservation of the lexical layer of language but also its deep scientific analysis and transformation into a convenient form for practical application.

In Europe, attitudes toward dictionaries changed fundamentally only in the first half of the seventeenth century. It was precisely during this period that the first Academies of Sciences and

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Academies of Knowledge began to be established. At that time, the question of in which language and by what method European scholars and thinkers should produce scientific works arose acutely. As the issue became clearer, even while Latin retained its position as the universal language of science, the necessity of collecting, organizing, and gathering scientific knowledge in the native language in lexical form became a central topic of interest. These historical and theoretical processes constitute the main factors determining the modern development of lexicography. In particular, they provide a solid theoretical and practical foundation for fully reflecting euphemistic graduonymic series in the Uzbek language within the lexical system, for scientifically analyzing synonymic-graduonymic relations, and for improving explanatory dictionaries on the basis of new approaches.

Questions and problems concerning the native language became a central scientific and cultural issue attracting the attention of most academic scholars and writers. In the process of creating scientific manuals, textbooks, and scholarly works in the native language, it was profoundly realized that dictionaries and grammar are essential fundamental tools. What today seems ordinary and self-evident was regarded in that era as a genuine discovery and scientific achievement. In our contemporary period, the concept of a scientific academy is primarily associated with mathematics, the natural sciences, and technical disciplines. However, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the situation was fundamentally different. To develop these sciences and facilitate their advancement, it was first necessary to organize the lexical wealth of the national language, create its grammar, and form scientific terminology. The first scientific academies established in accordance with the demands of the time were based primarily on social-humanitarian knowledge, especially questions of language and literature. The academy founded in Florence in 1582 had a partial orientation precisely in this direction; its members were tasked first and foremost with linguistic objectives. They set as their main goal the purification of artistic language from unnecessary, coarse, or foreign words and expressions – just as the finest grain is separated from wheat. This, in turn, later gave a powerful impetus to the development of scientific and artistic literature in national languages. As a result, the historical processes and theoretical approaches mentioned above serve as a solid foundation for current research in the field of lexicography. In particular, in Uzbek linguistics, the full and scientifically grounded reflection of euphemistic graduonymic units and synonymic-graduonymic series in modern explanatory dictionaries, together with the structural and functional improvement of dictionaries, is of great importance for preserving the richness of the national language and developing it to the level of international linguistic standards.

A similar task was assigned to the French Academy. Founded in 1635 at the initiative of Cardinal Richelieu, its primary goal was the purification and standardization of the native language. This initiative aimed to create the necessary conditions for the national language to function fully in scientific and literary spheres. The Spanish Academy, established in 1712, likewise faced the problem of compiling a dictionary in the native language and developing its grammar. The Swedish Academy, founded at the initiative of the renowned naturalist Carl Linnaeus, was also compelled to address similar linguistic and lexicographic tasks. These academies made a significant contribution to the cultural and scientific progress of their time by shaping the scientific terminology of national languages, organizing their lexical wealth, and standardizing literary language.

In Russia the situation developed somewhat differently. Although the dictionary issue had not been particularly urgent for a long time, by the eighteenth century, under the influence of M.V. Lomonosov's *Russian Grammar*, lexicographic questions became one of the most important and pressing directions in linguistics. For the first time, between 1789 and 1794, the *Dictionary of the Russian Academy* was published. This dictionary was highly praised by the most authoritative scholars and literary figures of its time and was recorded as an important milestone in the development of

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national linguistics and lexicography. It not only systematized the lexical wealth of the Russian language but also created a solid theoretical and practical foundation for subsequent lexicographic research. These historical processes represented an important stage in the development of lexicographic science, forming the theoretical and practical foundations for the scientific standardization of national languages, the organization of lexical wealth, and the reflection of synonymic-graduonymic relations in the lexical system. Another significant historical fact deserves attention: science (in the broad sense) and dictionaries became inseparable and interrelated concepts over time. Vivid evidence of this interconnection may be seen in the academies established in many countries, the linguistic tasks assigned to them, the lexicographic problems they faced, and the ways in which these problems were solved. Consequently, in contemporary Uzbek linguistics, the issue of fully and accurately expressing euphemistic graduonymic series in dictionaries also requires new approaches grounded in this historical experience. This, in turn, is of great importance for developing Uzbek lexicographic research to international standards and for scientifically preserving the wealth of the national language.

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