

THE STATUS OF REDUNDANT EXPRESSIONS IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Adjunct Researcher Izabela Kozera-Sławomirska, PhD
Jagiellonian University

В настоящей статье рассматривается вопрос о семантических и прагматических аспектах функционирования плеонастических выражений. Вопрос о плеонастичности, понимаемой как речевая избыточность, недостаточно исследован лингвистами и по-прежнему является актуальной проблемой для современной лингвистики. Основная проблема — трудность сформулировать определение термина *плеоназм* и разграничить его с понятием *тавтология*. Другой важный вопрос — нормативная оценка плеоназмов. Феномен плеонастичности соотносится с проблемой размытости границ между семантикой и прагматикой. Сопоставление плеонастических конструкций векторного типа в различных индоевропейских языках указывает на существование общего коммуникативного обоснования указанного феномена.

This paper examines the question of semantic and pragmatic aspects of the functioning of pleonastic expressions. The question of pleonasticity understood as redundancy on the part of the sender has not been investigated sufficiently by linguists and is still an actual problem for contemporary linguistics. The basic problem is the difficulty of formulating the definition of the term *pleonasm* and differentiating it from the notion of *tautology*. Another important question is the normative valuation of pleonasms. The phenomenon of pleonasticity corresponds with the problem of blurriness of the borders between semantics and pragmatics. A contrastive analysis of pleonastic constructions of the vector type in various Indo-European languages indicates the existence of a general and communicative tendency for semantic redundancy.

Key words: pleonasm, pleonastic expression, redundancy, tautology, Polish, Russian, English

1. Pleonasm in Polish, English and Russian lexicographic sources

In the relevant literature there are two terms describing semantically extended expressions, namely *pleonasm* and *tautology*. They are often used interchangeably as synonymous notions (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 29). As far as Polish references are concerned, one can notice a visible ambiguity and lack of consistency when it comes to defining both of these terms (Małocha-Krupa 2003). The definitions are often too general, and not very precise, and it is

obvious that the same examples are given under various lexicographic entries. The same problem applies to foreign references. The tables 1–3 provide an overview of the definitions of the terms in Polish, English and Russian dictionaries. The most popular lexicographic sources in Polish academic discourse have been taken into account by A. Małocha-Krupa (2003) (cf.: Table 1). In English linguistics it is difficult to find definitions describing *pleonasm* and *tautology* as different notions or precisely defining their respective scope (cf.: Table 2). The same problem of defining the boundaries of both terms exists when it comes to the Russian references (cf.: Table 3).

Table 1. An overview of the definitions of the terms *pleonasm* and *tautology* in Polish lexicography

| Polish lexicography | <i>Pleonasm</i> | <i>Tautology</i> |
|---|--|---|
| <i>Słownik ilustrowany języka polskiego</i> , M. Arct (ed.). t. I-II. Warszawa 1929. | „większa ilość wyrazów lub zdań, aniżeli potrzeba do określenia rzeczy, nagromadzenie jednoznacznych wyrazów, wada stylu przeciwna zwięzłości (pleonazm rozmyślnie użyty w stylu pięknym dodaje mu barwności, siły i dobitności)”; | „powtarzanie tych samych myśli innymi wyrazami”; |
| <i>Encyklopedyczny słownik wyrazów obcych</i> . W. Trzaska, L. Evert, J. Michalski (eds.). Warszawa 1939. | „figura retoryczna polegająca na nadmiarze słów określających jakieś pojęcie lub przedmiot”; | „zbyteczne powtarzanie tego samego innymi słowami, nadmiar słów użytych do wyrażenia tego samego pojęcia”; |
| <i>Słownik wyrazów obcych</i> . Z. Rysiewicz (ed.), Warszawa 1959. | „wyrażenie lub zwrot, w którym jakieś pojęcie jest określone [...] kilkoma bliskoznacznymi wyrazami”, np. <i>ciemny mrok</i> , <i>placzę i lzy przelewam</i> ; | „niepotrzebne powiedzenie drugi raz tego, co już w danej wypowiedzi było zawarte, np. <i>wylączna sprzedaż tylko na bony</i> ”; |
| <i>Słownik terminologii językoznawczej</i> , Z. Gołąb, A. Heinz, K. Polański (eds.). Warszawa 1968. | „pleonastyczne jest wszystko, co nie wnosi nic nowego do znaczenia danego wyrażenia”; | No ”tautology” entry. |
| <i>Słownik wyrazów obcych i zwrotów obcojęzycznych</i> , W. Kopaliński (ed.). Warszawa 1968. | „wyrażenie składające się z dwu albo więcej wyrazów (prawie) to samo znaczących”, np. <i>w tym samym rodzaju i gatunku, nadal pozostaje, obaj bliźniacy</i> ; por. <i>tautologia</i> | „niepotrzebne powtórzenie wyrazu, myśli zawartych już raz w danej wypowiedzi”; cf. <i>pleonazm</i> |

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|---|--|---|
| <p>Słownik poprawnej polszczyzny, W. Doroszewski (ed.). Warszawa 1981.</p> | <p>„wyraz lub wyrażenie określone albo uzupełnione wyrazem bliskoznacznym lub równoznacznym”, np. <i>cichuteczka cisza, płaczę i lzy przelewam</i></p> | <p>“It appears only with a grammatical quantification”</p> |
| <p>Słownik terminów literackich, S. Sierotwiński (ed.). Warszawa 1986.</p> | <p>„figura, która polega na użyciu nadmiaru słów dla określenia przedmiotu, wyrazów synonimicznych, które nie mają wartości rzeczowej, nie wnoszą ani nowych szczegółów uzupełniających, ani zabarwienia uczuciowego”, np. <i>bojaźliwy tchórz</i>; por. <i>hendiadys</i> „figura polegająca na użyciu 2 rzeczowników lub czasowników wyrażających to samo pojęcie, połączonych spójnikiem <i>i</i>, np. <i>ojczyzna i kraj rodzimy, cieszył się i radował</i></p> | <p>see entry: <i>Pleonazm</i></p> |
| <p>Słownik terminów literackich, J. Sławiński (ed.). Warszawa 1988.</p> | <p>„zgrupowanie wyrazów lub zwrotów bliskoznacznym bądź synonimicznych, oceniane najczęściej jako usterka stylistyczna, choć mogące być celową amplifikacją i służyć stylistycznemu oraz znaczeniowemu wzbogaceniu tekstu”. Inne nazwy: <i>batologia, perissologia, tautologia</i> – nie zostały zdefiniowane;</p> | <p>see entry: <i>Pleonazm</i></p> |
| <p>Słownik współczesnego języka polskiego, B. Dunaj (ed.). t. II. Warszawa 1999.</p> | <p>„połączenie wyrazów znaczących to samo lub prawie to samo”, np. <i>masło maślane, wrócić z powrotem</i>;</p> | <p>„wyraz, powiedzenie powtarzające niepotrzebnie zawartą już w wypowiedzeniu treść”, np. <i>wrócić z powrotem</i>;</p> |

Source: (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 29).

Table 2. An overview of the definitions of the terms *pleonasm* and *tautology* in English lexicography

| English lexicography | <i>Pleonasm</i> | <i>Tautology</i> |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. New Edition, Warszawa 1989.</i> | “the use of more words than are needed to express an idea” | “unnecessary repeating of the same idea in different words” |
| <i>The Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar, Oxford 1994.</i> | “the use of more words than are needed to give the sense” | “the saying of the same thing over again in different words (particularly as a fault in style)” |
| <i>Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 4th edition, Cambridge University Press 2013.</i> | “the use of more words than are needed to express a meaning, done either unintentionally or for emphasis” | “the use of two words or phrases that express the same meaning, in a way that is unnecessary and usually unintentional” |
| <i>Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 2014.</i> | “1. the use of more words than necessary or an instance of this, such as <i>a tiny little child</i> , 2. a word or phrase that is superfluous” | “(…) is the use of different words to say the same thing twice in the same statement. 'The money should be adequate enough' is an example of tautology” |

Source: my own material.

Table 3. An overview of the definitions of the terms *pleonasm* and *tautology* in Russian lexicography

| Russian lexicography | <i>Pleonasm</i> | <i>Tautology</i> |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Ахманова О.С., <i>Словарь лингвистических терминов</i>, Москва 1966.</p> | <p>1. Избыточность выражения как постоянное свойство языковой единицы, 2. Фигура речи, состоящая в накоплении синонимических выражений; ... стилистическая избыточность. Русск. Надо докончить, завершить, выполнить начатую работу. Плеоназм грамматический (...) Накопление синонимических грамматических средств. Русск. Та красивая, молодая женщина...</p> | <p>Неоправданная избыточность выражения; ср. <i>плеоназм</i>. Русск. прост. <i>самый наилучший, более красивее</i></p> |
| <p>Ожегов С.И., Шведова Н.Ю., Толковый словарь русского языка, Москва 1997.</p> | <p>„спец.оборот речи, в к-ром без надобности повторяются слова, частично или полностью совпадающие по значениям (напр., <i>человек двадцать людей</i>), или такие, в к-рых значение одного слова уже входит в состав другого (напр., <i>своя автобиография, патриот родины, коллега по работе</i>)”</p> | <p>„книжн. Повторение того же самого другими словами, не уточняющее смысла”</p> |
| <p>Крысин Л.П., Толковый словарь иноязычных слов, Москва 1998.</p> | <p>„Оборот речи, в котором повторяются слова, одинаковые или близкие по значению (напр., <i>патриот родины, приснилось во сне</i>). П. широко представлен в народной поэзии (<i>грусть-тоска, горе горькое, путь-дороженька</i>), часто используется как стилистический прием. Усиливающий смысл сказанного: <i>Но без страха, без боязни вышел Шенгис на битву</i> («Песнь о Гайавате», перевод И.А. Бунина (...))”</p> | <p>„1.лингв. Повторение того же самого другими словами, не уточняющее смысла и обычно являющееся речевой ошибкой, напр.: <i>мертвый труп, более длиннее</i>; 2.филос. В логике: логическая ошибка в определении понятия, состоящая в том, что определение подменяется изменением словесной формы определяемого понятия. напр.: <i>Круг – это геометрическая фигура круглой формы.</i>”</p> |

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|---|---|--|
| <p>Кузнецов С.А. <i>Большой толковый словарь русского языка</i>, Санкт-Петербург 1998.</p> | <p>„Речевое излишество с точки зрения смысловой полноты высказывания, стилистической выразительности, выражающееся в скоплении близких или идентичных по значению слов (<i>сниться во сне, самый лучший, толпа людей, своя автобиография</i> и т.п.)“</p> | <p>„1. Повторение того же самого другими словами, не уточняющее смысла. 2. Лог. Суждение, в котором определяемый предмет определяется через самого себя.“</p> |
| <p>Ефремова Т.Ф. 2001, <i>Новый словарь русского языка</i>, Москва 2001.</p> | <p>„Оборот речи, содержащий однозначные, часто излишние слова (иногда применяющийся как стилистический приём для придания речи выразительности)“</p> | <p>1. Повторение одних и тех же или близких по значению слов без уточнения или изменения смысла, 2. Логическая ошибка в определении понятия, состоящая в том, что определяемый предмет определяется через самого себя“</p> |
| <p>Ушаков Д.Н. <i>Толковый словарь современного русского языка</i>, Москва 2005.</p> | <p>„Оборот речи, содержащий однозначные слова, выражения, напр.: <i>спор был долгий и продолжительный; я его расцеловал и облобызал; надо докончить, завершить, выполнить начатую работу</i>“</p> | <p>„1. Разновидность плеоназма – повторение того же самого другими словами, а потому излишнее (лит.), 2. В логике – суждение, в котором подлежащее тождественно со сказуемым (филос.)“</p> |

Source: my own material.

An analysis of the above definitions allows us to indicate different scientific views on this problem. Comparing different approaches, English lexicographic sources (Table 2) are the least accurate and attribute both concepts to the general *redundancy* of expression, which corresponds to the statement: „A message is redundant if it contains such elements which contribute nothing to the information not already conveyed by the rest of the message” (Lehmann 2005: 120). This approach is also supported in English grammars. According to *The grammar of English grammars* (Brown 2004), *pleonasm* can be defined as the process of inserting superfluous words which are unnecessary to complete the structure or meaning of a sentence (Brown 2004: 1160), while *tautology* refers to the unacceptable repetition of the same ideas, words, or phrases by using diverse words (Brown 2004: 1160). Moreover, in tautological sentences, predicate and theme are equal (Dupriez 1991: 262–463).

The term *pleonasm* in Russian dictionaries is treated most often as a figure of speech (Akhmanova 1966) in which words with partly or fully coinciding meanings are unnecessarily repeated (Ozhegov & Shvedova 1997), or those where the meaning of a word is already part of another, while *tautology* is a synonymic repetition in different words without clarifying the meaning (Ozhegov & Shvedova 1997). However, Russian definitions focus on the functional aspect of *pleonasm*, which has obvious rhetorical and poetic impact, while *tautology* refers to the unacceptable repetition of the same ideas, words, or phrases by using diverse words. A similar approach is represented in some English scientific works, e.g. H. Fowler and D. Crystal state that pleonastic words are used for rhetorical impact and emphasis (Fowler & Crystal 2009: 440-441), such as: Eng. *I saw with my own eyes, I heard with my own ears*. *Pleonasm* is often not considered as a question of grammar, but of taste or style, for instance: Eng. *gather* or *gather together*, Eng. *the reason* or *the reason why* (Karama 2024: 61). This is why the status of pleonasm and tautology often depends on the stylistic interpretation.

