

Russian Botanical Terms: Towards Their Lexicographic Description

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Abstract

The paper discusses the Russian names of plants and their parts as they are used in everyday language and in two scientific disciplines: biology and crop husbandry. In many Russian texts (e.g., in different types of “gardener’s handbooks”) these three terminological systems interact in quite an intricate way. The explications of botanical terms in existing Russian explanatory dictionaries are inadequate in many respects. The paper proposes a theoretical basis for the lexicographic description of the terms under consideration and also illustrates its principles with several examples. Analysis of the use of botanical terms in Russian texts along with linguistic experiments have shown that everyday (standard) word usage based on a *naïve taxonomy* has little to do with biological nomenclature. The taxonomy of crop science is closer to standard usage; however, some differences exist. A complete lexicographic description should take account of the usage of “botanical words” in different terminological systems (providing appropriate labels where necessary).

1 Introduction

The linguistic semantics of 1960–1970s paid little attention to terms for natural kinds. Thus, Apresjan (1967:19) suggested that the semantic code of such a noun might be its number in the relevant dictionary. In line with this, at the early stage of development of the Meaning ↔ Text Theory, it showed little interest in the semantics of natural kinds.

Now the situation has radically changed. It comes as no surprise that Apresjan et al. have devoted a special section (2007:91–93) to explications of the meaning of Russian names for various kinds of fruit (*фрукты*).

In what follows, we will discuss the Russian “botanical words”, that is, names of plants and their parts. We will proceed from the general principle that the lexical entry should be oriented to the standard word usage based on naïve concepts; however, a complete lexicographic description should take account of the usage of “botanical words” in various genres including “scientific” usage (providing appropriate labels where necessary). The more so, many of the “naïve” speakers are inclined to believe that the scientific model of the world and the corresponding word usage is more “correct” and pattern their own usage on the scientific one. However, one must be cautious about the impact of scientific or quasi-scientific ideas on the “naïve” conceptualization of the world. The explicit statements of language speakers should be taken with a grain of salt. Anna Wierzbicka comments about a similar situation, “if a scientifically oriented informant claims that ‘for him’, tigers **are** cats, my reaction would be rather to mistrust him as an informant (because he cannot distinguish colloquial English from scientific terminology), than solemnly to write down that in his ‘lect’ tigers are a kind of cats.” (Wierzbicka, 1985:42) What counts is how the speakers use language, not their explicit “metalinguistic” statements.

In dividing up a polysemous word (a vocable, according to the terminology of the Meaning ↔ Text Theory) into separate meanings (lexemes, according to the terminology of the Meaning ↔ Text Theory),

one should also take into account, among other things, grammatical behavior in different types of usage. If a word behaves differently in different types of usage, one may conclude that they belong to different lexical meanings.

On this basis, a dictionary entry on the noun *цветок* ‘flower’ may look as follows as suggested in (Šmeleva & Šmelev 2007):

- (1) **цветок** 1. (pl. *цветы* or *цветки*) Colorful part of plant located on a *branch* or *stem*. *На ветке расцвели ярко-красные цветы.*
 1a. (scientific) (pl. *цветки*) Sexual reproductive organ in plants.
 2. (pl. *цветы*) Plant branch or stem with *цветы* 1. *Подарить цветы; сорвать цветок.*
 3. (pl. *цветы*) Small plant growing in the ground whose visible part consists of a stem and *цветок* 1 or several *цветы* 1. *На клумбе росли цветы.*
 4. (pl. *цветы*) Small *indoor* (growing in earth indoors, located in a pot) plant. *В знак того, что явка провалена, на окне стоял горшок с цветком.*

Recognizing (2), (3), and (4) is made on the basis of denotation and seems self-evident.¹ As for distinguishing (1a and (1b), it is supported by differences in grammatical behavior: the genitive plural is *цветов* or *цветков* for *цветок* 1, *цветков* for *цветок* 1a, and *цветов* for *цветок* 2, *цветок* 3, and *цветок* 4. It should be added that in numeral constructions the form *цветков* is used for all meanings.

