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THE FRAME *INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS* AS A MENTAL STRUCTURE WITHIN MODERN EDUCATIONAL DISCOURSE

ABSTRACT

The present research is aimed at defining the peculiarities of the frame *INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS* within modern educational discourse and finding out the lexical means verbalizing it in modern English. The first paragraph of the paper (Theory) reveals the key notions of the research – international communication, educational discourse, educational management and international affairs. Besides, it reveals the essence of the concept as the key mental structure. The next paragraph (Discussion and Results) deals with singling out the lexical units verbalizing the frame *INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS* as one of the components of the concept *INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION* within modern educational discourse. The factual material of the research contains 483 lexical units verbalizing the frame *INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS* in modern English singled out from the brochures and official web-sites of 50 leading higher educational institutions (25 HEIs of Great Britain and 25 HEIs of the USA) within the 10-year period (2005-2015). We come to the conclusion that the frame *INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS* as one of the components of the concept *INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION* is actualized in modern English by a great number of linguistic means. The prospects of further research are seen in defining the cognitive and linguistic features of some other frames composing the structure of the concept *INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION* in the modern English language.

Key words: *international communication, international affairs, educational management, concept, frame.*

Introduction

Modern system of higher education undergoes constant development, change and transformation. This process is caused by a number of different factors, including

an attempt to unify and harmonize the European Higher Education Area and implement the Bologna process components into the academic process of higher educational institutions. Besides, the

process of globalization that characterizes not only the modern sphere of higher education, but also all the other branches of social life, also plays its part here. Moreover, it influences the general conception of higher education management and the system of management of every particular higher educational institution as well.

The European Commission has an active policy for cooperation in education (higher education in particular) and training with European and non-European Union (EU) countries. On the one hand, cooperation with EU and non-EU countries enhances the quality of education and training in the EU and beyond by promoting peer-to-peer learning and comparison with education systems worldwide. On the other hand, it causes the need for *international communication*.

It should be mentioned that educational cooperation and international communication boosts innovation and job creation through mobility, and offers opportunities for staff and students to broaden their horizons through participation in the EU programmes. European universities have a positive record of internationalisation; they have facilitated the development of international curricula and joint degrees, fostered international research and innovation projects, and

supported the exchange of students, staff, and knowledge.

Theory

In Europe, the process of financial, political and cultural integration is underway. This process requires solutions to problems caused by the creation of a large area of fluid interrelation between a large number of human groups that speak different languages.

Nations and people of the world are increasingly interconnected and mutually interdependent. Globally, most cities and countries are becoming more diverse internally, with citizens and residents of varying races, religions, ethnicities and national backgrounds. Meanwhile, the greater risk is associated with economic or political aloofness and social isolation. All of these social forces are fostering increasingly more study of intercultural communication.

Specifically, **intercultural communication** is defined as communication, and the study of it, among peoples of different cultural, ethnic and tribal backgrounds. Because of the inherent differences between the message sender/encoder and the message receiver/decoder, the risk of misunderstanding is particularly high in intercultural situations.

This risk of misunderstanding is especially noticeable in the sphere of education. In order to avoid this risk, international cooperation of higher educational institutions should be a well-balanced and well-controlled process.

The branch of science that investigates the peculiarities and principles of running the system of education as a whole and every educational institution in particular, defines the functions and qualities of a modern manager is called *educational management*. A number of studies within the branches of pedagogics, psychology and management are concerned with researching this new sphere of scientific knowledge.

It should be emphasized that *educational management* is not only a lexical unit verbalizing the process of running an educational institution in modern English; it is a concept having a ramose semantic structure and including different images, associations and processes connected with the process of running an educational institution.

In our previous papers, lexical-and-semantic variants composing semantic structure of the lexical unit *educational management* have been identified [3] and the generalized frame structure of the concept EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT in modern English has been shown [13].

It should be mentioned that the sphere of educational management has been actively investigated for the last decades. Some of the papers focus on its pedagogical and psychological components [4; 12], the others deal with its social and marketing aspects [9], the third ones concentrate on the issues of management [1]. However, there have still been no studies concerned with linguistic or linguocognitive aspects of educational management. This very fact proves the **topicality** of our paper.

The analysis of scientific literature dedicated to researching the notion of *educational management*, allows us to state that it contains such components in its structure as the apparatus of management, methods of running of educational institution, administration, financial activity, international affairs etc.

It should be emphasized that every concept is a mental unity that is the minimum component of the conceptual worldview of every civilized society. Besides, the concept is a key element of the conceptualization process resulting in development of the conceptual system – the system of concepts located within the consciousness of a single person or collective consciousness of a whole ethnic group. The concept structures and represents the knowledge about the world, reality and outcomes of the inner reflective activity [7, c. 298].

