

Semantic Features (Polisemi, Homonymy) In The Law Terminology in The Albanian And Greek Languages

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Abstract

Aspects of semantic features in the Albanian lexicon, and in particular the aspects of poly-semantics and homo-semantics have been the scope of studies either in isolation or in interaction with one another, but as well they have been studies in relation to many other phenomena such as: the root of the meaning (Thomai,2009), synonymy (Islamaj, 1985) etc. A study of these two phenomena which are closely inter-related is both of theoretical and practical value. In particular, the practical value is directly related to the compilation of explanatory and translation dictionaries (Thomai, 1972), which serves as an interface of the semantic structures of words.

Keywords: *Law Terminology, Albanian Languages, Greek Languages*

1. Introduction

During these last sixty years, the issues of the phenomena of poly-semantics and homonymy, as well as those pertaining to synonymy have been regarded as semantic phenomena from another specific aspect of the lexicon, such as the terminology, which deals not just with their occurrence in the terminology lexicon, in its entirety in the context of all knowledge areas, but as well in terms of the specifics of the operation within a specific knowledge area, such as: in economy (Pasho, 1986), medicine, mechanical engineering, and agriculture. For both of these phenomena, in addition to synonymy, there are a number of works and monographic studies that have been published and as part of the theses work carried out in Albania and Kosovo. In light of these extensive works, whose special scope of study are these two phenomena, and based on the topics covered in them, we will review their appearance in a specific field of knowledge, such as: the legal terminology in the Albanian language.

A specific aspect that will be covered in this text is the appearance of the aspects of polysemy and homonymy in the Albanian language compared to the same phenomena in the Greek language, in order to identify the commonalities and specificities of both languages in this terminology. The conduct of such a review is of interest in comparative terms in two languages which are different more or less from the typology, structural and semantic aspects, as two separate branches in the Indo-European family, but as well possess common features, in particular as regards the terminology. Since the semantic features in terminology, in particular polysemy point out the

construction mechanism of words through the terminology process, of building simple words into terms, then the review of this mechanism in both languages assists in determining the models that shape the terms which are identified in the Albanian and Greek legal terminology. This helps in the use of these models in the activity for processing the terminologies of the relevant areas in both language, as well as in the work for the compilation of bilingual terminology dictionaries, Albanian-Greek, and Greek- Albanian. This is indispensable both in the case of consistency of the semantic structures of equal importance in both languages, as the most frequent instance, as well in the case of inconsistencies of the polysemy structures from one language into the other. As it could also be the case when one unit that marks two concepts in one language it could have two equal values for each concept in the other language, such as for e.g.: in Albanian *e drejta*₁ (as a norm) = gr. *το δικαίωμα* and *e drejta*₂ (as an area of activity) = gr. *το δικαίο*.

Semantic features, when displayed as one side of the difference of content, where the base of its organization are the elements of the content itself, such as polysemy, homonymy, acquire special importance in the legal terminology. They are important in discovering the mechanism that connects the terms with the concepts (Duro, 2009), in particular when this inter-relation is viewed from the perspective of the respective knowledge areas. Since a part of the terms are based on common words, then this perspective can be used when understanding the relations of the words with the meanings and of the terms of the concepts. This means that semantic phenomena in their majority in terminology are perceived also from the perspective of the connection of terms with the words of generic lexicon.

