



SEMANTIC AND FUNCTIONAL FEATURES OF THE VERB WITH THE MEANING “TO WORK” IN JAPANESE AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGE (Comparative study)

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ABSTRACT

Within the framework of this article, the verb "работать" (to work) is analyzed with the exact from the point of view of its semantics in Russian and Japanese languages. The analysis of polysemy and synonymous features of the verb "to work" is carried out in the semantic field. Descriptive, comparative, typological and empiric methods was used for study. In result, exact similarities and differences between meaning of the verb "to work" and their functions were defined following factual materials and scientific theories.

KEY WORDS: *semantics, semantical field, functional feature, to work, pragmatic competence, synonyms.*

INTRODUCTION

Language develops through social experience. Learners who are studying a new language automatically make some pragmatic failures not knowing the semantic, namely, meaning field of the foreign language's words also not realizing functional features of those words without the pragmatic competences. Pragmatic competence is essential for investigating functional features of the target to be able to apply the linguistic units on the right time and with appropriate interlocutors. We have selected the verb with the meaning "to work" which is most used verb in any language and its comparative study gives chance to the language learners to distinguish differential and identifying also absolute same points.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The verb "работать" refers to completed verbs, the subject and object can be either a person or an inanimate object. In Russian linguistics investigation on lexical and semantic features of the verb had started in 60th of XX century and it is still considered to be a hot topic for researches. A number of scholars such as L.A.Bogdanova, L.M.Vasilyev, R.M.Gaysina, V.L.Ibragimova, T.A.Kildibekova, E.V.Kuznetsova, V.P.Abramov, N.P.Sidorova¹ have conducted effective and wide researches on Russian verbs: their classification and formation as well as the interaction and intersection matters of Verb LSG (lexical semantic groups).²

¹ Ярема Елена Владимировна. Функционально-семантические особенности глаголов движения. Диссертация. Армавир, Россия. 2008.

² <http://www.nauteh-journal.ru/files/d77fb4b8-e61e-4b66-8d69-7d57143075f5>



The features of Japanese verbs have been studied depending on various principles and perspectives. There are two directions of Japanese researchers on the topic “Verb”. Supporters of the first group tend to examine the meaning of the verb from the typological and language, in contrast with “do-type” languages such as English, based on a cognitive-typological point of view (Ikegami’s (1981, 1991)³⁴ Shibatani’s (1973⁵, 1976a⁶, b⁷, Shibatani and Pardeshi 2002⁸)) whereas another direction approached verb meaning from the standpoint of morphology and syntax, an approach seen in verb classifications based on aspect (e.g. Kindaichi 1950; Kudo 1995), and in various studies undertaken within the framework of Kageyama’s (1996) lexical conceptual structure (LCS)⁹

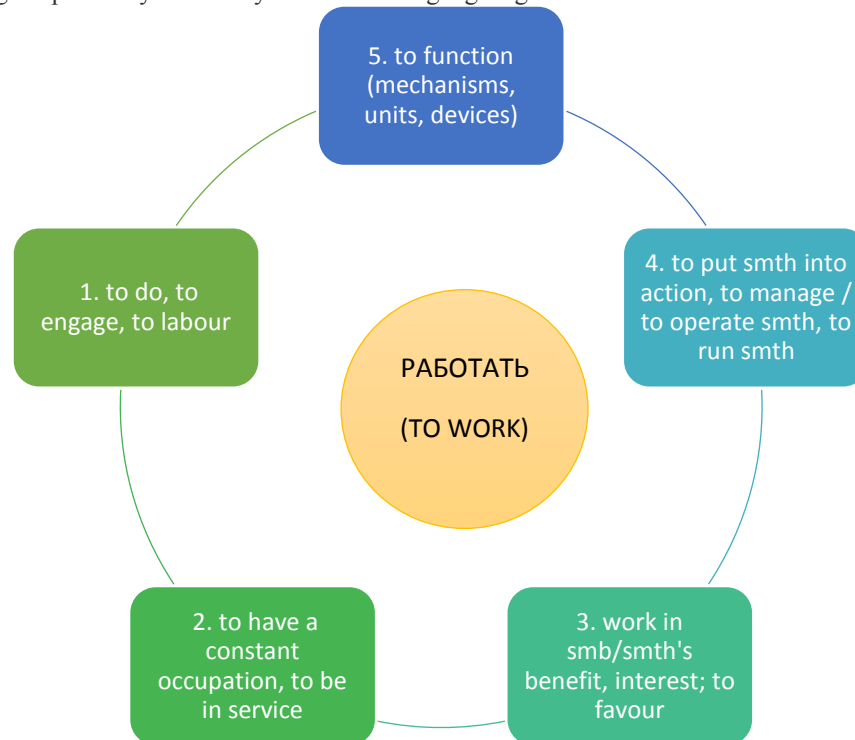
In this article functional and semantic features of the verb with the meaning “to work” in Japanese and Russian language will be discussed and investigated comparatively.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

