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REPRESENTATION OF THE CONCEPTUAL FIELD "EDUCATION" IN NATIONAL VARIANTS OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE

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Abstract. The paper presents an onomasiological analysis of the conceptual field "Education" exemplified by the vocabulary of the national variants of the French language of France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Canada (Province of Quebec) with the aim to establish the basic nomination principles and identify inter-variational differences within the framework of three sectors of the conceptual field "Education": "Educational institutions (établissement d'enseignement)", "Teaching staff (personnel enseignant)", "Students (étudiants)". The basic principles of nominating in the field of education are identified by considering the internal conceptual structure of the language units under analysis; inter-variational differences and alterations are stated by categorical-and-semantic comparability of the differentiation semes in the nominations of three sectors of the conceptual field "Education". The analysis allows to conclude that there exist generic categorical-and-semantic instances within nomination structures that indicate location of training or teaching, specialty, disciplines studied or taught, age, status of the teacher or student, level and methodology of training. In designation of objects in the sectors of the conceptual field "Education" lexical units get into hypernym-and-hyponym relations, thus categorically every sector is formed around some basic concept that is explicated in a hypernym, general nomination for four territorial variants of French, and a set of hyponyms that are more specific and not alike in the exemplification of general semes. The onomasiological analysis of the conceptual field "Education" reveals intervariational concomitant or alternating features, especially in sectors of "Educational institutions (établissement d'enseignement)", "Students (étudiants)" due to certain social-and-institutional reasons.

Key words: onomasiology, principle of nomination, hypernym-and-hyponym relations, nominative series, variants of the French language, education.

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РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЯ ПОНЯТИЙНОГО ПОЛЯ «ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ» В НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ ВАРИАНТАХ ФРАНЦУЗСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

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Аннотация. В статье представлены результаты ономаσιологического исследования понятийного поля «Образование» на материале лексики национальных вариантов французского языка Франции, Бельгии, Швейцарии и Канады (провинция Квебек). Цель работы заключается в выявлении категориальных принципов номинации и уточнении признаков межвариантных различий в трех секторах поля «Образование»: «Educational institutions (établissement d'enseignement)», «Teaching staff (personnel enseignant)», «Students (étudiants)». Принципы номинации установлены путем определения понятийной структуры значения лексических единиц, межвариантные различия – посредством категориально-семантического сопоставления дифференциальных сем значений наименований описываемого поля. Охарактеризованы общие категориально-семантические признаки номинации: место обучения или преподавания, изучаемые или преподаваемые дисциплины, профессия и возраст, статус преподавателя или ученика, уровень и специфика методологии обучения. При именовании объектов в рассматриваемых секторах поля «Образование» лексические единицы вступают в гиперо-гипонимические отношения: в каждом секторе имеется базовый концепт, который эксплицируется общей для четырех вариантов французского языка номинацией-гипонимом и семантически близкими номинациями-гиперонимами, различающимися по составу некоторых общих признаков. Значительное межвариантное разнообразие по принципам номинации отмечено в секторах «Educational institutions (établissement scolaire)», «Students (étudiants)», что объясняется социально-институциональными причинами. *Вклад авторов:* Ю.С. Дзюбенко осуществлен сбор и анализ лексики национального варианта французского языка Франции и Швейцарии; Е.А. Елтанской – сбор и анализ лексики национального варианта французского языка Бельгии; А.В. Аржановской – сбор и анализ лексики национального варианта французского языка Квебека; Н.Л. Шамне разработана методика исследования, выполнено обобщение материала.

Ключевые слова: ономаσιология, принцип номинации, гиперо-гипонимические отношения, номинативный ряд, варианты французского языка, образование.

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Introduction

Language description implies the study of its internal laws and social nature. The problem of the relationship between the social and interstructural components of language rightly belongs to the main issues of the modern language science, where, along with traditional problems related to the origin and classification of languages, the issues of their current state become relevant. At the end of the 20th – beginning of the 21st century there was a noticeable increase in interest in multinational languages, their position in the world and their diversification [Dzyubenko, Eltanskaya, 2022].

In linguistics of recent years a lot of works devoted to the study of certain problems of

nomination and nominative human activity have appeared [Arzhanovskaya, 2015; Shamne, Rebrina, 2007]. The most frequently and intensively studied issues refer to the theory of nomination (methods, motives, principles of nomination of individual thematic groups in various languages including in the comparative aspect, various aspects of nominative activity, the issues of the influence of certain scientific disciplines and directions on nominative activity, for example, cultural linguistics, anthropocentrism including). Precisely because the theory of nomination turned out to be a multifaceted and multidimensional science, many of its matters continue to remain outside of its study. Thereupon, it is advisable to study the vocabulary of the national variants of the French

language in France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Canada (Province of Quebec) comprehensively from a semasiological and onomasiological perspective. Both approaches are interrelated and complement each other. In a comprehensive study of the same object, conceptual groups (at the level of concepts) and semantic groups or fields (in semantic analysis) are identified.

