Functioning of lexical units of the lexical-semantic field «Crime» in James Hadley Chase`s novel «Have a Nice Night»

Mierieutsa Tetiana Hennadiivna¹

¹ lecturer of the Department of English Philology and World Literature «Izmail State University of Humanities», Ukraine

Abstract.
James Hadley Chase was an English writer and wrote over eighty violent crime novels during his long career. His racy and violent thrillers are acquiring cult status. Although Chase produced around 40 thrillers and gangster stories set in the United States, he only went there on short visits. The aim of the article is to define the most common lexical units defining «Crime» in James Hadley Chase`s novel «Have a Nice Night».

Keywords:
lexical-semantic field
crime
crimes against a person
police
detective
murder
tension
James Hadley Chase (1906-1985, birth name René Lodge Brabazon Raymond) is a famous British writer, one of the classics of the modern detective genre. The author of 93 detective novels, many of which became bestsellers and were translated into more than 30 languages, and about 50 novels became the basis for films. Chase`s work have attracted some internationally acclaimed directors, including Robert Aldrich, Julien Duvivier, Joseph Losey, Volker Schlondorff, and Krzysztof Zanussi. Chase was one of the best known thriller writers of all time, is even called the king of this genre. He was well known by his various pseudonyms, including James Hadley Chase, James L. Docherty, Raymond Marshall, R. Raymond, and Ambrose Grant [1, p. 119-121]

Although many of his novels are located in the USA, he paid there only two brief visits, one to Miami and one in New Orleans. Nonetheless, the descriptions of streets, cities, and districts in his novels are incredibly precise. Most of the author`s knowledge of America was derived from encyclopedias, detailed maps and slang dictionaries dedicated to the life of the American criminal world [2, c. 150]. The events in his works are severe and harsh, reflecting American reality, and the «happy ending», typical of classical detectives, is absent. His detectives often break the «formula» of detective fiction: the crime may be depicted at the very beginning of the novel, the main character may be a criminal known from the first page of the work, thereby shifting the focus from solving the crime to apprehending the criminal. The formula he followed in his novels was succinctly formulated by the writer in just four words: speed, violence, women, America [2, с. 117-118].

His detectives are classified worldwide as «noir» and «police novels», but in the United States, these extremely popular and widely known detective novels are called «hard-boiled». A «hard-boiled» novel is characterized by heightened dynamism, tension, unpredictability, saturation with extremely dangerous clashes, pursuits, adventures, numerous scenes of fights, shootouts, and murders. Unlike the classic detective, in which the hero`s main qualities are logic and deduction, in a «hard-boiled» novel, the physical activity of the hero, his fists, and gun are more important. The search
for the criminal and solving the crime puzzle is carried out through strength, agility, courage, cunning, life experience, knowledge of the criminal world and the streets of the city [3, c. 128]. Despite the large number of Chase’s novels, all of them are professionally written, concise, without unnecessary descriptions, always very dynamic, and «read without interruption».


The novel «Have a Nice Night» by James Hadley, first published in 1981, tells the story of crimes that went awry, not as planned by their organizers. The novel contains a large number of lexical units from the lexical-semantic field «Crime», which belong to the microfields «crimes against a person» and «crimes against property», and to their different lexical-semantic variants [5, c. 90].

The lexeme crime (11) is the core of the lexical-semantic field «Crime» is very common and often used in the novel, for example:

«...Art Bannion had accepted the adage that crime doesn’t pay» [6, p. 16].

«...why not a casting agency to supply the right man or woman for a carefully planned crime?» [6, p. 16].
«He sat... smoking, reading crime fiction and waiting for a call» [6, p. 16].
«...when he was bored reading crime fiction...he would think of his mistakes and his life in various prisons, and even of his mother and father» [6, p. 17].
«When Art finally accepted the fact that crime didn`t pay, he looked around...» [6, p. 18].
«You told me what your racket is: finding men to pull a crime» [6, p. 20].
«...even household chores were minor compared to sitting around waiting for crime...» [6, p. 30].
«He was thumbing through the previous night`s crime sheet reports...» [6, p. 118].