The article was followed using descriptive, comparative, typological and empiric methods. Facts are described and compared with one another in various languages, as well as conducting investigation using empiric method via observation written and alive situations.

❖ *Semantic and functional features of the verb “работать” in Russian*

Large explanatory dictionary of Russian language¹⁰ gives the definition to the verb “работать” as following:



³ Ikegami, Yoshihiko. 1981. Suru to naru no gengogaku: Gengo to bunka no taiporozii e no siron [Linguistics of BECOME and DO: an essay in the typology of language and culture]. Tokyo: Taishukan.

⁴ Ikegami, Yoshihiko. 1991. DO-language and BECOME-language: two contrasting types of linguistic representation. In Yoshihiko Ikegami (ed.), The empire of signs: semiotic essays on Japanese culture, 258–326. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

⁵ Shibatani, Masayoshi. 1973. Semantics of Japanese causativization. Foundations of Language 9. 327-373.

⁶ Shibatani, Masayoshi. 1976a. Causativization. In Masayoshi Shibatani (ed.), Japanese generative grammar (Syntax and semantics 5), 239–294. New York: Academic Press.

⁷ Shibatani, Masayoshi. 1976b. The grammar of causative construction: A conspectus. In Masayoshi Shibatani (ed.), The grammar of causative constructions (Syntax and Semantics 6), 1-40. New York: Academic Press.

⁸ Pardeshi, Prashant, Kazuyuki Kiryū, Heiko Narrog (eds.) 2015. Yuu-tui-doosi no tuugengoteki-kenkyuu: Nihongo to syogengo no taisyoo kara mietekuru mono [Crosslinguistic studies on paired verbs: insights from comparisons of Japanese and other languages]. Tokyo: Kurosio.

⁹ Matsumoto Yo. The semantics of Japanese verbs. Handbook of Japanese semantics and pragmatics Publisher: De Gruyter Mouton. 2020.

¹⁰ Большой толковый словарь русского языка. Гл. ред. С. А. Кузнецов. Первое издание: СПб.: Норинт, 1998.



Analysis of each meaning of “РАБОТАТЬ” contrasting with Japanese and English via factual materials. Five independent semantic areas were found in Russian verb “работать” and analyzed this verb’s semantic-functional features comparatively. As an object of this research, besides Japanese, we decided to include English verb “to work” either only for contrasting in order to get more clear results.

to do, to engage, to labor	Russian	Писатель работает над книгой.
	Japanese	さっか ほん じゅっさく 作家が本を 述 作している。
	English	A writer is working on his book.
to have a constant occupation, to be in service	Russian	Работать на всю семью.
	Japanese	ぜんかぞく はたら 全家族のために 働 く。
	English	To work for everybody in family.
	Russian	Работать слесарем / бухгалтером/ директором школы. Работать переводчиком
	Japanese	せいびし/かいけいし/こうちょう はたら 整備士/会計士/校長として 働 く。 ほんやく しごと 翻訳の仕事をする。
	English	To work as a mechanic / accountant / school principle. To work as a translator.
work in smb/smith's benefit, interest; to favour	Russian	Я работаю в туристическом агентстве.
	Japanese	つと 私は、旅行会社に 勤 めています。
	English	I work for a travel agency.
to put smth into action, to manage / to operate smth, to run smth	Russian	Работать молотом (вилами, педалями, рычагом)
	Japanese	しょう ひつよう ハンマーを 使用 する 必 要があります。
	English	To use/operate a hammer (lever, shovel, pitchfork, pedals)
to function (mechanisms, units, devices)	Russian	Магазин работает без перерыва.
	Japanese	じかんえいぎょう コンビニは24時 間 営 業 だす。
	English	The store is open 24/7.