In my opinion, the best way to differentiate between the terms is to apply a *syntactic criterion*, which was proffered by the Polish academic researchers D. Buttler, H. Kurkowska and H. Satkiewicz. According to *Kultura języka polskiego*, *pleonasm* is a construction, in which the subordinate word “unnecessarily repeats a part of the content of the superior word” (Ruszkowski 1995: 23), e.g. Pol.¹ *awansować wyżej* (to be promoted to a higher position)², Eng. *to return back*, Rus. *подниматься вверх* [podnimat’sya vverkh] (to raise up), Pol. *czworonożny wilczur* (four-legged Alsatian), Eng. *resulting effect*, Pol. *ubogi żebrak* (poor beggar), Rus. *пожилой старик* [pozhiloy starik] (elderly old man), Eng. *mutual cooperation*, Pol. *wzajemna przyjaźń* (*mutual friendship*), Rus. *взаимно уважать друг друга* [vzaimno uvazhat’ drug druga] (mutually respect each other), while *tautology* is “a co-ordinate combination of words of identical meaning” (Ruszkowski 1995: 23), e.g. Pol. *legalnie i zgodnie z prawem* (legally and in accordance with law), Rus. *no праву и no закону* [po pravu i po zakonu] (legally and in accordance with the law), Eng. *in any shape or form*, Pol. *personalnie i osobiście* (personally and in person), Eng. *of any sort or kind*, Pol. *wystawy i ekspozycje* (exhibitions and expositions), Eng. *happy and joyful*, Eng. *each and every*.³ One should, however, admit that it is common to understand *tautology* as the constructions that repeat the same root morpheme, like “buttery butter”, which don’t fall under the heading of co-ordinate combinations. This approach is manifested primarily in studies based on Slavic languages (Matveeva 2003; Rozental’ & Telenkova 2003), e.g. Pol. *masło maślane* (buttery butter),

¹ Abbreviations used for examples from different languages: “Pol.” – Polish example, “Eng.” – English example, “Rus.” – Russian example, “Fr.” – French example, “Germ.” – German example, “late Lat.” – late Latin example.

² The translation of the Polish or Russian phrases is indicated in brackets.

³ Personal data.

Rus. горе горькое [gore gor'koe] (bitter grief), Rus. прыгнуть прыжок [prygnut' pryzhok] (to jump).⁴ The syntactic criterion is also supported in the contemporary prescriptive dictionaries of the Polish language (Jadacka 1995; Jadacka & Markowski 1999). A quite alternative differentiation is presented in *Encyklopedia językoznawstwa ogólnego* ed. by K. Polański, including the entries by Z. Saloni. He conceives of *pleonasm*s as constructions “including semantically redundant elements, mostly redundant, e.g. a couple of co-ordinate synonymous elements or a definition which is semantically implied by the defined element” (Polański 1993: 339). Understood in this way, the term *pleonasm* encompasses what the authors of *Kultura języka polskiego* subsume under pleonasm and tautologies. *Tautology* is defined as “sentences that do not contribute anything to the content of the utterance” (op. cit., 548), e.g. a sentence from *Kwiaty polskie* by J. Tuwim: Pol. *Rezeda pachnie – jak rezedka* (Reseda smells like reseda). This example might be classified by some researchers as the so-called seeming tautologies, like the sentences Eng. *business is business*, Pol. *pieniądz to pieniądz* (money is money) (Ruszkowski 1995: 23), Eng. *this woman is a woman*. However, the last given example comes from a poetic text and is conditioned by the specific purposes of the poetic text.

Defining word combinations as either pleonasm or tautology is often a difficult task. Particularly troublesome are constructions that include a foreign language component, e.g. Pol. *kawalkada jeźdźców* (a motorcade of riders) (Fr. *cavalcade*, it. *cavalcata* ‘ride or a horse ride’), Rus. *ледяной айсберг* [ledyanoy aysberg] (Germ. *Eisberg* ‘a piece of freshwater ice’), Pol. *monumentalny pomnik* / Rus. *монументальный памятник* [monumental'nyu pamyatnik] (monumental statue) (late Lat. *monumentalis* ‘monumental’ from Lat. *monumentum*, *monimentum* ‘memento, monument’), Pol. *realna możliwość* (real possibility), Rus. *реальная действительность* [real'naya deystvitel'nost'] (real reality) (late Lat. *realis* ‘real, true’), Rus. *памятный сувенир* [pamyatnyu souvenir] (memorable souvenir). They contain a concealed reduplication as “the etymological meaning of the synchronically foreign element of a given language unit reveals the existence of repeated semes in a given syntagma” (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 82). A. Małocha-Krupa (Małocha-Krupa 2003) ascribes to the above-mentioned pleonasm an explicating pragmatic and communicative value. However, I.B. Golub (Golub 2008) defines them with the term “hidden tautology” (*скрытая тавтология* [skrytaya tautologiya] (Golub 2008:21), Some of these constructions should not be considered pleonastic because of semantic changes. For example, the word Pol. *monumentalny* / Rus. *монументальный* [monumental'nyu] in the 19 century took a figurative meaning: *monumental* means “striking in its size, grandiose”. Rus. *реальная действительность* [real'naya deystvitel'nost'] (real reality) can be contrasted with the *virtual reality*, so the word *real* is not superfluous here.

⁴ Personal data.

Because of the fact that *pleonasm* and *tautology* have been treated as interchangeable and have been variously delimited and delineated against each other, in this paper the term *pleonasm* will be used as the superordinate concept, while *tautology* as a special case of this phenomenon. In general, a *pleonastic expression* is a redundant combination of two constituents, which are in a superordinate-subordinate relation, and the subordinate element reiterates the meaning of the superordinate element, for example: Eng. *mutual cooperation*, Rus. *взаимное сотрудничество* [vzaimnoe sotrudnichestvo] (mutual cooperation), Eng. *to go on foot* / Rus. *идти пешком* [idti peshkom] / Pol. *iść pieszo*, Eng. *free gift*, Eng. *true fact* / Pol. *fakt autentyczny* (true fact). *Tautology* is a redundant combination of elements which are in coordinate syntactic relation, such as: Eng. *last will and testament*, Pol. *poprawa i polepszenie* (improvement and betterment), Eng. *breaking and entering*, Eng. *watching and observing*.⁵

2. Normative valuation of pleonasms

The high frequency of a given language phenomena, particularly when it is not in accordance with an arbitrarily accepted standard, should rather be “an inspiration for examining its functional background” (Szumska 1998: 447). Pleonasms as excessive constructions are the examples of *pragmatic redundancy* (redundancy on the part of the sender) which is an immanent feature of not only natural language, but also of homo loquens’ need for communication (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 25). The creations of human linguistic activity are analysed from the point of view of the achieved communication goal (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 25). Redundancy has the function of the “corrector of mistakes” – the more redundancy, the fewer mistakes in the content of the message (Jurkowski 1965: 47). The functionality of pragmatic redundancy – its inavoidability in communication – tends to be questioned when it comes to pleonasms (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 29). A pleonasm tends to be valued in two ways, “either as the effect of the creativity in manipulating the language measures, whose aim is e.g. amplification, or as an obviously objectionable stylistic clumsiness, e.g. Pol. *cofać się do tyłu* (Szumska 1998: 447) (*to retreat backwards*), Eng. *to return back*, Rus. *вернуться обратно* [vernut'sya obratno] (*to come back*)⁶. Meanwhile, a high frequency of such expressions both in literary and colloquial language implies that such constructions are useful in communication. The reason why many pleonasms and tautologies were created was the intention to emphasize, highlight the content expressed with the aim of eliminating misinterpretation important for the author’s ideas, e.g. Pol. *dobrze walory* (*good advantages*). Such expressions as Pol. *najprawdziwsza prawda* (*the truest truth*), Pol. *widzieć na własne oczy* / Eng. *to see with one’s own eyes*

⁵ Personal data.

⁶ My own examples.

/ Rus. *видеть собственными глазами* [videt' sobstvennymi glazami], Pol. *fakt autentyczny* / Eng. *true fact* can be considered as expressive amplifications which are acceptable if they occur in a casual conversation. Sometimes a social language habit decides that pleonasms and tautologies become accepted by linguists, e.g. Pol. *tylko i wyłącznie* (only and exclusively), Pol. *krótko i węzłowato* (short and to the point), Pol. *wejść po schodach na górę* (ascend the stairs upstairs), Rus. *подниматься вверх* [podnimat'sya vverkh], Pol. *zejść na dół* (descend the stairs downstairs), Rus. *спускаться вниз* [spuskat'sya vniz], Pol. *młoda dziewczyna* (young maid), rus. *молодая девушка* [molodaya devushka] (young maid), Pol. *stary dziadek* (old grandpa). However, it is a bit controversial to accept these constructions as normative because of their high frequency of usage only, as this leads to a false conclusion that a normative construction is a frequently used construction (Szumska 1998: 447).

