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THE LEXEME «CITIZEN» SEMANTIC STRUCTURE

Стаття присвячена моделюванню семантичної структури лексеми «citizen» у системі англійської мови та структурі дискурсу. Це дало можливість вирізнити функціональну семантику даної лексеми на матеріалі лінгвістичних корпусів Британського та Американського варіантів англійської мови.

Ключові слова: англійська мова, національний варіант, лексема, семантична структура, функціональна семантика, корпус, дискурс.

Статья посвящена моделированию структуры семантической структуры лексеми «citizen» в системе английского языка и структуре дискурса. Это дало возможность определить функциональную семантику данной лексеми на материале лингвистических корпусов Британского и Американского вариантов английского языка.

Ключевые слова: английский язык, национальный вариант, лексема, семантическая структура, функциональная семантика, корпус, дискурс.

The present paper is focused on modeling a semantic structure of the lexeme «citizen» in the English language system and discourse structure. It made possible to reveal the functional semantics of the given lexeme in the British and American variants of English.

Key words: English, national variant, lexeme, semantic structure, functional semantics, corpus, discourse.

The investigation of the national variants of English has been of a major concern of linguists, historians, sociologists, and ethnographers. In particular, the divergence of General (Global) English and convergence of national varieties have been in focus of R. Berndt, D. Crystal, K. Janicki, A. Markwardt, R. McDavid, Yu. Zacnyj, R. Kritsberg, D. Brozovych, O. Shveitser, O. Ostapovych, V. Mykhailenko, H. Polishchuk, H. Stepanova, A. Panaskov, Yu. Kovaliuk, M. Onchulenko et al. [2; 4; 5; 7;].

The very notion of «the national variant» has many definitions, for example,

O. Shveitser stresses its territorial unity: «the territorially limited variety of the literary language and the dialects spread over the territory» [8, p. 19]. National variants are also defined as «varieties of the fixed standard of the unified literary language with their own codified standards, e.g.: the American Standard of English which is sometimes perceived as an autonomous norm) [9, p. 4]». H. Stepanov highlights the national variant which is «a variety of the national homogeneous language functioning as a separate complex with its own social and linguistic characteristics» [5, p. 74].

L. Buyer and M. Tomenchuk distinguish the following national varieties of modern English as: British, American, Australian, Canadian, Scottish, New Zealand and South African. All variants make up a variantological macrosystem, wherein each constituent is an independent and competent part [6, p. 5]. Though O. Shveitser, H. Stepanov and A. Domashnev distinguish only such basic national varieties of English as British, American, Canadian, and Australian [5, p. 8].

Complex relations and ways of interaction among varieties show overlapping of various extralingual and intralingual factors in Standard English and the national variants. However O. Shveitser emphasizes that «both British and American variants of the English language are equal since they reflect one common objective system representing distinctive extralingual realia and different mentality of peoples' perception of the worldview, peculiarities of the worldview caused by socio-cultural, linguistic, geographical and other factors» [8, p. 36]. Therefore the differences between the American and British literary norms are not systematic, with some varieties in pronunciation, minor differences in grammar, but mainly in vocabulary.

In works of V. Mykhailenko, Yu. Kovaliuk, A. Panaskov, M. Onchulenko and others the variantological analysis of the English language is carried out within the framework «British and non-British» where each of the national variants is in the subordinate relationship to General English [3, p. 133]:

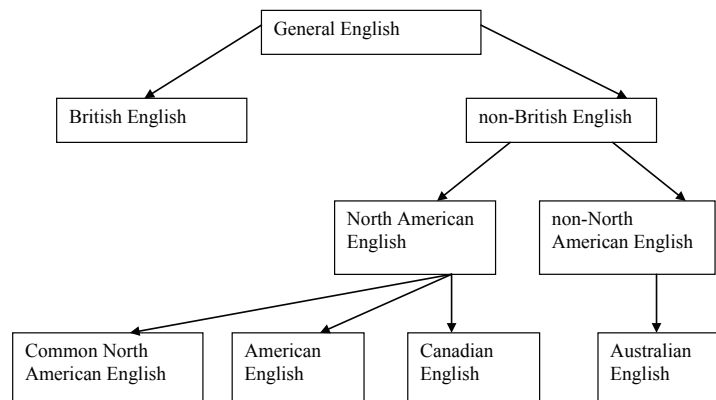


Chart 1. Variants of the English Language

For a further pursuing of variantological studies we offer the semasiological analysis of the meaning of the lexeme «citizen» in British and American variants of the English language.

The topicality of the present investigation lies in the variantological aspect of the semantic structure of the lexeme

based on the concept cognition and its verbalization in both variants. The common and differentiative features can be revealed in the functional semantics of the lexeme «citizen» in British (BNC) and American (COCA) linguistic corpora [9; 10].

The objective of the present paper is a functional semantic analysis of the lexeme «citizen» in American and British variants to define its specific and common features. Their semanticizing may bring about a lexical semantic field of nouns representing the concept «citizen» in both variants of the English language.

The major tasks to be accomplished to carry out our investigation are the following:

1) to single out the lexeme «citizen» in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) [10] and the British National Corpus (BNC) [9];

2) to distinguish common and differentiative features of functioning the lexeme «citizen» in the text fragments of various discourse registers;

3) to contrast the semantic structure of the lexeme «citizen» in British and American language systems and discourse registers.

The results of the contrastive analysis of the lexeme «citizen» in British English and in American English may constitute **the novelty of the present research** and it will help to understand the semantic structure of lexeme under investigation in the linguistic corpora of British and American national variants of English.

The data are selected from 10 lexicographic sources and 100 text fragments registered BNC and COCA.

In the process of the definitional analysis [1, p. 60] of the lexeme «citizen» and 13 definitions are provided in 10 explanatory dictionaries arranged into a classification ranging from the most frequent usage of the lexical components of meaning to the least frequent lexical components of the definitions acquired from the lexicographic sources. The definition «*member of a state or nation, inhabitant of a city or town*» is registered in eight dictionaries and as a result it is of our primary concern. The definition «*native or naturalized person*» is registered in six out of 10 lexicographic sources, definitions «*somebody who legally belongs to a particular country with rights and responsibilities*» and «*civilian*» were represented in 5 dictionary entries. Having conducted the definitional analysis, we are able to single out basic components of the semantic structure of the lexeme «citizen»: 1. *member of a state or nation, inhabitant of a city or town*; 2. *native or naturalized person*; 3. *somebody who legally belongs to a particular country with rights and responsibilities, civilian*; 4. *someone who lives in a particular town, country, state*; 5. *person who owes allegiance to a government and is protected by it, person belonging by birth or naturalization to a political or geographical entity, esp. a nation, denizen*; 6. *legally recognized subject or national of a state or commonwealth*. The nucleus of the lexeme «citizen» is the component *member of a state* and peripheries include other components; the component *inhabitant of a state* is the closest one to the nucleus component.

To reveal the functional semantics of the lexeme «citizen» in British and American national variants of the English language the text analysis of 100 text fragments from BNC and COCA was employed. For a further investigation separate text fragments from BNC and COCA were classified into the categories under the headings, each including the components of the lexical meaning of the lexeme «citizen», e.g.:

– **member of a state or nation, inhabitant of a city or town** is represented by 64 % of text fragments in BNC and 56% in COCA text fragments e.g. (BNC): 1. *In fact, the first pope elected after the creation of the Vatican City was **its citizen**, though by virtue of office rather than birth.* 2. *A few months later, president George Bush underlined the non-equivalence of ‘women’ and ‘**American citizens**’; explaining why the US saw fit to invade Panama, he said he could not tolerate assaults on ‘the wife of **an American citizen**’.*

(COCA): 1. *If the United States can seize **a Dutch citizen** in New Zealand over a copyright claim, what is next? 2. ...the other arrested were Finn Bataato, **a citizen and resident of Germany**.);*

– **native or naturalized person** e.g. (BNC): 1. *Paulo Jose Santos de Almeida, aged 26, **an Angolan-born Portuguese citizen**, was arrested.* 2. *A **Roman citizen** often owned slaves who worked his land growing wheat...* e.g. (COCA): 1. *Supreme Court ruled in *Minor vs Happersett* in 1875 that «**a natural born citizen**» is an offspring of two citizens of the nation.* 2. *The Alien Tort Statute permits **non-US citizens «aliens»** to sue other foreign residents for egregious violations of international law.)* is represented by 4 % in BNC and 16 % in COCA text fragments;

– **somebody who legally belongs to a particular country with rights and responsibilities, civilian**, e.g. (BNC): 1. *We expect the law to be enforced, we expect it to be held because **every citizen who lives under that law** may change it.* 2. *... **every citizen** in whose presence a breach of the peace is being, or reasonably appears to be about to be, committed has the right to take reasonable steps to make the person who is breaking or threatening to break the peace refrain from doing so....*

e.g. (COCA): 1. *The state and city did not take money from their general funds or **citizen taxpayers** to build the Dome.* 2. *He said China has promised the protection of his rights as **a citizen** there.)* is represented 6% in BNC and 6% in COCA text fragments;

– **person who owes allegiance to a government and is protected by it, person belonging by birth or naturalization to a political or geographical entity, esp. a nation, denizen**