In addition, a complete lexicographic description should take account of the usage of “botanical words” in different regional varieties of language. Consider, for example, the definition of the word *урюк* given in the *Small Academic Dictionary* (Evgen’eva 1981-1984): “fruit of an apricot-tree dried with pits” (*высушенные с косточками плоды абрикоса*). This definition does not take into account the use of the word with reference to apricot-trees in Central Asia (while the standard Russian word for ‘apricot-tree’ is *абрикос*, exactly as a donkey may be referred to as *ишак* in Central Asia while the standard Russian word for ‘donkey’ is *осел*) as in an “Indispensable manual for the composition of articles for gala occasions, feuilletons for state holidays, odes, hymns, and also poems for parades” from *The Golden Calf* by Ilf & Petrov (*Literary Verse with Asiatic Ornamentation*):

- (2) Цветет урюк под грохот дней, / Дрожит зарей кишлак. / А средь арыков и аллей / Идет гулять ишак.
 ‘Under daily din the *ooryuk* [apricot-tree] blooms, / Like dawn the *keeshlak* [village] flares, / While midst *aryks* [canals] and alley glooms / The *eeshak* [ass] forth he dares.
 (Authorized translation from the Russian by Charles Malamuth)

Needless to say we do not mean that the descriptions of “botanical words” should be extended so as to include all regional varieties of language; nor do we aim at dialects as well standard Russian. The point is that the use of the word *урюк* we are interested in is known to most speakers of Russian and is widely used in speech and written texts as in the following example from *Cancer Ward* by Alexander Solzhenitsyn:

- (3) В первое утро творения — кто ж способен поступать благорассудно? Все планы ломая, придумал Олег непутёвое: сейчас же, по раннему утру, ехать в Старый город смотреть цветущий урюк.
 ‘The first morning of creation — who can act rationally on such a day? Oleg discarded all his plans. Instead he conceived the mad scheme of going to the Old Town immediately, while it was still early morning, to look at a flowering apricot tree.’

One can also find many examples of the use of *урюк* with reference to apricot-trees in the *National Corpus of the Russian Language*. This leads us to conclusion that a lexicographic description should take

¹ One may observe that the semantic structure of the English word *flower* does not have the meaning similar to the fourth meaning of the word *цветок*: if the visible part of an indoor plant does not have a colorful part that catches one’s eye and grows on a stalk or twig, this plant can be only referred to as a *plant* (and never *flower*) in English.

account of the use in question as the *Small Academic Dictionary* does with regard to the words *арык* (defined as ‘irrigation canal in Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Transcaucasia [в Средней Азии, Казахстане, Закавказье: оросительный канал]’), *ишак* (defined as ‘ass, donkey [осел]’), and *кишлак* (defined as ‘village in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan [селение в Узбекистане и Таджикистане]’).

2 Plants and Their Edible Parts

Now we are in a position to discuss a fragment of Russian folk botany compared with the scientific description of the same domain of reality in order to illustrate certain problems of the relation between everyday and scientific concepts. We will deal with the names of plants and their edible parts.

2.1 Naïve usage vs. special purpose usage

This domain of reality was chosen not by chance. Its specific character lies in the fact that it is studied at least in two scientific disciplines: biology and crop husbandry.² Each of these disciplines has its own terminological system, and the models of the world of these disciplines (both of which differ from the naïve model) are not the same (although the world model of crop science is admittedly much closer to the naïve model than the scientific biological model). In many Russian texts (e.g. in different types of “gardener’s handbooks”) these three models of the world interact in quite an intricate way.

In order to assess the differences between everyday speech, crop science and biology, we need only turn to the Russian biology schoolbook for grades 6-7. Different types of fruit are described there as follows:

- (4) Поскольку плоды очень многообразны, для разных плодов существуют специальные названия. Сочный односемянный плод называют *костянкой*. Наружный слой околоплодника у него – тонкая кожица, средний – сочная мякоть, внутренний – деревянистый, образует косточку (вишня, слива, персик). Сочный многосемянный плод – *ягода*. Наружная часть околоплодника состоит из тонкой кожицы (помидор, виноград, смородина). *Яблоко* – сочный многосемянный плод (яблоня, груша, рябина). В его образовании принимает участие не только завязь, но и другие части цветка. *Зерновка* – сухой односемянный плод с тонким пленчатым околоплодником, сросшимся или плотно прилегающим к семенной кожуре (рожь, пшеница, кукуруза). *Семянка* – сухой односемянный плод с кожистым околоплодником, не срастающимся с семенной кожурой (одуванчик, подсолнечник). *Орех* – сухой односемянный плод с деревянистым околоплодником (орешник, липа). *Желудь* – сухой односемянный плод, в отличие от ореха околоплодник кожистый. *Коробочка* – сухой многосемянный плод, открывающийся крышечкой (белена), дырочками (мак) или створками (тюльпан). *Боб* и *стручок* – сухие многосемянные плоды. Но у стручка между створками есть перегородка, на которой и располагаются семена (капуста, редька), а у боба такой перегородки нет.

‘Given the great diversity of fruit, special names exist for different types of fruit. A fleshy one-seeded fruit is called *костянка* ‘stone fruit.’ The outer layer of the seed vessel is a thin membrane, the middle layer consists of fleshy pulp, and the ligneous inner layer forms the pit (cherry, plum, peach). A fleshy many-seeded fruit is called *ягода* ‘berry.’ The outer part of the seed vessel consists of a thin membrane (tomato, pear, currant). *Яблоко* ‘pome’ is a fleshy many-seeded fruit (apple, pear, rowanberry). It forms not only from the ovary but also from other parts of the flower. *Зерновка* ‘grain’ is a dry one-seeded fruit with a thin membranous seed vessel that is fused with or adpressed to the seed hull (rye, wheat, corn). *Семянка* ‘achene’ is a dry one-seeded fruit with a leathery seed vessel that does not fuse with the seed hull (dandelion, sunflower). *Орех* ‘nut’ is a dry one-seeded fruit with a ligneous seed vessel (hazel, linden). *Желудь* ‘acorn’ is a dry one-seeded fruit with a leathery seed vessel (in contrast to the nut). *Коробочка* ‘seedpod’ is a dry many-seeded fruit dehiscing through a lid (henbane), holes (poppy) or valves (tulip). *Боб* ‘bean’ and *стручок* ‘pod’ are dry many-seeded fruits. A pod has a septum that bears the seeds (cabbage, radish), while a bean lacks such a septum.’

² Crop husbandry is primarily a branch of agriculture, but the same name refers to an applied discipline that elaborates the scientific foundations of this branch of agriculture.

If we try to understand this classification in detail, we will see that it does not mention *тыквины* (cucumber, melon, pumpkin) and *померанцы* (orange, lemon), which are close to *ягоды* ‘berries’; indeed, they are sometimes referred to as *ягоды*. As for raspberries and strawberries, they are considered *сборные плоды* ‘aggregate fruits’. Raspberry is *сборная костянка* ‘an aggregate stone-fruit’, i.e. a number of fruitlets arranged together; every fruitlet is structured in the same way as a plum or an apricot. Strawberry is *сборная семянка* (‘an aggregate achene’), i.e. a number of fruitlets arranged in the same way as the seeds in a sunflower, and what we call a strawberry in everyday language is the fleshy receptacle.

Clearly, this usage has little to do with everyday word usage. In standard Russian, nobody calls pears or rowan-berries *яблоки* ‘pommes; apples’: *яблоки* ‘apples’ and pears are *фрукты* ‘fruits’ and rowan-berries are *ягоды* ‘berries’. (Note that *ягоды* are not a kind of fruit for everyday Russian.) Aggregate fruits such as raspberry and strawberry are also *ягоды* ‘berries’. At the same time, apart from the special-purpose botanical language, no one calls tomatoes, cucumbers, and oranges *ягоды* ‘berries’: tomatoes and cucumbers are *овощи* ‘vegetables’ and oranges are *фрукты* ‘fruits’. Notice that the word *плод* (‘fruit’) in everyday Russian is rarely used to refer to a part of a plant.³

The difference between technical terms and everyday words is not the most important thing. It is the difference between the scientific and the naïve taxonomy that is of first importance. Placing apples, pears and rowanberries into one class, peaches, apricots and cherries into another class, and tomatoes, gooseberries and watermelons into yet another class would contrast with the naïve classification, which would rather place together apples, pears, apricots and peaches (as *фрукты* ‘fruit’), on the one hand, and rowanberries, gooseberries and perhaps cherries (as *ягоды* ‘berries’) on the other hand. Watermelons and tomatoes do not belong to either class: watermelons are closer to *фрукты* while tomatoes belong to yet another class of *овощи* ‘vegetables’. This naïve taxonomy is reflected in the grammatical behavior of the words in question: names of berries are collective nouns (this does not hold for the generic term *ягода*) while names of fruit are countable.

