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## **THEORETICAL PROBLEMS OF THE LINGUISTIC CATEGORY OF QUANTITIVNESS WITHIN THE FUNCTIONAL-SEMANTIC APPROACH**

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**Abstract.** The article gives the general overview of the linguistic category of quantitiveness within the functional-semantic approach. Basing on the analysis of the main definitions and classifications, the author marks out those problems and questions which need clarifications and further investigation.

**Key words:** *linguistic category of quantitiveness, functional-semantic approach, functional-semantic category, functional-semantic field.*

Functional grammar is a perspective trend in modern linguistics. Its functional-semantic branch got a particularly wide recognition among Russian and Ukrainian linguists after the theory of a functional-semantic field was suggested in the 60-s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the Russian linguist O.V. Bondarko. It was extended and improved during several decades by his followers and by now has turned into a rather powerful scientific method, the key principle of which is incorporating and studying the entities of different language levels basing on their common semantics.

The linguistic category of quantitiveness has drawn a lot of attention of the representatives of the functional-semantic approach whose researches consider the category of quantitiveness in general (V.V. Akulenko) and some of its aspects such as the morphological category of number (I.R. Vihovanets, A.P. Zahnitko, A.O. Kolesnikov), the semantic categories of collectiveness (I.H. Matviias, O.K. Bezpoyasko) and multitude (I.R. Domracheva). Also, the researches were conducted both on the material of a particular language: O.V. Huliga and Y.Y. Shendels (1969), D.A. Kashina (1973), T.V. Konovalova (1998), S.A. Bronikova (2004), and while comparing two or more languages: N.S. Chirkinian (1980), K.N. Simonova (2003), M.A. Biriukova (2006),

A.V. Stepanova (2007) and others. Despite the substantial contribution of these scientists, the category of quantitiveness still remains the object of linguistic investigation, which is justified by the recent appearance of the works of L.O. Zapevalova (2008) and O.Y. Semenenko (2011). It proves that there are still many problems to be solved and questions to be answered about quantitiveness in language.

So, *the main objective* of this article is to analyze the existing conceptions of the linguistic category of quantitiveness within the functional-semantic approach and to define those questions and problems which need further investigation.

The representatives of the functional-semantic approach define quantitiveness using the terms of “functional-semantic category” (FSC) and “functional-semantic field” (FSF), but they mean different things under those terms. According to K.N. Simonova’s and A.V. Stepanova’s opinions the FSC of quantitiveness is a reflection of the gnoseological notion of quantity in a human language [7; 8, p. 5], while O.S. Kara-Murza doesn’t make any difference between the gnoseological notion of quantity and the FSC of quantitiveness [4, p. 596].

Also, there is no common definition of the FSF of quantitiveness. The majority of linguists who use this term don’t give any definitions at all (L.P. Kolokolova, O.S. Kara-Murza, A.V. Stepanova, S.A. Bronikova). Others, as M.O. Biriukova, refer to the conception suggested by O.V. Bondarko, according to which a FSF is a bilateral unit with some meaning and language means of expression. The meaning includes the semantic constants, the variants of which can be found in speech and the means of expression are a system of linguistic entities with the common functional basis [2, p. 16].

K.N. Simonova also refers to O.V. Bondarko’s conception, but understands the FSF of quantitiveness as a “FSF which combines all its constituents on the basis of their common function of characterizing quantity in the objective world of features, processes and phenomena” [7]. What exactly is meant by “constituents” – whether semantic invariants or linguistic means – is hard to say, taking into account the previous definition. It is also not clear how those constituents characterize quantity in the objective reality.

The Ukrainian linguist O.M. Medvid suggests a completely new point of view on the notion of the FSF of quantity. She distinguishes between the notions of “the language field of quantitiveness” (LFQ) and the FSF of quantitiveness [6, p. 4]. She defines LFQ as “the whole complex of quantitative entities, integrated by dominant and peripheral semes of quantity”. LFQ reflects the system relations peculiar to the outer world, the cognitive process and the mutual conditionality of linguistic and social factors [6, p. 6]. So, LFQ characterizes the mutual connection of quantitative entities on the paradigmatic level. The FSF of quantitiveness – according to O.M. Medvid, – is a functional-

semantic abstraction, the structural hierarchy of which defines the discursive capacities of quantitative entities [6, p. 9]. As we can see, both fields have a mixed structural-semantic nature and both are based on the paradigmatic and discursive (syntagmatic) semantics of language entities. O.M. Medvid comes to the conclusion that LFQ and FSF of quantitiveness are two systems, correlating but not overlapping [6, p. 10].

The correlation of FSC and FSF of quantitiveness is an even more disputable question. For example, K.N. Simonova considers a FSF a wider notion than a FSC because it includes the corresponding FSC and the system of different-level language means to express it [7]. But other linguists think that they are equal. According to V.V. Akulenko, a FSF is a form of existence of the corresponding FSC [1, p. 17]. M.O. Biriukova and A.V. Stepanova agree with this point of view by considering a FSF a structural organization of the corresponding FSC [2, p. 15] or of its means of expression [8, p. 5]. Still, there exists a point of view that the usage of either a FSC or a FSF term depends on the principle of systematization of language entities: categorical or field [3, p. 6]. According to L.P. Kolokolova, it is the scientific paradigm that matters here: a FSC is a term of the cognitive grammar, a FSF is a term of the functional grammar [5, p. 2-4].

All the previously mentioned inconsistencies prove that the representatives of the functional-semantic approach despite the great amount of scientific works don't have a common point of view on how the FSC and the FSF of quantitiveness should be understood. They also don't agree on the question of their borders and correlation.

One more unsolved problem is presented by the structural organization of the FSF of quantitiveness. The main reason is the absence of the common opinion on the nature and the hierarchy of the semantic division criteria. To support this idea we'll review two classifications of Ukrainian linguists V.V. Akulenko (1990) and S.A. Bronikova (2004) and compare them with two classifications of Russian scientists K.N. Simonova (2003) and A.V. Stepanova (2007).

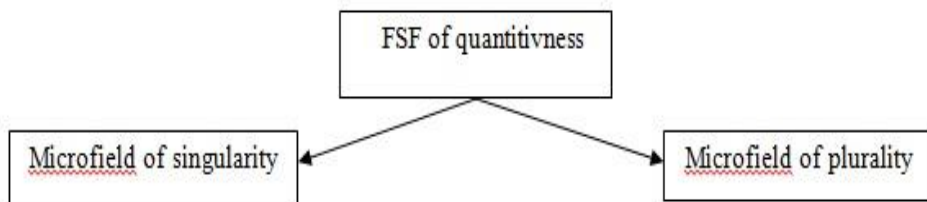
First of all, almost all of them have different number of levels: K.N. Simonova's classification has one level, V.V. Akulenko's and A.V. Stepanova's classifications – three levels, S.A. Bronikova's classification – four levels.

Secondly, some classifications have a different number of divisions on the same level. All the classifications on the first level of division have two symmetrical branches. K.N. Simonova's classification has no further levels of division but in V.V. Akulenko's one each of two branches splits into still two more branches on the second level of division. In A.V. Stepanova's one each branch on the second level of division is split not into two, but into three branches. In S.A. Bronikova's one on the second level the division continues

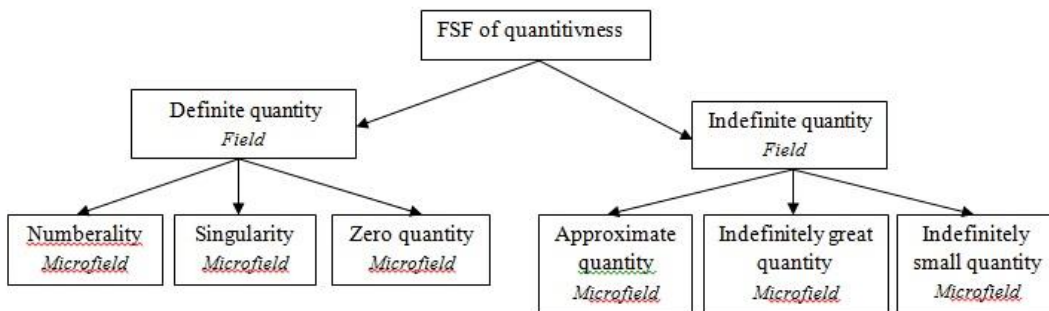
only in one branch, which splits into two more, and for the second branch there is no more division.

So, considering the classifications analyzed, only K.N. Simonova's and A.V. Stepanova's classifications are symmetrical, V.V. Akulenko's and S.A. Bronikova's classifications are asymmetrical, as the symmetry in them is violated on some level. For better understanding these classifications are presented visually (See pictures 1, 2, 3 and 4).

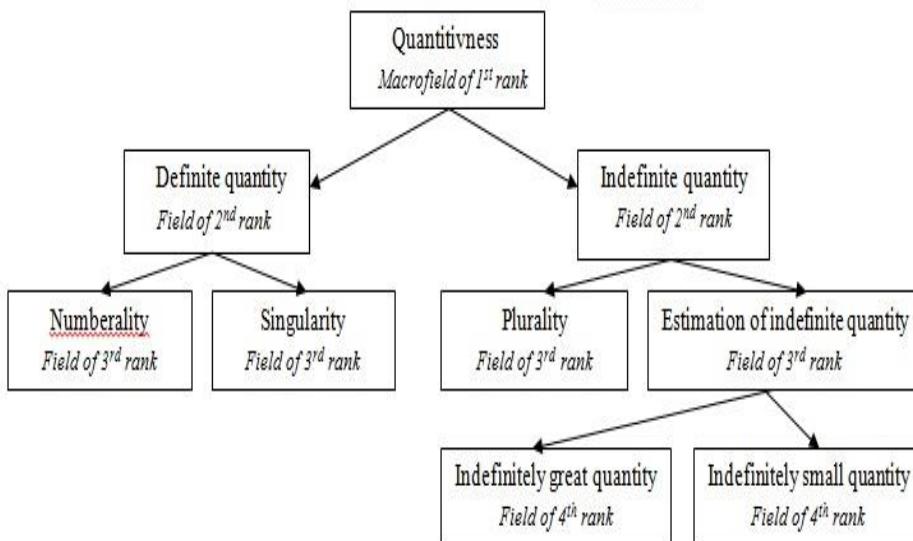
**Picture 1: The classification of K.N. Simonova**



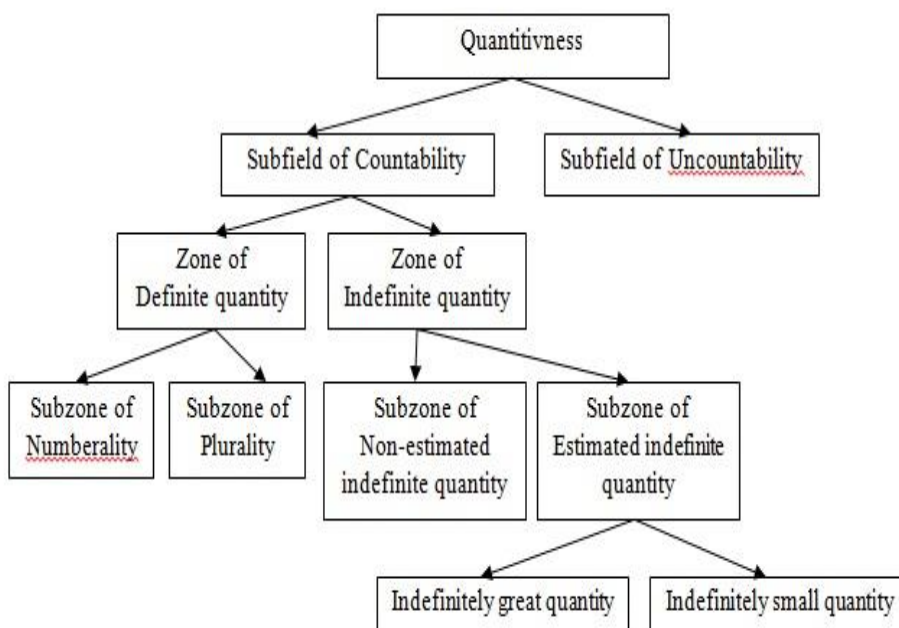
**Picture 2: The classification of A.V. Stepanova**



**Picture 3. The classification of V.V. Akulenko**



**Picture 4: The classification of S.A. Bronikova**



As we can see, all the classifications are visually different. The diversities become still more evident if we examine them in more detail.

Firstly, the classifications have different units of division. V.V. Akulenko uses the term “macrofield” for the FSF of quantitiveness itself and considers it the 1<sup>st</sup> rank entity. Its further subdivision produces “fields”, which are the entities of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> rank correspondingly [1, p. 17–18]. In K.N. Simonova’s and A.V. Stepanova’s classifications the division of the field of quantitiveness produces “microfields” [8, p. 5; 7]. S.A. Bronikova divides the field of quantitiveness into “subfields”, which in their turn are subdivided into “zones” and “subzones” [3, p. 199].

The common feature for all the classifications is the division into two branches on the first level but the semantic bases of division differ. V.V. Akulenko and A.V. Stepanova divide the FSF of quantitiveness into the fields of definite and indefinite quantity. According to V.V. Akulenko’s definition, the definiteness of quantity shows itself in the correlation with the sequence of ordinals. All that is outside the definite quantity is considered to be the indefinite quantity [1, p. 24–25]. H.V. Stepanova doesn’t give any definitions of either definite or indefinite quantity.

K.N. Simonova considers the opposition of meanings “one – more than one” principle for quantitiveness, so she divides the FSF of quantitiveness into the

microfields of singularity and plurality. The semantic category of singularity shows that the object is seen as a separate unit. As for plurality, K.N. Simonova doesn't give her own definition to it, but refers to the one, given by L.D. Chesnokova who defines plurality as "more than one" and "marking of any discrete quantity" [7].

S.A. Bronikova uses a differential-semantic feature of countableness/uncountableness on the first level of division. She defines countableness/uncountableness grammatically as the ability/disability to enter the "singularity – plurality" opposition [3, p. 22].

As we can see, even on the first level of division the classifications have principle diversities. The linguists have no common opinion what is to be taken for the basis of division: whether the features of definiteness/indefiniteness, or singularity/plurality, or countableness/uncountableness. Using these terms the scientists give their own definitions to them and place them on the different levels of division. It proves that quantitiveness is understood differently by different scientists. The diversities on the first level of division determine the diversities on the further levels of division.

On the second level of division within the field of definite quantity V.V. Akulenko marks out two fields of the 3<sup>rd</sup> rank: the field of numberality and the field of singularity. Numberality includes all the language means expressing exact number meanings which correlate with the sequence of ordinals [1, p. 18]. The idea of singularity is associated with the logical notion of "one" [1, p. 21]. A.V. Stepanova also marks out the microfields of numberality and singularity, but she adds one more microfield within the field of definite quantity – zero quantity. Though, unfortunately, A.V. Stepanova gives no definitions of these entities.

Within the field of indefinite quantity V.V. Akulenko marks out two fields: the one of plurality and the field of indefinite quantity estimation. The linguist defines plurality as one of the manifestations of indefinite quantity which can reach infinity but must obligatory be more than one [1, p. 24–25]. Estimation of indefinite quantity is based on the approximate comparing of quantity to some standard [1, p. 25].

A completely different structure of indefinite quantity can be found in the classification of H.V. Stepanova. The field of indefinite quantity, according to her opinion, has not two but three microfields: approximate quantity, indefinitely great quantity and indefinitely small quantity. No semantic basis for such a division is provided.

As for S.A. Bronikova's classification, she chooses the differential-semantic feature "definiteness/indefiniteness" for the division on the second level. The subfield of countableness is further divided into the zones of definite and indefinite quantity. She also gives her own conception of definite quantity which presupposes the calculation and expressing the quantity by a natural

number [3, p. 23–24]. The indefinite quantity presupposes the expressing of quantity of more than one but not known exactly how many [3, p. 24]. The subfield of uncountableness has no further subdivision.

On the third level of V.V. Akulenko's classification the indefinite quantity estimation field is divided into the fields of indefinitely great quantity and indefinitely small quantity. The meanings "many/much – few/little" are dominant for these fields and they are produced in the process of approximate comparing of the quantity to some standard. Everything that is above the standard belongs to the indefinitely great quantity and everything below the standard - to the indefinitely small quantity [1, p. 30].

On the third level of S.A. Bronikova's classification the differential-semantic feature of "singularity/plurality" is applied to the zone of definite quantity, so it is divided into the subzones of numberality and singularity. Numberality presupposes the calculation of the objects in a collection and expressing their quantity either by an exact or by an approximate natural number. Singularity always means one object or phenomenon [3, p. 24]. To the zone of indefinite quantity the differential-semantic feature of "presence/absence of estimation" is applied so it is divided into the subzones of non-estimated indefinite quantity (plurality) and estimated indefinite quantity. Plurality, according to S.A. Bronikova's opinion, means a discrete collection of non-counted objects [3, p. 24]. The division of the subzone of estimated indefinite quantity into indefinitely great quantity and indefinitely small quantity constitutes the fourth level of S.A. Bronikova's classification [3, p. 25]. Their definitions coincide with the ones given by V.V. Akulenko.

**Conclusions:** the analysis of the theoretical conception of quantitiveness within the functional-semantic approach shows that the representatives of this approach have different points of view on the nature of the FSC and the FSF of quantitiveness and their essence. The inconsistencies in definitions and classifications lead to the absence of clear borders between these two notions and entail the problem of their correlation. The linguistic category of quantitiveness reflects such important notions as definite/indefinite quantity, singularity/plurality, countableness/uncountableness. In different classifications they can be found as dominant semantic features on different levels of division and with different meaning. So, the structural model of FSF and its semantic constituents also remain an unsolved problem. All these questions prove that the conception of quantitiveness within the functional-semantic approach is far from being complete and unified; there is still a great need of further investigation efforts.

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