	Russian	В такие минуты мозг работает особенно чётко.
	Japanese	のう いちばんこうりつ はたら じかんたい ” ごぜんちゅう” か 脳が 一番 効率よく 働く 時間帯は ;" 午前中 ;"と書いてありました ¹¹ 。
	English	At such moments she/he thinks clearly.
	Russian	Почему же ЭТОТ калькулятор не работает!
	Japanese	この計算機はどうして 動かない だろう
	English	I wonder why this calculator won't work!



Russian verb “**работать**” with the semantic field “*to do, to engage, to labor*” does not always match with Japanese verb which gives the meaning “to work”. Working on a book is expressed with 述作する in Japanese which requires pragmatic competence and functional feature changes to another verb.



Semantic field “to have a constant occupation, to be in service” can be expressed same meaning verbs in three languages (**работать** – to work – はたらく) But the functional point of occupation can be replaced with 仕事をする (do work, do career) in Japanese.



Semantic field “work in smb/smith benefit, interest; to favor” is also clearly to be understood and used as can be applied with words **работать** – to work – はたらく. Meanwhile, lingua-pragmatics of Japanese play vital role in any case. In this field using つとめる is the best option.



Russian word’s meaning “to put smth into action, to manage / to operate smth, to run smth” cannot be translated as “work” or “働く・動く・勤める which are related to “to work”. In Japanese and English same meaning verb “to use” and 使用する can show similarity between Japanese and English connotation whilst Russian verb “**работать**” owns wide polysemy.



Meaning of function (mechanisms, units, devices): About the “working non-stop, namely 24/7 three languages demonstrated three different cases. Russian applies “**работать**”, English uses “open” (adjective) and Japanese doesn’t have exact translation of the word, but it is available to realize the “nonstop work” via context in Japanese.



のう はたら
мозг работает - 脳が **働く** - one **thinks** clearly. Semantical and functional similarities with Russian and Japanese, in contrast in English different verb is used to explain or describe the situation.

It is important define the minimum semantic field in analyzing the verb semantically and then identifying similarities and differences in meaning, also finding their common semanthem makes the research deep and clear to explore structure description and meaning. In semantic analysis comparing the differences and similarities of the word meaning is the best method to realize the differences between synonyms, polysemy and antonyms.

¹¹ <https://www.kensup.co.jp/1486.html>



Semantic field plays a significant role in semantic study as "Related to the concept of hyponymy, but more loosely defined, is the notion of a semantic field or domain. A semantic field denotes a segment of reality symbolized by a set of related words. The words in a semantic field share a common semantic property."¹² Andersen¹³ states "Traditionally, semantic fields have been used for comparing the lexical structure of different languages and different states of the same language." We agree that the investigation on the same language's features is essential, whereas comparative study on two or more languages' characters is more effective and detailed. Since determination of the main points of the target topic can be exact and wide by the contrast study. Furthermore, "learning a foreign language is not limited with learning its grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Being able to choose the appropriate word at the right time and for the right addressees is vital point of the communication and it is related to the knowledge in semantics."

In Ojegov's¹⁴ dictionary these verbs below mentioned are the synonyms of "работать" (to work)

- ✚ Трудить – to force somebody to work (archaic) (*Заставлять работать*), to accomplish something working hard (oral) (*Старательно выполнять*);

Я годами **трудился**, чтобы изменить свою жизнь.

I **worked** for years to get my life back on track.

This verb highlights that action is accomplished with a lot of effort.

- ✚ Трубить – to perform for longer period (monotonously and tediously) (*долгосрочно делать (монотонно или утомительно)*);

This verb highlights long and boring period of the action.

- ✚ Вкалывать – to work, to work hard (*работать, тяжелая работа*);

- ✚ Ломить – to work hard (difficult and troublesome) (*тяжелая работа (сложная и мучительная)*);

The verbs mentioned above relate to common oral speech and emphasizes the work's tiring and hard feature.

- ✚ Ишачить – to perform hard work (*выполнять тяжелую работу*).