The contrast between *фрукты* and *ягоды* is multidimensional. The main difference is in size: people normally hold *ягоды* with a thumb and one finger (usually index finger) while *фрукты* are normally held with a thumb and at least two fingers. To eat a *фрукт*, people usually bite off or cut off from it while *ягоды* are normally put into the mouth whole. Furthermore, many naïve speakers of Russian believe that *фрукты* grow on trees while *ягоды* grow on bushes/shrubs or herbaceous plants. This may be the reason to use the word *куст* ‘bush, shrub’ to refer to a rowan-tree: the phrase *куст рябины* ‘rowan bush/shrub’ is quite common in Russian texts. Ožegov (1972) acting as a naïve speaker has defined *фрукты* and *ягоды* as follows:

(5) **Фрукт.** *Сочный съедобный плод какого-н. дерева.*
‘Juicy edible fruit of a tree’.

(6) **Ягода.** *Небольшой сочный плод кустарников и трав.*
‘Small juicy fruit of bushes/shrubs and grasses’.

That is why we would not include the component ‘growing on herbaceous plants’ into the definition of *банан* ‘banana’ as it is suggested in (Apresjan et al. 2007:92). An average speaker of Russian believes that bananas grow on trees (or treelike plants), which may be considered a part of Russian naïve picture of the world. The *National Corpus of the Russian Language* contains a dozen of examples of the phrase *банановое дерево* ‘banana tree’, which can be regarded as an objective evidence for excluding the idea of ‘growing on herbaceous plants’ from the definition of *банан*. The more so, it also contains several examples of the phrase *банановая пальма* ‘banana palm’, and for an average Russian speaker *пальма* is a tree rather than a herbaceous plant (consider, e.g., the definition of *пальма* in the most of dictionaries).

³ The rare exceptions are: (1) texts written in archaic poetical style; (2) idioms, e.g. *освящение плодов* (‘blessing of fruits’) at Transfiguration (in accordance with the tradition of Russian Orthodox Church); (3) word usage in texts making (partial) use of the “scientific” model of the world; (4) designations of any exotic fruit when the speaker does not know its name.

Some speakers claim that a banana palm is an herb,⁴ but such claims reflect the biological nomenclature; in the casual, non-terminological usage it would be ridiculous to say *пальмы и другие травы* ‘palms and other herbs’ (while *пальмы и другие деревья* ‘palms and other trees’ would be quite correct).

True enough, the above regularity (*фрукты* grow on trees, and *ягоды* grow on bushes/shrubs or herbaceous plants) is not absolute. Ožegov (1972) not in the least embarrassed by an apparent contradiction has given the following definitions, which include reference to *ягоды* growing on trees:

(7) **Вишня.** Плодовое дерево с сочными съедобными темно-красными ягодами, а также ягода этого дерева.

A fruit-tree with juicy edible dark red berries as well as a berry of this tree.

(8) **Рябина.** Дерево с плодами в виде пучка горьковатых оранжево-красных ягод, а также самые ягоды.

A tree with fruits growing in a cluster of bitter orange or red berries as well as berries themselves.

(9) **Черешня.** Плодовое дерево, сходное с вишней, а также ягода его.

A fruit-tree resembling a cherry-tree (*вишня*) as well as its berry.

One more difference between *фрукты* and *ягоды* is that for many (but not all!) speakers of Russian *фрукты* are always parts of cultivated plants while *ягоды* may be parts of wild plants (the phrase *лесные ягоды* ‘forest berries’ is commonly used while *лесные фрукты* ‘forest fruit’ would sound rather strange). *Фрукты* are always edible unless poisoned by somebody while *ягоды* may be poisonous by themselves.

Because of the inconsistency between the biological nomenclature and everyday usage, the biological terminology in this area is difficult to learn and easy to forget after school. The only element of the scientific classification of fruit that almost all Russian speakers know is that a watermelon is *ягода* ‘berry’ from the scientific point of view. Undoubtedly, the lack of a generic term for *арбуз* ‘watermelon’ (as well as *дыня* ‘melon’) in everyday usage is a contributing factor. However, although Russian speakers know that a watermelon is a berry, the standard word usage is unaffected by this fact. It is unlikely that anybody who goes to a fruit-market *купить ягод* ‘to buy some berries’ will buy a watermelon (should s/he do that, it would mean that s/he had changed his/her original plans). In other words, some speakers claim that *арбуз* is *ягода*, but they do not use the word *ягода* to refer to a watermelon in everyday usage.

