Eremina Olga Sergeyevna

Figurative predicative characteristic meaning of a noun in Modern Russian: lexical and syntactical aspect

AUTO REVIEW

of a dissertation submitted for a scientific degree of a candidate of philology

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

Nouns with figurative predicative characteristic meaning possess a complex semantic structure because of their characteristic function and syntactic position. Such “syntactically conditioned” semantics of these words (term of V. Vinogradov) caused considering such words as a bear ‘a clumsy or rude person’ or a fox ‘a cunning person’ as having a specific type of lexical meaning. Semantics of a noun with figurative predicative characteristic meaning (PHM) like the one of any word with secondary meaning consists of a definite set of components of the first (producing, literal) meaning of the word (which strictly speaking is a lexical component of its semantics) and – on the other hand – of the structural component ‘characteristics, feature of a person or a thing’, with is conditioned by a specific function of the word in speech and its syntactical position in a sentence/phrase (N. Arutiunova, T. Semenova).

Thus a specific lexically-syntactically-functional semantics of the nouns with figurative predicative characteristic meaning is obvious. However mechanisms of interaction and mutual influence of different language levels as well as their role in development of a new meaning have not been studied yet. Meanwhile this issue is interesting not only for
studying a definite type of word meanings but also as a part of a theory of interaction of structural levels of language in general. This causes **topicality** of the paper.

**Object** of investigation is a noun with figurative meaning which is studied from the point of view of its semantic structure conditioned by its characteristic function and syntactic position and mechanisms of its development.

**Aim of the study** is to define a role of lexical and syntactical factors in developing figurative predicative characteristic meaning of a noun and to determine mechanisms of their interaction. To reach the aim one must solve the following **problems**:

1. To find out pre-requisites and conditions of developing figurative metaphorical PCM as a specific type of a word meaning.
2. To fix mechanisms of interaction of different language factors in the process of developing figurative predicative characteristic meaning.
3. To study changes in semantic structure of a noun taking place in the process of development of its figurative PCM.
4. To reveal dependence of syntactical properties of a noun on a degree of development of its figurative PCM and the meaning’s type.

**Scientific novelty** of the study is presented by investigating the nature of figurative predicative characteristic meaning of a noun as the result of interaction of different structural levels of language.

**Theoretical significance** of the study lies in developing and enriching the theory of figurative predicative characteristic meaning of a word which can be applied to analysis of language levels’ interaction in the processes of a word’s speech actualization in general.
Practical value of the study is conditioned by possibility of using its results in lexicographical practice and in teaching course of lexicology at school.

Sources of language material for the study are prosaic and dramatic works of Russian writers of XIX-XX centuries. Material under study includes 980 nouns with figurative predicative characteristic meaning used in more than 2500 contexts. To analyze whether their figurative meanings are occasional or regular these nouns’ definitions were compared in five main explanatory dictionaries of the Russian language.

Methodological base of the dissertation are philosophical categories of general and unique and the law of transition of quantity changes to quality ones as well as general linguistic principles: of systematic and structured organization of language (including categories of interaction and functional dependence of elements); of isomorphism of different structural levels and elements of language system; of dynamic nature of language and asymmetric dualism of a language character. Besides all these methodology of the paper is based on modern theoretical conceptions of connections between word’s semantics and functions (N. Arutiunova, O. Kondrashova, S. Mezhzherina) and it’s syntax (V. Vinogradov, N. Arutiunova, T. Semenova), as well as of similarity and difference in the nature of occasional (speech) and regular (language) metaphorical names (V. Telia, V. Kharchenko, A. Aznaurova, G. Skliarevskaja).

To solve the above mentioned problems the author uses the following methods and modes: 1) descriptive method, including modes of linguistic observation, one-language comparison, systematization and interpretation of language phenomena; 2) method of component analysis, enabling to determine special features of semantics of nouns with figurative predicative
characteristic meaning at different stages of its formation; 3) modes of analysis of definitions and mode of quantitative calculation.

