

CHANGES OF MEANING IN MODERN ENGLISH PR TERMINOLOGY

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Introduction

Language tends to change in time and space. These universal characteristics of language are permanent interest of scholarship. The most important function of any language is to carry the meaning. But as we know not only the sound-form but also the meaning of the word is changed in the course of historical development of a language. It happened under the influence of many factors. Change of meaning is affected through association between the existing meaning and the new one. This association is generally based on the similarity or the contiguity of meanings. Due to numeral changes of meaning such a phenomenon as multiplicity of word meanings or polysemy appeared.

The importance of studying the phenomenon of polysemy is obvious because it is the object of confusion and in order to provide a quantitative and qualitative growth of the language's expressive resources it is extremely important to investigate the semantic changes in the system of meanings in the English language. To understand a text, learners need to know words and knowing a word involves knowing: its spoken and written contexts of use its patterns with words of related meaning. When teaching vocabulary it is then necessary to consider aspects like denotation, polysemy, connotation and sociocultural aspects when teaching a second or foreign language so that learners are able to get meaning from texts.

Polysemy as the problem of Learning PR Terminology

In this investigation the problem of polysemy in PR terminology is touched upon. Polysemy is characteristic of most words in many languages. All the lexical and lexico-grammatical variants of the word taken together form its semantic structure or semantic paradigm. The phenomenon of polysemy was broadly investigated in the historical development of the language. The word "polysemy" comes from Latin, but the roots of the concept of polysemy lie in Greek philosophy.

Polysemy is inherent in the very nature of words and concepts as every object and every notion has many features and a concept reflected in a word always contains a generalisation of several traits of the object. Some of these traits or components of meaning are common with other objects. Hence the possibility of using the same name in secondary nomination for objects possessing common features which are sometimes only implied in the original meaning. A word when acquiring new meaning or meanings may also retain, and most often retains the previous meaning.

The semantic structure of polysemantic words is not homogeneous as far as the status of individual meaning is concerned. Some meanings are representatives of the word in isolation, others are perceived only in certain contexts. Context is a minimal stretch of speech necessary to determine individual meanings.

The problem of polysemy is mainly the problem of interrelation and interdependence of various meanings of the same word. Though it is the object of confusion and one of the most controversial problems in linguistics. It is of great importance in studying English as it presents the diverse meanings of expressive layer.

In this work polysemy is studied on the material of PR terminology. In the sphere of PR, whose aim is to shape and maintain the image of a company, organization or individual in the eyes of the client's various "publics", there have evolved a number of terms comprising specialist vocabulary; some of them are monosemantic while the other lot is polysemantic. The latter group was subdivided into those polysemantic inside the sphere of PR and those which have acquired a new meaning in PR but also can be found functioning in other spheres. The total number of terms analysed is approximately 200, all of them have been taken from specialist PR websites /1-6/.

PR Terminology Analysis

In an article named "Understanding Systematic Conceptual Structures in Polysemous Medical Terms" Italian researchers Aldo Gangemi, Domenico M. Pisanelli, Geri Steve state that "polysemy – the phenomenon by which a term may have multiple meanings – greatly affects data management.

In fact the current demand is for an unambiguous sharing or integration of the semantic content of data, either between different databases or for intelligent information access, natural language processing, terminological standards definition, etc.

Polysemy is widespread in verbal communication. The main reason is that linguistic items are used 'economically': humans try to use already known terms, instead of creating complex sentences for each intended meaning they want to express. For example, by *window* one could mean either a glass-filled frame, or an opening in a wall. Terminological economy is diffused in specialized languages as well and medicine makes no exception /7/".

The same is true about PR terms. Like most disciplines, public relations has acquired its own business practices and jargon, which can cause initial misunderstandings.

Below are a number of PR terms collected from specialized PR websites. The aim of this chapter is to analyze polysemy in the terminology as compared with the original meaning of the words-components. As it follows from the publications on polysemy and terminology in both PR and other contexts, terms can be strictly specific to a certain field (in this study, PR) or polysemantic that can be at times confusing. Among those found we identify both and classify all the terms into three groups: monosemantic and polysemantic with the further subdivision of the latter into a) those having several meanings inside the field of PR and b) those functioning in the sphere of PR as well as other spheres of human activity. We must here mention that monosemantic are those identified as functioning in the PR sphere only and having no other implications but those explained in PR glossaries. Anyway, they are comprised of language units which are polysemantic and, consequently, may background a certain level of misunderstanding among those not deeply involved in the PR sphere. And again, it is noteworthy that some of the monosemantic terms have sprung up as a result of word-building process and now are pertaining to the PR vocabulary only. These terms do not make up a big part of PR vocabulary, so they are placed first in our classification being followed by terms polysemantic within the frames of PR (not numerous either) and, then, those having diverse meanings in different spheres (including one-word and more-than-one-word terms).

