

On the category of health in the novel «Ready Player One» by E. Cline

This article considers the forms and means to express the category of health in the novel «Ready Player One» by E. Cline in English. The semantic space of the category of health includes the core, near periphery and the interpretative part. The interpretative semantic space was revealed as the distant periphery of the category under study. The data about the semantic structure of this mental unit was defined under the support of semantic and contextual analyses.

Key words: category; health; lexeme; collocation; phraseological unit, dicteme.

The semantic space of any category includes various means of its expression: lexemes, collocations, phraseological units. The title of the literary work, dictemes or the whole text can refer to a certain category.

The analysis of the semantic space of the category of health in the novel «Ready Player One» by Ernest Cline aims at defining the peculiarities of the linguistic worldview of the author about it and revealing the structure and forms of the expression of this category. The category of health has been considered with reference to the norm or deviation in mind or body, distinguishing core or peripheral elements in the text «Ready Player One» by Ernest Cline. The periphery has further subdivision. The distant periphery is mentioned as the interpretative field here.

One of the goals of such analysis is to reveal the interconnections between *health* and other mental phenomena formed into the linguistic world-image of Ernest Cline influenced by culture and social surroundings. This paper implies two phases of analysis. Firstly, we reveal linguistic units that refer to the semantic spheres, which have some links with *health* in English. Secondly, we make an attempt to structure *health* under the support of the novel «Reader Player One» based on the meanings defined in the contexts of the above-mentioned text.

The novel by E. Cline includes the consideration of constituents within *health* associated with mind and body in this work. They are polycentric elements, including various semantic spaces with further gradation and links with other mental units.

The meanings of the lexical units representing different semantic parts in the category of health are the source of reconstructing *health* in the novel «Ready Player One» by E. Cline [1] with the support of the contextual analysis. For instance, 2045, the main character, Wade Watts, tries to isolate himself from the society, being plunged into OASIS virtual system. He is not satisfied

with the reality where the viruses and illnesses are widely spread: «... *poverty, and disease*» / «... the outbreak of some new killer virus...» [1, p. 1]. The lexeme *disease* actualizes the meaning «an impairment» and can define the main body in the semantic field of *health* with reference to the mind and body in this novel. The collocation *outbreak of some new killer virus* belongs to the formal style and refers to the semantic space *acquired diseases in body*.

Wade Watts, as a player, received a message from the creator of OASIS, James Halliday, who became mad in accordance with some rumors: «... he'd gone completely insane» [1, p. 2]. The phraseological unit *go insane* in the following sentence belongs to neutral-bookish style, indicating mental deviation. Wade Watts called James *eccentric*, who had an obsession with '80s pop cultures. The lexeme *eccentric* expresses the meaning «strange character».

In this video message James Halliday changed greatly. Despite his age, he looked as he did on the cover of the well-known magazine, and he didn't suffer from any disease. Of course, it was only a simulation for geeks of games. In reality, he was a sixty seven year old man, «... *ravaged by time and illness*» [1, p. 2]. The verb *ravage* actualizes the meaning «the state of being damaged» and refers to both semantic parts in the main body of *health*, indicating age and condition. It also includes the visual signal. The lexeme *illness* in this context actualizes the meaning «an unhealthy condition». It belongs to formal lexis within *acquired diseases and age*.

Halliday was dancing for a moment but then he stopped and looked at himself, lying in the open casket: «... *his body emaciated and ravaged by cancer*» [1, p. 4]. The verb *emaciate* actualizes the meaning «become very lean as a result of the severe disease» and belongs to formal lexis, expressing the category *acquired diseases in body* of the category of health. The verb *ravage* has the meaning we observed in the previous example but characterizes only the semantic field of formal lexis, expressing the category *acquired diseases in body*. The lexeme *cancer* is represented by its direct meaning, characterizes the central part of the semantic space of «medical terms, actualizing physiological deviations».

Wade compares the humanity with the disease that spreads like the *unstoppable virus* and distinguishes the *artificial hearts* as one of the advantages of the development of our society and *starving* as the lack of the human activity. The collocation *unstoppable virus* implies its direct meaning with the visual accent. The collocation *artificial hearts* has the meaning, which defines the sphere of the semantic field «medical terms, actualizing physiological deviations». The physiological component of the category of health is enriched here by the lexeme *starving* with its meaning «killing with hunger».

Describing the future of people, E. Cline highlights the theme of death. Wade adds it to his inner dialogue about the full decline of the humanity: «...

your brain stops working...» [1, p. 18]. This dicteme and the whole paragraph refer to both mental and physiological damages.

W. Watts concludes that he lives in the world of chaos, *pain* and poverty. The lexeme *pain* functions here as the generalized term for psychological and physiological conditions of people, living in the real world and striving for OASIS reality. This pain is also the sensory sign, depicted in the narration. It includes the tactile accent.

Loretta, the mother of Wade, died as a result of using drugs: «*She was depressed all the time, and taking drugs seemed to be the only thing she truly enjoyed*» [1, p. 18]. The phraseological units *be depressed* and *take drugs* are given with their general meanings «unhappy», «do drugs» and are added to the formal lexis, expressing *mental illness*. Thus, it characterizes the main body of the mental constituent.

Drugs ruined her health: «... *they were what eventually killed her*» [1, p. 18]. The verb *kill* is the means of expressing the categories of health and death. The verb *kill* belongs to formal style and it is observed in the main part of the above-mentioned semantic spaces.

