

**THE LINGUISTIC STATUS OF THE PHENOMENON OF ENANTIOSEMY
IN THE KOREAN LANGUAGE**

Alikulova Feruza,
Teacher, Uzbekistan State World Languages University, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
alikulovaf1307@gmail.com

ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
<p>This article provides a detailed analysis of the linguistic characteristics of enantiosemy in the Korean language. Enantiosemy is a phenomenon in which a single word or phrase is used with opposite meanings. While this phenomenon exists in various languages, it exhibits unique semantic and pragmatic characteristics in each. The paper examines the concept of enantiosemy in Korean linguistics, its linguistic status, and examples at both grammatical and lexical levels. The study explores the causes of enantiosemy, its pragmatic functions, and its impact on communication. The findings contribute to the understanding of both the general and specific aspects of enantiosemy in the Korean language and lay the foundation for further research on this important linguistic issue.</p>	<p>Enantiosemy, semantics, pragmatics, antonymy, Korean language, linguistics.</p>

Introduction

The phenomenon of enantiosemy, which is a manifestation of lexical-level contradiction, became the focus of expanded research in the 19th century. During this period, one of the most renowned linguists studying enantiosemy was V. Schertz. In his work entitled *On Contradictory Words*, he discusses the phenomenon of semantic opposition within words, using examples from Indo-European languages, and introduces the term "enantiosemy" [1]. Since then, the term has been used in linguistics to refer to semantic opposition within a single word. Enantiosemy (from the Greek *en* meaning "within", *anti* meaning "opposite", and *sema* meaning "sign" [2]) is a phenomenon characterized by the coexistence of two opposing meanings within one word.

Various studies on enantiosemy have offered differing approaches to its linguistic status. In these works, enantiosemy is primarily regarded as: a specific manifestation of a lexical category (such as antonymy, homonymy, or polysemy); a phenomenon situated between two lexical categories; or as an independent lexical category in its own right [3]. In examining the peculiarities of lexical phenomena like homonymy, antonymy, polysemy, and synonymy, the relationship between form and meaning is taken into consideration. However, when comparing enantiosemic units with other lexical categories, attention should be focused not on the formal aspect but rather on the semantic aspect, with an emphasis on the fact that enantiosemy manifests exclusively within the boundaries of a single word. Based on this, we will attempt below to identify the similarities and differences between enantiosemy and other linguistic categories, and to determine its place within the linguistic system.

One of the linguists who regards enantiosemy as a form of homonymy, Shansky, presents the following view: “There are cases when an archaic meaning of a word is preserved, leading to the emergence of enantiosemy. As a result, the lexicon acquires words that are identical in pronunciation but possess opposite meanings. Such words do not represent antonymy, but rather a specific type of homonymy, arising from the divergence of a single word’s meaning into opposing senses” [4]. Below, by comparing several homonymous and enantiosemic words in the Korean language, we will examine their similarities and differences, in order to clarify the relationship between enantiosemy and homonymy. In the Korean language, the homonymous word 적다 carries the meanings “to write down” and “to be few,” representing two distinct words with unrelated meanings. In this case, the words belong to two different parts of speech: verb and adjective.

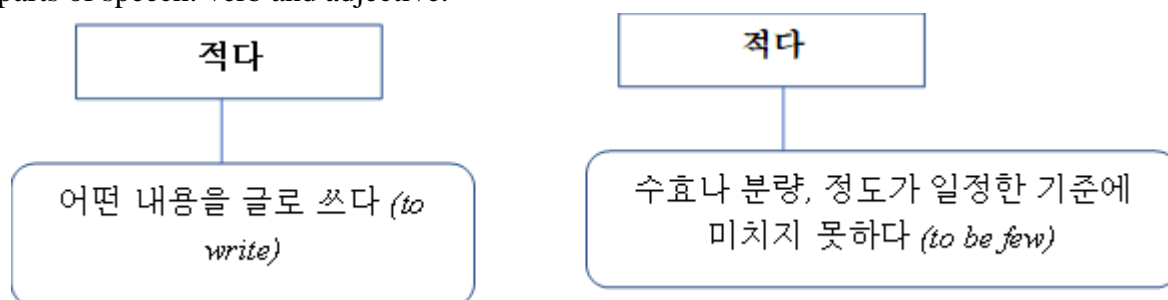


Diagram 1. Homonymy

In Korean, the word 안녕 (annyeong) carries the meanings of both “a greeting used when meeting someone” and “a farewell used when parting.” For example:

안녕, 티나, 나 폴이에요. 그런데, 3 시 회의가 얼마나 걸릴거라고 생각해요?

