

*Kutovyi A. B.,**PhD Student, Foreign Literature Department**Oles Honchar Dnipro National University**<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-1557-7000>*

LEXICAL-SEMANTIC STRUCTURE OF THE CONCEPT “ECONOMICS” IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

Summary. The article explores the general concepts of “concept” and “cognitive linguistics” and practically examines the means of verbalizing the concept of “Economics” based on contemporary English-language sources. The study material includes data from English dictionaries – synonym and antonym dictionaries, phraseological units, and web resources of general and specific (economic) thematic orientation. The purpose of the article is to identify the features of the verbalization (lexical-semantic structure) of the concept “Economics” using sources from modern English. Methodology: national and foreign scholars have developed numerous methods for studying concepts. The most notable include conceptual analysis, the method of identifying the semantic composition of a key word, metaphorical analysis, analysis of lexical paradigms of various sizes and types verbalizing a particular concept, and the analysis of proverbs and aphorisms. The most comprehensive approach, in our opinion, is a multi-faceted, integrated analysis involving the sequential application of several complementary methods. This integral approach is applied in this study. Scientific novelty of this work lies in the need to update the limited existing data on the lexical-semantic structure of the concept of “Economics” in contemporary English. This is particularly relevant given the scarcity of research on this topic in the national literary-scientific process, the ongoing debate surrounding the concept issue in both Ukraine and abroad, and the necessity of systematizing theoretical and practical data in the field of cognitive linguistics. In conclusion, the core of the concept “Economics” is identified, which is represented by nouns such as Economics and Economy. The study also examines the concept’s near periphery, represented by synonymic and/or antonymic series including the following nouns: economy, finance, commerce, financial system, thrift, frugality, conservation, wealth, financial resources, financial management, thriftiness, prudence, canniness; and antonyms like diseconomy, improvidence, lavishness, prodigality, wastefulness. Additionally, the far periphery of the concept is analyzed, specifically phraseological units containing the components “economy/economics” which can be grouped into three broad categories: sayings/proverbs, idioms, and professional (financial) jargon.

Key words: cognitive linguistics, concept, economics, lexical-semantic structure, verbalization.

Problem statement. The entire cognitive activity of humans can be viewed as a progressively developing ability to navigate the world, and this activity is associated with the necessity of forming new concepts. At a certain stage in the development of the humanities, national linguistics studies faced the need to create a new term to adequately denote the semantic aspect of a linguistic sign. This term would eliminate the functional limitations

of the traditional notions of “meaning” and “sense” and organically combine logical-psychological and linguistic categories.

This identified need has led to the emergence of a range of competing nominative units, which arose alongside the necessity to equate and distinguish objects of the real world. A common feature among them was the aspiration to “reflect in concepts” the ethnic specificity of linguistic knowledge representation. To describe such units, terms such as “concept,” “linguocultureme,” “mythologeme,” and “logoevisteme” coexist in domestic linguistic literature, each of which is fully or partially equated with the term “notion.” However, it is now evident that the most universal term is “concept,” which has significantly surpassed all other terminological innovations in this field of cognitive science in terms of usage frequency.

Cognitive linguistics (from the English cognition, meaning “knowledge, cognition,” or “cognitive ability”) as an interdisciplinary linguistic approach within cognitive science, which views the functioning of language as a type of cognitive, i.e., knowledge-acquiring, activity, and studies cognitive mechanisms and the structure of human consciousness through linguistic phenomena, is becoming the primary domain for conducting relevant research.

Literature review. On the disciplinary map of science, cognitive linguistics emerged relatively recently, as the theory of modern cognitive linguistics consists of several individual research programs that were developed only within the past century. The birth of cognitive science is traditionally dated to 1956, with J. Miller recognized as its founder, and its foundational hypothesis being the idea that cognitive processes can be understood as processes of processing and transforming mental representations. According to Miller, the goal of cognitive research is to construct an integrated picture of human speech, thought, and intellectual behavior.

The direct origins of cognitive linguistics are associated with a symposium held at the University of Duisburg in Germany, organized by R. Dirven in 1989 [1, p. 174–178]. At the current stage of research in the field of cognitive science, the most significant contributions in the international academic arena come from linguists such as C. Fillmore, J. Miller, G. Lakoff (1980), R. Langacker (1987), L. Talmy, V. A. Maslova (2005), and N. Chomsky (2017), among others.

Among prominent national scholars addressing issues of cognitive linguistics, notable figures include I. B. Stern (1998), S. A. Zhabotynska (2011), L. I. Bielekhova, O. P. Vorobiova, and others.

Thus, the aim of this paper is to identify the features of the verbalization (lexical-semantic structure) of the concept «Economics» using sources from modern English.