Apart from the lack of a generic term, everyday usage lacks a clear classification in some cases as well. Thus, some Russian speakers refer to cherries as *фрукты* ‘fruits’ while others refer to them as *ягоды* ‘berries’. This may be because they are bigger than prototypical berries (such as currants or rowanberries) and grow on a tree. Grammatically, it may be used both as a countable noun (like *фрукты*) and as a collective noun (like *ягоды*): both *варенье из вишни* (sing.) and *варенье из вишен* (pl.) are acceptable. *Виноград* ‘grapes’ is only used as a collective noun; it grows on a vine rather than tree; so, it is closer to berries. Nevertheless, some speakers of Russian refer to it as *фрукты* (maybe because grapes are somewhat bigger than prototypical berries and vine differs from herbaceous plants and bushes); by the way, it may be observed that Apresjan et al. (2007) have classed *виноград* as *фрукт*. Anyway, the fact that grape is *ягода* while cherry is *костянка* ‘stone-fruit’ according to the biological nomenclature is unlikely to affect their naïve classification.

The inconsistency between biological terminology and everyday usage has led texts striving to reflect the scientific model of the world yet catering to the mass reader to try to explain this difference. Consider, for example, the following article from *Soviet Encyclopedia* (Sovetskij... 1985):

⁴ Googling Russian *пальма* returns many examples like *банановая пальма (а точнее трава, которая просто маскируется под пальму!)* ‘a banana palm (or, more precisely, a herb which masquerades as a palm)’; *Кстати, пальма не дерево, а многолетняя трава* ‘As a matter of fact, palm is not a tree but a perennial herb’

- (10) **‘ЯБЛОКО** (ботан.), сочный, обычно многосемянный нераскрывающийся плод растений сем. розоцветных подсем. яблоневых – груши, яблони, айвы, рябины и др. В быту Я. наз. плод яблони.
‘ЯБЛОКО (botan.) ...fruit of... pear-trees, apple-trees, quince-trees, rowan-trees, etc. In everyday usage, Я. is the fruit of an apple-tree.’

2.2 Regular polysemy of folk “botanical” terms

Various parts of cultivated herbaceous plants function as *овощи*: roots, tubers, bulbs, leaflets, leafstalks, flower stalks, fruits. They are cultivated for food: thus, there are no wild vegetables (**дикие овощи*) or poisonous vegetables (**ядовитые овощи*). In contrast to fruit and berries, which are commonly used as a dessert, *овощи* are not supposed to be used in such a way. The word *овощи* (sing. *овощ*) ‘vegetables’ has two different meanings in everyday Russian: ‘1. Part of a plant good to eat cut with salt. 2. Plants cultivated to get *овощи* 1’. Note that the *Small Academic Dictionary* (Evgen’eva 1981-1984) recognizes only one meaning for the word *овощи*, namely ‘vegetable garden fruit and greens used for food (cucumbers, carrots, tomatoes, beets, etc.)’. Ožegov (1972) suggest a similar definition: ‘vegetable garden fruit and greens used for food (cucumbers, carrots, beets, tomatoes, turnips, etc.)’. But these explications does not take into account such uses as *прополка овощей* ‘weeding vegetables’; *В огороде растут овощи* ‘Vegetables grow in the garden’; *Я люблю совмещать на грядке овощи и цветы* ‘I like to combine vegetables and flowers on one bed’ (an example from the *National Corpus of the Russian Language*). It would be wrong to treat these examples as instances of a regular polysemy that may be ignored in a dictionary, since the seemingly very similar word *фрукты* ‘fruits’ can never refer to fruit trees (nor does the word *ягоды* ‘berries’ have the meaning of ‘berry bushes’).