3. Pleonasm – on the border between semantics and pragmatics

A discussion on pleonasms belongs to the eternal problem of the ambiguity of the borders between semantics and pragmatics. From the semantic point of view, a pleonasm is a syntagma whose elements are redundant when it comes to a code – as opposed to the syntagmas with no excessive information. Thanks to pragmatics one can take into consideration a so-called *functional criterion* (Ruszkowski 1995: 27). A. Małocha-Krupa (Małocha-Krupa 2003) ascribes to pleonasms the following pragmatic and communicative values: defining, emphasising and explicating and proves that semantic redundancy is not a stable value for a given syntagma, but is dependent on context. The seeming semantic surplus is justified by the necessity of increasing the precision of the utterance and it increases the probability of achieving the communicative goal. Under particular contextual conditions one can notice a partial reduction of pleonasticity. A pleonastic expression can paradoxically introduce additional content:

- Pol. *Przyszedłem do ciebie (I walked to you).* vs. *Przyszedłem do ciebie pieszo (I walked to you on foot);*

The first sentence communicates only that somebody arrived, whereas the second one emphasises that its author did not use any means of transport, although this information should have been included in the verb Pol. *przysiąc (to walk)* (Ruszkowski 1995: 26). The Polish dictionary *Słownik poprawnej polszczyzny* accepts the phrase *iść pieszo (to walk on foot)*.

- Rus. *Человек 5 лет шел пешком от Севастополя до Владивостока* [Chelovek 5 let shel peshkom ot Sevastopolya do Vladivostoka] (A man walked on foot for 5 years from Sevastopol to Vladivostok);

The pleonasm Rus. *идти пешком* [idti peshkom] (to walk on foot) can also emphasize the physical feat of a person.

- Eng. *Anne rushed quickly to the street to tell the others;*

The meaning of the adverb *quickly* is not an obligatory formal component of a motion verb, but it's used to emphasize the dynamics of an action – it serves the narrative purposes of the statement.

Pleonastic verbal groups that duplicate the feature of quantity or multiplicity, like *odnowić* (to renovate), *powtórzyć* (to repeat), *przywrócić* (to restore) *znowu/ponownie/raz jeszcze* (again/once more/one more time) can refer to iterative actions. Some repeated expressions are used to show emphasis and intensification:

- Pol. *Wiele sklepów znowu wznowiło działalność* (Many shops have been reopened again);

This sentence will always be described as a pleonastic one. When a given activity is said for the first time, such a phrase is assumed to be a pleonastic construction, but each subsequent “resumption” connected with adverbial descriptions of quantification should be considered functional, introducing new information. A similar situation occurs when it comes to the construction: *two twins/both twins*.

- Pol. *Szło dwóch bliźniaków* (Two boy-twins walked);

This expression communicates not only the obvious number of agents, but most of all their male gender. One can interpret in the same way an utterance Pol. *Szli dwaj bliźniacy* (Two boy-twins walked, concerning boys) and Pol. *Szły dwie bliźniaczki* (Two girl-twins walked, concerning girls).

- Eng. *I do care about you;*

This pleonastic expression may be used for emphasis; technically “do” is not needed, but it can be used to emphasize that one does truly care.

- Rus. *Язык французов и латиноамериканцев наиболее экспрессивен, и жестикулируют они двумя руками.* [Yazyk frantsuzov i latinoamerikantsev naibolee ekspressiven, i zhestikuliruyut oni dvumya rukami] (The languages of the French and Latin Americans is the most expressive, and they gesture with both hands).

Neutralization of the redundancy of such constructions occurs when the pleonastic element is accompanied by an additional component (the attributive function of an expression *двумя руками*).

- Rus. *Выбор и цены приятно радуют!* [Vybor i tseny priyatno raduyut] (The selection and prices are pleasantly pleasing);

The use of pleonasm in advertising is motivated by their categorical tone. Using a pleonasm the advertiser can manipulate the consumer, forcing her/him to accept a desired point of view.

The above-mentioned constructions are redundant when it comes to the code, but not pragmatically. In other words, system pleonasticity (on the plane of *langue*) has its communicative justification, which means that it is no longer pleonasticity on the plane of *parole* (Szumska 2006: 157). D. Szumska presents examples, in which the excessive element has the function of an exponent of the referential value – either typifying or indefinite (Szumska 2006):

- Pol. *W małym miasteczku trudno o pracę* (*It is hard to find a job in a small town*) – „if it is a typical town, you can say that it is hard to find a job there and it would be true”
- Pol. *Jagoda pracuje w małym miasteczku* – „Jagoda works in a little town”

The author proves that when the above-mentioned contexts are subjected to the reduction test, they become unacceptable, or require a reinterpretation. The author notes that most of the nominal pleonastic groups are based on a so-called “ascribing its common attribute to a given thing”, e.g. *hot tea/coffee, sweet custard/jam*, cf.

- *Napij się gorącej herbaty* (*Drink hot tea*): “drink some tea, because it is hot” as an offer for someone who got cold vs. a neutral “*Drink tea*”.

Moreover, building a pleonastic construction may aim at achieving increased intensity of the feature, cf.

- *Czemu nie pijesz herbaty? Jeszcze gorąca* (*Why don't you drink the tea? It's still hot*), so it is „very hot/too hot to drink it”.

4. Research hypothesis

Apparently, the typical analysis of pleonasms is concentrated on the question whether they are normative or not and all the attempts to justify the existence of such constructions consist of proving their pragmatic usefulness, while the essence of this language phenomenon can be rooted deeper. Many Polish, English and Russian examples given in this paper coincide with each other, which means that the corresponding equivalents can be found in different languages. This allows us to suspect that pleonasm is one of the language universals. The essence of pleonasm lies in human cognition. The conceptualization follows from common human experience, from human perception of the surrounding world. The methodology of cognitive linguistics makes possible to notice the existence of universal semantic features that tend to be replicated in the systems of different languages (cf. Małocha-Krupa 2003, Zayts 2001). Some of these features were identified by A. Małocha-Krupa (Małocha-Krupa 2003) in her typology of Polish pleonasms (vector, quantitative, temporal and locative, extremizing, coexistential pleonasms etc.). Due to the limited volume of this paper, in the following part I will focus on the discussion of *vector pleonasms* using Polish, English and Russian as data, because they have a high frequency of occurrence in the languages discussed.

5. Vector pleonasms

Vector pleonasms mirror the space relations in two opposite forms: 1) vertical (UP–DOWN) and 2) horizontal (FRONT–BACK) – e.g.:

- 1) Pol. *obniżać się w dół, opadać w dół / do dołu (decrease down, fall down), opuszczać się w dół / na dół (lower down), piąć (się) ku górze / w górę / do góry (climb upstairs), pochylać się w dół (lean down), podrywać się do góry / w górę (stir up), podnosić (się) do góry / w górę (raise up), podrzucić w górę, podsadzić do góry, podskakiwać do góry / w górę, przeważyc w dół (outweigh down), spaść na dół / w dół (fall down), spuścić (się) w dół (drop down), stoczyć się w dół (roll down), unieść (się) do góry / w górę (raise up), upaść na dół (fall down), wchodzić na górę (ascend upstairs), wjeżdżać na górę (ascend up), wspinać się do góry / w górę (climb upstairs), wzbić (się) w górę (soar up), wzlecieć w górę / do góry (rise up), wznieść się ku górze / w górę / do góry (lift up), zbiec na dół (abscond down), zejść na dół / w dół (descend down), zjechać w dół / na dół (descend down), zlecieć z góry (fall down), zrzucić na dół (drop down), zsunąć się w dół (slide down), zwiesić w dół (hang down)* (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 152–158);
- 2) Pol. *cofnąć się do tyłu / tyłem /w tył (reverse backwards), wrócić (się) z powrotem (return back), wycofać się do tyłu (withdraw backwards), wysforować się do przodu (take the lead at the front), zawrócić z powrotem (return back)* (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 158–160).

It is interesting that the Polish language is not the only example as such pleonastic constructions are present in English, Russian and French languages as well.

- 3) Rus.: *падать вниз* (Solganik, Dronyaeva 2008: 113) [*padat' vniz*], *подниматься вверх* (Golub 2010: 92) [*podnimat'sya vverkh*], *подско-чить вверх* (Bylkova, Makhnitskaya 2009: 119) [*podskochit' vverkh*], *спускаться вниз* (Krapotina 1995: 147) [*spuskat'sya vniz*], *упасть вниз* (Rozenal', Golub 1996: 19) [*upast' vniz*]; eng.: *descend down* (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 95), *climb up* (op. cit.), *ascend up* (op. cit.); fr.: *descendre en bas* (op. cit.), *monter en haut* (op. cit.).
- 4) Rus.: *вернуться обратно* (Bylkova, Makhnitskaya 2009: 119) [*vernut'sya obratno*], *возвращаться обратно* (Solganik, Dronyaeva 2008: 116) [*vozvrashhat'sya obratno*], *отступить назад* (Bel'chikov 2008: 406) [*otstupit' nazad*], *повернуть назад* (Lyakhovetskaya 1985: 117) [*povernut' nazad*]; eng.: *to return back* (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 95), *revert back, recede back*; fr.: *reculer en arriére* (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 95).

The question arises – what is the ground for this phenomenon? What is the reason of such a similarity? The explanation is purely anthropocentric.

The perception of the world present in language is the picture of the world, which is seen, hierarchically ordered by the human conceptualizer, as a human is the one who is at the centre of this world, and categorisation of extralinguistic reality is relativised considering the human condition. Space, as a universal category has a human dimension, as the human being is the one who interprets spatial relations. Vector pleonasm encodes physically truthful meaning, which is the movement in space and at the same time refer to spatial experience, which is fundamental for a human being (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 52). According to Cz. Lachur, a human perceiving space uses two “systems of orientation”. The first of them is included in the human body construction (differentiation between the upper and lower part of a body, the front and the back, the left and the right sides), thanks to which a man can differentiate the diversions in space. The second one, however, described as the “sensual” one, is the structure of our spatial concepts, “which is based on the differentiation of three directions: towards the head and towards the legs; following the sight “straight forward” and its extension backwards; following the line of the right and left hands stretched out in the frontal level”. According to the author, the two language systems are isomorphic. “Therefore, space is three-dimensional to us, and it is directly connected with our physical build. The three dimensions of space mirror the three dimensions of a human body” (Janowska 1999: 18). The iconic reflection of our spatial ideas at the level of form is the adverbial element of a vector pleonasm, which indicates the oppositions UP–DOWN, FRONT–BACK. The superordinate element of this construction is the verb of motion, which in the light of cognitive semantics profiles the elements of the scene’s layout, such as the characteristics of space and the direction of movement (Kubiszyn-Mędrala 2007: 4). In this way, in the pleonastic construction, both the verb and the adverb profile the same element of the scene’s layout, which is the direction of movement. This testifies to the conceptual closeness of the verb and the adverb, which, in accordance with the first Behaghel’s law⁷, also appear next to each other in the linguistic structure. The vector pleonasm as an overcoded construction is more distinct for a language user, as it reflects the essence of their spatial concepts better. The presence of vector pleonastic constructions in other languages suggests that there is a universal conceptualisation of space for Indo-European languages.

A detailed analysis of vector pleonastic constructions in various languages could have proved the existence of a general and communicative tendency for semantic redundancy or maybe they are indicative of transcultural language behaviours, which are similar when it comes to pragmatics and communica-

⁷ The first Behaghel’s law – one of the fundamental principles of *iconicity* states that what belongs together mentally, will also be placed close together within the syntactic structure.

tion (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 105). Cognitivists perceive the UP–DOWN model of space ordering as the one deeply rooted in the European tradition (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 52). Perhaps it is the reason why among vector pleonasm there are more vertical constructions and much fewer horizontal ones.

6. Conclusion

A pleonasm analysed without a syntagmatic context is an overcoded construction, whereas a pleonasm in context, including such pragmatic dimensions as: communicative goal, context, communicative competence of the interlocutors, acquires pragmatic and communicative value (Małocha-Krupa 2003: 105). Therefore, the pragmatic perspective helps to diminish the redundancy that exists in relation to the code and, subsequently, to reduce the negative meaning of the term *pleonasm* itself and to admit that under functionally justified conditions the phenomenon constitutes no deviation from the language standard.

The existence of pleonastic constructions in various languages, where similar semantic features are replicate within the constructions, suggests that there is a universal semantic and pragmatic tendency for creating redundant structures. Analysing pleonasticity from the perspective of cognitive semantics opens further research perspectives.

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СТАТУС НА РЕДУНТАНТНИТЕ ИЗРАЗИ В СЪПОСТАВИТЕЛЕН ПЛАН

гл. ас. д-р Изабела Козера-Славомирска
Ягелонски университет

В статията се разглеждат семантичните и прагматичните аспекти на функционирането на плеонастичните изрази. Въпросът за плеонастичността, разбирана като излишък на речта, не е достатъчно проучен от лингвистите и продължава да бъде актуален за съвременната лингвистика. Основният проблем се състои в трудността да се формулира дефиниция на термина плеоназъм и това понятие да се разграничи от понятието тавтология. Друг важен въпрос е нормативната оценка на плеоназмите. Явлението плеонастичност е свързано с размиването на границите между семантика и прагматика. Плеоназмите и тавтологиите представляват системна редундантност, т.е. излишък по отношение на *langue*, но по отношение на *parole* редупликацията на семантичните характеристики не е толкова очевидна. От съществено значение е неутрализацията на плеонастичните и тавтологичните отношения в определени контекстуални условия. Функционалният критерий обяснява прехода на плеонастичните изрази към категорията на конструкциите, допустими в речта. Плеоназмите дублират семи, които са общи за много езици, затова сравнението на тези конструкции върху богат езиков материал поражда хипотеза за универсалността на разглежданото явление. Съпоставят се плеонастични конструкции от векторен тип в различни индоевропейски езици.

Ключови думи: плеоназъм, плеонастични изрази, редундантност, тавтология, полски, руски, английски

Adjunct Researcher Izabela Kozera-Sławomirska, PhD

ORCID: 0000-0001-6852-4132

Department of Russian Linguistics

Institute of Eastern Slavonic Studies

Jagiellonian University

Gołębia 24, 31-007 Cracow, Poland

e-mail: izabela.kozera@uj.edu.pl