Results and discussion. The term “concept” is widely used in modern scientific literature but is interpreted in various ways. It is

viewed as an ideal, culturally conditioned representation of reality, as a logical category, as a notion in practical philosophy, and more. There are several different classifications and definitions of concepts, reflecting the complexity and multidimensionality of their semantic and structural organization, as well as the absence of a universally accepted structure of a concept in contemporary scientific-linguistic discourse.

The word “concept” is a calque from the Latin *conceptus* meaning “notion,” derived from the verb *concipere* (“to conceive”), literally translating to “conception” [2]. The term encompasses the subject areas of several scientific disciplines, primarily cognitive psychology and cognitive linguistics, which deal with issues of thinking, cognition, information storage, and processing. Within cognitive linguistics, concepts are understood as operational semantic units of memory, the mental lexicon, reflected in human psychology.

In the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, a concept is defined as “someone’s idea of how something is, or should be done” [3]. This definition unexpectedly points to a thinking individual who holds a particular idea and perspective. Despite the abstractness and generalization of this subject, the concept also incorporates potential subjectivity, emphasizing the inseparability of a person from the concept.

To date, researchers have developed several methodologies for studying concepts and various ways of describing them based on different research materials. The most commonly used approaches include: identifying the semantic composition of the key word by analyzing the definitions of the basic lexical representation of the concept in various explanatory dictionaries [4]; analyzing lexical paradigms of different volumes and types that verbalize a particular concept; and analyzing materials from proverbs and aphorisms [4].

In a significant number of academic papers and monographs dedicated to concept analysis, multiple methods from those mentioned above are often employed simultaneously. This allows for the most comprehensive representation and illustration of the content and structure of the concept under study. For this research, we consider the methodology of broad conceptual analysis to be the most relevant.

I. B. Stern [1] describes the methodology of conceptual analysis based on the structural features of the concept, namely, the presence of a core and a periphery. The core consists of the dictionary meanings of a particular lexeme, which, according to the scholar, provide great potential for uncovering the content of the concept and identifying the specifics of its linguistic expression. The periphery comprises subjective experience, various pragmatic components of the lexeme, connotations, and associations.

Conducting a comprehensive conceptual analysis involves the following sequence of steps. First, when analyzing the core of a concept, it is necessary to identify the key word(s) that represent the concept in the language, as these are the primary means most frequently used to convey the concept linguistically. The criteria for selecting these key words may include frequency of use, abstractness of meaning, and general familiarity.

The content of concepts is further enriched through the analysis of synonyms, antonyms, and phraseological units associated with the key lexeme. This involves examining the semantics of these units, including their primary sememes and specific features, which can help uncover new conceptual traits.

Analyzing the collocations of lexemes that objectify (verbalize) the concept in the language reveals the means of categorizing the conceptualized phenomenon. These represent the substantive features that are part of the concept’s structure.

Let us proceed to identify the core (basic layer) and the periphery (additional cognitive layers) of the concept under study. We establish that the concept of “Economics” is primarily associated with the corresponding word “Economics”. According to the definition provided in the Merriam-Webster dictionary, Economics is defined as “a social science concerned chiefly with the description and analysis of the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services” [2].

Thus, we determine that in modern English, the concept of “Economics” is also intrinsically linked to the notion of Economy, which it describes: “the structure or conditions of economic life in a country, area, or period; an economic system” [2]. This is because the economy is the subject of study within this scientific discipline (economics). Therefore, the words economics and economy are the key lexemes representing the concept of “Economics” in English and belong to the core of the analyzed concept.

At the next stage of this research, we identify the near periphery of the concept, which involves determining additional conceptual meanings of the key lexeme through the analysis of its synonyms, antonyms, derivatives, and phraseological units. It is assumed that the semantic field (lexical-semantic system) of the concept includes words belonging to the same part of speech. Therefore, we define the near periphery of the concept as a set of nouns based on their integral features. This provides grounds to consider the analyzed nouns as synonymous and/or antonymous groups, as synonyms are words that differ in their sound form but are identical or similar in the denotational component of their lexical meaning [5, p. 66], and antonyms are words that belong to the same part of speech and are used or associated in such a way as to denote opposite notions [5, p. 66].

The results of the analysis, based on the extraction of nouns from various lexicographic sources (including the Cambridge Learner’s Dictionary, The Dictionary by Merriam-Webster, Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture, and English Oxford Living Dictionary [6, 2, 3]), allowed us to identify the following synonyms for the main lexemes “Economics,” selected based on their frequency of use in speech: economy (n) – “the management of the resources of a community, country, etc., especially with a view to its productivity”; finance (n) – “the management of revenues; the conduct or transaction of money matters generally, especially those affecting the public, as in the fields of banking and investment”; commerce (n) – “an interchange of goods or commodities, especially on a large scale between different countries or between different parts of the same country trade; business”; financial system (n) – “the system that enables lenders and borrowers to exchange funds”; thrift (n) – “economical management”; frugality (n) – “the quality of being economical with money or food”; conservation (n) – “a careful preservation and protection of something”.

The synonyms for the lexeme “Economy” are: wealth(n) – abundance of valuable material possessions or resources; all material objects that have economic utility; especially: the stock of useful goods having economic value in existence at any one time; financial resources(n) – the money available to a business for spending in the form of cash, liquid securities and credit lines; financial system(n) – a financial system (within the scope of finance)

is a system that allows the exchange of funds between lenders, investors, and borrowers. Financial systems operate at national, global, and firm-specific levels; financial management (n) – refers to the efficient and effective management of money (funds) in such a manner as to accomplish the objectives of the organization; thrift (n) – careful management, especially of money; prudence (n) – the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason; thriftiness (n) – frugality; caniness (n) – carefulness or prudence in money management.

The antonyms of the key lexical units of the concept “Economics,” according to the Merriam-Webster English Antonyms Dictionary, are the following words: diseconomy (n) – a lack of economy; extravagance (n) – an instance of excess or prodigality; specifically, an excessive outlay of money; improvidence (n) – neglecting to provide for future needs; lavishness (n) – expending or bestowing profusely; prodigality (n) – recklessly spendthrift; wastefulness (n) – useless or profitless activity; using or expending or consuming thoughtlessly or carelessly.

Thus, by analyzing the antonymic series of the key lexical units of the concept Economics, we have confirmed that in addition to the primary meanings of economics as a scientific discipline or financial system, the lexemes “Economics” and “Economy” also include additional meanings such as “thriftiness – extravagance,” “economy – diseconomy,” “saving – generosity,” and so on.

To analyze the idiomatic expressions that represent this concept in modern English, we use lexicographical sources and English-language publications dedicated to various topics, including economics (e.g., *The Economic Times*, *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, etc.), which include idiomatic and phrasal units. This is due to the fact that the materials from such sources better reflect the current state of the concept being studied, and we select those idiomatic units directly related to the concept of “Economics” in modern English.

Indeed, the phraseological stock of the English language contains a large number of idiomatic expressions related to this concept. These can be categorized into three main groups [8, 9]: sayings / proverbs, idioms, and professional (financial) jargon. To date, the most commonly used phraseological units from those we have studied include the following; however, their number can be significantly expanded through the use of additional lexicographical and other sources (listed in alphabetical order): (to be) born with a silver spoon in one’s mouth (idiom) – to be born into a wealthy and privileged family; a debt paid is a friend kept (proverb) – When there is a rational financial relationship between two friends, they get along better than if there were financial problems; not all that glitters is gold (saying) – the attractive external appearance of something is not a reliable indication of its true nature; a rising tide lifts all boats (aphorism) – improvements in the general economy benefit all participants in that economy; (to) balance the books (idiom) – to check that all the money in a business is accounted for; (to) break the bank (idiom) – to be left without money; false economy (jargon) – an initial attempt to save money that ultimately costs more in the future; (to) have deep pockets (idiom) – to have a lot of money or abundant financial resources; (to) have more money than sense (idiom) – to act foolishly with one’s money, lacking the intelligence (sense) to manage it properly; it’s good fishing in troubled waters (proverb) – to involve oneself in a difficult, confused, or dangerous situation, often with the intent of gaining an advantage; (to) keep one’s head above water (idiom) – to avoid succumbing to difficul-

ties, especially financial difficulties or debt; (to) make money hand over fist (idiom) – to earn money quickly and in large amounts; money for jam (jargon) – an easy way of earning money; money laundering (idiom) – the process of disguising financial assets so they can be used without detection of the illegal activities that produced them; monkey business (idiom) – mischievous or deceitful behavior; nest egg (idiom) – a sum of money set aside as a reserve or savings; (to) pay through the nose (idiom) – to pay an excessively high price for something; (to) play duck and drakes (idiom) – to carelessly squander one’s wealth; time is money (proverb) – a person’s time is as valuable as money.