The author most often uses the lexemes police (51) and policeman (1), which denote police and court employees, for example:
«...he had no police record, although the police of the world were searching for him» [6, p. 4].
«He was bothered neither by visitors nor the police» [6, p. 16]
«Harry Atkin...was a good friend of the police» [6, p. 33]
«There were times when police work paid off, he thought» [6, p. 35]
«He told him to report the loss to the police and had sailed» [6, p. 41]
«...he is now in hospital, under police guard» [6, p. 44]
«The police want to question a Cuban named Roberto Fuentes...» [6, p. 45]
«...Mike got into the hands of the police...» [6, p. 90]
«She wanted was to be taken to police headquarters» [6, p. 130]
«An ex-policeman, he took his job, protecting the hotel, seriously» [6, p. 80]

Chase also uses the lexeme murder (10), which refers to the microfield «crimes against a person»:
«...Beth..., whose father was serving life for murder...» [6, p. 17].
«Two hours after the murder...came into Chief of Police Terrell`s office» [6, p. 42].
«The murder gun has been traced to him...» [6, p. 44].
«We want him as accessory for murder» [6, p. 69].
«...her husband is being held by the police for murder» [6, p. 144].

The novel also contains the lexemes steal (11) and robbery (2), which are connected by the seme «action directed against property» and belong to the microfield «crimes against property», for example:
«Both of them had agreed the planning had been brilliant and the execution of the steal not to be faulted» [6, p. 4].
«I lost money on that steal...» [6, p. 5].
«You organize the steal» [6, p. 8].
«You really mean you are going to steal, my darling?» [6, p. 30].
«...Brady explained the details of the steal» [6, p. 51].
«He had told her the following morning the man who was to play such an important part in the hotel robbery would be arriving» [6, p. 48].
«What a racket! Daylight robbery!» [6, p. 72].

The lexeme criminal (2) is one of the subclasses of the core of the lexical-semantic field «crime» and can be found in the novel, for example:
«...he had built up his agency, collecting names of those who were recommended as the up-and-coming younger criminal generation» [6, p. 16].
«Realizing that he was about to embark on his first criminal offense, Bannion felt cold...» [6, p. 163].

The differential seme «violence» (1), which makes it possible to create a lexical-semantic variant «violence», is also present in the novel:
«And Bannion, there is to be no violence» [6, p. 23].

The novel also contains the lexeme killer (14), which denotes criminals, for example:
«So far, we haven`t identified the killer» [6, p. 42].
«You`ve taken the killer`s fingerprints?» [6, p. 42].
«This man could have sold his gun to the killer...» [6, p. 43].
«...he now had the name of the rent killer and it was important to locate the killer`s wife...» [6, p. 128].
«We have plenty of other work to do without bothering about a small time killer who is now dead» [6, p. 155].
«Pedro Certes, killer of a rent collector in Seacomb...» [6, p. 157].

It should be noticed that the lexical-semantic field «Crime» in James Hadley Chase’s novel «Have a Nice Night» also contains the following lexical units:

