

Eötvös Loránd University of Arts and Sciences
Faculty of Humanities

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Semantics of Present-Day's Hungarian Neologisms

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1. Subject and aim of the dissertation

The dissertation examines the semantic structure of **neologisms** that appear in present-day's Hungarian language in **functional-cognitive frame**.

Many approaches and definitions can be read in the Hungarian and foreign scientific literature (e. g. Terestyéni 1955, 1958, Zsemlyei 1996, Minya 2003, Szathmári 2004, Kozocsa 2008; DLT, DS, Metzler, DTL, Kramer 2003) and there have been many groupings and dividing suggestions during the years. However, these definitions and classifications led to the mixing and to overlapping of view points, so they made complicated to study the born and using of new linguistic phenomena. The different points of view made difficult to study the causes of birth, spreading or disappearing of neolog phenomena, to study the language users' activity that motivate language change and to study those cognitive processes that lead to the appearance of neologisms.

The dissertation (with the help of those aspects that have been missing from earlier approaches) deals with **analysing the semantic structure** of some of those neologisms that have appeared in the Hungarian standard language in the last few years. The analysed phenomena are lexemes: there are compounds, multiple compounds and some verbs with *be* prefix.

One of the aims of the dissertation is to give a **(labour) definition** for neologisms that is based on the mentioned aspects and is dynamic and takes the relationship of the speaker and the listener into account in the communicative situation. According to this aim, I give a survey on the history of neologisms' scientific literature (2.1.) then I point at those overlapping problems and absence that occurred in the former definitions (2.2.), I sketch the possibilities that come from cognitive approach and that can be fruitful in defining neologisms (2.4.) and I give that labour definition in which sense I regard the analysed linguistic phenomena as neologisms (2.7.).

From my point of view a **neologism** is a linguistic form that can sometimes have novel semantic structure, and that can have novel meaning or style according to the former experiences, knowledge and expects of the speaker and the listener in a communicative situation. The speaker and the listener assume dynamically new meaning or new style to this phenomenon; the change of this assumption is scalar: depending on the mentioned variables it can change even according to the same language user.

Those questionnaires that I have taken since 2006 annually with more than a thousand informants help to uncover the language users' relationships with the analysed neologism, to

study the recognition, semantics and the attitudes toward the neolog phenomenon. In Chapter 4 I cite those relevant data that I have got since 2008.

Using the results of these questionnaires can be especially fruitful in reaching the dissertation's main aim, the **semantic analyses** of neologisms. With the help of the informants' answers, understanding strategies and attitudes can be reached that can help to model the process of meaning construal. It must be emphasized here that this process cannot be revealed on the basis of some hundreds of informants, but this is not the aim of this dissertation. Citing the data of the surveys is important and necessary because using the experiences of informants as a point of view in the analysis, they can make revealing the semantic structure of the analysed neologisms more successful. The theoretical background also serves this aim. With its help I present those semantic structures that are the base of the analysis. These semantic structures that I use directly in semantic analysis are metonymy (3.1.), metaphor (3.2.) and conceptual integration (blending, see Fauconnier–Turner 1994 [1985], 1998a, b, c, 2003, 2007, Kövecses–Benczes 2010: 173–192); with the latter one's help the graphical illustration of the semantic structure of a neologism can be made (3.4.).

2. Theses of the dissertation

According to the above mentioned statements the following theses of the dissertation can be formulated:

1. The appearance of neologisms in language is embedded organically into the process of language change; it is coherent part of it. That is why investigating and dealing with the process of language change is inevitable during the analysis of neologisms.
2. Former definitions, groupings of neolog phenomena analysed neologisms many times according to only one chosen aspect (e. g. according to grammatical structure), so there have been deficiencies and confusions of standpoints in the results of the investigation and in the definitions of the phenomenon. To prevent these characteristics it is practical to examine the mentioned linguistic phenomena during their use.
3. It is worth making a usage-based, dynamic (labour) definition in order to be able to characterize the varied appearing forms of neologisms.
4. The communicative situation, the person of the announcer and the receiver, their relationship have prominent role in the use of neologisms, so the investigated phenomena must be examined in context, during discourse.

5. During the usage of neologisms the former knowledge, linguistic experience of the announcer and the receiver is highly important: with this help they develop interpreting strategies according to new linguistic phenomena.
6. Those relations of interpreting strategies which help analysing the semantic structure of the neologisms, can be examined directly with the help of the concerning data of those questionnaires that deal with recognizing, meaning and sometimes accepting neologisms.
7. With the knowledge of the results of the surveys the process of meaning construal in the process of understanding a neologism can be modelled; this can reveal which factors have an impact on the “viability”, surviving or disappearing of a neologism in language use.