Conclusion. Thus, within the framework of this study, we have established the core of the concept of “Economics,” which is verbalized by such nouns as Economics and Economy. We have also examined the near periphery of the concept in the form of synonymous and/or antonymous chains, which include the following nouns: economy, finance, commerce, financial system, thrift, frugality, conservation, wealth, financial resources, financial management, prudence, thriftiness, caniness, as well as diseconomy, improvidence, lavishness, prodigality, and wastefulness respectively. Furthermore, we have analyzed the distant periphery of the concept, specifically the phraseological units containing the components economy/economics, which can be divided into three main groups: sayings / proverbs, idioms, and professional (financial) jargon. The phraseological units we have considered, which contain components of the Economics concept, are metaphorical and reinterpreted, and they often pertain not only to the narrow sphere of professional activity related to economic science but, for the most part, are part of the core vocabulary of contemporary English and are used by native speakers in everyday life.

The prospects for further research in this area lie in the potential expansion of the corpus of phraseological units from modern lexicographical and other sources, as well as the possibility of conducting a deeper analysis of the means of verbalizing the concept based on contemporary English and Ukrainian language materials, utilizing various conceptual research methodologies available at the time of further research.

Bibliography:

1. Штерн І. Б. Вибрані топіки та лексикон сучасної лінгвістики: енциклопедичний словник для фахівців. Київ : Артєк, 1998. 336 с.
2. The Dictionary by Merriam-Webster [Електронний ресурс]. URL: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/> (дата звернення: 20.11.2024).
3. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English [Електронний ресурс]. URL: <https://www.ldoceonline.com/> (дата звернення: 20.11.2024).
4. Lakoff G., Johnson M. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago; London : The University of Chicago Press, 1980. 242 p.
5. Анісімова А. І. Лексикологія сучасної англійської мови: теорія і практика: підручник. Дніпро : РВВ ДНУ, 2017. 216 с.
6. Cambridge Learner’s Dictionary [Електронний ресурс]. URL: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/learner-english/> (дата звернення: 20.11.2024).
7. Жаботинська С. Лексичні поля й нелінійна динаміка когнітивних структур. *Вісник Львівського університету. Серія: Філологія*. 2011. Вип. 52. С. 3–11.
8. Langacker R. W. *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar: Theoretical Prerequisites*. Stanford : Stanford University Press, 1987. Vol. 1. 512 p.
9. Nemickienė Ž. Concept in Modern Linguistics: the Component of the Concept Good [Електронний ресурс]. URL: <https://dspace.kauko.lt/handle/1/817> (дата звернення: 20.11.2024).

10. On Language: Chomsky's Classic Works: Language and Responsibility and Reflections on Language. New York: The New Press, 2017. 259 p.

Кутовий А. Лексико-семантична структура концепту «Economics» в сучасній англійській мові

Анотація. У статті розглядаються загальні поняття «концепт» та «когнітивна лінгвістика» і практично досліджується засоби вербалізації концепту «Economics» на матеріалі джерел сучасної англійської мови. Матеріалом дослідження слугували дані словників англійської мови – словники синонімів та антонімів, фразеологічних одиниць та веб ресурси загальної і специфічної тематичної (економічної) спрямованості. Мета даної роботи полягає у виявленні особливостей лексико-семантичної структури концепту «Economics» на в сучасній англійській мові.

Вітчизняними та зарубіжними вченими було розроблено велику кількість методик дослідження концептів, до найбільш відомих з яких належать: метод концептуального аналізу, метод виявлення семного складу ключового слова, метафоричний аналіз, аналіз лексичних парадигм різного об'єму і типу, вербалізуючих той чи інший концепт, аналіз матеріалу паремій і афоризмів тощо. Найбільш повним, на наш погляд, є комплексний, багатоаспектний аналіз, проведений з послідовним застосуванням декількох зга-

даних взаємодоповнюючих методик; цей інтегральний підхід і було використано в цій роботі. Наукова новизна цієї роботи зумовлена необхідністю оновлення фонду вже існуючих нечисленних даних щодо лексико-семантичної структури концепту «Economics» в сучасній англійській мові, враховуючи малу кількість досліджень в національному літературно-науковому процесі з даної теми, дискусійність проблеми концепту як в Україні, так і за кордоном, і необхідність систематизації теоретичних і практичних даних в сфері когнітивної лінгвістики.

В статті виявлено ядро концепту «Economics», яке представлено такими іменниками, як «Economics» та «Economy», а також розглянуто ближню периферію концепту як синонімічні та/або антонімічні ряди, що містять наступні іменники: economy, finance, commerce, financial system, thrift, frugality, conservation, wealth, financial resources, financial system, financial management, thrift, prudence, thriftiness, caninness; diseconomy, improvidence, lavishness, prodigality, wastefulness відповідно. Також, проаналізовано дальню периферію концепту, а саме – фразеологічні одиниці з компонентом «economy/economics», що їх можна поділити на три великі групи: sayings / proverbs, idioms та professional (financial) jargon.

Ключові слова: когнітивна лінгвістика, концепт, економіка, лексико-семантична структура, вербалізація.