Onomasiology as a new direction is often attributed to A. Zauner, who distinguished between two aspects of the word semantics study: semasiology and onomasiology. The semasiological approach involves the study of the lexical meaning of a word. This study is based on the “from word to concept” principle. The onomasiological approach to the study of the word is closely related to the semasiological approach. This method is based on the “from the content to the form of the word” principle. Onomasiology studies the process of a name emergence and its assignment to an object of reality. If semasiology considers which concept is related to a word, then onomasiology examines why a particular word is used to denote a specific concept in a language. The external form of the word means “thing” by means of “concept”, which is associated in the minds of native speakers of a given language with a certain form [Borodina, Gak, 1979, pp. 79-80]. The onomasiological approach considers the content side of language units from the perspective of the subject orientation. Language formation as a semiotic code is impossible without onomasiological processes. Each language denotes a non-linguistic and linguistic reality. The peculiarity of a language is evidenced by what is denoted and how.

Intensive development of onomasiology in Soviet linguistics has been taking pace since the late 60s of the 20th century. A number of works by B.A. Serebrennikov, N.D. Arutyunova, E.S. Kubryakova, I.S. Toroptsev, V.G. Gak, V.N. Telia, A.A. Ufimtseva, D.N. Shmeleva and other linguists reveal certain aspects of onomasiology, interpret its concepts, and expand the boundaries of the study of a new discipline. The main goal of onomasiology is considered to be the creation of a theory of nomination, its main task is to study the means and methods of naming individual elements of reality. During this period, the development of onomasiology was primarily associated with the task of explaining the path from a thing to its designation, to naming individual fragments of the real world. The nominative

aspect of speech activity has been analyzed, in particular, E.S. Kubryakova notes that the main goal in the process of speech generation is to find the appropriate language form for expressing thought and its content [Kubryakova, 2020, p. 33]. Yu.S. Stepanov defines the theory of nomination as the core of semantics (in a narrow sense), and nomination as the relation of linguistic signs to objective reality, as well as the system of such signs [Stepanov, 1977, p. 353].

The theory of nomination leads researchers to the fact that when investigating naming problems, it is necessary to take into account such factors as experience, linguistic technique, the role of the individual and society, as well as the relationship of language and thinking with the surrounding reality [Serebrennikov, 1977, pp. 112-127].

Currently, onomasiology is one of the leading areas in the study of French vocabulary. The principle of object nomination remains one of the most important issues in modern linguistics. The nomination principles are based on the properties of the reality. The nomination principles are understood as peculiar onomasiological models that generalize the study of names, patterns of use of various linguistic means in the designation of non-linguistic phenomena. Therefore, in order to conduct an onomasiological analysis, it is necessary to go beyond the linguistic phenomena of the same level, since the approach itself combines word-formation, lexical and semantic phenomena that reflect real associations among native speakers [Ivanova, 2015].

Consequently, the interpretation of the word as a substitute for the subject has been replaced by the search for the inner layers of culture imprinted in it and reflecting not so much the opposition, opposition of this name to other names of the same system, as human activity associated with the reflection of the objective world [Kopach, 2006, p. 120].

Our study examines the field of education and, accordingly, the conceptual field’s representation in the four national variants of the French language (France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Province of Quebec in Canada). Within the conceptual field “Education” in the above enumerated variants of the French language, the following conceptual groups are distinguished: “Educational institutions (names of educational institutions, their organizational structure, types of certificates and diplomas)”, “Teachers”, “Students”.

Methods and materials

The material under study includes the linguistic units belonging to three conceptual groups extracted by continuous sampling from the explanatory and encyclopedic dictionaries of the French language of France, Belgium, Switzerland and Quebec: “Educational institutions (établissements d’enseignement)”, “Teaching staff (personnel enseignant)”, “Students (étudiants)”.

The analysis of the language material is carried out with a set of linguistic methods and techniques, which are predetermined by the set purpose and objectives of the study, as well as the specifics of the material. Component analysis as the main method helped to reveal similarities and differences in the nominations of the conceptual groups under study. The method of comparative analysis was used for establishing cases of cross-variant coordination or alteration in the national variants of the French language under study. The quantitative ratio of the nomination principles was determined by the method of statistical analysis. Within the onomasiological analysis, firstly, the composition of the thematic groups under consideration was determined. Secondly, the differential signs of the linguistic units included in these groups were revealed. The third stage of the study was to determine the principles of nominations due to the identified differential features. At the end of the analysis, we established the dominant principles of nominations characteristic of all the national variants of the French language that we studied.

Results and discussion

Considering common and differential features of linguistic units in the conceptual groups “Educational institutions (établissements d’enseignement)”, “Teaching staff (personnel enseignant)”, “Students (étudiants)” we have obtained the following results.

The conceptual group “Educational institutions”

The conceptual group “Educational Institutions (établissements d’enseignement)” in the territorial variants of the French language in France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Province of Quebec (Canada) includes nominations that characterize

educational institutions of various levels of education, in particular, four conceptual subgroups: preschool educational institution; secondary educational institution; specialized or vocational educational institution; higher educational institution.

Preschool educational institutions are referred to the notion of kindergarten, *jardin d’enfants* in common French. It is a private educational institution where children spend the first two years of preschool education (corresponding to the first two years in the public kindergarten *maternelle*). In France, *école maternelle* is an optional school that accepts boys and girls aged from 3 to 5 (Rey, 2006, p. 352). In Belgium, *école Froebel* is a kindergarten that admits children aged from 2.5 to 5, and extended day-care groups for primary school students (Francard et al., 2021, p. 175). In Switzerland, *école enfantine* is a kindergarten for children aged from 4 to 6, and depending on the canton in French-speaking Switzerland, there are kindergartens with a different number of training levels. