

RESEARCH INTO SEMANTICS OF LEXICAL AND PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS AS A MEANS OF DEVELOPING STUDENTS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

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Abstract

According to recent analyses of my technical students' essays written in general or technical English most of them lack accuracy in using polysemantic vocabulary acquired in class which is often caused by an inconsistent and superficial manner of studying the semantic structure of polysemantic lexical and phraseological units, which should be looked up in dictionaries and studied in contexts revealing secondary meanings of words which might be actualized due to mechanisms of metaphor. Average language learners often relying on their "language feeling", and general ideas of the text under consideration, the correct semantics of the vocabulary (including stylistic and contextual features) they study is usually disregarded.

The language learning problem the paper is devoted to might also arise due to differences in the semantics of lexical and phraseological units in their mother tongue and their English equivalents.

A language is called a mirror reflecting national and cultural, scientific and pseudoscientific knowledge about realities of human life that unveils a nation's cultural and historical lifestyle. Besides, lexicology and phraseology of a national language denote objects and processes of the environment a nation has been living in, focusing on the most relevant features characterizing people's actions, behavior, stereotypes and conceptual thinking caused by lots of factors including even climatic peculiarities and, thus serving as the foundation to perceive and evaluate the world, and comprehend and classify things around.

Acquiring a language as a dynamically developing and complicated system based on unique national concepts might be interfered by a learner's native language and their national mentality in terms of vocabulary, syntax and sentence building. Looking into the problem from this point of view motivates us to strive for effective teaching and learning methods implying a consciously learning approach to information to be analyzed and learnt.

Highlighting the importance of a learner's conscious approach to studying a foreign language (English) with the help of research techniques in the learning process, this paper describes methods for analyzing secondary meanings of polysemantic words and contexts they are actualized in as part of the English teaching methodology for Russian native speakers. Also, the article comments on the stages of a student's research work, which results in comparing and contrasting shared and specific features in the semantics of English and Russian general and technical vocabulary, allowing them to carefully and accurately choose language to communicate ideas, taking into account its unique features.

To develop a student's language research skills we analyze English-written scientific and technical articles, essays and books in terms of vocabulary, syntax and text which, undoubtedly, improves their oral and written academic skills, enlarging and enriching their professional vocabulary and empowering their communication skills.

Keywords: derivation, secondary meaning, metaphor, semantics, polysemy, English-teaching methods, comparative and contrastive linguistics.

1 INTRODUCTION

Any language, mirroring life, reflects people's knowledge and ideas about the surrounding reality. Lexicology and phraseology of a language aim to name the realities of the objective world, as well as people's actions, behavior, feelings and emotions, and general mental concepts being the foundation to perceive, comprehend, evaluate and classify the realities of the world. For example, both Russian and English lexemes that have almost the same set of components and, therefore, similar definitions, are

used to name such concepts as air, water, land, surface, sea, lever, arm, etc. The identical classifying features and components in the definitions / semantics of the above mentioned Russian and English lexemes allow us to speak about the common ideas and concepts and, as a consequence, to understand nuclear, differential and associative components in the semantics of these concepts in different languages. On the other hand, human thinking is able to see similar features of different objects, processes and phenomena, which are revealed in the semantic structure of a word. For example, in the Russian and English languages, the word *magnet* develops the same figurative meanings: 1.1 A person or thing that has a powerful attraction (in English) [11]. 2. Colloquial About something that has an attractive force, attracts to itself (in Russian) [6].

In some cases, derived figurative meanings of lexemes denoting the same concept in two different languages based on the same image may differ in a number of features affecting the style of the text they may be used in (we differentiate among bookish, colloquial, and other styles of language), as well as grammar and lexical properties that are expressed in different patterns of word combinations (substantive, adjectival, adverbial, verb, prepositional, non-prepositional, etc.)