Monosemantic Terminology

This group is constituted by terms which originated in the sphere of PR and are specific to this field alone.

Advertorial (blend of advertisement and editorial) – An advertisement in a print publication that looks and reads like a news article.

Ezine (*electronic magazine*) – Electronically generated and distributed newsletter.

Doorstepping – Colloquial term for reporters hanging around someone's doorstep to get their story.

Sell-in – term given to attempts to interest a publication in carrying a story or feature.

Booker – the staffperson at a TV, radio, or cable station who responds to pitch letters when an appearance needs to be arranged or "booked"

Ghostwriter – person writing articles or speeches for another person who claims authorship

Op-Ed (*op(posite) + ed(itorial)*) – article written by an expert that is positioned on the page opposite the editorial page. Not to be confused with Letters to the Editor

Readership – The number of people who read a publication, normally worked out by multiplying a publication's circulation by three.

Piggy-backing – Hooking your news or feature onto a topical story in the media.

Vlog – Short for video weblog, a vlog is frequently updated online video content.

Byline – The writer's/reporter's name, usually at the beginning of the news item, story, column, etc.

Endmark – A symbol (usually -30-) used at the end of news copy and news releases to indicate "the end."

Placeline – The placeline (OTTAWA, NORTH BAY, Ont., etc.) identifies the geographical location of where the news event is taking place or the reporter's base when writing about an event or situation.

Simulcast (simultaneous cast) – To broadcast over two facilities at once such as a newscast aired simultaneously on a TV and radio station (audio only) or on two different TV or radio stations.

Talkback – A brief sequence at the end of a live field report where the anchor chats with the reporter about the story.

Listenership/viewership – data on listeners (radio) and viewers (television), including the size of the cumulative audience, the number of listeners as a quarter-hour average, the average hours tuned by listeners, and the audience share in a particular market. This information is available by specific demographic groups (age, gender, etc.).

Promo (abbr. promotion) - A broadcast announcement that promotes an upcoming program or activity on a radio or TV station. If an organization is involved in a project with the station – as a sponsor or a participant – a promo may be done mentioning the organization's name and/or address and/or slogan.

Jump head – the headline, using the same words as in the jump line, on the continuation of a jumped story.

Jump line – a line inserted where the jump occurs to direct the reader to the rest of the story

Polysemantic Terminology Having Several Meanings Inside the Field of PR

Backgrounder – a) A brief document providing background and pertinent vital information on a company. b) an official briefing giving background information

Proposal – a) document outlining a proposed PR campaign to an existing or potential client. b) an idea for a PR campaign.

Editorial – a) written materials composed to communicate a brand to the various audiences identified by the client and consultancy. b) Stories, features, letters, sport – anything not paid for .

Sidebar – a) Part of a news story that providing extra information that is relevant but not necessary to the overall story. Sidebars usually appear set apart from the body of the story. b) A secondary story that explores an interesting or unusual angle related to the main story.

Soundbite – a) A succinct and often catchy message that illustrates or encapsulates a story in just a few seconds. b) A soundbite is a short sentence or phrase, usually from a politician's speech, which is broadcast during a news programme.

Polysemantic PR and Other Spheres Terminology

Polysemantic terminology may cause confusion, anyway, as is seen, it is the most numerous group. The most confusing are one-word terms as to a non-specialist they may be misleading. Apart from them are a large number of compounds or word combinations which can be easily understood in a PR contexts but, on the other hand, are made up of component parts which have non-specific meanings and, again, this can be misleading.

News hook or angle – The most interesting part of the story, which will grab the reader's attention

Optimised press release – Press release that is both optimised for search engine results and released online

Corporate communications – The company's messages (such as press releases) to the outside world

Press officer – Person usually working in a company's PR or communications department

Proofread – Read through carefully, to check spelling, punctuation and grammar

Reader offer – Offer or competition for newspapers/magazine readers – good way of promoting a product

Assignment editor – staff member of a television or radio news team responsible for judging appropriateness of story ideas assigned to reporter for coverage

"Client pays" wire service – client pays to have his or her own news or feature stories transmitted through print and broadcast media newsrooms at no cost to the media

Concept story – feature story designed to pique the interest of a certain demographic audience

Contributing reporter or writer – often used to describe a freelance writer

Copy editor – last professional to see and approve written material before it is delivered to an audience by a media outlet. Responsible for its accuracy, grammar, and length

Corporate fact sheet – one-page document that describes a company's principles, services, philosophy, fees. Includes address, telephone, fax and e-mail, and map to allow prospective clients or reporters to easily find a business

Guest editorial – an opinion piece written by someone outside the publication who is an expert or has particular insight on an issue, event, or situation.

Lead time – period of time that reporters and producers need to prepare stories and information for publication or broadcast

Letters to the Editor – your opportunity to congratulate, discuss, or criticize an article you have read

Media outlet – a publication or broadcast program that transmits news and feature stories to the public through any distribution channel

News feature – special story or article in a print publication or broadcast program that goes in detail about concepts and ideas of specific market interest

Periodical – publication circulated at regular intervals, such as a weekly or monthly

Pitch letter – letter written to introduce a source and story idea to a member of the media

Stand-up shot – the source is filmed standing in front of a wall, while a TV reporter asks questions. This kind of shot adds an authoritative source to a television story.

Specialized publication – industry-specific trade or professional publication (manufacturing, insurance, telecommunications, etc.)

Syndicated – report that appears in more than one media outlet simultaneously

Masthead – The formal statement of the publication's name, officers, place of publication, and other descriptive information. It usually is printed on the editorial or op-ed page.

Newsbreak – A brief segment with a couple news headlines and/or teasers to encourage viewers or listeners to tune in for the complete newscast.

News bulletin – A brief story on an important and often breaking news event that may cut into regular TV or radio programs.

News values – are those factors that determine the newsworthiness of events and situations. Although the following terms may differ from text book to text book and newsroom to newsroom, the essence of each is contained in all.

Impact – information about events/situations that are likely to affect a significant number of people in the media audience.

Timeliness – information about events/situations that is appropriate to the audience at the time it is published or aired. It may be that the information is timely now, it may involve seasonableness in that it is relevant to the season or a timely observance, or it may tie into a relevant anniversary.

Beat – The specific area (politics, environment, crime, etc.) covered by a particular reporter.

Boilerplate – A block of text that is often reused from document to document without being changed. The company description included at the bottom of press releases is generally a piece of boilerplate text.

Circulation – The number of copies distributed by a publication. This number is checked independently by the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC).

Dub – A copy of a radio or television story.

Frequency – The average number of times a media consumer is exposed to a PR message.

Message – An agreed upon statement or overall effect that a company wants to convey to the press and the public.

Reach – A calculation of the total number of primary readers (i.e. circulation) and pass-along readers of a publication.

Brief – the instructions from a client to a consultancy, or directions communicated within a PR agency.

Broadcast – the dissemination of programmes or messages through the media of radio, internet or television.

Brainstorming – the creative process of group thinking to stimulate or articulate ideas on a given subject or problem.

Client – the organisation or person who employs a PR consultancy.

Communication – the credible, honest and timely two-way flow of information that fosters common understanding and trust.

Competition – other organisations that represent a threat to a particular business.

Contract – an agreement made between the PR consultancy and the client covering areas of agreed objectives, timing, service levels and price. The PRCA has an approved client/consultancy agreement for its members.

Copy – the text produced by a consultancy for a press release or article. Journalists also refer to their news stories or features as copy.

Credentials – Either the published information consultancies provide to prospective clients or an initial no-cost presentation of the consultancy's capabilities.

Crisis Management – Having a communications plan in place that can be effectively put into action when something goes wrong for a company or organisation. For instance, how a product recall will be handled.

Cutting – the piece of written material containing messages about the client or its products or an extract from a paper or magazine regarding a particular account. Also commonly referred to as 'clipping'.

Cue sheet – briefing notes to help a spokesman prepare for an interview with a journalist. The cues should cover the issues that are likely to arise in the interview and approach that should be taken on these issues.

Edit – Altering copy to improve, and often shorten, it

Editor – The person in charge of overall content of the editorial side

Embargo – a warning to the media not to publish a news item until the date specified on the release.

Evaluation – The continuous process of measuring the impact of a PR campaign from start to finish.

Expenses – The charges consultancies make for expenditure incurred on client programmes, such as print, travel, telephones, mailing costs etc. Usually charged monthly in arrears against agreed budgets and often with some items subject to standard consultancy mark-ups.

Exclusive – a news story offered by a PR practitioner to a single newspaper title, radio, website, or TV station.

Exposure – the extent to which the target audience becomes aware of a person, message, activity, theme or organisation through the efforts of PR.

Feature article – a broad or in-depth newspaper, magazine, internet, radio or TV article that discusses, analyses or interprets an issue, subject or trend. A feature generally takes longer to research and produce than a news story.

Features editor – The person in charge of the features pages

News Editor – The person in charge of the news content

Fees – The charge consultancies make for the time of the executive staff working on client programmes, usually invoiced in regular instalments monthly or quarterly in advance and monitored through daily time sheets.

Flag – The printed title of the newspaper on page one. (This often is incorrectly called the masthead.)