3. Importance and novelty of the investigated topic, justification of the investigation

Neologisms occur daily in language during the linguistic activity of people who use language; there are novelties that become deeply rooted in language use while others sooner or longer disappear. This phenomenon is always presented in the life of a language and it occurs in the dynamic process of **language change** (Croft 2000, Keller 1985, 1990).

The consequence is that the analysis of neologisms (words, phrases or other linguistic forms) is important task, not to mention that it is extremely exciting: that is why many times “ordinary” people who are not interested in the scientific side of the investigation, realize these novel phenomena. In my dissertation I try to grasp those meaning organizing processes and semantic characteristics that can help with describing the processes that play a role in explaining, understanding and using a neologism. I think that these characteristics (meaning organizing process like metaphor and metonymy which occur in semantic structure) have as important impact upon the “survival” and spreading chances of a neologism, as associations with well-known forms like grammatical structure, rhyme or euphony.

In my opinion semantic analysis of neologisms is really adequate because with its help those contradictions can be solved that appeared in former approaches and definitions. The analysing process that is used in this dissertation and the data that I got from the questionnaires can be build into analyses and can give an opportunity in the examination of neologisms that help to reveal why is it so, that one neolog phenomenon “works” and became established in language use while the other “doesn’t work” and disappears without a trace.

4. Theoretical background of the dissertation

The dissertation analyses the semantic structure of the chosen neologisms in **functional-cognitive** frame.

It is common in the different functional schools, that they explain language functioning not only with internal, but also with **external characteristics**. They state that linguistic structure “(...) is not autonomous, but they consider it in close connection with the other human cognitive abilities and with the external functions of language, so they examine it based on operation and on wider **connections of language use**” (Ladányi–Tolcsvai Nagy 2008: 21–22, translated by me). From these facts it emerges that functional linguistics “(...) regards language basically **not as an abstract system of rules**” (Tolcsvai Nagy 2010: 11, translated by me), but as a phenomenon that is “(...) a conventional network of those actual linguistic structures that are realized in human communication and bring meanings within reach” (Ladányi–Tolcsvai Nagy 2008: 24, translated by me). An important characteristic of functional linguistic approach is that it is **usage-based**. *Functional* attribute, examining linguistic phenomena in language use, avoiding formalisation and importance of empiric experience have to be emphasised (Hámori 2009: 18). According to functional approach language is **knowledge** that is settled in the language user’s mind with the help of experience of the world, within the bounds of cognitive process. Establishing linguistic structures and functioning linguistic knowledge can be done with the help of more “not linguistic” factors (Langacker 1999: 15–16, Ladányi–Tolcsvai Nagy 2008: 24–25, Tolcsvai Nagy 2010: 15).

Cognitive linguistics emphasizes the primacy of linguistic meaning and that not the knowledge about language has to be examined but the language itself is one kind of knowledge (Geeraerts 2006: 3). Cognitive semantics is “(...) semantics based on human cognition” (Tolcsvai Nagy 2010: 13, translated by me) that emphasizes that “linguistic structures map and bring the world’s things, relationships and processes in human cognition within reach with the help of **conceptual construal**, basically in semantic structures” (Tolcsvai Nagy 2010: 13, translated by me). According to **holistic** cognitive linguistics, functional fields of human mind are traversable and they process the results of cognition in analogous way. The experiences that are processed are directly part of linguistic knowledge and they help in shaping abstract knowledge (Geeraerts 2006: 5–6, Tolcsvai Nagy 2010: 14).

According to the above, the chosen theoretical frame can be especially appropriate in analysing semantic structure of neologisms, because it holds meaning’s primacy among the facts that organize language and it emphasizes that language is based on experience and is a part of cognitive knowledge (Langacker 1987: 13).

5. Methodology of the dissertation

Since the aim of the dissertation is explaining the concept of neologism and analysis of the semantic structure of the examined phenomena, the structure of the dissertation and the methods used serve these aims. The second and the third chapters of the dissertation contain theoretical summaries which help to prepare the way for the analyses of the fourth chapter. During the introduction of theoretical characteristics and tendencies I constantly cite those **results** that are in certain respects connected with neologisms that I had analysed earlier.