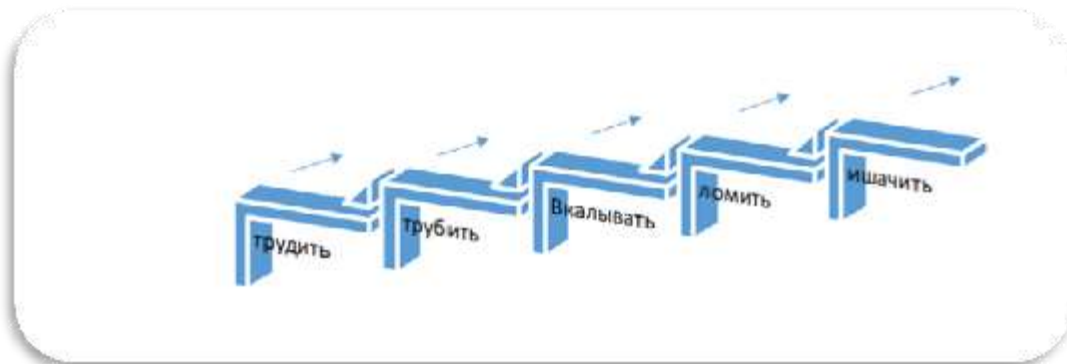
This verb's origin is "ishak – eshak" in Uzbek language with meaning "donkey". Donkey works hard but it is never loved. In this kind of case, in Russian language ишачить is used with the purpose to show how hardworking but underestimated the accomplisher of the work is.

Не можешь же ты всю жизнь на нее **ишачить**.

You can't go on **slaving** for her all your life.

There are more than 70 synonyms for "работать" in dictionaries¹⁵ of Russian language, but in our article we have decided to select 5 of them and compare with Japanese units.

- Gradual analyze of "работать" due to its meaning "how hard to work":



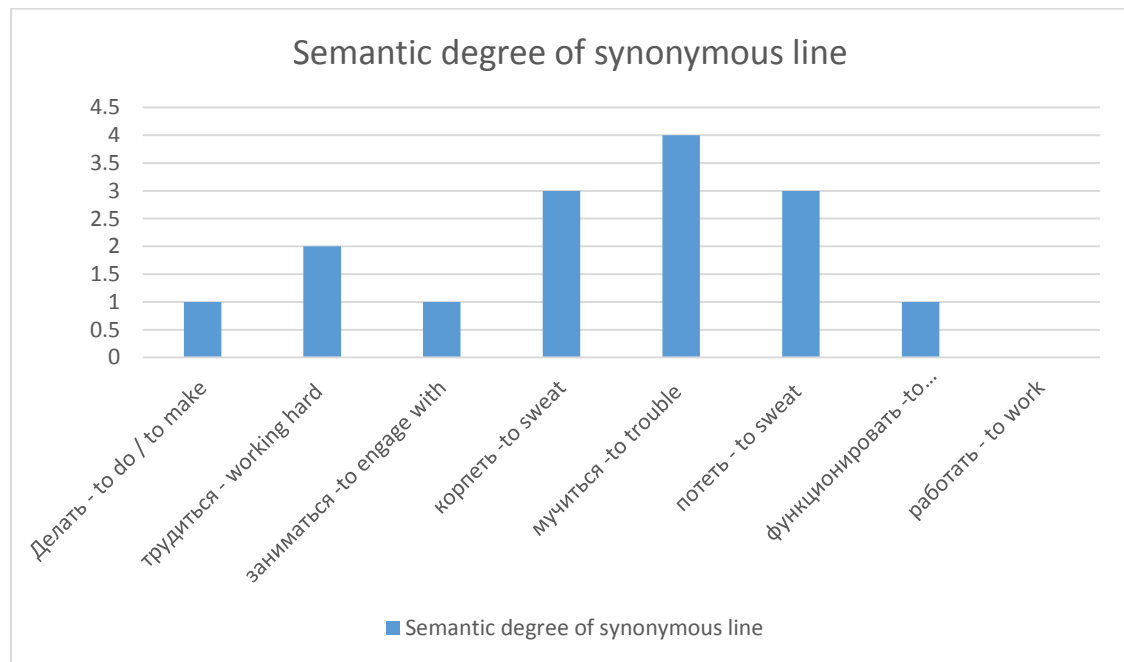
¹² Brinton, Laurel J. (2000). The structure of modern English: a linguistic introduction. Illustrated edition. John Benjamins Publishing Company. ISBN 9789027225672, p.112

¹³ Andersen, Peter Bøgh (1990). A theory of computer semiotics: semiotic approaches to construction and assessment of computer systems. Volume 3 of Cambridge series on human-computer interaction. Cambridge University Press. ISBN 0-521-39336-1, ISBN 978-0-521-39336-2. , p.327

¹⁴ С. Н. Ожегов Толковый словарь русского языка Москва ООО «Бета Фрейм», 2003. — 430 с.