(Hello, Tina, I’m Paul. How long do you think our 3 o’clock meeting will last?)

그럼 이만 안녕. 내일 보자.

(Well then, goodbye for now. See you tomorrow.)

Although these meanings express opposite concepts, they share a common semantic field, as both relate to expressions of social interaction. In this respect, the enantiosemic meanings are interconnected. This contrast can be illustrated in the following diagram:

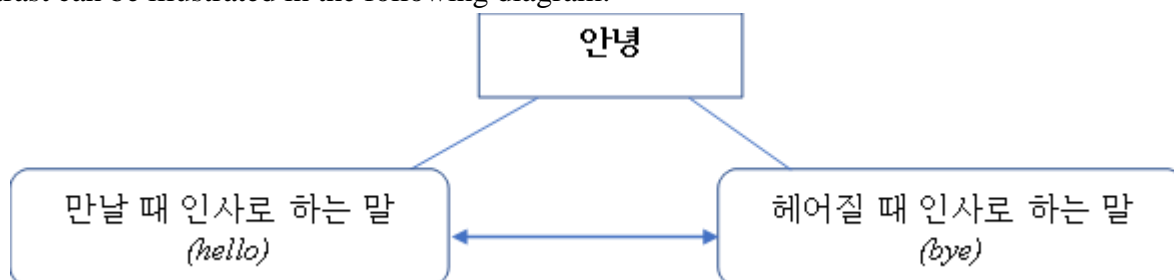


Diagram 2. Enantiosemy

Based on the foregoing discussion, the following distinctions can be drawn between enantiosemy and homonymy:

- while homonymy involves attention to both the formal and semantic aspects of words, enantiosemy places primary emphasis on the semantic dimension alone.
- enantiosemy operates within the boundaries of a single word, whereas

homonymy manifests across different words.

- in cases of enantiosemy, the meanings share an underlying semantic connection, whereas homonymous words typically lack such an intrinsic relationship.
- furthermore, enantiosemy is characterized by meanings that belong to the same lexical category, whereas homonymy may involve meanings that occur either within the same category or across different lexical categories.

Furthermore, due to the semantic opposition of meanings and the fact that it is based solely on a semantic perspective, enantiosemy is also interpreted as a type of antonymy. Linguists who consider enantiosemy as a form of antonymy present the following view: "Words that are opposite in meaning are often referred to as antonyms, for example, truth – falsehood. However, antonymy can occur not only between different words but also between the various meanings of a single word" [5]. However, during the course of this research, we have identified the following differences between enantiosemic words and antonymic words:

- both enantiosemy and antonymy are based on the opposition of meanings, but while enantiosemy arises within a specific word, antonymy occurs between different words. In antonymy, the opposition can be understood without context, whereas in enantiosemy, the meaning that emerges is only revealed within a specific context.
- both enantiosemy and antonymy represent two opposing sides of a phenomenon, action, or state; however, in antonymy, the opposing meanings are always equal and mutually exclusive, while in enantiosemy, the opposing meanings are not always equal or mutually exclusive.
- in antonymy, one meaning typically implies the other in an associative manner, meaning that when "good" is mentioned, the concept of "bad" naturally arises in the mind. However, in enantiosemy, due to the context-dependent nature of the meanings, one meaning does not necessarily evoke the other in an associative manner. Compare:



