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LEXICAL-SEMANTIC FIELDS IN THE TEXTS OF THE AMERICAN PATRIOTIC SONG

The article discusses the definitions of the term “Lexical-semantic field” given by different authors and produces a brief description of them. It also provides theoretical information on text units with patriotic semantics. The practical part of the article examines how the lexical and semantic fields are reflected in the texts of American patriotic songs. The detailed analysis of lexical and semantic units is carried out, presented on examples of 10 patriotic songs, and the functions they carry. The collection of songs “All American Patriotic Songbook” and “American Patriotic Songs” were selected for this study.

Keywords: lexical-semantic field, patriotic song, Motherland, text, patriot, lyric hero.

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ЛЕКСИКО-СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЕ ПОЛЯ В ТЕКСТАХ АМЕРИКАНСКОЙ ПАТРИОТИЧЕСКОЙ ПЕСНИ

Рассматриваются определения термина «лексико-семантическое поле», приводимые разными авторами, и дается их краткая характеристика. Также дается теоретическая информация относительно текстовых единиц с патриотической семантикой. В практической части рассматривается, как лексико-семантические поля отражаются в текстах американских патриотических песен. Проводится детальный анализ лексико-семантических единиц, представленный на примерах 10 патриотических песен, и функций, которые они несут. Для данного исследования были выбраны сборники песен «All American Patriotic Songbook» и «American Patriotic Songs».

Ключевые слова: лексико-семантическое поле, патриотическая песня, Родина, текст, патриот, лирический герой.

In linguistics, a semantic field is a lexical set of words, grouped semantically (by meaning), which refers to a specific subject.

American historian Crane Brinton defines a “semantic field” or “semantic area” and connects the linguistic concept with hyponymy:

“Associated with the concept of hyponymy, but more loosely defined, the concept of a semantic field or domain. The semantic field denotes a segment of reality symbolized by a set of related words. Words in the semantic field have a common semantic property” [4, p. 112].

The general and intuitive description is that the words in the semantic field are not necessarily synonymous, but they are all used to speak

of the same general phenomenon [4, p. 112].

According to the Finnish philosopher Jaakko Hintikka, synonymy requires the separation of the seme, but the semantic field is a large area surrounding them. The meaning of a word depends in part on its relationship to other words in the same conceptual area [7, p. 41].

By the words of the philosopher Adrian Akmajan, the types of semantic fields vary from culture to culture, and anthropologists use them to study belief systems and reasoning in different cultural groups [2, p. 239].

British philosopher John Andersen defines traditional uses of the “semantic field” theory as:

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“Traditionally, semantic fields have been used to compare the lexical structure of different languages and different states of the same language” [3, p. 327].

In this article, we will look at how lexical-semantic fields are used in patriotic songs of the United States.

A patriotic song is a piece of music that vividly expresses a feeling of love and devotion to one’s people, nation, country or community.

A text unit with patriotic semantics can be viewed as a means of accumulating, storing and transmitting knowledge acquired and reflected in a poetic form, which makes it possible to reveal the mentality of a nation, linguistic and cultural phenomena. Such a textual component has thematically determined semantics, various forms of expression, functional significance and power of influence in connection with the popularity of the song in the communicative space.

A landscape text unit with patriotic semantics is able to convey not only the main content of the song text, but also preserve the historical memory of the people. A distinctive feature of such elements is that they can be basic for some texts and background for others, have a nuclear center and peripheral zones.

Information related to the semantics of patriotism is the most complex structure, including public and individual, at the same time objective and subjective perception of a person about the real picture of the world, which is associated not only with the creation

of the author of the text, but also with the perception of the listener.

Next, we will consider with examples how the lexical-semantic fields are reflected in patriotic songs and what function they carry.

The collection of songs “All American Patriotic Songbook” and “American Patriotic Songs” were selected for this study.

“All American Patriotic Songbook” is a collection of the most famous American Patriotic Songbooks, edited and produced by American poet and professor John Haag, who is the editor and producer of 72 of America’s favorite songbooks. “American Patriotic Songs” is a collection of popular and rare tunes from the American Civil War.

“All American Patriotic Songbook” and “American Patriotic Songs” includes 46 songs, the content of which mainly focuses on the natural beauty of the nation, love of America, pride and honor of being an American, the unyielding spirit of the American people, ongoing conflict and the call for resistance movements.