At the same time, each ethnic community builds their own linguistic view of the world within the framework and in the form of their national languages, interpreting the facts and realities in accordance with its cultural and historical traditions and customs, norms, beliefs and lifestyles. Therefore, cultural and national features are understood by us as the language itself and the realities and history characteristic of a nation, and also as linguistic images correlated with situations typical of this ethnic group. For example, when learning English, Russian students can often see that English and Russian words, having equal primary meanings, develop a different number of secondary meanings, some of them being lacuna meanings in either English or Russian. For example, the lexeme *antenna* has the same two meanings in Russian and English: 1) A rod, wire, or other device used to transmit or receive radio or television signals; an aerial [6], [10] 2) and in the field of Zoology it is used to denote either of a pair of long, thin sensory appendages on the heads of insects, crustaceans, and some other arthropods [6], [10]. The following contexts reveal the meanings of *antenna*: 1) 'Of course, all radios and antennas should be tuned for their best performance.' [11] 2) 'It was a female, as evidenced by its plump, rounded abdomen and thin antennae. [11]' In the "zoological" meaning, the lexeme *antennae* is used in the plural form and modified by an adjective describing appearance (thin) [11]. In the "technical" meaning, the lexeme *antennae* is also modified by a word characterizing function and type of the device (satellite, television, dish, radio, different, external, separate, navigational). The English lexeme *antennae* develops the meaning 1.1 'The faculty of instinctively detecting and interpreting subtle signs' [11], which the Russian lexeme *antennae* lacks, for example, 'I'd trust politicians, who, whatever their faults, have finely tuned antennae for the flow of events.' [11] Interestingly, lexemes developing secondary metaphorical meanings reveal these meanings when modified by adjectives, which are not typical of the contexts where the primary meaning of a lexeme is used. For example, the meaning of the English lexeme *antennae* 'to be very sensitive (to something); to have a keen sense of detection or perception' [11] is often found in contexts with abstract lexemes (political, social, attuned to, the flow of events, etc.)

Thus, comparative research into the semantic structures of lexemes is able to spot common and specific features in their semantics, demanding a learner should be more careful and accurate when selecting language for communication purposes [7].

National stereotypes, mentality and symbols of a particular culture are expressed and stored in phraseology of a language. Phraseological units (idioms), being means of vivid description, are used to name fragments and situations of the surrounding world, which can cause a number of difficulties associated with a lack of understanding cultural and linguistic differences of our communication partners. The flow of international students to Russian universities is increasing every year, which means that higher education should provide a respectful, harmonious and safe environment for learning. In this regard, it seems necessary to pay considerable attention to learning a foreign language as a means of dialogue between different cultures and ethnic groups [1].

The national and cultural peculiarities of phraseological units are based primarily on the specific cultural and historical background of an ethnic community and their traditions. Each nation reflects facts, phenomena, events, not just naming, but also evaluating them, through an idiomatic interpretation resulting from their mentality. For instance, to understand the following English idioms *a wet blanket*, and *smart Aleck*, it is not enough to know the meanings of each component that make up the structure of the idioms under consideration. Russian learners, for example, may know the meanings of the words *wet*, *blanket*, *smart*, but the meanings of the lexemes will not lead to understanding the whole idioms. The dictionary explains a *wet blanket* as a person who spoils other people's fun by failing to join in with or by disapproving of their activities [9], [11], and *smart Aleck* [as a person who is irritating because they

behave as if they know everything [9], [11]. Both of the idioms are used in informal language. Besides, *smart Aleck* is characterized as derogatory [9], [11]. The contexts, which use the above mentioned idioms, add vividness to the described situations, for example: 'Being first an engineer and second a smart aleck, I pointed out that important data was missing [11], 'I'm a bit of a wet blanket when it comes to the whole business of space travel', Stewart said in an interview posted on the BBC website.' [11].

Phraseological units that have more than one meaning (polysemantic phraseological units) are particularly difficult to understand and learn. For example, the English idiom *of the first water* has two meanings: 1. (of a diamond or pearl) of the greatest brilliance and transparency (for example, 'a gem of the first water'); 1.1 Used to refer to a person or thing that is unsurpassed of their kind, typically in an unacceptable way. For example, 'A lot of this is obviously down to the fact that these guys are players of the first water.'. To memorize and use the meanings of such polysemantic idioms, research techniques and methodology will also be useful to study the structure and semantics of idioms [11].

