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SEMANTIC TRANSFORMATIONS OF *UNIVERSITY* LEXEME IN ENGLISH INTERNET DISCOURSE

The vocabulary of any language undergoes constant changes and development. Semantic changes have been an issue of numerous linguistic research. I.Vetrova and Ya.Pocheniuk follow the semantic changes in the English language from the XIX to the XXI century by analyzing entries from the dictionaries compiled at the respective period [1]. Expansion and narrowing of meaning in terminological system and borrowings are in the focus of study by I.Kuznetsova and O.Berezhna, and Yu.Shovkoplias [2; 5]. One of the reasons of semantic dynamics is proved to be the discourse [3, 4].

The contemporary linguistic landscape is undergoing significant shifts due to the pervasive influence of digital communication and internet discourse. This research explores the semantic changes and functional evolution of the lexeme *university* as it moves from traditional lexicographic definitions to its dynamic representation in the digital space. The relevance of this study is rooted in the growing role of internet discourse in shaping the meaning of lexical units and the subsequent need to examine how digital communication influences semantic structures.

The aim of the research is to identify the semantic transformations of the lexeme *university* within English-language internet discourse. To achieve the aim, the study draws upon a diverse range of sources, including standard lexicographic sources for baseline definitions; contextual examples from the British National Corpus (BNC) to observe usage in broader linguistic contexts; and data extracted from the *About* pages of leading British and American institutional websites, such as the University of Oxford, University of Cambridge, Imperial College London, Princeton University, Yale University, MIT, and Harvard.

Traditionally, dictionaries [7, 8, 10, 11] define a *university* as an institution of higher learning that provides facilities for teaching and research and is authorized to grant academic degrees: *She teaches at the University of Connecticut. Researchers at universities are always complaining about lack of funds. I graduated from Liverpool University in 2012.* It is often viewed collectively as the members, colleges, buildings, and campus of such an institution: *The rest of the exam involved free translation and composition, based on set texts decided upon by the university.*

Analysis of the BNC [9] confirms these core meanings, highlighting its role in providing high-quality education, training skilled specialists for the labor market, and awarding degrees: *University is where a small range of closely related subjects is studied in depth. University provides high quality education: And that we provide good quality education for students of 17 to 22 years. ... a university is still a university, a poly can now call itself a university and award its own degrees ...*

Analysis of the *About* pages of leading British and American educational institutions websites [6, 12, 13-16] reveals that while the modern lexeme *university* retains its core meaning as an educational institution, it has acquired significant additional connotations. University retains its lexicographical meaning of an educational institution with a certain structural organization in the text on the official website of the University of Oxford: *Oxford is an*

*independent and self-governing institution consisting of the University, its divisions, departments and faculties, and the colleges. The mission of the University of Cambridge implements the meaning of an institution in which students study, teach and research: The University's mission is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research ... The About page of Imperial College London opens with the sentence *We are a world-leading university for science, technology, engineering, medicine and business (STEMB)*..., in which the lexical units *science, technology, engineering* indicate the priority of science and technology at the university.*

The digital discourse on institutional websites indicates a semantic expansion characterized by several key themes. One of them is social responsibility and humanism. Modern universities position themselves as socially responsible actors in the *About* section of their websites. This includes supporting displaced persons and scholars, fostering an environment of equality and inclusiveness regardless of background or gender, and strengthening local communities and economies: *It (Yale) partners with its hometown... to strengthen the city's community and economy. It (Yale) engages with people and institutions across the globe... to improve the human condition. The University of Oxford is committed to being a place of welcome for people who have been forcibly displaced around the world.*

The next theme characterizing a semantic expansion is human capital. Institutions like Princeton emphasize that "people are at the heart" of the university, using iterative possessive pronoun to highlight the value of human resources, e.g., *People are at the heart of Princeton – teachers, students, alumni, support staff, management: Our People: Our Faculty, Our Students, Our Alumni, Our Staff, Our Leadership*.

There is a clear shift toward integrating science with business and practical utility. This is exemplified by MIT's motto, "*mens et manus*" (mind and hand), signifying the fusion of theoretical knowledge with practical purpose. Cambridge University also promotes the interface between academia and business: *Cambridge promotes the interface between academia and business, and has a global reputation for innovation.*

Universities are no longer isolated; they are active players on the international stage: *Our researchers collaborate with colleagues worldwide. The University has established partnerships in Asia, Africa, the Americas and Europe. (www.cam.ac.uk). They strive to improve the human condition, solve global challenges, and act as engines of progress that change the world through scientific discovery: *The MIT community is driven by a shared purpose to make a better world through education, research, and innovation.**

Another new shade of meaning that a *university* acquires due to the role shift of an educational institution is leadership. A core emerging purpose of a university is the training of the next generation of world leaders": *The [Yale] engages with people and institutions across the globe in the quest to ... train the next generation of world leaders.*

In addition the lexeme now encompasses meanings related to financial sustainability, including attracting private investment, fundraising, and diversifying income streams to support long-term academic goals: *The University seeks to protect and grow its income streams by diversifying income sources and pursuing an ambitious development strategy. A key source of income is fundraising, led by the Development and Alumni Engagement office. (www.ox.ac.uk).*

To summarize, the study of the *university* lexeme functioning in the texts of the British National Corpus indicates the actualization of the lexicographical meanings and the acquisition

of additional meanings, reflecting the expansion of the university's activities, which is not limited to teaching and research, but also includes earning money, advertising, and cooperation. The interpretative analysis of the *About* section of the leading English and American universities websites proves that the lexeme *university* has evolved from a static descriptor of an educational facility into a complex concept reflecting a multifaceted institution. In the modern digital context, a university is defined not just by teaching and research, but by its ability to train leaders, influence the global economy, promote cross-cultural understanding, and function as a socially responsible innovation center dedicated to improving the world.

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