It happened when Wade was eleven: «... *she shot a bad batch of something into her arm and died...*» [1, p. 18]. This part of the dicteme includes the description of the mental aberration of Loretta and it implies the visual signal in the terms of the perceptual linguistics. The phraseological unit *shoot a batch* has the meaning «take drugs». It characterizes both components because drugs influence mind and body. It is marked as the lexis of informal style, expressing *mental illness* and *acquired diseases*.

Alice, Wade's aunt, also suffers from drug addiction: «... She was much easier to deal with when she was high» [1, p. 19]. The phraseological unit *be high* is given with the meaning «be intoxicated by drugs». It is defined in thesauri as the informal lexis, expressing *mental illness* and *acquired diseases*.

Wade created his own game for Atari 2600, the goal of which was to collect junk computers and avoid various deviants: «...*meth addicts and pedophiles*» [1, p. 23]. The collocation *meth addicts* belongs to the informal style, denoting «ones who are dependent on methedrine», refers to the semantic spaces of informal lexis, expressing *mental illness* and *acquired diseases in body*. The lexeme *pedophile* actualizes its direct meaning and refers to *medical terms, actualizing mental deviations*.

Mrs Gilmore, the neighbor of Wade, noticed him, jumping from one trailer to another. She warned him against *breaking his neck*. The collocation *break one's neck* actualizes the meaning within the semantic space of formal lexis, expressing *acquired diseases in body*.

The following context presupposes the interpretative field in the semantic structure of *health* in this novel and the worldview of the author. In addition to

the lexical units that indicate the deviations directly, the dictemes defining the physiological condition of the character are also observed.

Wade was not satisfied with his weight (*I was overweight*) and found the reason for it: «*My bankrupt diet of government-subsidized sugar-and-starch-laden was a contributing factor, but I was also an OASIS addict, so the only exercise I usually got back then was running away from bullies before and after school*» [1, p. 30]. The phraseological unit *be overweight* refers to the semantic space of formal lexis, expressing *acquired diseases in body*. The whole dicteme «*My bankrupt diet...*» functions as the representative of the interpretative field of the category of health, denoting «failure of nutrition and sedentary lifestyle». The lexeme *addict* actualizes the meaning «being physiologically and mentally dependent on the virtual world OASIS».

The following dicteme shows the interconnections between the category of health and the mental unit death. Wade registered in the virtual school within OASIS.

The main character exaggerated seeing the advantages of not going to a normal school. He thought he had passed away: «... *I'd died and went to heaven*» [1, p. 32]. The verb *die* actualizes the positive meaning within this context. There was no necessity to run a gauntlet of *drug addicts*. The collocation *drug addict* is represented by its direct meaning revealed in the previous dictemes.

The theme of his overweight mentioned by the main character is reflected in various parts of the narration. Wade is a teenager and he is too focused on his appearance: «... *I was fat ... I had acne ...*» [1, p. 32]. The lexeme *fat* belongs to informal style, forming the semantic space of the physiological component of the category of health. The lexeme *acne* has the meaning «an inflammatory disease of the skin», it refers to the semantic space «medical terms, actualizing physiological deviations» within the phrase.

Being afraid of bullies, Wade was happy to realize that they can not reach him in this virtual school. He remembered being *pummeled* by the bike rack. The verb *pummel* refers to the semantic space of formal lexis, denoting *traumas* and including a visual accent.

In the framework of the following example we do not see real deviation in mind or body. The player I-rOk meets the main character in the chat room, addressing to him with the use of the derogatory and offensive lexeme *cock* in their theme about Star Wars. It actualizes the meaning «a despicable male» and refers to informal lexis.

Wade faced a financial problem when he started traveling from one planet of OASIS to another. He remembered that moment when he addressed to I-rOk, who dropped him in a planet Graw-hawk to kill kobolds. I-rOk took screenshots of Wade's avatar and posted files. From that moment Wade called

him a stupid person: «...*the jerk had followed me...*» [1, p. 43]. The lexeme *jerk* in this example is given with the meaning “a very foolish person”. It can be referred to the semantic area of informal lexis, denoting *mental underdevelopment*. Wade didn't hesitate and called I-rOk *an ignorant know-nothing twink* [1, p. 43], which can also be included into this semantic space. The lexeme *ignorant* has the meaning “not having knowledge or education”.

The revealed meanings defined the cognitive structure of the category of health in the literary work «Ready Player One» and confirmed the presence of sensory signals in the narration. The author prefers visual accents in order to highlight worries of the main character.

This semantic structure of the category of health in the work by E. Cline includes the core, near periphery and the interpretative semantic space. The interpretative field was considered as the distant periphery. Despite the fact that the author prefers the informal style in some of the parts of his work, in most cases the sphere of health has been reflected by lexis of neutral-bookish style in Cline's personal worldview.

This paper dealt with the method of semantic analysis, distinguishing the structural elements of the mental unit *health*. The contextual method was quite supportive to reveal specific means of expressing *health* in the novel «Ready player one» by E. Cline in English. Thus, the category of health in this novel consists of the following semantic spaces: formal lexis, expressing acquired diseases in body or age, medical terms, actualizing physiological deviations, formal lexis, expressing mental illness, informal lexis, expressing mental illness, informal lexis, expressing acquired diseases in body, medical terms, actualizing mental deviations, formal lexis, denoting traumas, informal lexis, denoting mental underdevelopment. The revealed contexts helped to define the interconnections between *health* and the mental units *age, condition, death*.

Литература

1. Cline, E. Ready Player One / E. Cline. – London : Arrow Books, 2012. – 374 p.