Most of the names of cultivated plants have the same polysemic structure: the word refers to a plant as well as to a part of this plant used by people. For example, such words as *груша* ‘pear-tree; pear’, *слива* ‘plum-tree; plum’, *вишня* ‘cherry-tree; cherry’, *абрикос* ‘apricot-tree; apricot’ denote both trees and fruits of these trees (one of the rare exceptions is the existence of two different words for the apple-tree and its fruit: *яблоня* ‘apple-tree’ and *яблоко* ‘an apple’); the words *морковь* ‘carrot’ and *свекла* ‘beet’ denote plants and their edible roots. Reference to plants is quite common in everyday usage, e. g.:

- (11) Расцвели яблони и груши, / Поплыли туманы над рекой.
 ‘Apple and pear trees were in bloom, / The mist crept over the river.’
 (*Katyusha*, lyrics by Mikhail Isakovsky)

Most Russian dictionaries take this polysemy into account by indicating ‘plant’ as the first meaning and ‘part of this plant’ as the second meaning (this is apparently due to preference for “scientific” usage in which these words denote plants, while their edible parts are indicated periphrastically: *plody abrikosa*, *korni morkovi*); consider the following entries from the *Small Academic Dictionary* (Evgen’eva 1981-1984):

- (12) **АБРИКОС...**1. Южное плодое дерево. 2. Плод этого дерева оранжевого цвета с крупной косточкой
‘АБРИКОС... 1. A southern fruit tree. 2. fruit (orange in color) of this tree with a large pit’
- (13) **МОРКОВЬ...**1. Огородное растение семейства зонтичных, овощ. 2. *собир.* Съедобные утолщенные корни этого растения оранжевого цвета
‘МОРКОВЬ...1. A garden plant of the Umbelliferae family, a vegetable. 2. Edible incrassate roots (orange in color) of this plant’

It may be observed that Mel’čuk (1979) suggested much more sophisticated explications taking into account countability/non-countability (thus, he distinguished four lexical meanings of the word *морковь* rather than two); however the strategy he used was essentially the same (the meaning ‘a plant...’ or

‘species of plant...’ comes first; the meaning ‘edible product...’ and ‘natural unit of edible product...’ are considered derived from one of the above meanings).

A good case can be made for the reverse order since the meaning of ‘a kind of fruit’ and ‘a kind of vegetable’ is the basic meaning of these terms in standard Russian while the meaning of ‘a plant cultivated for this fruit/vegetable’ may be considered a derived meaning. Consider the following observation made by Apresjan et al. (2007:91): “It is quite correct to say in Russian *персики, апельсины, виноград и другие южные фрукты* ‘peaches, oranges, grapes, and other southern fruits’ but to say *виноград, хмель и другие лианы и их плоды* ‘grapevines, hops and other lianas and their fruits’ would be quite ridiculous.”

2.3 Crop science and everyday usage

The taxonomy of crop science is much closer to standard usage. *Плоды* (‘fruit’) in crop science are divided into *плоды* (apples, pears, plums, apricots, peaches), *ягоды* (gooseberries, raspberries, strawberries), *овощи* (tomatoes, cucumbers, marrow squashes), *бахчевые культуры* (watermelon, melon, pumpkin), *виноград* (grapes; a separate type). Accordingly, the following branches of crop science exist: *плодоводство* ‘fruit growing’ (subdivided into proper *плодоводство* and «*ягодководство*» ‘berries growing’), *бахчеводство* ‘growing of melons and gourds’, *овощеводство* ‘vegetable growing’, *виноградарство* ‘viticulture’. However, the attempt to take this usage into account in an encyclopedia leads to an erosion of the “scientific” model of the world. Consider another article from *Soviet Encyclopedia* (Sovetskij... 1985):

- (14) **‘ЯГОДНЫЕ КУЛЬТУРЫ** (ягодники), деревья, кустарники, травянистые растения, выращиваемые для получения ягод (напр., смородина, крыжовник), а также земляника, малина и др., плоды к-рых в быту неправильно наз. ягодами.
‘ЯГОДНЫЕ КУЛЬТУРЫ (ягодники), trees, bushes, herbaceous plants cultivated for berries (e.g. currant, gooseberry bush), also strawberry, raspberry bush, etc., whose fruits are mistakenly referred to as berries in everyday usage’.

One should note that strawberries and raspberries are called *ягоды* ‘berries’ not only “in everyday usage”, but also in the usage of crop science; hence the title *ягодные культуры (ягодники)* ‘berry bushes’ (in the encyclopedia there is no entry «Ягода» at all).