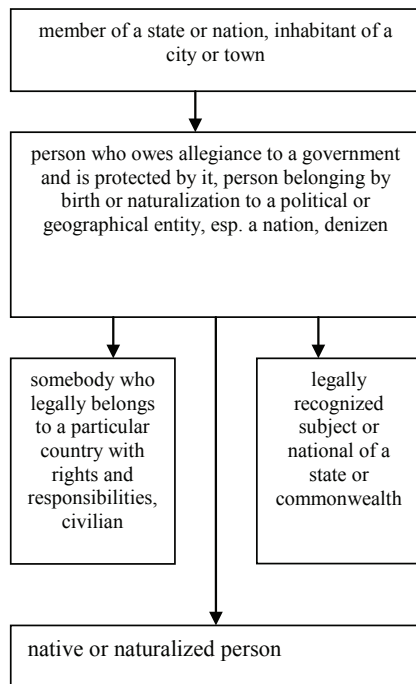
e.g. (BNC): 1. *A democracy...demands a dissemination of political understanding wide enough to make the people’s will in government an effective thing...**the uninformed citizen**...can be misled by the easy half-truth and the persuasive slogan...;* 2. *It is an interesting question what the French will do with Article 3 of the ‘**Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen**’ if a treaty of European Union were ever adopted: ‘The principle of all sovereignty resides necessarily in the Nation. e.g. (COCA): 1. Craig Holman, government affairs lobbyist for the Washington based **Public Citizen** watchdog group, said the absence of charges has bothered New York.* 2. *... you offer that «the proper remedy for such questionable practices is **citizen complaints** to their local elected leaders.)* is represented by 20% in BNC and 18 % in COCA text fragments;

– **legally recognized subject or national of a state or commonwealth**,

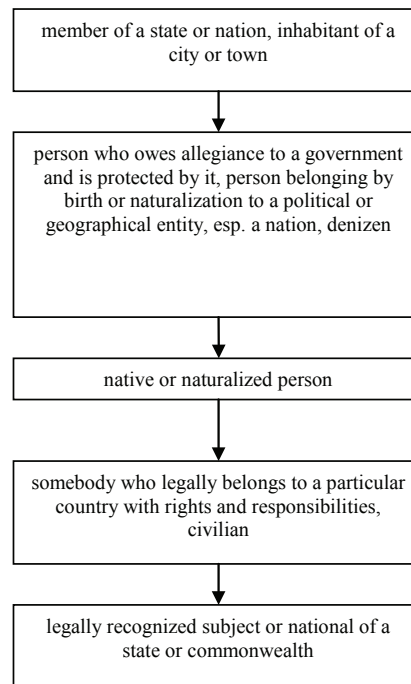
e.g (BNC): 1. Under a giant makeshift marquee, Tadashi Kume, the president of Honda, promised that the Japanese company would become a ‘good citizen of Europe’ buying 80 per cent of components for its Swindon-built cars from European suppliers. 2. To register to vote for example, a union citizen must have been resident in Great Britain on the qualifying date of the tenth of October or fifteenth of September for Northern Ireland in exactly the same way as British or other commonwealth citizens and citizens of other member states who wish to be candidates of the elections for the European parliament must conform to the same nomination procedures as candidates have hitherto.

e.g(COCA): 1. Therefore every citizen or at least every voter should have standing in the TABOR case. 2. Morgan Stanley wasn’t charged and it appears to have been a model corporate citizen.) is represented by 6% in BNC and 4% in COCA text fragments.

According to the results of textual analysis based on the lexeme «citizen» functioning in British and American the semantic hierarchy of the lexeme «citizen» in British (see Graph 1) and American (see Graph 2) variants can be presented:



Graph 1. Hierarchy of the semantic structure of the lexeme «citizen» in BNC



Graph 2. Hierarchy of the semantic structure of the lexeme «citizen» in COCA

As we can see in Graph 1 the semantic structure of the lexeme «citizen» and its functions in the British variant of English do not fully coincide with the structure of the lexical semantic field of the investigated lexeme, constructed on the basis of definitional and componential analyses since the component «native or naturalized person» is registered as the least frequently revealed one in the text fragments, being the component of the closest periphery to the nucleus in the structure of LSF «citizen». On the contrary as we can observe in Graph 2 this component occupies the position of the «close periphery» to the nucleus «member of a state» in American English.

Another important feature is the lexical meaning with semantic components representing «person who owes allegiance to a government and is protected by it, person belonging by birth or naturalization to a political or geographical entity, esp. a nation, denizen» since this component occupies the «distant periphery» to the nucleus in the LSF but in Graph 1 and Graph 2 it is second most frequently used in both British and American variants of the English Language.

Therefore considering the percentage indices and hierarchical semantic meaning of the lexeme «citizen» with comparison to the data obtained by means of definitional analysis, we can **conclude** that the nucleus of the lexico-semantic field represented in the earlier works – «*member of a state or nation, inhabitant of a city or town*» [1, p. 59] – by far represents the primary semantic meaning of the lexeme «citizen» in both American and British Corpora while other elements of meaning change their position in accordance with the frequency of their usage in lexicographical resources and overall frequency of functioning in contemporary English corpora and demonstrate the differentiating features of the semantic structure and semantic functioning of the lexeme «citizen» in British and American national variants.

The components of the semantic structure of the lexeme «citizen» and its functional semantics in other variants of the English language (Canadian and Australian) will now become **the object of our further investigations** in this field.

The results of our study are of big importance and **practical use** for the further investigations of the LSF «citizen» within the framework of cognitive linguistics and cross-cultural communication.

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