- **gun** (101): «Be careful with this gun...» [6, p. 149], «Once again, he fingered his gun» [6, p. 156], «You point the gun at the man...» [6, p. 166], «...he saw Fuentes drop his gun...» [6, p. 171], «She ran to where she had left Fuentes’ gun» [6, p. 175];
- **dead** (35): «He only hoped he was dead» [6, p. 41], «... Mike would be dead in a few months...» [6, p. 111], «He could be looking at the face of a dead woman» [6, p. 157], «I thought you were dead» [6, p. 179];
- **details** (6): «You’ll have to find out the details for yourself» [6, p. 8], «Bannion sat in the chalet checking on last minute details for the night’s operation» [6, p. 145], «Brady explained the details of the steal» [6, p. 51];
- **anxiously** (2): «Maggie looked anxiously at Brady» [6, p. 146];
- **fact** (8): «Art finally accepted the fact that crime didn’t pay...» [6, p. 17], «... he accepted the fact that he was kidding himself» [6, p. 47];
- **death** (11): «... Pedro Certes moved from pain ridden life into peaceful death» [6, p. 145], «At a death, women always pray» [6, p. 163], «...Fuentes who is responsible for your death...» [6, p. 165], «...Anita might learn of his death...» [6, p. 100];
- **detective** (44): «Detective Jacoby was sitting on a bollard, smoking a cigarette» [6, p. 78], «She thought of the night detective who patrolled the hotel» [6, p. 80], «A bored detective sat at his bedside» [6, p. 83], «The hotel detective begins patrolling the corridors...» [6, p. 126];
- **revenge** (2): «... Pedro was crying out for revenge» [6, p. 165], «I will revenge you...» [6, p. 165];
- **guard** (8): «... he is now in hospital, under police guard» [6, p. 44], «The other security guard was leaving when I arrived» [6, p. 77];
- **pain** (18): «I have pain killing pills» [6, p. 111], «He folded down, pain raging through him» [6, p. 40], «He got to
his feet, controlling a grimace of pain» [6, p. 78];
- punish (3): «May God punish you!» [6, p. 128], «I will punish him» [6, p. 185], «So I punish you, you man of untruth...» [6, p. 174];
- suspicious (1): «... dark Cuban woman walked by them, giving them a quick, suspicious glance...» [6, p. 68];
- threaten (2): «Anita will expect me to threaten the hotel owner...» [6, p. 138], «...we threaten to wipe out the kitchens...» [6, p. 65];
- blood (16): «Then the hot blood turned cold making her shudder» [6, p. 165], «Lepski said, his blood pressure rising» [6, p. 182];
- arrest: «... I could arrest you for obstruction...» [6, p. 130];
- injure: «It is not powerful enough to injure anyone...» [6, p. 65];
- affair (4): «... we must keep the cops out of this affair» [6, p. 138], «I have been organizing this affair» [6, p. 63], «One is a very minor affair» [6, p. 64];
- fear (3): «...his eyes went dim with fear» [6, p. 68], «He felt a shudder of fear run through him» [6, p. 117], «... Fuentes felt a cold chill of fear run down his sweating back» [6, p. 150];
- frightened (8): «... her eyes frightened» [6, p. 82], «She frightened him» [6, p. 164], «The faint feeling frightened her» [6, p. 165], «... she was frightened she had forgotten...» [6, p. 175];
- hurt (3): «You really mean this drug won`t hurt anyone?» [6, p. 11], «It hurt Abe to deliver the message» [6, p. 36], «One more day won`t hurt» [6, p. 119];
- unconscious (7): «He is still unconscious, but he will live» [6, p. 63], «...taken as he lay unconscious in the hospital bed» [6, p. 66];
- die (8): «...he wasn`t going to die in a few months» [6, p. 47], «He is going to die» [6, p. 98], «...lot of bums die in this city» [6, p. 122], «...he was now dying faster than he thought he would die» [6, p. 145].

Therefore, the results of the research have shown that in James Hadley Chase`s novel «Have a Nice Night», there are 395 lexical units from the lexical-semantic field «Crime»,...
belonging to microfields «crimes against a person», «crimes against property» and to their different lexical-semantic variants. The research showed that the most frequently used lexical units in the novel are: the lexeme «gun» ranks first and makes up 25.6% of the lexical-semantic field «Crime», the lexeme «police» ranks second and makes up 13%, and the lexeme «detective» takes the third place and makes up 11.1% of this lexical-semantic field. All these lexical units meet the requirements of a «hard-boiled novel»: heightened dynamism, tension, many dangerous skirmishes, persecutions and murders.

References: