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## **LEXICAL PARALLELS: DEFINITIONS, TYPES, EXAMPLES (RUSSIAN, GERMAN, ENGLISH, SPANISH)**

**A b s t r a c t.** This paper is devoted to different types of Lexical Parallels, mainly in Russian and German, with some additional examples from English and French. A classical Lexical Parallel (LP) in two or more languages is an n-tuple of lexical items, one from each of these languages, with similar (phonetic and/or graphic) forms and partial or full identity/non-identity of meanings. For two languages, more complex Lexical Parallels comprise homonyms and paronyms in one or both of these languages. In comparison to former publications of the authors, this paper offers a precise and enlarged view of Lexical Parallels and contains some corrections made in the context of recent publications of the Moscow Semantic School.

**K e y w o r d s:** lexicography, comparative lexicology, lexical parallels, homonyms, paronyms

### **1. Why this topic?**

#### **1.1. Dictionaries for non-linguists and professional dictionary making**

Talking about linguistics to non-linguists, under private circumstances, very often starts from the question: What is all that for what you are doing professionally? Language teaching and dictionary making come among the first answers, multilingualism and cross-linguistic features are also quite frequent topics<sup>1</sup>. Lexical Parallels (see below) offer an opportunity to combine all these aspects, and indeed, the authors of this paper had a quite positive experience in explaining their work to a more general audience<sup>2</sup>.

On the other hand, the theory and practice of dictionary making has reached a high level, especially when taking into account the efforts by Igor Mel'čuk,

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<sup>1</sup> Linguistically interested internet users may ask how it comes that search machines become better every second month and provide translation between different languages, but still these features are more often taken for granted and not every linguist knows what to answer.

<sup>2</sup> A good example was the presentation of RNSLP to V. A. Kravets, a technician and Vice-rector of National Technical University «Kharkiv Technological Institute». He was happy to get a copy of our book, began to look up examples, and was (finally) convinced that it was useful to support the scientific cooperation of his university and the Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt (Austria) in the field of linguistics.

Jurij Apresjan and their adherents: Works like TKS, DEC, NOSS and AS demonstrate different techniques for the representation of linguistic knowledge to the scientific community, students and/or a general readership. The purpose of this paper is to present a piece of dictionary making and current research of our own, and to compare our approach with the approaches of the above named authors.

### 1.2. The Russian-German Dictionary of Lexical Parallels (RNSLP)

A Lexical Parallel (LP) in two or more languages is an n-tuple (i. e. a pair, a triple, ...) of lexical items (for details, see below), one from each of these languages, with similar (phonetic and/or graphic) forms and partial or full identity/non-identity of meanings. In RNSLP — a learner's dictionary — the authors of this paper have presented a representative collection of LPs in Russian and German<sup>3</sup>. Let us discuss some examples.

An LP with lexical items of similar forms and completely different meanings is called a *False Lexical Parallel*; in our dictionary, these items are marked with a special symbol (cf. below example (1)  $\triangleleft$  ДЕПУТАТ —  $\triangleleft$  Deputat); these cases are not so numerous. The majority of interesting LPs are those where only some meanings of the lexical items differ while others are identical: a LP with items of similar forms and partly different meanings is called a *Partial Lexical Parallel*; in our dictionary, an asterisk is used to mark the non-identical meanings (cf. below example (2) ДЕПО 1; ДЕПО 2 — Depot 1; Depot 2; Depot 3\*; Depot 4\*; Depot 5\*). The third case is that of a *Full Lexical Parallel* with items of similar forms and fully identical meanings (cf. below example (3) ДЕПРЕССИЯ — Depression).

#### (1) False Lexical Parallel

$\triangleleft$  ДЕПУТАТ, -а, м:

1. выборный представитель, член выборного государственного учреждения: *депутат парламента*

— Abgeordnete(r);

2. человек, избранный кем-л. и уполномоченный для выполнения каких-л. поручений, заданий и т. п.: *депутат переговорщиков*

— Vertreter(in), Delegierte(r), Deputierte(r).

$\triangleleft$  Deputat, n (-(e)s, -e):

1. натуроплата (часть заработной платы, получаемая натурой): *ein ausreichendes Deputat erhalten*;

2. причитающаяся доля: *die Deputate verteilen*.

<sup>3</sup> Traditionally, translators used to speak (metaphorically) about «False Friends» (faux amis, ложные друзья переводчика). Recently, the (misleading) notion of «interlanguage homonyms» (межъязыковые омонимы, cf.: Кочерган М. П. Словник російсько-українських міжмовних омонімів, К., 1997; Кусал К. Русско-польский словарь межъязыковых омонимов, Вроцлав, 2002) appeared. Our goal is to present a view from a more general perspective.

## (2) Partial Lexical Parallel

**ДЕПО**, нескл, ср:

1. предприятие и здание для стоянки и ремонта локомотивов, вагонов или городского транспорта; здание для пожарных машин: трамвайно-троллейбусное депо;
2. мед. вещество, накопленное в тканях или органах, или отложения в ткани, в клетках; место накопления и резервного хранения каких-л. веществ в организме: депо витаминов.

**Depot**, n (-s, -s):

1. = депо 1;
2. = депо 2;
- 3\*. склад: *Werkzeug aus dem Depot holen*;
- 4\*. отдел сейфов (для хранения ценностей в банке): *im Depot verwahren*;
- 5\*. вклад, депозит (ценности, отданные на хранение в банк): *als Depot hinterlegen*.

## (3) Full Lexical Parallel

**ДЕПРЕССИЯ**, -и, ж:

1. угнетенное, подавленное психическое состояние: *лечить депрессию*;
2. упадок, застой в хозяйственной, общественной жизни: *экономическая депрессия*.

**Depression**, f(=, -en):

1. = депрессия 1;
2. = депрессия 2.

## 1.3. More examples from English and Spanish

Starting from the above example of **ДЕПУТАТ** — **Deputat**, a search for candidates of Lexical Parallels between four languages — Russian, German, English, and Spanish — leads us to the following picture:

- Spanish **diputado** and Russian **ДЕПУТАТ** is a Partial Lexical Parallel;
- English **deputy** is a False Lexical Parallel for all three languages (Russian, German, Spanish).

| (4) Meaning                                    | Russian            | German  | English              | Spanish                              |
|--|--------------------|---|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 'elected member of a legislature'              | депутат 1          | Abgeordnete(r)                                    | Member of Parliament | diputado                             |
| 'chosen person for some task'                  | депутат 2          | Vertreter(in),<br>Delegierte(r),<br>Deputierte(r) | deputy 2             | delegado                             |
| 'a person appointed to act for another person' | заместитель        | Stellvertreter(in)                                | deputy 1             | suplente;<br>sustituto;<br>interino; |
| 'payment in natural goods'                     | натуроплата        | Deputat 1   | payment in kind      | remuneración en especie              |
| 'assigned part of a working load'              | причитающаяся доля | Deputat 2   | teaching load        | horas lectivas (de un docente)       |

As one can see the picture gets very rich when dealing with **Cross-Language Lexical Parallels**.

## 2. How to define lexical items and their meaning(s) correctly?

### 2.1. The Traditional and the Lexical Parallel Approach

Most of traditional (Russian) lexicography resides on the notions of «*word*» and «*lexico-semantic variant of a word*». In the three Russian examples above, according to this tradition, there are three Russian words, *депутат*, *депо*, *депрессия*, and two lexico-semantic variants for each of them. Each lexico-semantic variant of a word is a pair of a «*form*» (understood as the representative of a set of grammatical «*wordforms*») and its «*meaning*». Within a traditional dictionary, a word, its lexico-semantic variants, and all information given with them, make up a «*dictionary entry*»; each dictionary entry comes under the heading of a «*key word*». In the above cases, according to this tradition, we have three Russian key words (ДЕПУТАТ, ДЕПО, ДЕПРЕССИЯ) and three dictionary entries.

Within one given language, words having the same grammatical forms, but obvious different meanings are traditionally called «*homonyms*» (cf. below example (5) **DIVISION I** ‘big unit of an army’; ....; ‘league’ and **DIVISION II** ‘the mathematical operation of ...’); words having the same grammatical forms, sufficiently close derivational forms, and different, but somehow close meanings are traditionally called «*paronyms*» (cf. below example (5) ДИВИЗИОН and ДИВИЗИЯ). The following example (5) allows us to highlight types of Lexical Parallels, comprising more than one keyword from one of the compared languages.

#### (5) Homonymic and Paronymic Lexical Parallels

##### ДИВИЗИОН, -а, м:

1. *воен.* войсковое подразделение в ракетных и артиллерийских частях: *артиллерийский дивизион*;
2. *воен.* соединение военных кораблей одного класса: *дивизион миноносцев*.

##### ДИВИЗИЯ, -и, ж:

крупное войсковое соединение из нескольких полков или бригад: *мотострелковая дивизия*.

##### Division I, f(=, -en):

1. = дивизион 1;
2. = дивизион 2;
3. = дивизия.
- 4\*. *спорт.* (во Франции, Великобритании и других странах) лига; класс игры: *in der ersten Division spielen*<sup>4</sup>.

##### △ Division II, f(=, -en):

*матем.* деление: *durch Division berechnen*.

The triple (ДИВИЗИОН — **Division I**, **Division II**) is called a **One-Sided Homonymic Lexical Parallel**, and the triple (ДИВИЗИОН, ДИВИЗИЯ — **Division I**) is called a **One-Sided Paronymic Lexical Parallel**.

<sup>4</sup> In RNSLP, this meaning was given as Division III; the change was made according to a remark by D. Weiss.

Going further, the range of Homonymic and Paronymic Lexical Parallels may be extended to two (or more) key words of two compared languages, making room for the notions of **Two-Sided Homonymic Lexical Parallels** (cf. example (6) below) and **Two-Sided Paronymic Lexical Parallels** (cf. below example (7)):

(6) Two-Sided Homonymic Lexical Parallel

**ГРАФ I**, -а, м:

дворянский титул в Западной Европе и дореволюционной России; человек, носящий такой титул: *граф Толстой, имение графа*.

**Graf I**, m (-en, -en):

= граф I.

**ГРАФ II**, -а, м:

матем. система точек и линий: *построить граф*.

**Graph, Graf II**, m (-en, -en):

= граф II.

(7) Two-Sided Paronymic Lexical Parallel

▲ **ШТАТН/ЫЙ**, -ая, -ое, -ые:

1. находящийся в штате: *штатный сотрудник*  
— im Dienststand befindlich;

2. полагающийся по штату: *штатные выплаты*  
— der Zahl der Dienstposten entsprechend.

▲ **staatlich**, adj:

государственный: *staatliche Einrichtung*.

▲ **ШТАТСК/ИЙ**, -ая, -ое, -ие:

невоенный, гражданский: *милиционер в штатском*  
— zivil.

▲ **stattlich**, adj:

представительный, видный: *stattlicher Herr*.

Within the Lexical Parallel approach the terminology slightly changed over the years resulting now in the following:

«Words» are called «words» in the traditional sense, and «lexico-semantic variants» are called «*lexemes*»<sup>5</sup>. Lexical Parallels as a whole are treated on the level of words, and their types are discriminated on the level of lexemes.

Each lexeme has its form and its meaning which comes as a collection of «*sememes*». Identical sememes of lexemes of different languages which have similar (phonetic or graphic) forms are called «*intersememes*» (formerly «*inter-*

<sup>5</sup> The term «*lexeme*» is exactly what is understood by a lexeme by Mel'čuk and Apresjan, i. e. in the Moscow Semantic School. Cf. NOSS, XXXIII: «Lexeme — a word in one of its meanings. The lexeme, and not the word, is the real lexical unit of language, because in an utterance normally every polysemous word is used in one of its meanings. In contrary to the meaning, the lexeme is a multilateral unit of language: it has a signifiant (the phonetic shell), a signifié (the meaning), and syntactics (the special features of combinatorics)». [Translation from the Russian original. — T. R.]

*lexes*»)<sup>6</sup>, and sememes occurring in just one of the languages are called «*idiosememes*» (formerly «*idiollexes*»). As a result, Full Lexical Parallels have identical intersememes, Partial Lexical Parallels have at least one idiosememe, and False Lexical Parallels have only idiosememes. Intersememes are marked with the symbol «=», idiosememes are marked with the symbol «\*».

## 2.2. Some refinement of the identity of meaning within the Lexical Parallel approach

Within our research design we decided to make a distinction between identity of meaning in the full sense and «*weak identity of meaning*», i. e. between intersememes in the full sense and «*weak intersememes*», resulting in the additional notion of **Weak Lexical Parallel**. Let us give two examples:

Russian **ДАМА** and German **Dame** (cf. example (8) below) is a Partial Lexical Parallel, and the lexemes *дама 2* and *Dame 2* are connected by a weak intersememe (‘polite form for addressing a woman’): In German, this meaning is limited to one single expression (*Meine Damen und Herren!*), in Russian it is not restricted (cf. *Милая дама!* — *Gnädige Frau!*, but not *\*Meine liebe Dame!*). What we have in German compared to Russian is a narrower meaning; we use the symbol >.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>(8) <b>ДАМ/А</b>, -ы, ж:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. видная, представительная и немолодая женщина: <i>настоящая дама</i>;</li> <li>2. вежливая форма обращения к женщине: <i>Дамы и господа!</i>, <i>Милая дама!</i> — а ткж <i>Gnädige Frau!</i>;</li> <li>3. женщина или девушка, танцующие в паре с кавалером: <i>кавалер ведет даму в танце, пригласить даму на танец</i>;</li> <li>4. игральная карта с изображением женщины: <i>ходить с дамы</i>.</li> </ol> | <p><b>Dame</b>, f (=, -n):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. = дама 1;</li> <li>2. = дама 2 &gt; только в сочетании «Дамы и господа!»: <i>Meine Damen und Herren!</i>;</li> <li>3. = дама 3;</li> <li>4. = дама 4;</li> <li>5*. шахматный ферзь: <i>die Dame verlieren</i>;</li> <li>6*. (игра в) шашки: <i>Dame spielen</i>;</li> <li>7*. дамка в шашечной игре: <i>mit der Dame ziehen</i>.</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

The case of a wider meaning is German **Dock** as compared to Russian **ДОК** (cf. example (9) below); we use the symbol <.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>(9) <b>ДОК</b>, -а, м:</p> <p>портовое сооружение для ремонта судов: <i>стоять в доке</i>.</p> | <p><b>Dock</b>, n (-(e)s, -e u -s):</p> <p>= док &lt; для ремонта судов и самолетов.</p> |
|---|--|

<sup>6</sup> For earlier terminology see e. g. (Dubičinskij 1993; Dubičinskij, Rojter 2002; Dubichynskyi, Reuther 2010).

### 2.3. What kind of word explanations for what kind of dictionary?

Our dictionary is a reference work for a broader public and a learner's dictionary, therefore we have constructed our word explanations on the basis of other dictionaries with a similar general approach<sup>7</sup>. Recently, however, Apresjan's Moscow based research group has published the prospectus of a work of profound lexicographic research with a somewhat similar orientation — the AS. Let us compare the Russian part of one of our Lexical Parallels — the dictionary entry ПЕРСОНА (10) — with another popular dictionary, the BTS (11), and with the AS approach (12)<sup>8</sup>.

#### (10) RNSLP

**ПЕРСОНА**, -ы, ж:

1. человек (в количественных конструкциях): *накрывать стол на 20 персон*;
2. личность: *моя персона никого не интересуется*;
- 3\*.<sup>9</sup> влиятельный, значительный человек: *важная персона*  
— Persönlichkeit.

**Person**, *f*(=, -en):

1. = персона 1;
2. = персона 2;
- 3\*. *пренебр.* женщина: *eine unmögliche Person*;
- 4\*. *юр.* субъект: *eine juristische Person*;
- 5\*. *лингв.* лицо: *die erste Person Singular des Verbs*;
- 6\*. *театр., лит.* действующее лицо: *Personen der Handlung, handelnde Personen*.

#### (11) BTS

**ПЕРСОНА**, -ы, ж. [lat. persona]

##### 1. Устар.

Особа, личность. *Моя, ваша, твоя, его* и т. п. (*ирон.*; я, вы, ты, он и т. п.). *Привлекать внимание, вызывать интерес к чьей-л. персоне* (обращать на кого-л. внимание, вызы-

<sup>7</sup> Belentschikow R. (Hrsg.) Russisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch. Wiesbaden, 2006 (CD-ROM Version 2.4); Götz D., Haensch G., Wellmann H. Langenscheidts Großwörterbuch Deutsch als Fremdsprache. 5. Auflage. Berlin, 1997; Götze L., Hermann U., Wahrig G. Die deutsche Rechtschreibung. München, 2003; Klappenbach R. u.a. Wörterbuch der deutschen Gegenwartssprache. 6 Bände. Berlin, 1961—1977; Готлиб К. Г. М. Немецко-русский и русско-немецкий словарь «ложных друзей переводчика». М., 1972; Кузнецов С. А. Большой толковый словарь русского языка: около 130000 слов. СПб., 1998; Ленинг Е. И. и др. Большой немецко-русский словарь в 2-х томах: 165000 слов / Под рук. О. И. Москальской. 2-е изд. М., 1980; Ленинг Е. И. и др. Русско-немецкий словарь: около 53000 слов. 9-е изд. М., 1983; Немецко-русский политехнический словарь: 110000 слов. М., 1973; Ожегов С. И. Словарь русского языка. 23-е изд. М., 1990.

<sup>8</sup> BTS was a basic reference work for our RNSLP, and BTS serves as starting point for (Levontina 2010) in the framework of her contribution to the AS prospectus.

<sup>9</sup> The original RNSLP numbers 2\*, which is a misprint.

вать интерес). *Своя п.* (ирон.; я). *Своей персоной* (ирон.; собой). *Со своей персоной* (ирон.; сам с собой).

2.

Важная, значительная особа. *Чувствовать себя персоной*. *Знатная, видная п.* *Собственной персоной* (ирон. и шутл.; сам, лично).

3.

Обслуживаемый за столом, за обедом человек, лицо. *Сервиз на шесть персон*. *Заказать столик на три персоны*. *Званный вечер на двадцать персон*.

RNSLP and BTS both give three lexemes; there are only slight differences in two of the explanations, while one of them is much more explicit in BTS; the order of lexemes is different.

(12) AS as given in Levontina (without ILLUSTRATIONS)

**ПЕРСОНА**, СУЩ; ЖЕНСК, ОДУШ; -ы

**персона 1.1**

ПРИМЕРЫ: *Известная персона прибывает сегодня вечером; В отеле готовились к встрече влиятельной персоны.*

ЗНАЧЕНИЕ: ‘Важный человек А1’.

СИН: *особа*; <sup>10</sup> ДЕР: *vip-* (VIP).

**персона 1.2** *ирон.* или *шутл.*

ПРИМЕРЫ: *Моя (ваша, твоя, его) персона, привлечь внимание к чьей-л. персоне.*

ЗНАЧЕНИЕ: ‘Человек А1, преувеличивающий свою важность’.

СИН: *особа*; АНАЛ: *пуп земли*.

**персона 2**

ПРИМЕРЫ: *Сервиз на шесть персон. Заказать столик на три персоны. Званный вечер на двадцать персон.*

ЗНАЧЕНИЕ: ‘Обслуживаемый за столом человек’.

♦ *собственной персоной* ‘лично’; *персона нон грата* дипломатический термин, указывающий на нежелательность пребывания данного дипломата в стране.