For example, idioms with the proper name component in English and Russian may have the same source of origin. This is referred to idioms with the Biblical component in its structure, sourcing from Biblical texts. Biblicisms exist in all national languages whose history is more or less related with Christianity and constitute an extensive base of background cultural knowledge of a person. In this case, as the analysis of English idioms shows, the image of an idiom can be understandable, making the basic meaning of an idiom understandable. For example, according to the dictionary *Abraham's bosom* is heaven; the place of rest for the souls of the righteous dead (chiefly "in Abraham's bosom". [2]), Gog and Magog are (in the Bible) the names of enemies of God's people. In Ezek. 38–9, Gog is apparently a ruler from the land of Magog, while in Rev. 20:8, Gog and Magog are nations under the dominion of Satan. [2], Cain's seal is the mark of Cain, the sign placed on Cain after the murder of Abel; (figurative) a sign of infamy. [2].

In a number of English idioms, you can see a metaphorical image that allows you to guess the meaning of the whole idiom, for example, the idiom *ball and chain* (also *chain and ball*), which is a heavy metal ball secured by a chain to the leg of a prisoner to prevent escape, develops the figurative meaning in the American English: the thing that binds hands and feet [initially an iron core chained to the prisoner's feet] [5], the idiom (*as*) *blind as a bat* develops the figurative meaning: having very bad eyesight in the informal American English language [5]. These idioms develop secondary meanings on the basis of associative components. The secondary meaning of the idiom *ball and chain* is used as jargon: family chains [5], the metaphorical meaning of the idiom *as blind as a bat* is used in the neutral style: 2) blind, not noticing, not seeing, not understanding what is happening around [5].

In phraseology and lexicology of each language, both common and specific features are distinguished. Common concepts reflected in lexicology and phraseology of the English and Russian languages are based on the similar figurative interpretation of the reality in figurative meanings of lexical units, which explains the phenomenon of regularity of secondary meanings and phraseological parallelism in these languages. The images underlying some English idioms can be easily acquired by the Russian-speaking audience and the meaning of such idioms can be easily understood.

When learning a language, it is important to realize that changes to people's daily lives, new norms of behavior and customs, breakthroughs in technology and science are reflected in the language. For example, the lexeme *robot* in English and Russian with the primary meaning 'a machine capable of carrying out a complex series of actions automatically, especially one programmable by a computer' especially used in science fiction develops the secondary meaning 'a person who behaves in a mechanical or unemotional manner' [10]. In English, *robot* is also used in computer technology in the meaning 'a program that systematically browses the World Wide Web in order to create an index of data'. In the Russian dictionary, this meaning of the lexeme is not registered [11].

This article is devoted to the importance of a conscious approach to learning a foreign language (English) using research techniques in the learning process.

It should be noted that undoubtedly, our method of analyzing lexical and phraseological units in English scientific and technical articles improves students' oral and written academic skills, expands their technical and general vocabulary, enlarges their vocabulary of special words and terms and, in addition, opens up a new view of the world through the English language, which fragments the objective reality in a different way compared to the Russian language, highlighting unusual cultural features in the language and making them important and outstanding.

This paper describes the research method to study secondary meanings of polysemic words and idioms and contexts they are used in as part of our methodology of teaching English. The article describes the

stages of a student's research work, which results in analyzing common and specific features in the semantics of common-use and special words including terms, which will allow learners to carefully and accurately use language, taking into account its peculiarities.

2 METHODOLOGY

Russian students studying elementary and even pre-intermediate English often associate a word with one meaning only. This may be due to the fact that they mainly focus on general ideas in context, use electronic translators, do not look up unknown words in dictionaries to clarify the meanings, do not analyze the context, thus ignoring the complex semantics of a polysemantic word.

Our students study technical English with the Technical English 3 book, authored by David Bonamy, paying attention to the terminology and special vocabulary given in the book, which perfectly illustrates the use of technical vocabulary in a variety of technical contexts. It should be noted that modern linguists are still debating if terminology belongs to a literary language or is a special professional language of communication. Indeed, some terms are used only by specialists and do not go beyond their professional usage [12]. Nevertheless, terms and special words can be found in a variety of contexts (technical and non-technical) due to their developed semantics. For instance, technically speaking, the word *beacon* has the following meanings which are useful for technical contexts: 1.2A light or other visible object serving as a signal, warning, or guide at sea, on an airfield, etc., 1.3A radio transmitter whose signal helps to fix the position of a ship, aircraft, or spacecraft [11]. Here are the contexts from the book the word *beacon* is used in: The beacon sent a signal to the satellite. The beacon detached itself from the boat [3]. However, it seems to us that it would also be useful and important to show examples illustrating the metaphorical usage of the word *beacon*. For example, the following examples registered in the Cambridge Dictionary show that the word *beacon* is often used metaphorically ('a good example that gives people hope or encouragement'): 'This school is a leader in all-round education in the country and stands out like a beacon.' Dubai was transformed from an ancient Persian Gulf port into a glitzy international hub of spas and skyscrapers - and a beacon of modernity for the Arab world [4]. This is of particular importance because in the Russian language the figurative meaning of the lexeme *beacon* ("mayak") has a reference to the Soviet past and is connected precisely with the realities of the Soviet time [6].

