

## ARTICLE

# THE STRUCTURAL AND SEMANTIC PECULIARITIES OF THE ENGLISH VERBS WITH THE MEANING INFORMATION TRANSFER THROUGH THE PRISM OF ETYMOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION

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## ABSTRACT

The article reveals the specific features of English verbs with the meaning information transfer (fable, detail, narrate, paraphrase, recite, recount, rehearse, relate, retail) considering historical and structural-semantic peculiarities. Special attention is drawn to the etymological factors of formation, development and existence of meanings. On the basis of their examination the authors come to the conclusion about the importance of conceptual description of verbs with the meaning information transfer that contribute to the reconstruction of the elements of linguistic worldview of this or that nation.

## INTRODUCTION

Many linguistic researchers (R.S. Jackendoff, A. Babushkin, K. Bühler, R. Jakobson) often deal with the ways a person gets information and accumulates it in his mind. Through language we get access to the knowledge which is kept in a person's mind in the form of certain structures. Language is the most important means of human communication and any sort of information, any phenomenon of reality can be expressed by linguistic means.

R.S. Jackendoff applies to this phenomenon and, accordingly, notion in his researches [1], pointing out that verb meaning can be decomposed in features which are part of our general conceptual knowledge. Thus, etymological and structural-semantic features of the verbs with the meaning information transfer are of great importance.

## DATA AND METHODS

In accordance with the dominant cross disciplinary approach to the linguistic research the semantics of the verbs under study is analyzed in correlation with the methods of cognitive and etymological analysis, such as etymological analysis of words, contextual analysis of lexical units, conceptual analysis, frame semantics method, component analysis of dictionary definitions. The complex of conceptual and diachronic etymological methods allows tracing important mechanisms in the structure of lexical unit meanings. It reveals the necessity of using some data of cognitive linguistics together with etymological methods of semantic analysis.

## RESULTS

### Semantic features of the English Verbs with the meaning information transfer

The object of the ongoing research is the semantic group of verbs with the meaning information transfer in the contemporary English language. This group includes the following verbs: to fable, to detail, to narrate, to paraphrase, to recite, to recount, to rehearse, to relate, to retail, denoting different ways of information transfer.

### Etymological aspect of the English verbs with the meaning information transfer

The peculiarities of cognitive approach to the processes of language and speech studying considerably define the interest of linguists in cognitive science, and in cognitive linguistics in particular. All the information a person gets by different channels, is accumulated in person's mind in the form of certain structures. Each cognitive discipline, having its own object of a research, provides access to the most objective analysis of these structures through language [2].

The present article gives the description of etymological and structural-semantic features of the verbs with the meaning of information transfer: to fable / (to tell fables, to invent), to detail / (to tell in detail), to narrate / (to tell, narrate), to paraphrase / (retell), to recite / (to recite; to repeat on memory), to recount / (to tell, state in detail), to rehearse / (a feather – to tell), to relate / (tell), to retail / (to extend, retell).

### KEY WORDS

semantics; English verbs with the meaning information transfer; structural analysis etymological analysis; speech influence; synchronic aspect; diachronic aspect.

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The purpose of this article is to present a system and complex description of possibilities of meaning varieties taking into account data of a phonetic analysis, a historical, cultural and cognitive paradigm and the conceptual field on the basis of the principle of multiple etymology. The New Webster's Dictionary defines the term 'information' as follows: "News or intelligence communicated by word or in writing; facts or data; knowledge derived from reading or instruction, or gathered in any way"[3].

Information can be possessed (to have, to obtain, to possess, to hold), it can be protected (to protect, to store, to safeguard, to seal, to be inserted, to be kept private, to want very badly to keep it secret, to contain, to hide), it can be transferred to someone (to concur, to confirm, to reveal, to transfer, to convey, to sell, to deliver, to write down, to send, to tell, to uncover, to come with, to give, to pass on, to divulge, to share), it also can come from somebody. On the other hand, it is possible to need the information (to need desperately), it can be received in honest or dishonest way (to glean information from smb., to extract (data), to gather, to access, to read, to be permitted to know, to steal, to get information from somebody, to see, to find, to receive, to gain), one can try to get rid of it (to bury, to destroy), to evaluate and to understand it (to weigh the information, to sort through a barrage of information).