**Dissertation contents the following statements to be defended:**

1. Semantic and syntactic transformation of a noun with figurative predicative characteristic meaning is a result of changing communicative pragmatic function of noun in speech: the noun passes from the class of subject words to the class of characteristic words. The category transition “subject → characteristics” consists of several stages: a) singular (unique) usage of the word in characteristic function; b) regular usage of the word in characteristic function when this function is recognized as a secondary one and every application of the word towards a real referent needs mental addressing to the image of the initial denotate; c) functioning of the noun with characteristic function as an independent element of language.

2. Choice of a noun for using it in the function of characterizing predicate is stipulated by a range of general language and lexical factors: the law of analogy, interaction of semantic and word-formative derivation, influence of phraseological level of language and impact of word’s phonetics.

3. Nouns with figural PCM being at different stages of the category transition “subject → characteristics” have different semantic structure. Gradual changing word’s semantics goes on under impact of its communicative pragmatic function due to actualization of category regularities of syntactical and lexical levels of the Modern Russian language (characteristic nature of predicate and mechanisms of semantic derivation). Meaning of noun develops from poly-characteristic denotation in speech to mono-characteristic signification in the system of language.

4. Caused by category transition, gradual change of semantics of a word developing figurative predicative characteristic meaning results in
changing its syntactical features. Stage of development of figurative predicative characteristic meaning of noun stipulates higher or lower degree of its syntactic stability (when a noun can be used only in a definite syntactic position). Thus as a result of inter-level connections in the language system all the three aspects of developing figurative PCM of a noun correlate to each other (stage of the category transition – semantic structure of the word in figurative PCM – degree of syntactic stability of the noun).

**Presenting of the paper.** Basic statements of the dissertation were presented and discussed at 6 international, 2 regional and 1 university conference. Nine reports were published in scientific collections of articles and conference proceedings.

**Structure of the dissertation.** The dissertation consists of introduction, three chapters, conclusion, list of abbreviations, references, list of sources of language materials and supplement.

**SHORT SUMMARY OF THE DISSERTATION**

**Introduction** shows topicality of the paper, defines its aim and problems, reveals the dissertation’s scientific novelty, theoretical significance and practical value, determines main methods and modes of studying, presents the statements to be defended.

The first chapter “**Figurative predicative characteristic meaning of a noun as a linguistic problem**” deals with connections of nouns having figurative PCM with other lexical elements, it reveals the reasons to study figurative PCM as a specific structure.

In modern Russian lexicology nature and essence of figurative predicative characteristic meanings are interpreted inconsistently and
sometimes contradictory. On the one hand the classification by V. Vinogradov is generally accepted and authors of recognized works in semantics note its impact on the lexical typology in general (N. Arutiunova, A. Ufimtseva, O. Yermakova, N. Alefirenko etc.).

On the other hand figurative predicative characteristic meaning of word is still a very poor studied phenomenon, mainly because of its heterogeneous nature.

As a heterogeneous phenomenon figurative PCM becomes an object of investigation for many lexicologists solving different researching tasks. For example, nouns with figurative PCM are studied in the papers devoted to expressive lexics (N. Lukianova, E. Shereshevskaja, T. Tripolskaja etc.). They observe some particular points such as a place of the nouns with figurative PCM in the system of language (their synonymous and antonymous relations etc.) or some features of their semantic structure (distinct differentiation of core and peripheral semes).

Nouns with figurative PCM are observed while studying figurative meanings in general, particularly while studying metaphor (V. Telia, A. Aznaurova, G. Skliarevskaja, M. Nikitin, V. Kharchenko, V. Gak, Z. Petrova, N. Arutiunova). These works contain some conclusions important for understanding the nature of figurative PCM: that metaphorical comparison is often based not on a definite feature, which can be selected and defined, but on some general similar impression caused by the two objects (G. Skliarevskaja), that predicative usage of nouns in figurative meanings can be explained by characterizing function of metaphor and that the main distinctive feature of a metaphor as an element of language comparing to metaphor as an element of speech is its “turning into a mono-seme structure” (N. Arutiunova), that transition of a noun from
nominative to characterizing class results in “reduction of features” (V. Kharchenko).

Semantics of nouns with figurative PCM is also important for those who study adjectives meaning ‘quality’ (Z. Kharitonchik, G. Shipitsina, E. Kotliarova), because analyses of semantic structure of underlying words aids in understanding meanings of their derivatives.

However all the above mentioned works do not address the topic of figurative predicative characteristic meanings of nouns directly and do not allow to build a conception of their essence and specifics.