Using the research techniques in teaching English to technical students involves the following steps: 1. Searching for and collecting factual materials (working with Russian and English lexicographic sources). 2. Using the component analysis method to study the semantics of Russian and English lexical / phraseological units. 3. Identifying common and specific features in the semantics of Russian and English lexical / phraseological units. 4. Using the contextual analysis method in order to identify the use of lexical / phraseological units in contexts. 5. A researcher's conclusions based on the analysis done and observations made.

Let us show how research techniques are able to help learners understand the peculiarities of the semantics of English and Russian polysemantic words with the same primary meaning, analyzing the lexeme *harvest* in Russian and English. First, it is necessary to draw a student's attention to the fact that the primary meaning of the word *harvest* is the same in English and Russian: The process or period of gathering in crops. 1.1The season's yield or crop. The contexts given illustrate the use of *harvest* in the primary meaning: 'farmers work longer hours during the harvest', and 'The maize fields were also expected to produce a good harvest, with enough maize for feed and export.' [6], [11].

Next, we analyze the specific features of the semantics of *harvest* in Russian and English. The English word *harvest* develops the meaning: 1.2A quantity of animals caught or killed for human use [11], while the Russian word *harvest* (*urozhay*) does not have it [6]. Interestingly, Russian and English lexemes, whose semantic structures are partially equal, reveal their different secondary meanings in different grammar patterns using different prepositions. For example, the Russian word *harvest* has the meaning registered in the dictionary as '3. (used with the preposition 'na' in Russian, which correlates with the preposition 'for' in English) Colloq. About the abundance, a great number of something at a certain moment, at some time. According to the dictionary, this meaning is colloquial, and shown in the Russian examples, which might be interpreted in English in a paraphrased way using such words as *abundance*, *plenty*, *a great number* instead of *harvest*: There has been a great number of journals this year. There is an abundance of brides these days. We have plenty of poets today. This analysis of the Russian lexeme *harvest* spots the components which prevent learners from using the English lexeme *harvest* to convey the third meaning of the Russian word *harvest* (mentioned above). The English lexeme *harvest* also develops a metaphorical meaning registered in the dictionary as 'figurative the product or result of

an action' and used in the following grammar patterns, with the preposition of "... but it has produced a *harvest of insights* into the riches of the Bible" [11], Later on, however, it yields a *harvest of righteousness* and peace to those who have been trained by it [11], Inflation, shortages, and declining production were the harvest of five years of perestroika and glasnost [11]. Lexicographic sources also give examples of other word combinations with *harvest* in a figurative meaning using prepositions associated with the idea of "something gained as a result of some action", for example, 'I suspect Dr. Colbert has reaped a healthy harvest from the sale of these best-selling books.'; 'The US invented basketball, and are now reaping its harvest.' [11].

Thus, despite the close ideas conveyed by the figurative meanings of the Russian and English lexeme *harvest*, the comparative analysis of the Russian and English sentences with *harvest* shows that the figurative meaning of the English lexeme *harvest* is associated with actions / processes that have led to a certain result (for example, *produce a harvest*), while the Russian lexeme *harvest* has no 'action' component that supports the result in its semantics. Such an analysis in the semantic structure of lexemes reveals the common and specific features in their semantics, which requires a deeper understanding of language to be used for oral and written communication.

The English structures with *harvest* analyzed show that the different semantic components of this lexeme become prominent depending on a lexical company, the lexeme keeps in a saying. It should be noted that *harvest* can be both a noun and a verb. The Oxford English Dictionary registers the primary meaning and secondary meanings of *harvest* as a noun: 1. The process or period of gathering in crops; • the season's yield or crop; • a quantity of animals caught or killed for human use; • figurative the product or result of an action. As a verb, *harvest* has the following primary and secondary meanings registered in the dictionary: gather (a crop) as a harvest; • catch or kill (animals) for human use; • remove (cells, tissue, or an organ) from a person or animal for the experiment or transplant [11]. Thus, comparing the meanings of the noun and the verb, we can point out that the semantics of the noun and the verb have developed in a different way. The noun *harvest* develops the figurative meaning of 'product or result of action', whilst the verb lacks this meaning. Let us analyze the examples which use both the primary meaning (the season's yield or crop) and the metaphorical meaning (the product or result of an action) of the noun *harvest*. In the primary meaning *harvest* is represented in the following examples: 1. ...the new harvest will yield about 600,000 tons of staple grains this year. 2. ...the seeds sown to date can yield a bountiful harvest.. 3.... people in his area continued to record bumper harvests in maize production. [11]. When translating the sentences into Russian, we use the Russian word "urozhai" (harvest), as its primary meaning is equal to the primary meaning of the English word *harvest* registered in the Russian dictionary as "1. The yield produced of cereal crops, fruits, herbs, etc. [6]

The metaphorical meaning of the English word *harvest* and the contextual translations of harvest used in the figurative meaning into Russian are of great interest as well. The derived metaphorical meanings of the English and Russian words denoting harvest are not semantically equal, which suggests selecting different lexical units to convey the ideas when translating the figurative meanings of *harvest* from English into Russian and vice versa.

In the Oxford English Dictionary, you can see the following meaning of the English noun *harvest*: 'the product or result of an action' [10], which can be interpreted by means of synonyms with the meaning of "result", in the Russian language. For example, in the sentence "... but it has produced a harvest of insights into the riches of the Bible" [11], the word combination *produce a harvest of insights* is used in the figurative meaning "to result in / lead to some ideas, or knowledge". The English word *insight* correlates with such Russian words as "understanding" "realizing", and are often used in the singular form, which is explained by their abstract nature, unlike the English word *insight*, which can be used both in the plural and singular form. The Russian language has borrowed the English word *insight* (it is pronounced in the same way as the English lexeme) as a term in psychology, and now it has become trendy among coaches, the so-called "life instructors", who define *insight* as "a sudden and total understanding of relationships and situations not based on the past experience, allowing you to come to a reasonable solution to the problem." Russian speaking coaches often use *insight* in the plural form (insaity). The associative components of the word *insight*, related with its "psychological" origin, do not allow us to use it for translating this sentence into Russian. The word combination 'a *harvest of (something)*' is made up of the indefinite article with the meaning of "any" and the preposition "of" with the possessive meaning, which makes the associative component "some quantity (several or many) / of something obtained as a result" prominent in the context under consideration. In our opinion, the most successful Russian interpretation of the English word *harvest* in this context is the Russian word *plod/plody*, which has the figurative meaning "result, result generated by previous activity" in the Russian language [6], since, firstly, it has the same figurative meaning as *harvest* in English, and, secondly, it

occurs in Russian Biblical and religious texts. In the sentence "Later on, however, it yields a harvest of righteousness and peace to those who have been trained by it" [11], the word combination *yield a harvest of righteousness and peace* is used in the figurative meaning "to result / lead to", which uses abstract nouns in the prepositional phrase. In this context, we cannot identify the "quantity" component, however, the most important component to convey is the "result" component. The religious tint of the context is added through the Russian word "plody" (correlating with fruit), used in the meaning of "results".