The description of information by means of the lexemes characterizing information transfer is significant for us. Information is an intermediate link between a sign and knowledge; the frame "information" is included in dominant frame "obtaining knowledge" and comprises various subframes by means of which the concept INFORMATION can be described directly: "storage of information", "obtaining information", "information transfer", etc. The semantic center of oral English communication is formed by four dominants - "information transfer", "exchange of information", "speech influence" and "expression of interpersonal relations of communicants" as all of them is directed to solve a certain communicative problem by a speaker.

Let's consider the first dominant that is called "information transfer". Verbs with the meaning information transfer reflect the major informative language function. This function was considered as the central by K.Bühler [4] and R. Jakobson[5], though under other name (referential, denotative, cognitive). The group under consideration includes the following verbs: to fable, to detail, to narrate, to paraphrase, to recite, to recount, to rehearse, to relate, to retail.

On the basis of the analysis of dictionary definitions we come to the conclusion that the given group of verbs is close to group of lexemes with the meaning of speech interaction in connection with presence of the general semes: results orientation (the interest of the addressee to the received information), frequency of actions (action can repeatedly repeat in relation to the same addressee), character of the transferred information. The subject of the message that can be presented as events of a real or imagined life or the content of someone's thought is also differently presented. The sequence of events, facts or pictures replacing each other is typical for these verbs.

The conducted analysis of dictionary definitions allows to be convinced, that even separate event may be presented as a number of smaller its constituent events. While noting the signs connected with the subject of speech action, we take into consideration similar motivation: the statement is carried out by the subject in order to let the addressee know some information. Besides the verbs of this group reflect aesthetic or actual (keeping the conversation ball rolling) purpose of the subject. There may be different purposes of speaking: to occupy the addressee or make a necessary impression, because it is pleasant for the addressee to listen or because it gives pleasure to the subject. Therefore, any story is often supplemented with colourful details (to fable / "to tell fables, to make up") and repeated many times (to rehearse / "to retell" - orientation on the addressee, to paraphrase /"to reword" - modification of volume of the information).

On the basis of these facts, it is possible to identify a subgroup with the meaning "repetitions, repetition", that is presented by verbal lexemes: to ingeminate, to iterate, to repeat.

The group with an integrated sign of "repetition" is presented by the central verb to repeat. In semantic structure of the meaning of the given lexeme there are no differentiating, additional signs. Presence of the subject and the object of the action is possible. The lexeme to iterate "to repeat" is close to it.

The meaning of the verbal lexeme to ingeminate "to repeat, repeat several times" contains an emotional component which points to the huge desire of the subject to achieve his goal, taking no account of the intentions of the participants of the conversation. Sometimes information and aesthetic (or actual) purposes are combined (to retail "to retell (news)"). The verb "to tell" is focused on the oral form of speech, the process "tell" can be characterized from the point of view of sound parameters (loudness, rate, timbre) of speech and manners of speaking (in a whisper, loudly, quickly, slowly, hoarsely).

Semantic features of the analyzed category enable us to examine the verbs meaning information transfer that have the following etymological characteristics:

to fable - "(arch. and poet.) romance, tell fictitious tales"[6]. It is dated XIV century in the meaning "to tell tales", in XVI century it got the meaning "to tell fiction". There are no doubts that the verb has connections with the Latin noun *fābula* [7]. However, the Latin verb *fābulārē* "to talk, to tell"[8] lies in the stem of borrowing.

to detail – "give the particular of, relate circumstantially"[6]. It is dated XVII century in the meaning "to deal with in detail". In XVIII century it was used in the military language. Etymological reconstruction allows to detect connections with F.détail(dé + tailler)"to cut up in pieces"[7]. Deeper etymological analysis shows that this verb can be reconstructed in IE. roots \*dā(i)-, \*dī- "to divide, cut, break"[9-10].