Investigating nouns with figurative PCM as a separate lexical group makes researchers address their specific semantic and syntactic characteristics (T. Semenova). This task is complicated by the necessity to consider complicated nature of this phenomenon in unity of semantic and syntactic aspects that sometimes results in giving preferences to only one of them. Thus the issue of a degree of syntactic stability of a noun with figurative PCM is studied only from the syntactic point of view.

Actually analysis of syntactic functions of such nouns allows dividing them into two groups: nouns with relatively limited meanings and nouns with absolutely limited figurative PCM meanings. First group includes nouns able to function in a sentence as its predicate, allocution, dangling apposition, attribute, object and subject under some conditions: presence of a deictic pronoun, presupposition etc.: This dragon earns 10 thousand a month (A. Malyskin) – dragon is the subject of the sentence; He enjoyed the view of these happy and self-content doves and their comfortable nest/about a wife and a husband / (L. Tolstoy) – doves is an object; Here is where a feeling is hidden – in this oak-tree! /about a man / (I. Goncharov) – oak-tree is an adverbial modifier.
Nouns of the second group may be used in a sentence only as its predicate or a predicative dangling apposition: молодец (good boy), загляденье (a picture – ‘about a person’), мечта (dream), клад (treasure), смерть (death) (T. Semenova).

Although dividing predicative lexics into nouns with relatively limited and absolutely limited figurative PCM meanings causes a range of new questions. Why can some words with figurative PCM meanings take (though under definite conditions) non-predicative syntactic positions while some can not? What’s the difference between these words? What determines this difference? What kind of semantics do nouns of these opposing groups possess? Are these groups strictly delimited from each other or do they have any ‘zone of crossing’? These questions can not be answered if nouns with figurative PCM are studied only from syntactical point of view.

One more consequence of taking into account only syntactic aspect is absence of opposition ‘direct (proper) – figurative predicative characteristic meaning’. As a result nouns like трус (coward), дурак (fool) and like орел (eagle – ‘about a brave and handsome man’), огонь (flame – ‘about a quick tempered or vivid person’), индюк (turkey – ‘about an arrogant and insolent person’), золото (gold – ‘about a handy or helpful or true-hearted person’) are studied as having similar meanings (E. Emelianenko, O. Kondrashova).

However comparative analysis of nouns with direct and figurative predicative characteristic meanings enables revealing a range of differences between them.

Semantically non-derived nouns with characteristic meaning (fool, scoundrel, trifle) compose rather stable lexical group. Having an indefinite intensional meaning they are however able to refer either to a
person or to an object (situation). Such nouns can not change their meanings (except for using them in ironical sense). Their emotive coloring is usually conditioned by presence of evaluative se mes. Having direct meaning such nouns can not create an extensive metaphorical picture. They characterize an object from one side and point only at one feature of it (the feature they name) and do not possess any additional semantic aura.

Nouns with figurative characteristic meaning can not be organized into a constant group: different nouns can develop such a meaning and add to the group continuously. Derived characteristic meanings preserve vivid link with motivating image and therefore can become the core of an extensive metaphor in a text. They include semantic component of comparison (“as if it were...”) that results in forming specific emotive meaning (V. Telia). Many nouns with figurative PCM have extremely indefinite extensional meaning (the same word can be used to characterize a person, an object and a situation). Features of semantics of nouns with figurative PCM specify their syntactic behavior, for example, ability to be used in the construction “not A, but B”, where A is a real class of objects, and B the class to which the object is referred: A kind, clear, loving soul – not a man, but glass! (A. Chekhov).

These characteristics enable considering nouns with figurative PCM as a separate class within characteristic lexics and figurative PCM itself as a specific type of lexical meaning requiring special studying.

The second chapter ‘Figurative predicate characteristic meaning of noun from functional and semantic point of view’ is devoted to analysis of category belonging of nouns with figurative PCM, mechanisms of changing of meanings and characteristics of nouns allowing them to develop regular (language) figurative PCM.
‘Starting mechanism’ of the process of developing a new meaning becomes category transition “object → characteristics”, when a word which used to identify objects (This is a bear) begins to perform a new role of characterization (He is a bear – ‘a rude or clumsy person’). Category transition consists of several stages beginning from a singular usage of the word in characteristic function; through its regular usage as characteristics when this function is recognized as a secondary one and every application of the word towards a real referent requires mental addressing to the image of the initial denotate to the stage when the noun functions as characteristics independently, as an element of language.

New meaning is formed gradually without definite boundary between the stages. Analysis of definitions the noun has in different dictionaries allows to determine this stage approximately. So it is expedient to divide nouns with figurative PCM into groups depending on occasionality/regularity of their meanings.

According to this criterion nouns with figurative PCM can be divided into:

1. Nouns with occasional (author’s) PCM. Formal distinctive features of such a meaning are uniqueness of using a word with this meaning, high degree of its contextual dependence and absence of this meaning in any explanatory dictionaries (Russian words апельсин (orange), балерина (ballet dancer), журнал (magazine) used with the same meaning ‘about a pretty young girl or woman’).

2. Nouns with regular speech figurative PCM. They are characterized by higher frequency (they can be found more than twice in texts by different authors of both XIX and XX centuries), clarity of their figurative meaning for most Russian-speaking people and absence of this meaning in explanatory dictionaries (Russian words ныску (lunatic) – ‘about a person
with unexpected behavior’, экстра (extra) – ‘about an object of high quality or an extraordinary person’, голубки (doves) – ‘about a loving couple’).

3. Nouns with relatively regular (relatively language) figurative PCM. Their meanings are relatively stable, repeatable in speech but are only fixed in one of 5 analyzed explanatory dictionaries (Russian words бандит (bandit) – ‘about a misbehaving person’, бугай (bull) – ‘about a strong and healthy person lacking intellect’, горюшко (my grief) – ‘about a child causing problems’, деревня (countryside) – ‘about naive or uneducated person’).

4. Nouns with regular (language) figurative PCM. Their meanings are understandable even without context and are fixed in 2 or more dictionaries (баран (sheep) and бревно (log) – both having the meaning ‘about a stupid person’, золото (gold) – ‘about somebody very helpful’, игрушка (toy) – ‘about something or somebody nice’).

Changing of noun’s function cause changes in its semantics and syntax, however, semantic and syntactic transformation of the word takes place in the process of its functioning in a definite language, so the possibility of changing and its ways depend on laws and principles of different levels of the language.

Theoretically any noun with concrete (not abstract) semantics can develop figurative predicative characteristic meaning (as a speaker intends to characterize an object by comparing it with other object having some similar features). Actually not every concrete noun develops even a regular speech figurative PCM and moreover – a language one. Ability of a noun to develop regular figurative PCM is connected with features of the word itself. There are several factors contributing into developing characterizing semantics.
1. Proper lexical factors determine choosing a word able to become a characteristic predicate. Regularity of metaphorical transitions from one thematic group to other one (“animal → person”, “vegetation → person”, “part of clothing → person” etc.) is explained by the law of analogy.

Nouns within such a thematic group develop close metaphorical meanings so it is possible to define general figurative meaning of the group (or several general meanings). The nouns within a thematic group “food and meals” have several general characteristic meanings: a) “about a mess in some business”: винегрет (Russian salad), окрошка (Russian cold vegetable soup); b) “about something pleasant”: мед (honey), сахар (sugar); c) “about a week-willed person”: кисель (fruit jelly); d) “about something the most valuable or interesting”: изюминка (raisin), соль (solt) (V. Kharchenko). This general figurative meanings became an additional incentive for other nouns of the group to create close meanings: ‘What happened?!’ – ‘It was such a stewed fruit that it was just lovely. Alexander the Third received the telegram at 2 o’clock in the morning’ (M. Bulgakov), – the noun компот (stewed fruit) got the sense ‘mess’ like the words винегрет (Russian salad), окрошка (Russian cold vegetable soup), due to such a feature in common as ‘mixed’; It was such a girl that everybody was surprised. A date! Stoutness, forms etc. (A. Chekhov); You are beauty itself, not a woman! Simply whipped cream, that’s what you are! (M. Sholokhov) – nouns date (fruit of date palm) and whipped cream develop characterizing sense on the analogy with words honey and sugar (feature in common is ‘having a pleasant taste’).