When translating the sentence *Inflation, shorts, and declining production were the harvest of five years of perestroika and glasnost* [11], the word combination *the harvest of five years of perestroika and glasnost* can be translated into Russian as "the result of five years of perestroika and glasnost", the synonyms meaning "generated", "gave birth to", "caused" might be used as well. These are stylistically neutral. In the sentence *The futile effort to 'eradicate' marijuana has produced a harvest of misery* [6], the word combination *produce a harvest of misery*, made up of the verb, *harvest* and the abstract noun with the preposition, is translated into Russian, taking into account the context and using a combination of the verb and the noun *porodit nishchetu* (to cause poverty). It is interesting to note that Russian "porodit" and "urozhai" are the words of the same root, which means they have common components. The contextual translation of *yield a harvest* into Russian in the following example, *Curiosity about fundamental biological mechanisms has yielded a rich harvest of useful knowledge* [11] is also reasoned by the "result" component, which is prominent in such synonyms as generate, create, result, reward, etc. The 'large number' component is revealed in the English word combination 'rich harvest', whilst in Russian it is prominent in the lexeme "izobiliye" (abundance), semantically related to the lexeme "harvest" in Russian. The word *meagre* modifying *harvest* in the sentence *In terms of science, Apollo yielded a meagre harvest* makes the 'amount / degree' component significant in the metaphorical meaning of *harvest*. In the sentence *Such a policy will inevitably produce a bumper harvest of both 'normal' and unanticipated 'abnormal' results* [11] *harvest* is used with the adjective *bumper*, which unveils the quantity component when translating the sentence into Russian. The quantity component is clearly expressed in the following example, *The Israeli Prime Minister must be convinced that he will reap a richer harvest of votes by going to the electorate well before October* [11], which is due to the significance of the 'get as a result' component in the contextual use of *harvest*.

The English idiomatic dictionary shows that the semantics of the idiom *reap a/the harvest* includes such components as "good results" and "bad results" of actions, which become significant due to the context. For example, in the sentence *And so, once again, the Democrats reaped the bitter harvest of their own incompetence* [11] *harvest* modified by the adjective *bitter* has the meaning of "bad results". In the sentence *The US invented basketball, and are now reaping its harvest* [11] there is no qualitative adjective that would clarify the connotation of *harvest*, however, the context associated with basketball as a team sport makes the positive component prominent and implies its positive connotation. The contextual use of *harvest* modified by the adjective *lucrative*, for example, in the sentence *Will the second half of the calendar which is about to begin to produce a more lucrative harvest for Peugeot?* [11] emphasizes the 'result' component in the word combination *produce a more lucrative harvest*, where *harvest* is used in the meaning of the result and, the adequate language to be used for translating the sentence into Russian should contain the 'increase', 'growth', 'result due to the action' and 'making a profit' components in the semantics. The 'making a profit' component becomes significant when *harvest* is modified by the adjective *rich*. For example, the component analysis method shows that the idiom *reap a rich harvest* in the sentence *But Redhefer seems to be reaping a rich harvest from the public deception* [11] is used in the meaning of "getting a lot of money as a result of certain actions". This contextual meaning is clear due to the pattern with the preposition *from*.

The analysis of the English examples with *harvest* as the noun used in the direct and figurative meanings shows that the following patterns are typical of the direct meaning of *harvest*: 1) adjective + *harvest*, with the following adjectives in the examples analyzed: *new, bountiful, poor, good, successful, regular, bumper*; 2) noun + *harvest*, with the following nouns in the examples analyzed: *winter, grain* 3) *harvest* + verb, with *harvest* as the subject, 4) verb + *harvest*, with *harvest* as a complement; in many dictionaries, *reap the harvest* is marked as an idiom; 5) *harvest* + *from* + a noun used in the meaning of crops, grains 6) *harvest* + *in* + a noun used in the meaning of producing crops/grains. The following patterns are typical when using *harvest* in the figurative meanings: 1) verb + *harvest* + preposition *in* + noun, with *produce* as a verb, and an abstract noun; 2) verb + *harvest* + preposition *of* + noun, with *produce, result in, reap* as a verb, and an abstract noun (e.g. *incompetence*); 3) adjective + *harvest* + preposition *for* + noun, with such adjectives as *lucrative*, and the brand name as a noun; 4) adjective + *harvest* + preposition *of*, with such adjectives as *lucrative, rich, bitter* and an abstract noun (e.g. *misery, votes, knowledge*); 5) adjective + *harvest* + preposition *from* + noun, with such adjectives as *rich,*

healthy, and an abstract noun (e.g. *sales*, *deception*). It should be noted that the noun *harvest* can be used in the singular and plural forms both in the direct and metaphorical meanings. The most frequent English verbs used with *harvest* in the direct and figurative meanings are *produce*, *yield*, and *reap*. The direct meaning of *harvest* is often implied either in a non-prepositional phrase, or with the prepositions *from* and *in* and a noun denoting an agricultural crop. The vast majority of the English examples with *harvest* show that the figurative meanings are implied in a prepositional phrase with abstract nouns, as well as with descriptive adjectives, which are not typical of *harvest* in the direct meaning (e.g. *lucrative*, *bitter*).