The objects of the fourth chapter's semantic analyses are fourteen words that can be considered as neologisms according to the (labour) definition of the dissertation. Choosing these neologisms was **arbitrary**, but during choosing them it was important that they have different morphological and – probably – semantic structure. In this chapter I always cite the analysed neologisms in **context**, in their “supporting matrix” (Tolcsvai Nagy 2010: 12): the **corpus** is given by parts of **internet forums' texts** and **comments** that have been written according to these texts, and in one case the corpus is a part of a **blog**. With each semantic analysis I report those **results from the questionnaires** that are connected to the realization of the examined neologism and/or the attitude of informants according to it (in diagrams) and I also introduce those **circumscriptions** or those **synonyms** that informants advised in connection with the neologism. In my opinion these results can be very fruitful in analysing the semantic structure of neologisms because they can reveal the process of meaning construal in a wider sense. Thanks to the data of the questionnaires the subjectivity of the analyses can be softened, so the analyses do not reflect the personal point of view of only one language user in connection with the examined neologisms. After the detailed semantic analysis I always give the graphic representation and the explanation of the characteristics that have been dealt with. The analyses are based on those semantic structures (metaphoric and metonymic meaning and especially conceptual integration) that had been explained in the former chapters of the dissertation.

The corpus of the dissertation is given by **Hungarian texts**, so its results are relevant principally in respect of the Hungarian language. On the other hand I think that its results and methods can be used in analysing the semantic structure of new words in other languages, too.

6. Results of the dissertation

The dissertation points at the heterogeneity of the definitions of neologisms in the Hungarian and foreign scientific literature and shows those problems that come from overlaps or contradictions. The dissertation also introduces a definition for the phenomena of neologisms

in which sense these phenomena can be characterized in the **relationship of the speaker and the listener**, during **language use**.

In a broader sense the dissertation makes an attempt to **study a phase of language change** analysing the moment situation of a given state's cross-section. It reveals these processes with the help of analysing the semantic structure of neologisms that exist actively in synchronicity, not to mention that language users, informants (and the author of this dissertation) also have concrete, "everyday" **experience** in connection with these neologisms.

In the dissertation I analyse the chosen neologisms in the same theoretical frame. With the help of those possibilities that have been given by the conceptual integration network model I successfully point at those metaphorical and metonymical meaning relations that sometimes occur in really variable ways. Thanks to the chosen theoretical frame's possibilities (e. g. graphical illustration) those mental and cognitive processes can be shown that presumably take part in **meaning construal** when neologisms appear in language use. During analyses I always emphasize that these processes cannot be studied directly but they **can be modelled** with the help of some possibilities: the dissertation shows examples for these possibilities (questionnaires, graphical illustrating).

During the theoretical overlook and the analyses I explain that neologisms are dynamic phenomena, their judgement depends on the speaker's and the listener's relationship and there are varied **mental and cognitive language user's strategies** in their coming into existence and in their understanding. The dissertation's semantic analyses model these processes, so it can be said that the dissertation fulfils its aims.

It is the consequence of the examined phenomenon that the future tasks are always on the agenda. It is worth continuing collecting neologisms and analysing them according to multiple view points, just like studying the life (surviving or disappearing) of older neologisms. Among the possibilities of this dissertation a momentary cross-section could have been shown: the following analyses are tasks for the future.

Publications and conference lectures in connection with the dissertation's topic

Publications

Celeb, bevállal, H1N1 – neologizmusok megítélése, értékelése különböző korcsoportok körében. In: Hires-László Kornélia – Karmacs Zoltán – Márku Anita (szerk.) 2011. *Nyelvi mítoszok, ideológiák, nyelvpolitika és nyelvi emberi jogok Közép-Európában elméletben és gyakorlatban. A 16. Élőnyelvi Konferencia előadásai*. Budapest – Beregszász: Tinta

Könyvkiadó – II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola Hodinka Antal Intézete. 335–344.

Becéloz, betámad, bevállal – be igekötős neologizmusaink szemantikájáról In: Parapatics Andrea (főszerk.) 2011. *FÉLÚTON 6. A hatodik Félúton konferencia (2010) kiadványa.*
[URL:http://linguistics.elte.hu/studies/fuk/fuk10/](http://linguistics.elte.hu/studies/fuk/fuk10/)

Új szavak értelmezési stratégiái különböző korcsoportokban. *Anyanyelv-pedagógia* 2011. 1. szám (elektronikus kiadás). <http://www.anyanyelv-pedagogia.hu/cikkek.php?id=302>

Neologizmusok kognitív szemantikai megközelítése. *Magyar Nyelvőr* 2010. 134. évf. 3. sz. 270–282.

Értelmezési stratégiák és attitűdök vizsgálata fogalmi terek ötvöződését tartalmazó köznyelvi neologizmusainkban. In: Illés-Molnár Márta – Kaló Zsuzsa – Klein Laura – Parapatics Andrea (szerk.) 2010. *FÉLÚTON 5. Az ötödik Félúton konferencia (2009) kiadványa.* Budapest: ELTE BTK Nyelvtudományi Doktori Iskola – L'Harmattan Könyvkiadó és Terjesztő Kft. 139–154. (elektronikus kiadás: <http://linguistics.elte.hu/studies/fuk/fuk09/>)

Napjaink neologizmusai általános és középiskolás diákok szemszögéből nézve. *Könyv és Nevelés.* 2009, XI./4. (elektronikus változat)

Megértési stratégiák és attitűdök neologizmusok értelmezésében. In: Várad Tamás (szerk.) 2009. *III. Alkalmazott Nyelvészeti Doktorandusz Konferencia kötete.* Budapest: MTA Nyelvtudományi Intézet. 152–166.