Levontina’s solution in the AS framework shows the following:

- Two lexemes come close to each other (**персона 1.1**, **персона 1.2**), one comes separately (**персона 2**), and there is a phraseology section (♦).
- The order of lexemes is from the simple to the more complex.
- The sememes come from a limited standard semantic vocabulary (человек, важный / важность, преувеличивать; обслуживать за столом).
- The syntax of the explanations is explicit and standardized.

As one can see, Levontina’s dictionary entry is preferable to RNSLP and BTS. In order to improve our Russian RNSLP entry, we must do the following:

<sup>10</sup> The original Levontina is plain, not italics which is a misprint.



1. As a first step, the ordering of the RNSLP explanations must be changed; closer grouping of lexemes was, however, in principle left aside for the structure of RNSLP dictionary entries for the purpose of easier reading and its practical orientation as a learner's dictionary.
2. As a second step, Levontina's sememic vocabulary and structure of explanations can and should be applied; however, our additional information (в количественных конструкциях) seems useful and should be given explicitly.
3. As a third step, stylistic markers should be added; to a large extent RNSLP lacks stylistic markers.
4. Explicit use of semantic actants (A1) will be left aside in RNSLP for the moment; on the one hand, we are aware of the progress in the theory of actants (cf. Mel'čuk 2004; AS), but, on the other hand, much empirical work has still to be done to find the best way to represent actants in dictionaries for a broader public (cf. Reuther 2012)/

In the German part, we have to add an obvious first meaning (cf. *twenty persons in a room*).

As a result, the improved RNSLP entries will have the following form:

(13) Corrected form of RNSLP entries

**ПЕРСОН/А**, -ы, ж:

1. Важный человек: *известная персона; персона президента*<sup>11</sup>  
— а тжж *Persönlichkeit*;
2. ирон. или шутл. Человек, преувеличивающий свою важность: *моя персона никого не интересует*;
3. Обслуживаемый за столом человек (в количественных конструкциях): *накрывать стол на 20 персон*.

**Person**, *f* (=, -en):

- 1\*. человек: *im Saal waren 20 Personen*;
2. = персона 1;
3. = персона 2;
4. = персона 3;
- 5\*. пренебр. женщина: *eine unmögliche Person*;
- 6\*. юр. субъект: *eine juristische Person*;
- 7\*. лингв. лицо: *die erste Person Singular des Verbs*;
- 8\*. меамп., лит. действующее лицо: *Personen der Handlung, handelnde Personen*.

### 3. Resumé

The idea of this article was to present a piece of practical dictionary work, and to improve and enrich, on the one hand, the notional apparatus of the Lexical Parallels approach, and, on the other hand, the descriptive lexicographic part of RNSLP.

<sup>11</sup> We owe this example to D. Weiss; as a consequence, the lexeme ПЕРСОНА 1 has two German equivalents — Person and Persönlichkeit.

The latter was achieved for ПЕРСОНА — Person by reference to recent lexicographic achievements within the AS framework. The former led to the following typology of Lexical Parallels:

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| Full<br>Lexical Parallel                   | Weak<br>Lexical Parallel                   | Partial<br>Lexical Parallel                | False<br>Lexical Parallel                        |
| ДЕПРЕССИЯ —<br>Depression                  | ДАМА — Dame;<br>ДОК — Dock                 | ДЕПО — Depot                               | ДЕПУТАТ —<br>Deputat                             |
| One-Sided<br>Homonymic<br>Lexical Parallel | One-Sided<br>Paronymic<br>Lexical Parallel | Two-Sided<br>Homonymic<br>Lexical Parallel | Two-Sided<br>Paronymic<br>Lexical Parallel       |
| ДИВИЗИОН —<br>Division I,<br>Division II   | ДИВИЗИОН,<br>ДИВИЗИЯ —<br>Division I       | ГРАФ I,<br>ГРАФ I —<br>Graf I,<br>Graf II  | ШТАТНЫЙ<br>ШТАТСКИЙ —<br>staatlich,<br>stattlich |

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