Influence of general figurative meaning of the group facilitates understanding an occasional meaning of a noun and contributes to its regular usage.
2. Interaction of two types of derivation (semantic and word-formative) leads to specific figurative meaning of nouns having different word-formative affixes. Development of characteristic meaning of a noun with word-formative affixes may go in two different ways.

I. A noun without any affixes develops its characteristic meaning (камень (stone) – ‘about a heartless person’, бутон (bud) – ‘about a pretty girl’, зверь (animal, beast) – about a cruel person’. In this figurative meaning the word can be used in its affixless form or may add some affixes which are used to:

a) make it more emotional: камень – камен-юк-а (a big stone) – ‘about an absolutely heartless person’, бутон – бутон-чик (a little bud) – ‘about a lovely girl’, зверь – звер-юг-а (a big beast) – ‘about an extremely cruel person’) or

b) b) give some details of the object’s age or gender: зверь – звер-енцы (a kid of a beast) – ‘about a cruel teenager’, дикарь (a savage) – дикар-к-а (a female of savage) – ‘about a shy, unsociable or rude and misbehaving person (male or female correspondingly)’.

In these cases word-formation does not change general meaning of the noun (comparing with the figurative meaning of its affixless form).

II. Figurative meaning is developed when a noun already includes some semantic or intensifying affix(es). Then the finishing elements of derivative chain: “direct meaning of the affixless form of a noun → figurative meaning of the affixless form of a noun” and “direct meaning of the affixed form of a noun → figurative meaning of the affixed form of a noun” have absolutely different semantics:

- рыба (fish) – ‘animal’ → рыба (fish) – ‘about a sluggish or impassive person’: After meeting Popova two or three times Artamonov began to dream about her. ‘Be careful!’, said his brother. ‘I tried, but she is a
Figurative meanings of nouns рыба (fish) and рыб-к-а (little fish) appeared independently from each other and are supported by different features of their initial denotate. Figurative PCM of the word рыба actualizes some real zoological features of fish (a cold-blooded animal that is unable to let out any sounds hearable by human’s ear). Although the figurative meaning of affixed noun рыб-к-а is mostly motivated by the meaning of the affix (‘little’).

3. Interaction between phraseological and lexical levels of the language contributes into developing figurative PCM on the base of a corresponding phraseological unit: лакомый кусок (a tasty piece) – ‘about something or somebody very attractive’ → кусок (piece) with the same meaning.

4. One more incentive for using a noun in the function of characterizing predicate is an adjective or/and a verb of the same root having the same characteristic meaning. Such a verb or an adjective can be interpreted as motivating towards the noun which receives double motivation. So a Russian noun кипяток (boiling water) having a figurative meaning ‘an irritable person’ is taken for a derivative of a verb кипятиться (to be boiled) having figurative meaning ‘to get excited or angry’.

5. Interaction of lexical and phonetic levels of the language conditions influence of word’s phonetics on the choice of noun used for characterizing a person or an object. According to some works in phonetics most of sounds are associated with positive or negative feelings and emotions. For
example, “bad” consonants associating with negative emotions in Russian are sounds transmitted by letters ш [sh], ж [zh], ч [ch], х [h], ф [f], especially in the beginning of a word (A. Zhuravlev). So nouns with negative characteristic meaning are supposed to be more emotional if they include this consonants. Figurative meanings of such nouns tend to become regular: шут (clown), шакал (jackal), животное (animal), жаба (frog), чурбан (block), чудовище (monster), фурия (Fury).

Influence of different language levels is not equal at different stages of meaning’s development. At the moment of fulfilling communicative task (to name one object by comparing it with other one by some features they have in common) lexical factors are especially important: choice of a noun is connected with impact of the whole system of language. After choosing the word (when it begins to be used as a characteristic one) the role of syntactical aspect grows: predicative function requires corresponding (predicative) semantics.

Process of transferring a word from the class of identifying lexics to the class of characterizing words causes serious changes in its semantics consisting in redistribution its semes. From the set of semes composing intensional (main, central) and implicational (peripheral) part of initial meaning only one or two seme(s), or feature(s), which are often not significant for the initial meaning, are extracted and actualized. However actualization of a single (or two single) feature(s) as the most important one(s) does not mean devaluation of all the other semes. Figurative meaning continues to be interpreted as a derived one, as the meaning existing on the background of the direct meaning of the noun. Elements of information about initial denotate become semes of implicational part of a figurative meaning.