to narrate – "relate, recount, give continuous account of, (abs.) utter or write narrative"[6]. It is dated XVII century with the meaning "to give an account or history of". Doubtless it has connections with L. narrāre[7] "to tell, to narrate, to inform"[8].

to paraphrase – "express meaning of (passage) in other words"[6]. The verb is dated XVIII century although the cognate noun is fixed in XVI century. Both words are borrowed from Latin and correlated to the Greek-Latin prefix para "equal" and the root phrasis "speaker's style, manner of speaking"[7-8].

to recite – "recite aloud or declaim (poem, passage) from memory"[6]. It is dated XV century in the meaning "repeat or utter aloud; describe in detail". It has connections with OF. reciter and L.recitāre"read out"[7-8].

to recount – "narrate, tell in detail" [6]. It is dated in XV century. The stem should be seen as a form of ONF. reconter: re + conter"count"[7].

to rehearse – "recite, say over, repeat from beginning to end, give list of, recount, enumerate" [6]. It is dated in XIII century with the meaning of speaking. Through late ME.reherce: –OF. reherc(i)er with the prefix re – "back, again" and the root hercer"to irritate, to torment". In this case we can observe the transformation of the initial semantics "torture stories" → "to retell" [7].

to relate – "narrate, recount" [6]. The verb is dated XVI century. The cognate noun is fixed in XIV century. In the stem of the verb is L.relātus, functioning as past participle of the verb referre[7] "to retell, to inform, to report"[8].

to retail – "recount, relate details of"[6]. It is dated XVI century with the meaning of speaking. It has related connections with the OF. verb retaillier. It indicates a Romance origin. According to the lexicographic sources, the etymon is formed by the prefix re- with the meaning of intensive force and the verb taillier"to cut"[7]. The semantic development of the verb is formed by the transformation of "purposefully emphasize" → "retell (news)". Likewise detail the verb can be referred to IE. roots\*dā(i)-,\*dī- "to divide, to cut, to break"[9].

The verbs with the meaning "repetition" have the following characteristics:

to ingeminate – "repeat, reiterate" [6]. The verb is dated XVI century and referred to L. ingemināre[7] "to redouble, to repeat"[8].

to iterate – "repeat (quoted words etc.); make (charge, assertion, objection, etc.) repeatedly"[6]. The verb is dated XVI century and referred to L.iterāre[7] "repeat"[8].

To repeat – "say or do over again, recite, rehearse, report, reproduce, give imitation of"[6]. It is fixed in English in XIV century with the meaning "to say again". In XVI century it gets the additional meaning "to recite, to say after another". In late ME. this form is transformed into repete. OF. répéteris a related word referring to L. repeterewith the prefixre- and the stempetere[7] "to try, to strive, to achieve"[8-9].

The above analysis of the verbs meaning information transfer showed that the filling of this segment was equal in XV, XVI and XVII centuries (2 words in each century). We can also observe a similar process in XIII, XIV and XVIII centuries (one word). Seven verbs have the Romance origin and two – IE. origin. The verbs meaning repetition having the Romance origin and referring to XIV (one word) and XVI (two words) can be added to this group according to their semantic structure. These centuries are the most productive for this lexical group.

## CONCLUSION

Research of the historical layer of the concept has a huge importance as reflects all features of the most complicated process of information transfer in diachronic aspect that will essentially add the data of the synchronous analysis of the concept. The integrated approach allows to conduct researches of the change of the meaning taking into account the data of the phonetic analysis, historical, cultural and cognitive paradigms and a conceptual field on the basis of the principle of multiple etymology, avoid subjectivity in the estimation of the material and provide reliability and trustworthiness of the conclusions. The results of such analysis undoubtedly do possible reconstruction of elements of language representation of the world that, in turn, allows to reconstruct history of mentality of the people.

Conceptual and etymological analysis of the verbs meaning information transfer allowed to fulfill the investigation in the diachronic aspect and enrich the data of synchronic and conceptual analysis as etymology combines methods of analysis from Phonetics, Word Formation, Morphology, Lexicology, Semantics and others.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None

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