The latter also looks into the mechanism for the formation and functioning of the terms themselves, in particular when they refer to the words of general lexicon on which bases they are formed, but also based on the concepts which are marked by the terms given within the respective field or in different fields, such as, as polysemy: *e drejtë* (general word.) (in Greek. *το δικαίωμα*) – *e drejtë* (as a legal term) (*το δικαίωμα*), *ligj* (fiz.) (gr. *ο νομος*) – *ligj* (drejt.) (*ο νομος*), si homonime: *qëndrim* (fj. përgj. “ndejtje në këmbë”) (gr. *η στάθμευση*) – *qëndrim* (drejt. “sjellje ndaj një akti”) (*η στάση*), *shtet* (drejt. “organizim politik”) (gre. *ο κράτος*) – *shtet* (drejt. “vend si territor ...”) (gre. *το επικρατεία*). In the Greek language, one notices similar of equal formation models, but as well differences, such as in the case of : *shtet*_{1,2} in Albanian and *ο κράτος* and *το επικρατεία* in Greek. However, it is pretty clear that the semantic method of formation of terms is a very qualitative one, since in these instances the native source language is directly used. As can be clearly deduced for terms created based on the meaning of common words such as: *e drejta*₁ → *e drejta*₂ (*το δικαίωμα*₁ - *το δικαίωμα*₂) they are clearer and make more sense while displaying the special context that they describe. They serve to display an important aspect of the functioning of the terminology, since this would be the way for connecting any terminology with its base, i.e. native language. However, common words, although constituting the bases for any terminology, in the further process of extension and improving on the knowledge, they acquire new meaning, which leads to a mix of the boundaries of concepts due to various associations created by their external form both for common words such as: *ndalim*, *goditje* (as common words), as well as in the shape of terms such as: *ndalim*₂ (meaning arrest) and *goditje*₂ (as in the case of a criminal group), *ndalim* (mechanical) (for

the car), *goditje* (sports) (striking the ball), which is also true for the Greek language, with different Greek common words.

A main feature of these units that come usually from the general terminology is that while they become part of the terminology system they keep the relationship with the (concept) of common words (Feka, 1986), i.e. they are part of the general lexicon of both languages, mainly from the active form: *lirim₂* (*η απόλυση₂*) (from prison) related to the word *lirim₁* (*η απόλυση₁*), *goditje* (*το πλήγμα*) (e një grupi kriminal), *zbardhje* (*η διαλεύκανση*) (e vendimit) related to the term *goditje* (*το πλήγμα*) and *zbardhje* (*η διαλεύκανση*) etc. As terms they constitute the basic terminology concepts, serving on one hand to create word compounds, while on the other hand they have the potential to create new concepts such as: *zbardhje* (*η διαλεύκανση*) (e ngjarjes) → *zbardhje* (*η διαλεύκανση*) (e vendimit). In addition, another very important aspect related to them is that for the most part they are also used in other terminologies, such as: *ndalim* (*η απαγόρευση*) (i makinës) etc, and this gives them a generalist aspect which connects in a system terminologies with one another, such as for e.g. *ligj* (*ο νομος*) (drejt., ek.,fiz.), *zbardhje* (*το άσπρισμα*). As such they are motivated to the highest degree, since they are clear and understandable, but on the other hand, relating them to common words they display concepts up to an undetermined degree, thus touching upon one of the most important features of the terms such as one-sided meaning and accurate. However, it is important to reiterate that the conceptual meaning of a good share of them is evident in other micro areas where these words have specific connotations related to a given field, such as: “*Vendimi dhe zbardhja e tij*” (*η απόφαση και η διαλεύκανση της*).

In the above mentioned examples, given the comparative context in both languages, one may notice that the intrinsic forms of the terms, composed of common words almost coincide. This is also related to the universal features of concepts, which make the terminology researchers to find in the respective languages similar or same forms for the concepts. In some other instances this compliance of the intrinsic forms in both languages may not be appreciated, but still there is a certain degree of closeness. The concept is identified through another sign such as: *hartim₁* (i tekstit) and *hartim₂* (i ligjit), in Greek: *η εκπόνηση₁* (του κείμενου) and *η εκπόνηση₁* (του νόμου).

2. POLYSEMY

The most specific occurrence of polysemy in the legal terminology is the most differentiated transfer of meaning within the same unit, which could be a word, and a term. For instance, the lexical term *ndalim₁* (as a common word “an action to cause someone or something not to move”) (in Greek - *η απαγόρευση₁*) is related with the word *ndalim₂* of the concept “as an action of making somebody not move for the purpose of detaining him”, which in Greek corresponds with *η απαγόρευση*. In this case, the concept of the term *ndalim₂* is related with the meaning expressed from the sign as a word *ndalim₁*. Between them there are differentiated meanings from each-other, which motivate the link between the word *ndalim₁* with the term *ndalim₂* from the law terminology. The link between these two markers shall be referred to as external polysemy for the terminology, since for this terminology, the word as an external element belongs to the general language, whereas the term built on the bases of the common word, as intrinsic, since it is now a term. This is also the case, in *humbje₁* (e një sendi) as a word (*η απόλεια₁*) and *humbja₂* (e së

drejtës) (η απώλεια₂), as a term, *përdorim*₁ (i një fjale) (η χρησιμοποίηση₁) and *përdorim*₂ (i forcës) (η χρήση₂). Some of them, for e.g. *ndalim*₃ as a term may express the concept of “detention for a brief period”. In this case, since we have to do with transfer of concepts within a sign, as a term, which as a phenomenon we may refer to as internal polysemy for terminology. As such, we may consider: *e drejtë*₂ (e drejt.) (ο δίκαιος₂) which expresses the concept of “a legal possibility to do something” derived from the common word *e drejtë(a)*₁ (to express a thought) (το δικαίωμα₁) and *e drejta*₃ (drejt.), as derived from *e drejta*₂ (drejt.) which expresses the concept “field of law” (ο δίκαιος₂), *shfrytëzim*₂ (e drejt.) (η εκμετάλλευση₁) which comes out in the context of *shfrytëzim* i njeriut, derived from *shfrytëzim*₁ (as a word) and *shfrytëzim*₃ (e drejt.) (η εκμετάλλευση₃) which comes from the context *shfrytëzim* (i postit).

Looking into other instances of the appearance of polysemy as external (transfer meaning-concept) and intrinsic (transfer concept - concept) may be observed in the distances meaning → concept and concept → concept to words and terms, which can be insignificant or very insignificant, even *ndalim*₁ (απαγόρευση₁) si fjalë – *ndalim*₂(απαγόρευση₂) , as a term and respectively *ndalim*₃ “detention” with a relatively big conceptual difference, as a term”. By the same token, with clear differences, we can see *kërkesë*₁ “diçka që kërkohet të bëhet” (η αίτηση₁) and *kërkesë*₂ “shkresë për të kërkuar diçka” (το αίτημα₂). In other instances the distance represents a major detach with obvious transfer, such as polysemy may be perceived as homonymy in the boundaries of terminology. This leads to the fact that the same sign can be distinguished as two signs (terms), with different concepts, even though sharing the same root from which they. *falje*₁ (gabim) (η συγχώρηση₁) *falje*₂ (dënimi) (η χάρη, η αμνηστεία), *forcë*₁ (pune) (η δύναμη₁)– *forcë*₂ (fiz.) (η δύναμη₂), *forcë*₃ (e armatosur) (ένοπλες δυνάμεις₃).

Since polysemy is about fine shades of meaning within the content of the concepts expressed by the same term in both languages, then in order to find out the conceptual distances expressed in the polysemy terms it is necessary to analyze the meaning of concepts in their depths and connections. In this case, the conceptual structure of the term may be built as an analogy to the contextual structure of the word, drawing on the polysemy connections of the term, the same as those of the word. However, between the polysemy of the term and polysemy of the word there are distinct differences, since the difference of the concepts within a sign at the term such as: *ligj* (fiz.) *ligj* (drejt.), as in Greek ο νομος₁– ο νομος₂ is more distinct than the differences between shades of meanings in the words, which integrate different shades of meaning, as may be included in the unit *ligj* taken as a word in the context “fjala e tij është *ligj* për mua”, while in Greek: ο νομος “ η λέξη του είναι νομος για μένα”

However, considering *ligj*₁— *ligj*₂ (“ ο νομος₁” and “ ο νομος₂”) as a word would be done through two meanings, hence it does not matter how distant or close they are from each-other, they are accepted as displays of polysemy. While in terminology, in the context of the expression of concepts between *ligj* (fiz.) and *ligj* (drejt.) there is a big difference, such that they may be considered as two distinguished signs. This would be the same as if for each of these two objects *ligj*₁ (ο νομος₁) and *ligj*₂ (ο νομος₂) there could be two different signs. This means that the

acceptance of the criterion of distance in terminology leads to what can be accepted as a phenomenon of polysemy in general language should be considered as homonymy in terminology. From this perspective, the boundaries between these two semantic phenomena, at concept level mingle with one another, and taken on relative and subjective values. This means that in terminology, as a division bases between polysemy and homonymy should be the juxtaposition of the features "*i afërt*"/*i largët*" (*κοντινός, διπλανός/μακρινός*). If there is a prevalence of the feature "*close*", then we have to do with polysemy, if instead we have the aspect "*far*", then the phenomenon is linked with homonymy. It goes without saying that this criterion is quite relative and subjective, and hence the establishment of the differentiation between these phenomena depends on the perspective of the researcher. Thus, for e.g. the term *ndalim* expressed two different concepts from each-other, but in some cases even the boundaries may be undefined: *ndalim*₁ "veprimi për ta ndalur, për të mos lëvizur më tej" and *ndalim*₂ "veprim për ta mbajtur për një kohë". In both these cases there is a phenomenon of polysemy, because the difference between concepts is so insignificant that the boundary is very difficult to be defined. In a more distinct way, the term *gjykim* carries two concepts, which are identified in the following comparison of the relevant concepts:

- a) "Veprime të gjyqtarit të një ndërhyrje në sport" (=gjykim₁) (*η διατησία1*) dhe
- b) "Veprime të gjyqtarit në gjyq..." (=gjykim₂) (*η εκδίκαση2*)

Here, in difference from the first case, we have to do more with the phenomenon of homonymy, since we have to do with concepts which are far from each-other, and which are used in areas which are different from each-other: *gjykim* (sport) (*η διατησία*) and *gjykim* (drejt.) (*η εκδίκαση*).

The proof in this can be if we are to compare the sign *gjykim* in Albanian, which marks two concepts: 1. "evaluation, intervention" and 2. "an assessment of a deed...", with their equal sign in Greek, and for which concept we have two signs: 1. *gjykim* (ndërhyrje) = *η διατησία*, whereas for 2. *gjykim* (fajtori) = *η εκδίκαση2*

3. HOMONYMY

In difference from the general lexicon, where the boundary between polysemy and homonymy is more defined, which comes out as well in the analyses of the semantic structure of words in a dictionary, "Fjalor i 1980", where we have to do with homonim *fletë*₂ (=gjethe) (*το φύλλο1*) dhe *fletë*₂ (fletoreje) (*το φύλλο2*), in terminology it may be easy to note that in the most generic case, polysemy is being perceived as included in homonymy (Loshi, 1972). This is particularly the case when the distance between concepts of the same sign is clear (Duro, 1995). Here we can use the examples referred above, as the external polysemy, such as for e.g.: *zbardhje*₁ (fj.e përgj.) (*το άσπρισμα1, η λεύκανση1*) and *zbardhje*₂ (e vendimit) (drejt.) (*η διαλεύκανση*), but even when concepts expressed by one sign belong to different fields, such as for e.g: *zbardhje*₃ (tekstil) (*το άσπρισμα1*) and *zbardhje*₂ (e drejt.) (*η διαλεύκανση*), *gjykim*₁ (i ndeshjes) (sport.) (*η διατησία1*) – *gjykim*₂ (i çështjes) (drejt.) (*η εκδίκαση2*)).

In rare cases, as mentioned above we have to do with pure homonyms such as: *firmë*₁ (ek.) (η επιχείρηση₁) – *firmë*₂ (drejt.) (η υπογραφή₂), *azil*₁ (fj. përgj.) (το άσυλο₁) – *azil*₂ (drejt.) (το άσυλο₂), *gëztoj*₁ (ndjej gëzim) (fj.përgj.) (χαροποιώ₁)– *gëztoj*₂ (të drejtën) (drejt.) (απολαμβάνω₂).

In a summary, the above mentioned phenomena, of polysemy, as well as of homonymy, in the legal terminology may be perceived as inter-related from the point of view of distance in meaning, which could serve as the bases to set the boundaries between them. However, in most of the instances, it would depend on the point of view of the study, which could be very relative and subjective, in terms of putting them under one category or the other.

1. Pure polysemy is the case when concepts are so close to each-other that in some cases it would be difficult to distinguish among them. In the majority of the cases, it may be accepted as internal/intrinsic polysemy (within the field of the legal and administrative style), which is also given in the word that serves as the contextual cycle of the term, such as: *zbardhje*₁ (e vendimit) – *zbardhje*₂ (e çështjes), *shfrytëzim*₁ (i rastit) (η εκμετάλλευση₁) – *shfrytëzim*₂ (i postit) (η εκμετάλλευση₂).

2. Mixed polysemy, whereby the boundary between the polysemy and homonymy is difficult to be established: *humbje*₁ (e sendit) (η απώλεια₁)– *humbje*₂ (e së drejtës), in Albanian and η απώλεια₁ – απώλεια₂ in Greek.

3. External homonymy related to the boundary between the concept of a common word and the term concept: *zbardhje*₁ (fj. e përgj.) (το άσπρισμα₁)– *zbardhje*₂ (e vendimit) (η διαλέκωση).

4. External Homonymy between different fields: *zbardhje*₁ (tekstil) (το άσπρισμα₁)– *zbardhje*₂ (vendim) (η διαλέκωση).

5. Pure homonymy, where the distinction among concepts is clearly cut, such as: *firmë*₁ (ek.) (η επιχείρηση₁)– *firmë*₂ (drejt.) (η υπογραφή₂), *azil*₁ (fj. përgj.) (το άσυλο₁) – *azil*₂ (drejt.) (το άσυλο₂).

It is important to view homonymous relations in terminology from the point of view of their formation, since in their majority they are generated in the process of new shades of meaning (terminology) of common words, i.e. creating terms with them.

In this case, within one sign there are together the common meaning in the specialized concepts through which the distance in meaning is generated. This distance between the meaning and the concept is generated since the specialized concept is linked to a new object, which in its concrete occurrence (mainly in terms of form or function) is clearly distinct from a common object. From this perspective, the difference in objects leads to a division of the sign into two planes, such as: *gjyqtar* (i ndeshjes) and *gjyqtar* (i aktit). Even though the transfer of a sign from one plane to the other (i.e. from the meaning to the concept) takes place on a common base due to the difference of two contents, it should be interpreted as two different signs (Markovin, 1970), which coincide in

form, but are clearly distinct in terms of content. This move of the sign from one content to the other may continue further, including in their field other concepts, due to their proximity within the existing concept. Hence, homonymy, as a phenomenon in terminology may be perceived as external, when there is a difference in the meaning of the word and the term concept such as: *zbardhje*₁ (fj. zakon.) and *zbardhje*₂ (vendim) (e drejt.), në gr. *το άσπρισμα*₁ and *η διαλεύκανση*₂. And internal, when there is a difference between expressed concepts by the same sign as a term, in the boundaries of the field such as: *e drejta*₂ (drejt. “si normë”) and *e drejta*₃ (drejt. “si fushë veprimtarie”), in Greek *το δικαίωμα*₁ -*το δικαίωμα*₂.

The above mentioned presentation of cases of homonymy serve to show that in the intrinsic homonymy not always units are equal from one language to the other. On one hand this indicates the distance in terms of concepts of homonymous signs, whereas on the other hand it is an indication of the trend of the terminology in one of the languages, or in both, to break the homonymy, in a way that can give the concepts in a differentiated fashion. This breach may be natural or the terminology researchers during the standardization of terminology aim at ensuring equality in a concept and a term through breaches in homonymy, such as: *gjqtar*₁(sport) – *gjqtar*₂ (drejt.) → *gjqtar* (sport) – *gjkatës* (drejt.), in Albanian which corresponds to the Greek model: *η διαίτησία* (sport) and *η εκδίκαση* (drejt.).

Cases of the presence of the homonymy and its breach may be observed in its existence in one language and failure of such existence in another, which may come out during comparison of both languages mutually. The most typical of cases being when homonyms in one language correspond to two different signs in the other language.

4. Conclusions

As a conclusion, it is important to point out that the phenomena of polysemy and homonymy in terminology, which emerge as a link between shades of meaning of words and concepts constitute models which are almost the same in both Albanian and Greek languages. They also express the same mechanism for the generation of terms based on common words. Cases of deviation from same models that guide the work that needs to be done, to break the polysemy or homonymous structures of the term, when it is loaded with concepts, introducing another unit (as newly created or found in the language).

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