Now we will study everything on examples.

1. Lee Greenwood “God, bless the USA”, 1983.

In the song, the singer tells about how if he lost everything he had and had to start from the start, he would do it in the United States, because he believes that his freedom is guaranteed in America. This relationship can be seen in the following lines:

“I’d thank my lucky stars,

To be livin here today.

Cause the flag still stands for freedom...”.

The stars in the sky are symbolized by the stars on the flag of the state. The stars that made it possible for a person to live in the country and the flag waving in the sky in the name of freedom.

*“And I won’t forget the men who died,
Who gave that right to me”.*

The author recalls how other Americans in history died to secure this freedom. The words “men who died” and “who gave that right to me” are addressed to the brave men who made it possible for people to live in a free country. Also in this context, the author is seen as claiming that if he ever had to defend the United States today, he would happily stand up and fight because he loves his country.

*“And I’m proud to be an American,
Where at least I know I’m free”.*

In these lines, we also see how a patriot associates his home country with freedom. He prides himself on being American, where at least he knows he is free and willing to do his best to defend his homeland [10].

2. Toby Keith “American soldier”, 2003.

*“I’m just trying to be a father...
Be a lover to their mother...”*

At the beginning of the text of the song, we can see the lexical-semantic connection, with the help of which the soldier is compared with the father for the children, as well as the lover for the mother. This technique shows us how devoted a soldier is to his family.

*“... I just do it anyway
Providing ... my responsibility”;
“I just work straight on holidays
And sometimes all night long”.*

The words “anyway” and “responsibility” show that our protagonist needs neither money nor fame. He serves his homeland to show responsibility for his native land and so that the future generation knows what a real soldier should be. A patriot has no days off, and if necessary, he will stand

up to defend his homeland and on holidays, and sometimes work all night, which can be traced in the words “on holidays” and “all night long”.

*“Hey, I’m solid, hey I’m steady, hey I’m true
down to the core”.*

The set of epithets in these words emphasizes the strength and courage of the army and navy.

The protagonist confirms that he is strong, resilient, devoted to the Motherland and plays an integral role in preserving peace and defending the country [11, p. 22].

3. Johnny Cash “Ragger old flag”, 1974.

*“Your old court house is kinda run down,
He said, “Naw, it’ll do for our little town”.*

This comparison shows that the old man is not at all worried that the court house has been knocked down a little. On the contrary, he is proud of his native land, saying that this house is now for their small town.

*“We’re kinda proud of That Ragged Old
Flag...”;*

*“It got powder burned the night Francis Scott
Key sat watching it...”;*

“It got a rip in New Orleans”.

In the following lines there is already a direct mention of this ragged flag, and most importantly of the events through which it went.

This passage includes patriotic lines that are addressed to every generation. The Old Man’s Torn Flag describes in detail the history of the American state. The basis of this comparison is to show how patriotism spreads across generations, and also why a song like “Ragged Old Flag” is an important part of patriotism in the United States of America.

*“So we raise her up every morning
And we bring her down slow every nigh
Cause I’m mighty proud of That Ragged Old
Flag”.*

Every day, residents raise and lower the flag, not even paying attention to the fact that it is tattered. Note that the author per-

sonalizes the flag using the pronoun “her”. By this, he once again proves that no matter what America goes through, he will always be proud of his country [6, p. 25].

4. Alan Jackson “Where were you” (“When the world stopped turning”), 2001.

The song is based on Jackson’s own experiences on September 11, 2001. Jackson returned home from his walk to hear news of the attack on television.

In this song, the lexical and semantic connection is traced in the rhetorical questions that the author asks the civilians and in the answers he offers. Let’s consider this technique with examples:

“Where were you ... That September day?”

“Out in the yard...”

Or working on some stage in L. A.?”

“Did you stand there in shock at the sight of that black smoke”.

And if you listen carefully to the text of the song, you can immediately notice that these rhetorical questions continue throughout the text of the song and each question has its own function. But most importantly, all these questions are aimed at the reaction of civilians.

Some stanzas ask:

“Did you lay down at night and think of tomorrow?/Go out and buy you a gun?”

In between, the author asks where the people were when the tragedy broke out:

“Did you go to a church and hold hands with some strangers

Did you stand in line and give your own blood?”