Diagram 3. Antonymy

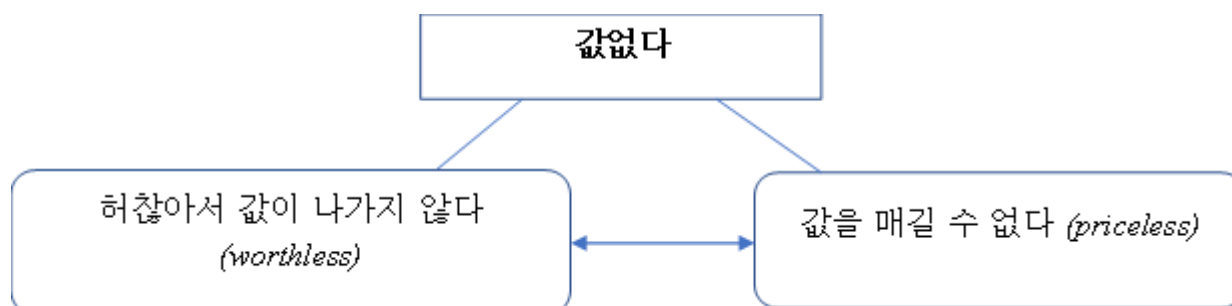


Diagram 4. Enantiosemy

Another approach regarding the role of enantiosemy in language is its relationship with polysemy. Polysemy refers to the phenomenon of a single word having multiple meanings, where the meanings do not contradict each other but are united by a common semantic thread. Even if the words refer to different things, they are connected through a particular semantic feature — their commonality.

Korean linguists Lee Jong-shik and Yun Pyong-hyon define polysemy as the phenomenon in which a single word has two or more meanings [6]. Im Ji-ryung, on the other hand, describes polysemy as a case in which a single word has two or more meanings that are related to each other [7]. Although all definitions of polysemy are quite similar, the important point to note here is the connection between the meanings. For instance, the word 머리 (meori) can be translated as "to nod one's head" in 머리를 끄덕이다, "smart" in 머리가 좋다, and "long hair" in 머리가 길다. In dictionaries, 머리 has nearly 10 different meanings. In this case, the literal meaning of "head" (as a body part) is treated as the primary meaning, while the other meanings are considered figurative due to their usage within speech. Although these meanings refer to different concepts, they are all unified by the core meaning of "head."

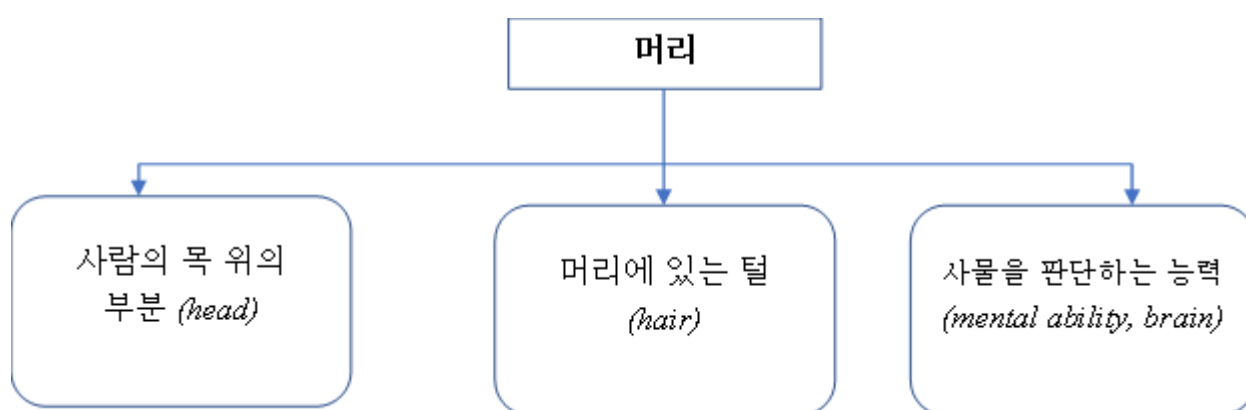


Diagram 5. Polisemy

Another example of a polysemous word is 줄 (jul), which can mean:

- 1) A thin and long object used to tie, such as a rope for tying a dog's offspring" (literal meaning);
- 2) An object stretched or laid out along a road" (queue or line);
- 3) A relationship or connection in social life" (connection or relationship).

Among these meanings, the first meaning — a "rope" — is considered the primary meaning of the word. The second meaning, referring to a "line," is related to its form (length), while the third meaning, referring to "relationships," is considered a figurative meaning derived from the core meaning of the word, based on its function or usage in context.

In enantiosemy, as in polysemy, the meanings of words are related, but these meanings result from the development of opposing meanings, where they describe a phenomenon, sign, action, or state from opposite perspectives. For example, in the word 비천 (bicheon), there is a semantic opposition between the meanings "a spring flowing upwards" and "water flowing down from the rocks," where the opposition is expressed in terms of spatial relationships — "upward" and "downward." The semantic commonality in this word is evident in the fact that it describes the relationship of a certain phenomenon to the earth's surface, but it differs by expressing the opposition of these states as being in contrast to one another.