Full Service – a one-stop PR shop which incorporates clients from many different industry sectors and which offers a range of PR disciplines, and sometimes in-house design and other services.

Integrated campaign – a multidisciplinary approach which uses a number of marketing communications techniques in order to deliver a consistent set of messages. The aim is to achieve seamless communication with the audience.

Internal communications – communicating with employees and shareholders to inform them of change (for instance during a company merger) or to help achieve corporate objectives.

Logo – a graphic or symbol owned by and representing a company or brand.

Leader- an article that is given prominent placement on the first page (or comment pages) of a publication.

Masthead – list of editors, publishers, and senior reporters in each publication's issue. It includes an address and telephone number

Media relations – dealing with journalists and building good working relationships with the broadcast, print and online media.

Messages – agreed words or statements that a client wants to convey to third parties, like the media or shareholders for example.

Media – channel for the communication of information including newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, mobile phones and the internet.

Pitch – A full presentation of a recommended public relations programme, generally carefully researched and costed, which usually takes at least four weeks to prepare. Some consultancies reserve the right to charge a fee if not subsequently appointed.

Transcript – written outline of a radio or broadcast about a client.

Bills – The day's headlines on the board (or bill board) outside a newsagents

Brand – Your company's name and its identity - more than just its logo

Copy – The words that make up a piece of writing

Deadline – Final time by which a story has to be written

Freelance – Someone who works for him or herself and sells stories or gets commissions

Integrated campaign – Using a variety of media i.e. TV, radio, press, online, outdoor and direct mail

Journalist – Can be a reporter, news editor, sub-editor or editor

Newsletter – Updates sent out by businesses - good way of keeping in touch with clients

Splash – The front page lead

Audience – the people you want to reach

Boilerplate – a brief paragraph stating who you are, what you do, and how you do it, usually used as the first paragraph in a biography or last paragraph in a news release

Anchor – the member of a news team who coordinates the reports

Broadcast – to transmit electronically by radio or television

Circulation – the distribution of newspapers, magazines, and other print publications

Clip or clipping – a story cut from a publication or a segment cut from a video or audiotape

Frequency – the number of times a publication comes out in a given period of time, such as daily, weekly, quarterly, etc.

Network – chain of broadcast or radio stations controlled and operated as a unit, often using the same editorial material

Reporter – professional who gathers information and writes reports for newspapers, magazines, newsletters, or television and radio broadcasts

Reprint – copy of an article that mentions you or your company

Round-up story – story geared to look back at what has happened over a specific period of time, such as the previous year or quarter. A story in which a reporter wants five or ten opinions on a subject.

Sidebar – legal term that the media adopted to describe a portion of a story that is relevant but not necessary to the body of the story, such as data, a glossary, or a deeper explanation of a concept mentioned in the story. Usually it is set apart from the body of the article by a box or screen to make it stand out

Talking head – television shot that shows only the upper shoulders, neck, and face of the person being interviewed. Usually accompanied by a computer-generated sign that appears midchest identifying the person and his or her company

Spin – jargon for the point of view or bias you create in a story

Spokesperson – An expert from your organisation who can comment on issues as they arise in the media.

News release (press release) – a written communication sent to all news media. Also known as a press release.

Press pack (press kit) – a branded pack handed out to the media by an organisation. It normally contains background material, photographs, illustrations and news releases.

Jump – To continue a story from one page to another.

Kill – Pulling a story at any stage of the process. A story may be killed before it is even written or it may make it into the news line-up only to be killed later – sometimes at the 11th hour.

So, the aim of the research was to make an analysis of the main principles of word meaning and its problems in teaching English. The object of this research was polysemy in diachronic and synchronic dimensions, the subject -polysemantic words in PR terminology. The practical part of the research was done on the material of PR terminology glossaries represented on web sites. The total number of terms analyzed is about 200. The research results can be used when teaching Modern English Lexicology, Practice of Translation or Public Relations.

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EVOLUTION DU STATUT DU TEXTE LITTÉRAIRE DANS L'ENSEIGNEMENT DU FRANÇAIS LANGUE ÉTRANGÈRE

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Au début nous voudrions poser deux questions essentielles : Pourquoi faire apprendre la littérature en classe de langue et comment l'enseigner d'une façon efficace ? Ce sont exactement les questions qui intéressent beaucoup de chercheurs. Nous citons un d'eux A. Toussaint-Dekker : « Comment peut-on être lecteur à l'ère des mass média ? L'enseignement de la littérature est-il voué à l'échec ? Si non, que faire pour que les jeunes apprennent ou continuent à lire, même en langue étrangère ? » (article « Théories et pratiques de l'enseignement de la littérature »). /1; 157/