

## Semantic domains 'full' and 'empty': a cross-linguistic study

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This research is devoted to typological description of semantic domains 'empty' and 'full'. These domains possess unique features both on syntactic and semantic levels. Situations related to these domains include two semantic arguments (container and contents); it distinguishes them from the majority of other situations described by qualitative lexemes. These properties influence both syntactic features of the adjectives in question and semantic structures of the corresponding domains. The research was carried out on the material of 10 languages including languages of not closely related families (e.g., Chinese, English and Armenian) and closely related languages, such as Russian and Serbian. The latter revealed some important basic oppositions, which proves the relevance of closely related languages material for lexical typology.

The basic meaning of the domain 'empty' is lack of contents in a container. The prototypical context is *empty X (of Y)*, where X is a noun, denoting container (e.g., a glass, a bottle, a box), and Y is the lacking contents. The basic opposition in this domain is the opposition of form and function. In the majority of the languages in our study this opposition is expressed lexically, i.e. the two zones are covered by two different lexemes (cf. Russian *полый* vs. *пустой*, English *hollow* vs. *empty & blank*, Armenian *p'uč'* vs. *datark*, Spanish *hueco* vs. *vacío*, Greek *κούφιος* vs. *άδειος*). Note that the notion of 'empty' possesses higher cognitive relevance than the notion of 'hollow'. This reflects both in higher frequency and combinability of the corresponding lexemes and in larger amount of possible metaphoric extensions. The structure of the domain is rather complex and includes a number of oppositions, which are less frequent from the typological point of view, among them are the type of contents (cf. Serbian *пуста* 'without people' vs. *празан* 'without any objects or substances' [Tolstaya, 2008]) and the type of container (cf. Korean *thengpita* 'empty (prototypical container)' vs. *pita* 'empty (bracket or surface)' vs. *konghehata* 'empty (space)').

The basic meaning of the domain 'full' is 'filled to utmost capacity'. The basic opposition in this domain is the opposition of qualitative and quantitative meanings (the adjective describes the state of the container or the quantity of contents). This opposition can be expressed both lexically (cf. Spanish qualitative *lleno* vs. quantitative *completo*), and syntactically by different constructions with one lexeme. In English we see this opposition not only on syntactic level, but also on the level of word formation (cf. two different models with suffix -ful (qualitative *beautiful* vs. quantitative *a spoonful of...*). Other oppositions relevant for this domain are: form vs. function, type of container and the degree of fullness.

The domains under study have a complex structure with a number of oppositions. In some languages none of the oppositions are expressed lexically (cf. Serbian *пуна*, covering the whole domain of 'full'), in others, on the contrary, almost all the oppositions are realized (cf. Spanish *lleno, repleto, completo, pleno, integro* for 'full'). The systems of the first type are called poor; the systems of the second type are called rich (after [Maisak, Rakhilina eds. 2007]), but according to our data, the most frequent are average systems containing two or three lexemes (Russian, Armenian, Greek).

### References

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