In the chorus, Jackson tries to summarize his own feelings, first calling himself “a singer of simple songs” and “not a real political man”, and finally paraphrasing the first message Apostle Paul to the Corinthians from the biblical New Testament. “Faith, hope and love are some good things He gave us / And the

greatest is love” [9].

5. Big and Rich “8th of November”, 2005.

“Said goodbye to his momma as he left South Dakota

To fight for the red, white and blue”.

The song, which begins with a spoken introduction by Chris Kristofferson, tells the story of Niles Harris, a soldier of the 173rd Airborne Brigade of the United States Army, during the military operation in South Vietnam on November 8, 1965.

The words “red, white and blue” are associated with American flags, explaining to us that the hero is ready to fight for his homeland.

“Like a dark evil cloud, 1,200 came down on him and 29 more”

Here the author draws our attention to the fact that at the time when he would have been dropped in the jungle, another 1229 people fell on him. They are also patriots, but when they all fell, it looked visually like a cloud of evil, consisting of people fighting for their lives.

“On the 8th of November the angels were crying

As they carried his brothers away”.

The people who fought alongside the main characters are brothers to him. The word “brothers” emphasizes this point.

“Now he’s 58 and his pony tail’s gray

But the battle still plays in his head”.

The third verse reveals the main meaning of the song. It consists in the fact that when soldiers return from war, they often recall these events, because the service to the Motherland remains in the memory forever [1].

6. Toby Keith “Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue” (“The Angry American”), 2002.

“American Girls and American Guys

We’ll always stand up and salute

We’ll always recognize”;

“So we can sleep in peace”.

The words “Girls and Guys” are the call to the entire American nation, to the patriots that peace prevails in the country now. The author personalizes the inhabitants of his native land and explains to them that they can sleep peacefully, and the expression “in piece” means a peaceful sky.

*“And the Statue of Liberty
Started shaking her fist
When you hear Mother Freedom
Start ringing her bell”.*

In this context, the lyric hero makes a comparison in the form of an idiom. The Statue of Liberty is symbolized by the literal expression “Liberty-Mother”, who will ring the bell and freedom will triumph in the country.

*“Justice will be served
And the battle will rage
This big dog will fight”.*

The verbs used in these lines are also different in sense, but the same in meaning. For the sake of peace in his native country and justice will prevail and there will be a hot battle, and even a dog will be ready to defend the country.

*“My daddy served in the army”;
“He wanted my mother, my brother, my sister
and me*

*To grow up and live happy
In the land of the free”.*

You should also pay special attention to the second verse. Toby Keith wrote this song to his father, who died in a car accident on March 24, 2001. And here is another association of America with a free country “the land of the free”. His father Hubert Keith wanted his family to live in a free country, and even when he lost his right eye in battle, he continued to fight for his homeland [5].

7. Daryl Worley “Have You Forgotten?”, 2003.

*“I say there’s some things worth fighting for
What about our freedom and this piece
of ground”*

The lexical-semantic connection in this context is expressed in the fact that the author explains that there is something worth fighting for the good of his native country, namely freedom and a piece of land that cannot be saved if people surrender and begin to retreat.

“Have you forgotten how it felt that day?”

The lyrical hero explains the importance of the whole situation on the example of the events that occurred on September 11, 2001. He does not write a specific date, but uses the phrase “that day”, which helps to remember everything.

*“We had neighbors still inside going thru
a living hell”.*

Neighbors who were at the time of the explosion in the towers and tried to escape are described as people passing through a fiery hell.

*“To see your homeland under fire
And her people blown away”.*

Reading the phrase “homeland and her people”, we again see how the author personifies the Motherland, presenting it in the image of a loved one, which also seeks to protect its patriots [8].

Having analyzed seven patriotic songs in this article, we can draw the following conclusion. The semantic field includes in its composition the words of various parts of speech, with the assumption of the inclusion of phraseological units and lexical materials of various forms of existence of the national language, not only literary, but also vernacular, dialects with reference to historical lexical materials. The lexical-semantic field is characterized by a number of systematic features, such as the semantic correlation of lexemes; a certain set of repeatedly implemented motivational models; repeatability of derivational models).

However, due to its close connection with extra-linguistic realities, the field is an open

unit of vocabulary organization and therefore significantly differs from the systems of other linguistic levels (phonological, morphological)

The lexical level of the language is organized by complex correlations of lexical-semantic fields, both adjacent and intersecting, and subordinate.

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