NOUNS DENOTING *EVIL* AS THE UNITS OF ENGLISH LEXICON

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The most fundamental units of any language are the words as "they matter in human relations (which are often shaped by names, titles, terms of address and kin terms), in the edifice of human knowledge (to mention only number words, the names of biological species, and the role of terminology in science), and in systems of religion, belief, and values" [2]. To a significant extent words shape people's life: "people speak with words, they think with words, they "do things" with words" [2].

A lexicon is "a collection of anything and everything that is used as a word or a set expression by the language community" [3]. Therefore it can refer to a dictionary, the vocabulary of the language (also known as the lexis) and or a particular language user's knowledge of his/her own vocabulary. The traditional method to study the latter is to define a word in terms of other units, involved in a network of associations connecting it with other words in the language. Numerous attempts have been made to study, describe and analyze lexical structures into which the lexemes are organized (Holubovska I.O., Fabian M.P., Soroka T.V., A. Wierzbicka, D. A. Cruse, D. Geeraerts, C. Goddart, N. Riemer and many others).

The **aim** of the present work is to define the place and role of the nouns denoting *evil* in the semantic space of the English language.

To study the relevant features of the lexical units denoting *evil* in English, the procedure of formalized lexical semantics' analysis has been used. This method allows revealing the semantics of the nouns in question by studying the correlations between words and their lexical meanings, at the same time disclosing their common and distinctive qualitative and quantitative characteristics. The suggested approach is based on formal, exclusively language criterion – belonging of the words under study to one part of speech – the nouns which have been selected from the most authoritative English dictionary [4]. The matrix method of semantic interconnections' representation between the words in the languages is regarded as a metalanguage for the description of *evil,* and the matrix itself – as the semantic structure of the lexis in question. This model fixes the semantic correlations between the words by means of columns and lines, where horizontal axe indicates the seme stock, and the vertical one – the lexical units. The sign (◊) shows the correlation between words and their meanings in the language [1].

The lexico-semantic group "*Evil*" in modern English is presented by 763 lexical units. The conducted lexico-semantic analysis has shown that the words under study are not isolated and autonomous, but establish a hierarchy which is vividly represented in the matrix: polysemantic words take densely filled places in it, whereas monosemantic – rarely filled ones. The most numerous is the group of nouns with the low degree of polysemy (62,9%). The words with the high degree of polysemy constitute 8% of the lexical stock under study, the ones with the middle degree of polysemy – 26,6% and monosemantic – 2,5 %. In this respect, each lexeme occupies a definite place in the English semantic space and has its semantic value, which is determined by the semantic correlations between the studied lexical units.

References:

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