Napjaink neologizmusainak mondatbeli értelmezése. In: Keszler Borbála – Tátrai Szilárd (szerk.) 2009. *Diskurzus a grammatikában – grammatika a diskurzusban.* Budapest: Tinta Könyvkiadó. 257–265.

Neologizmusok a mai magyar szókészletben. In: Kuna Ágnes – Veszelszki Ágnes (szerk.) 2009. *FÉLÚTON 3. A harmadik Félúton konferencia (2007) kiadványa.* 260–273.

Újabb neologizmusaink szemantikai vizsgálata. In: Nádor Orsolya (szerk.) 2009. *MANYE XVIII. A magyar mint európai és világnyelv. A XVIII. Magyar Alkalmazott Nyelvészeti Kongresszus Előadásai*. Budapest: MANYE-Balassi Intézet. 259–264.

Új *-da/-de* képzős üzlet-, cég- és vállalkozásnevek a magyar nyelvben. In: Bölcskei Andrea – N. Császi Ildikó (szerk.) 2008. *Név és valóság. A VI. Magyar Névtudományi Konferencia előadásai*. 2007. június 22–24. Balatonszárszó. 610–614.

A mai magyar köznyelv szókészletének neologizmusai. In: Plugor Réka (szerk.) *RODOSZ Konferenciakötet 2007*. Kolozsvár: Romániai Magyar Doktoranduszok és Fiatalkutatók Szövetsége (RODOSZ) 69–78.

In press

Szösszetétel keletkezett neologizmusok szemantikai szerkezetének vizsgálata (XXI. MANYE Kongresszus konferenciakötete)

Fórum szövegek vizsgálata: neologizmusok elemzése a szemantikai felépítés és a stílus szociokulturális rétegzettségének vonatkozásában (Stíluskutató csoport készülő kötete)

Conference lectures

2012

E- előtagú neologizmusaink szemantikájáról

VI. Alkalmazott Nyelvészeti Doktorandusz Konferencia (MTA Nyelvtudományi Intézet), Budapest

2011

Szösszetétel keletkezett neologizmusok szemantikai szerkezetének vizsgálata

XXI. Magyar Alkalmazott Nyelvészeti Kongresszus (MANYE), Nyugat-magyarországi Egyetem Savaria Egyetemi Központ, Szombathely

2010

Celeb, bevállal, HINI – neologizmusok megítélése, értékelése különböző korcsoportok körében

16. Élőnyelvi konferencia, II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola, Beregszász

Becéloz, betámad, bevállal – be igekötős neologizmusaink szemantikájáról
Félúton 6. (az ELTE magyar nyelvészeti doktoranduszainak konferenciája), Budapest

2009

„*Passzív ház*” vagy „*masszív ház*”? Neologizmusok (fel)ismertsége különböző korcsoportok körében

I. Vályi András anyanyelv-pedagógiai konferencia, ELTE BTK, Budapest

Megértési stratégiák és attitűdök neologizmusok értelmezésében

III. Alkalmazott Nyelvészeti Doktorandusz Konferencia (MTA Nyelvtudományi Intézet), Budapest

Értelmezési stratégiák és attitűdök vizsgálata fogalmi terek ötvöződését tartalmazó köznyelvi neologizmusainkban

Félúton 5. (az ELTE magyar nyelvészeti doktoranduszainak konferenciája), Budapest

2008

Napjaink neologizmusainak mondatbeli értelmezése

Diskurzus a grammatikában, grammatika a diskurzusban konferencia, ELTE BTK, Budapest

Újabb neologizmusaink szemantikai vizsgálata

XVIII. Magyar Alkalmazott Nyelvészeti Kongresszus (MANYE), Balassi Intézet, Budapest

Metaforikusság, metonimikusság és blending napjaink magyar köznyelvének új lexémáiban és frazémáiban

Félúton 4. (az ELTE magyar nyelvészeti doktoranduszainak konferenciája), Budapest

2007

Neologizmusok a mai magyar szókészletben

Félúton 3. (az ELTE magyar nyelvészeti doktoranduszainak konferenciája), Budapest

A mai magyar köznyelv szókészletének neologizmusai

VIII. RODOSz Konferencia (a Romániai Magyar Doktorandusok és Fiatal Kutatók Szövetségének konferenciája), Babeş–Bolyai Tudományegyetem, Kolozsvár

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