**SYNONYMS of “Работать” in Russian and their semantical comparison with other languages**

Russian	Japanese	English	Semantic degree
Делать	擦る・行う	To make, to do	neutral
1. трудиться	働く	To labour, to trouble	Highlighting the hardness
заниматься	従事する	To be engaged in, to be occupied with	neutral
корпеть	毛穴に	To pore over, sweat over	Colloquial, emphasize
мучиться	くるしむ・悩む	To suffer, to be tormented	Negative meaning, emphasize the hardness
потеть	汗をかく	To sweat	Colloquial
функционировать	作用する・機能を果たす	To function	formal
служить	ーのために働く	To work for	neutral

**Japanese equivalent verbs to Russian “работать” and their functional and semantic features**

はたら

働く - to work, to act, to commit, to work on, to labor, to do

работать, действовать, совершать, работать, трудиться, делать

頭の働かない人 — lit. person whose head (brain) doesn't work – Тупой человек (stupid man) In colloquial

Russian language this phrase can be expressed as “У него голова **не работает**” where “работать” is used. 頭の働かない人 can be translated word by word into both English and Russian language with same meaning and structure.



かれ かずかず わるごと はたら

彼は数々の悪事を働いた。 - He committed many kinds of crimes. - Он совершил много видов преступлений. In this example, the verb 働く has *polysemy* with the verb 犯す and is translated into both English and Russian with the same equivalents such as “to commit” and “совершать”. 働く = to commit = совершать

動く - move, work, run, operate, shift, swing
двигаться, работать, сдвигать, качаться

機械が動かなくかった。 Машина перестала работать. - The machine stopped working. To describe the operation of the particular mechanism or machine, the verb 動く is required whereas the verbs “работать” and “to work” can be used for this situation without losing semantic field and the form.

まぶたがぴくぴく動いている。 His eyelid is twitching. - У него дергается веко. Japanese verb 動く has a connotation to mark the noticeable movement, so that to twitch and “дергаться” tends to the semantic meaning “to act, to move” can be observed and witnessed obviously.

Hereby other examples were noted during the research.

勤める - serve, work, endeavor, serve - служить, работать, прилагать усилия.

彼女は病院に看護婦として勤めている。 - She works for a hospital as a nurse. - Она работает в больнице медсестрой.

かせ

稼ぐ - earn, income, work - зарабатывать, доход, трудиться ради заработка.

稼ぐに追つく貧乏なし。 Work hard and you will never be poor. - Работай усердно, и ты никогда не будешь бедным.

Semantic Analysis and Idioms. The collocations of verb and particle in turn collocate with other lexical items, as just mentioned. Some of these collocations are very familiar to the speakers of a language, and attain a high degree of cohesion, while others are quite restricted in their acceptability¹⁶. Besides the factor of familiarity, contextualization also plays an important role with such restrictions. Familiar collocations, which could be called set phrases, may be semantically self-evident, such as bacon and eggs, here and there, but they may also be highly idiomatic, such as rub noses or shoot the breeze¹⁷. Hereby some idiomatic phrases of Russian language are collected through observing alive conversations and compared semantically with Japanese and English.

Semantic comparison Russian idioms related “Работать”

Russian	Japanese	English	Comments
Работать до поту лица	よく頑張る	To work very hard	Work until face gets sweaty
работать, как вол Мой отец день и ночь работал как вол.	ちち み こ ひる 父は身を粉にして昼 よる はたら も夜も働いた。	To work without rest, to work very hard	My father worked like an ox day and night.
Не дадут спины разогнуть	手を休めずに	I don't have time to breathe	Working hard being extremely busy
Время работает на нас	ときは我らの味方だ。	Time is on our side	Winning the time

¹⁶ Cf. Greenbaum (1968), Lipka (1971c).

¹⁷ Leonhard Lipka Semantic structure and word-formation verb-particle constructions in contemporary English. Munchen, 1972.

*Japanese idiomatic phrases with meaning “to work”*

Japanese idioms	Meaning
私は金ではうごかない。	<i>I will not be influenced by money</i>
彼女の新設について彼の心はうごいた。	<i>Her kindness finally touched him (won his heart)</i>
時間を稼ぐ	<i>Win the time</i>
馬車馬のように働く	work like a carriage horse Meaning: work single-mindedly. PS. Carriage horses wear blinkers, so as not to be distracted.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion it is identified that semantic and functional features in Japanese and Russian also English language very essential to realize the pragmatic competence to use the word with appropriate function and correct meaning. The research topic is very actual where formality, informality, semantic and functional graduonomy as well as synonyms gradual degree have been proven. This article can contribute to the educational system of Japanese or Russian language.

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