English electronic lexicographic sources register the following figurative meaning of *harvest* as the verb, which is not recorded in the Oxford English Dictionary: "Collect or acquire (a resource) for future use" (to collect or receive (a resource) for further use) [11]. This meaning is often used in scientific and technical literature, for example 1. The power supply would be harvested by solar panels, housed on a lunar orbiting power station. 2. This hydrogen could be harvested and used for propellants or combined with oxygen to make water [11]. In the above-mentioned secondary meaning of *harvest* as the verb, the 'collect' and 'source of activity' components are prominent, which affect the semantics of the words used in the context. Syntactically, the most typical functions for *harvest* to be used in this special meaning are subject or complement, which are semantically not related to crops, grains and other agricultural products, denoting, for example, *solar energy*, *solar panels*, *ice*, *raw materials*, *corals*, *rubber*, *wave energy*, or *renewable energy*. Our analysis of the English examples with *harvest* as the verb has shown that the meaning is frequently found in the field of alternative energy.

3 RESULTS

Although the example of the research technique applied to studying the semantics of *harvest* seems rather extended and complicated, it is of great value when explaining the principles of choosing the appropriate language for productive and correct interpersonal interaction and communication to Russian learners who are not aware of polysemy, equal and non-equal meanings of a lexeme in Russian and English. Comparing language units helps learners to have a good picture of what and how should be interpreted in a foreign or native language [8]. In terms of linguistics, the research techniques, if used when learning a foreign language, make it possible to identify typical lexical patterns of a word used in different meanings, distinguish associative and potential components in figurative and contextual meanings stressed by context and determine syntactic peculiarities of a word used in different contexts. This is of great importance when communicating ideas in English or Russian, as the semantics of English and Russian lexemes may differ in some differential and associative components, and the stylistics of the context should be taken into account when choosing the appropriate language corresponding to the specified parameters. Based on the comparative analysis of the Russian and English sentences with *harvest*, the paper points out to the fundamental semantic components in the structure of *harvest*, which play a significant role when interpreting as they affect the meaning and message of the text.

Such scrupulous analysis of all the components of the primary and derived meanings of lexemes allows to study the differences in the semantics of these lexemes and also identify regularities in the development of lexicology and phraseology of the Russian and English languages, revealing their common and specific features. Discovering a different view of the world, seen by a different nation, our students feel they are part of the global scientific community and, on the other hand, they become aware of a conscious approach to studying national and cultural peculiarities of the languages used to name the realities of the world.

When studying the language of scientific and technical literature with the help of research techniques, undoubtedly, our students improve their English-speaking competence, as the following goals are set and achieved: studying typical structures for communicating scientific concepts, studying contexts using secondary meanings of common-use and special words, terms and term combinations, studying meanings and roles of logical linkers in contexts (e.g. introductory words, conjunctions, articles, pronouns), studying meanings of adverbs, adjectives, verbs, and nouns in scientific and technical literature. In addition, research into lexicology and phraseology of texts results in students' scientific papers, reporting regularities, consistency and interrelationships of language units, which expands their theoretical knowledge and improves practical skills in academic writing and oral speech in English.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Researchers in Linguistics and Methodology of teaching English note that lexical and phraseological units “live” and interact in contexts. A detailed analysis of the semantics of words and contexts they are used in allows us to identify grammar constructions and regular patterns revealing specific meanings of a particular polysemantic unit. Scientific research is based on data of dictionaries and national corpora, which allows us to do objective and balanced scientific work to identify the most frequent patterns and specific features of the semantics of lexemes. The technique studying the semantic structure of lexical and phraseological units and their environment, affecting their contextual meanings, is called corpus methodology. Its main tool is a linguistic corpus of a national language, which helps solve a wide variety of applied research and multidisciplinary tasks. This method enables you to cover a huge number of examples of a word under study and specify its typical grammar and lexical structures. Thus, the methods of definitions, component analysis, contextual analysis and corpus linguistics are useful when studying a foreign language and considering its national and cultural features.

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