



THE PHENOMENON OF HOMONYMY AS AN OBJECT OF RESEARCH FOR THE ENGLISH LINGUISTICS

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Annotation. *This article studies the phenomenon of homonymy in Modern English linguistics. It discusses types and classifications of homonymy in English.*

Keywords: *classification, homonymy, homophones, homography, language.*

The phenomenon of homonymy has developed significantly in modern English. This phenomenon attracts many linguists to study its issues and classify homonyms in the English language. However, despite the long-standing study of homonymy, there is still no universally accepted definition of homonyms and no established terminology in this field. Understanding homonymy is particularly important for comprehending a foreign language because various grammatical forms can have the same sound or spelling. In the Russian language, this is typically not given much attention. Furthermore, knowing homonyms is very necessary in the practical use of English, where their number is significantly higher compared to the Russian language. When determining what meaning of a word fits the speech context, homonymy can pose a significant barrier in the communication process. Additionally, homonyms can be a problem for the speaker, who is forced to choose words in order to convey their statements in a specific meaning [1].

Studying homonyms is ultimately interesting from the perspective of observing the historical meanings of words and the changes they undergo during the development of the language. Modern English is characterized by a large number of homonyms compared to other languages. Homonyms in different languages are always unique, and due to their arbitrary nature, there can be no similarities among homonym groups, nor can there be a guarantee of a commonality. The problem of classifying homonyms holds an important place in their linguistic description [2].

Many famous linguists, such as Arakin, Arnold, Lyons, Skit, and Smirnitkiy, have worked to identify and classify English homonyms. Each of them has their own personal viewpoint on this concept. The most comprehensive classification of homonyms has been proposed by A. I. Smirnitkiy and I. V. Arnold, where Smirnitkiy suggests that homonyms can be divided into full and partial, with the latter including three small groups of partial homonyms. Arnold considers 12 classes of homonyms in his classification. It should be noted that there are slight differences in the opinions of scholars regarding the understanding of linguistic forms. Some of them rely on the phonetic aspect of a word and connect it to the concept of homonymy, while others believe this concept is broader: they combine the phonetic and graphic forms of words. Therefore, in the dictionary-entry of linguistic terms, Rosenthal distinguishes lexical, grammatical, graphic, absolute, homophonic, and homogrammatic homonyms [3].

I.V. Arnold distinguishes between various types of homonyms, such as exact homonyms, homophones, and homographs, but he suggests categorizing exact homonyms into the following 12 groups for more precise classification:

1. Homonyms with the same base form but different paradigms (e.g., light, n., and flame – light, adj., easy);
2. Homonyms that have the same individual word forms but are derived from different roots (e.g., might – n. power, strength; might – past tense of may);



3. Words that belong to different parts of speech but have different forms in their base (this case is very rare) (e.g., axes – arrows, exes – arrows);
4. Words with different lexical meanings but the same grammatical meaning in different paradigms (e.g., lay – lain and lie – false – false);
5. Words that differ in lexical and grammatical meanings but do not differ in paradigms, as they serve as invariant function words (e.g., for – prep. for – conj.);
6. The most typical type of complete homonymy, where the homonyms belong to the same part of a sentence, although they have different lexical meanings (e.g., spring – to jump, spring – a source, spring – a season);
7. The existence of a common component in the lexical meaning of homonyms (e.g., before – to prepare, before – a prefix, before – a conjunction);
8. Pairs of words that possess maximal specificity. They can be considered as variations of a polysemantic word;
9. Homonyms derived from the change of form (e.g., eye – noun, eye – verb) whose meanings can be inferred if the meaning of the original word is known;
10. Words belonging to different parts of a sentence and sharing similarities due to a common root (e.g., thought – noun, thought – verb);
11. Similarity of lexical and grammatical meanings, taking into account shape differences;
12. A set of small words formed from nouns that generally convey plural meanings, with slightly different meanings (e.g., brother – brothers, sister – siblings).

In I.V. Arnold's classification, all aspects of classification and all types of homonymy, even if rare, are examined in detail. Kabanov I.N. distinguishes between three types of phonetic and graphic matching based on the degree of distinctness of the words: complete homonyms and incomplete homonyms (homophones and homographs).

Complete homonyms are words that are identical in sound and written form but differ in meaning.

For example,

Back (noun) "part of the body"

Ball (noun) "a round object used in games"

Ball (noun) "a gathering of people for dancing";

Bark (noun) "the noise made by a dog"

Bay (noun) "the European laurel".

"Homophones– sounds that are similar, but differ in their spelling and meaning, for example:

air - heir; buy - by; him - hymn;

knight - night; not - knot;

storey - story; write - right.

Homographs are words that are the same in spelling but differ in meaning and pronunciation (in terms of sound composition and the position of stress in the word). For example:

bow[bou] - bow[bau];

lead[li:d] - lead [led];

wind [wind] - wind [waind].

E. V. Sevortyan expressed that homonyms are verbal-type lexemes, while Kyrgyz scholar B. O. Oruzbaeva emphasizes that simple homonyms are one of the ancient word-formation methods in Turkic languages. Other scholars also refer to homonyms as a transformation of a word from one lexical category to another, a process known as conversion [4].

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that a single definition of homonyms accepted by all linguists has yet to be developed [5]. There are various approaches to classifying homonyms, particularly in describing the homonyms of different languages, especially English, where certain classifications may be effective. The phenomenon of homonymy can present specific challenges during



language interaction, although these challenges can be resolved by examining the context of communication. Throughout its historical development, the English language has undergone changes related to homonymy, and these changes continue to occur.

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