For example, the base of metaphorical PCM of a Russian noun змея
(snake) consists of two basic (though implicational for the initial meaning) features: ‘insidiousness’ and ‘malice’. However the figurative meaning of this noun is not exhausted by these two semes. Definitions of this word in different dictionaries include in its meaning such semes as ‘saying innuendoes’, ‘mocking’, ‘cunning’. All these semes are found in the meaning of this word in different contexts. The concrete speech situation can actualize other intensional and implicational features of the initial denotate (see the picture).

snake – ‘animal’

INTENSIONAL
reptile
may be poisonous
etc... (the list is almost endless and depends on a person’s knowledge about the subject)

IMPLICTIONAL
malicious
insidious
able to attack unexpectedly
able to sting

snake – ‘of a person’

INTENSIONAL
malicious
insidious

IMPLICTIONAL
saying innuendoes
mocking
cunning
disappearing easily etc.

Therefore a figurative meaning though having a simpler structure than a direct one is difficult to define; it remains diffuse and basing on integral and indivisible image of the initial denotate.
All the above mentioned is true for a vivid metaphor. Degree of metaphor vitality is different. It is the highest on the first stage of forming a figurative meaning when a word was first used as a characterizing predicate. If a word is not a component of a thematic group having general regular characterizing meaning, if it is not a part of a phraseologic unit and if it does not have affixes able to indicate its meaning it is very difficult to set (and limit) the semantic features determining its meaning. For example, occasional (author’s) sense of a noun апельсин (orange) in such a context: *Your Al’ka is ... An orange! /about a young girl/* (F. Abramov) is understandable only generally – as ‘a pretty girl’. It is impossible to determine what features of the initial predicate compose the semantics of the metaphorical comparison. It may be ‘having rosy cheeks’, ‘fresh’, ‘stout’ or any others.

In the process of regular usage of a noun in its figurative meaning a quantity of semes in its semantics reduces and its semantic uncertainty diminishes. But figurative meaning remains orientated on the image of its initial denotate, i.e. remains metaphorical. This integral perception reveals itself in possibility to deepen semantic structure of a word by pointing at some additional features of initial denotate which are visible through the image of situational referent. So image of the animal (*fox*) is visible through the image of a person in such a context: *You smelled it out, an old fox!* (F. Abramov).

When a noun is used in its metaphorical meaning for a long time metaphor becomes less and less vivid. Metaphor “dies” especially fast when the comparison is made between close spheres of reality (for example, “person → person”: *advocate, philosopher, king*). The factors which usually lead to “fading” of metaphor are: a) principal impossibility to imagine a source of metaphor visually: нуль (zero), прах (dust); b) too
wide sphere of usage of a word in its direct meaning (so it is not clear what visible picture it can produce): тварь (creature), зверь (beast); c) such formal features of a word that equalize it with nouns with direct characterizing meanings (for example, ending -а (-я) that enables referring a word to both males and females: этакая/этакий скотина (such a beast); d) eliminating the initial (direct) meaning: молодец (a good boy), initial meaning ‘a young man’ disappeared from Modern Russian.

Week metaphorical properties of a noun reveal themselves in a monocharacteristic type of meaning, in impossibility to “revive” its first meaning by means of contexts, in ability of the word to be used as a synonym with other characterizing words and in transition of a word-of-notion to a word-of-concept that results in derivative capability of the word in its figurative meaning: проворонить (to have behaved like a crow) – ‘to lose attention or forget about something important’.

Thus in the process of passing all the stages of category transition and becoming regular a noun changes its meaning from poly-characteristic, diffuse, uncertain, metaphorical and contextually conditioned to monocharacteristic, conceptual, able to characterize an object independently and contextually free. Changes in a noun’s semantics influence on its syntactical properties.

The third chapter “Figurative predicative characteristic meaning of a noun in syntactical aspect” is devoted to revealing common syntactical properties of nouns with figurative PCM and specific syntactic features of the words the meanings of which reached different stages of the category transition.