The papers dealing with the study of the notion *concept* are characterized with broad views on this multifacet phenomenon. As a result, the complexity of defining this notion causes various ideas in its understanding. Such a differentiation is a result of existence of several approaches to defining its nature:

1. *linguocultural* [8] where the concept is seen as a result of the link of the word meaning with speaker's personal and ethnic experience;
2. *cultural* [10] when the concept is understood as the main element of culture in the person's mental world;
3. *linguistic* [2] based on the idea that a linguistic sign is a means of forming the conceptual content;
4. *linguocognitive* [6], the representatives of which analyze the concept from semantic-and-semasiological standpoint justifying the search for linguistic representations of this mental unity.

In our paper we stick to the last point of view and consider it to be the key one for achieving the **aim** of our research: to define the peculiarities of verbalization of the frame INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS and to show which linguistic means represent this concept as one of the key components of the concept INTERNATIONAL

COMMUNICATION and to describe its main cognitive features.

The subject of the article is presented by lexical units objectifying the conceptual features of the concept INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION, in particular one of its structural components – the frame INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. The task of the present study lies in singling out the verbalization means of the frame INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS in modern English.

Method

As for the methodological tools used for analyzing the most essential social concepts, they are marked with their variety.

The key method that is used in our research is the frame analysis method. In our opinion, it allows us to have a deep and detailed look into the concept EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT. From the point of view of Ch. Fillmore [12], a frame is a system of interconnected and interdependent: if one of the concepts of this structure is included in the text or speech, then the rest are automatically available too [5, c. 162]. As for its structure, the frame consists of slots that are filled with the information about the particular situation.

Discussion and Results

The factual material of the research contains 483 lexical units verbalizing the frame INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS in modern English singled out from the brochures and official web-sites of 50 leading higher educational institutions (25 HEIs of Great Britain and 25 HEIs of the USA) within the 10-year period (2005-2015).

A thorough analysis of the factual material allows us to state that the means of verbalization of this slot are identical in both varieties of the English language: British and American.

The lexical units representing this slot in modern English are not peculiar of the sphere of education only. The majority of lexical units verbalizing this slot refer to the general vocabulary of English and are used in other specific spheres of the English language. The analysis of the dictionary definitions of lexical units verbalizing this slot has shown that their semantic structure and content fully correspond to their dictionary definitions. Within the sphere of education, they acquire only one additional conceptual feature – *in the sphere of education*.

The study of lexis of the brochures and official web-sites, singled out for the present research, has shown that the key notions forming the notional basis of this

slot are as follows: *collaboration, partnership, opportunities, projects and research*. They are verbalized with the corresponding nouns in the English language (*collaboration, partnership, opportunities, projects, programs, research* etc.) together with such adjectives as *international, joint, research, scientific, exchange* etc. They are usually used in different collocations, for instance *joint partnership, joint collaboration, exchange programs, international collaboration, international research opportunities*. The following example shows the real functioning of the lexical units verbalizing the frame INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS in modern English:

(1) *The Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships Exchange Programs were developed in order to enhance and broaden Caltech students' undergraduate experiences by giving them the chance to live in another culture, conduct research in a different academic/research environment, and prepare for careers that will most certainly involve international cooperation and collaboration (California Institute of Technology, the USA).*

The analysis of factual material allows us to state that all the HEIs pay a lot of attention to their reputation and acknowledgement at the global educational

arena. We think that this is the reason why such lexical units as *reputation* and *acknowledgement* are widely used in the educational discourse of British and American varieties of the modern English language.

Semantic content of these lexical units is identical in both varieties of the English language and coincides with those meanings that are found in lexicographical sources: *reputation* – *the opinion that people have about how good or how bad someone or something is* (Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners); *acknowledgement* – *the act of publicly thanking someone for something they have done* (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English). The common semes of these definitions are *the opinion about the activity* and *acknowledgement of the activity outcomes*. These semes are stored in different linguistic means representing this frame that are underlined in the following example:

(2) *The mission of the University of Cambridge is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence* (University of Cambridge, Great Britain);

We think that the phenomenon of semantic identity of the lexemes

verbalizing the frame INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS in the American and British varieties of the English language can be explained by the fact that a HEI is a legal organization where international cooperation is an indispensable part. An identical linguistic apparatus is necessary for facilitating the cooperation between the educational institutions and avoiding any misunderstandings.

Conclusion

Thus, the frame INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS as one of the components of the concept INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION within modern educational discourse is actualized in modern English by a great number of linguistic means. In the process of the investigation it has been identified that all the lexical units verbalizing the frame in British and American varieties of modern English refer to the general vocabulary of the English language, not the special one. The only cognitive feature that added to them is *the sphere of education*.

The prospects of further research are seen in defining the cognitive and linguistic features of some other frames composing the structure of the concept INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION in the modern English language.

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