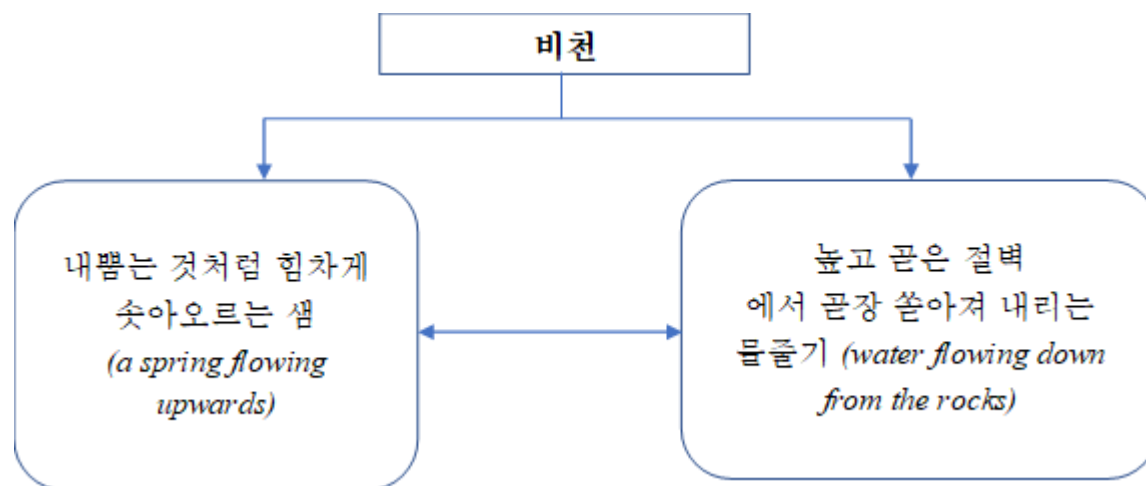


Diagram 6. Enantiosemy

In polysemy, one meaning does not eliminate or replace another, nor does it arise as a result of the previous meaning disappearing. On the contrary, the meanings coexist as equal components. For example, the word 언니 (eonni) originally meant "the older sister in a family," based on the semantics of "older" and "girl." From this, a new meaning developed, referring to "any adult woman" in a general sense, regardless of whether they are a biological sibling.

Enantiosemy also arises from the development of meanings, similar to polysemy. However, in enantiosemy, sometimes one meaning may emerge at the expense of another, which pushes the original meaning out. In Korean, when considering enantiosemy as a form of polysemy, it should be studied synchronically. In other words, the original meaning of a word may evolve over time into an opposite meaning. For example, the word 마누라 (manura) originally referred to a respectful term used for a king or queen during the Joseon period. However, over time, this word acquired a negative connotation and is now used in a coarse manner to refer to a middle-aged woman or one's wife. From this perspective, enantiosemy can be considered a special form of polysemy [8].

In conclusion, there are views in Korean linguistics that consider enantiosemy as a type of homonymy or polysemy. However, the sources examined in this research suggest that enantiosemy in Korean should be regarded as a form of polysemy, and we find this approach to be more suitable.

References:

1. Шерцль В.И. О словах с противоположными значениями (или о так называемой энантиосемии) // Хрестоматия по истории русского языка. – М., 1973. – С. 259–264.
2. Розенталь Д.Э., Теленкова М.А. Словарь-справочник лингвистических терминов. – М.: Просвещение, 1976. – С.537.
3. Odilov Y. Enantiosemya hodisasi va uning lingvistik tadqiqi // Til va adabiyot ta'limi. – Toshkent, 2013. - №1. – B. 35.
4. Шанский Н.М. Лексикология современного русского языка. – М.: Просвещение, 1972. – С. 64.
5. Будагов Р.А. Введение в науку о языке. – М.: Просвещение, 1958. – С. 57–61; Ш.Балли. Общая лингвистика и вопросы французского языка. – М., 1953. – С. 38.

6. 이정식. 다의어 발생론. – 서울, 역락, 2003; 윤평현. 국어의미론. – 서울, 역락, 2008. – 315 쪽.
7. 임지룡. 한국의미론. – 서울, 한국문화사, 2018. – 547 쪽.
8. Odilov Y.R. O‘zbek tilida enantiosemiya: Filol. fan. dok. ...diss. – T., 2016. – B. 57.