Analysis of materials enables defining such common syntactical properties of nouns having figurative PCM as:

a) ability to take a position of the predicate;
b) ability to take a half-predicate position of an allocution and apposition;

c) ability to take a non-predicative position of an attribute, an object and a subject under some conditions (presence of a deictic pronoun and/or text presupposition).

Besides nouns with figurative PCM can be a part of a construction “a verb plus a noun” with the verbs *become, seem, to be called, turn to* etc.

One more “formal” characteristic of a noun with figurative PCM is its ability to combine with an intensifying adjective: *real, absolute* etc.

However not every noun with figurative PCM is able to fulfil all the above mentioned syntactic functions. A range of words within the group of nouns developing figurative PCM present higher degree of connection with a definite syntactic position. Therefore dividing lexics with figurative PCM into nouns with absolutely and relatively syntactically fixed meaning is natural and based on semantic principles.

Calculation of times of using nouns with figurative PCM with different degree of development shows that going along the stages “occasional figurative PCM – regular speech figurative PCM – relatively regular figurative PCM – regular figurative PCM” nouns tend to demonstrate increase of numbers of predicative and half-predicative usage and reduction of number of non-predicative usage.

The highest per cent of non-predicative usage is found among the nouns with occasional characteristic meaning. Unusual function of a predicate and absence of a stable characteristic meaning often requires “indirect” predicate construction: *For such a phlegmatic as you are, probably, even I would seem a volcano* (I. Turgenev) – where a noun *volcano* in occasional author’s sense ‘a hot-tempered person’ is introduced not directly, but by the mean of a construction *to seem a volcano,*
“intermediate” between direct comparison and metaphorical characteristics.

The more distinct a meaning becomes the less is need in additional comments and the more natural it takes a syntactical position usual for characteristic lexics.

The last point of this way is a stage of tough fixing a noun in its figurative PCM over a definite syntactic position. For metaphorical names this stage is connected with loss of metaphorical background. Nouns with vivid connection of their figurative meaning with the initial denotate reveal wider variations of syntactical position: кошка (she cat) (2/1/1), волк (wolf) (8/3/3), индюк (turkey) (1/2/1), гусь (goose) (9/4/2) than the ones which have lost this connection: варвар (barbarian) (7/0/0), гигант (giant) (2/0/0), дикарь (savage) (8/0/2), ноль / нуль (zero) (7/0/0), прах (dust) (2/0/0), игрушка / игрушечка (toy) (4/0/0) – where figures in brackets mean correlation between predicative / half-predicative / non-predicative using correspondingly.

A strong correlation between their figurative meaning and syntactic position is demonstrated by all nouns with non-metaphorical figurative meanings: роскошь (luxury), радость (моя) [(my) joy], горе (grief), счастье (happiness), досада (nuisance), талант (talent), характер (character) etc., and by all the words used in their characteristic meaning only within a definite construction: не сахар (not sugar), не мед (not honey) – ‘about something unpleasant’. Only as a predicate nouns which have lost their first meaning may be used: молодец (a good boy).

So most nouns with figurative PCM can take rather wide range of syntactic functions (they construct the group of words meanings of which can be called relatively connected with their position). These are nouns with occasional, regular speech, relatively regular and metaphorical regular figurative PCM.
Connection of a word with a definite syntactic position becomes more pronounced gradually with developing its figurative meaning into a regular type. Besides all the nouns with non-metaphorical figurative PCM are strictly connected with a definite syntactic position. All these nouns compose a group of words **absolutely connected** with their position. These two groups do not exist independently, they represent different stages of the same process of transition of identifying lexics into characterizing one. Syntactical differences between these two groups are determined by their semantics.

**Conclusion** of the dissertation includes the following deduction: changes in semantics of a noun developing figurative predicative characteristic meaning concern different aspects: **functional** (the word changes from an identifying to a characterizing noun), **semantic** (the noun can receive a new occasional sense, which can become less or more regular, and the meaning changes from poly-characteristic, diffused, metaphorical to mono-characteristic, contextually free and conceptual) and **syntactical** (the noun which used to take a non-predicative position in a sentence begins to take a predicative one).

Analysis of functional, semantic and syntactic changes which a noun suffers at different stages of developing its figurative predicative characteristic meaning enables to make a conclusion about strong connections and interdependence between different language levels.