It seems reasonable to say that lexicographic definitions should account for the usage of “botanical words” in various types of discourse. However, it would be wrong to claim that such words as *малина* ‘raspberry; raspberry bush’, *земляника* ‘strawberry’, etc. should be defined via the notion of ‘aggregate fruit’ to account for the use in botanical texts. The point is that these words never refer to fruits in biological discourse. In order to refer to raspberries in a scientific botanical text, one may use a periphrastic expression *плоды малины* ‘fruits of raspberry bushes’. The linguistic characteristics of words like *малина*, *земляника*, etc. are those of names for berries (the suffix *-ин-* or *-ик-* specific of names for berries, uncountability, etc.). Thus, *ягода* ‘berry’ is the only generic term for the words like *малина*, *земляника*, etc., and the structure of polysemy of the words in question may be represented along the following lines: “1. berry... 2. the plant on which this berry grows”.

We would like to make one more comment concerning definitions of “botanic words”. The status of different components of those definitions should be different. In particular, the components referring to size, shape, color, taste, etc. are not distinctive features of the corresponding concepts: one can easily imagine that selectionists grew *сладкие лимоны* ‘sweet lemons’ or *квадратные арбузы* ‘square watermelons’ (to make easier the process of packing). Rather, they are parts of common background knowledge about the referents of the corresponding noun: every adult native speaker of Russian would understand such expressions as *малиновый пиджак* ‘crimson coat (lit. raspberry-colored coat)’, *форма груши* ‘pear-shaped’, *величиной со сливу* ‘about the size of a plum’, etc. This may mean that there is a good reason to introduce these components into the definition with some additional components such as ‘people think...’, ‘people would say...’, ‘usually’, etc.

2.4 Tentative definitions

In this subsection, we provide tentative definitions of some terms discussed in the paper to illustrate the suggested theoretical recommendations. It should be noted that we have not included any reference to the size into the definitions of kinds of berries and fruits if this information can be deduced from the reference to the *genus proximum*.

- (15) **Овоци** (sing. *овоц*) ‘1. Edible parts of cultivated plants growing in the ground or above the ground, usually good to eat cut with salt in order not to be hungry. 2. Plants cultivated to get *овоци* 1’.
- (16) **Фрукты** (sing. *фрукт*) ‘Edible fruits growing on trees or tree-like plants, too big to be put easily into the mouth, usually sweet, lightly sweet or sour, good to eat raw for pleasure; most often having seeds or a pit inside’
- (17) **Ягода** ‘A fruit growing on bushes/shrubs or herbaceous plants, not too big to be put easily into the mouth, often sweet, lightly sweet or sour, good to eat raw for pleasure, one after another at one time’
- (18) **Абрикос** ‘1. Not a big *фрукт* growing on a tree in warm parts of the earth, usually oval, yellowy-orangey, with soft, sweet and juicy flesh, having a pit inside. 2. A tree on which *абрикосы* 1 grow’
- (19) **Урюк** ‘1. (uncountable) *Абрикосы* 1 dried with pits. 2. *Абрикос* 2 (mainly in Central Asia)’
- (20) **Банан** ‘1. *Фрукт* growing on a tree-like plant in warm parts of the earth, usually long, slightly curved, with a thick yellow skin and whitish flesh, having no seeds inside. 2. A tree-like plant on which *бананы* 1 grow’
- (21) **Вишня** ‘1a. Edible *ягода* or small *фрукт* growing on a tree, usually round, dark red, having a pit inside. 1b. (uncountable) *Вишни* 1a as a foodstuff. 2. A tree on which *вишни* 1a grow’
- (22) **Морковка** (colloquial) ‘1a. *Овоц*, edible root of a cultivated plant, usually long, thinner at the bottom end, orange in color. 1b. (uncountable) *Морковки* 1a as a foodstuff. 2a. (uncountable) Plants cultivated to get *морковка* 1a. 2b. A plant of *морковка* 2a’.
- (23) **Рябина** ‘1. (uncountable) Small *ягоды* growing on a tree or a bush/shrub, usually round, red, bitter. 2. A tree or a bush/shrub on which *рябина* 1 grows’
- (24) **Яблоко** ‘1a. *Фрукт* growing on a tree, usually round or oval, red, yellow or green, whitish inside, with firm flesh, having seeds inside. 1b. (special) A fleshy many-seeded fruit of pear-trees, apple-trees, quince-trees, rowan-trees, etc.’

3 Conclusion

We hope that the presented evidence has shown that the terms for natural kinds deserve detailed linguistic analysis no less than other lexical units that used to be considered more “interesting”. The more so, the terms for natural kinds throw down a challenge for a lexicographer since s/he has to be permanently drawing borderlines between what is linguistically relevant and what belongs to the extra-linguistic knowledge.

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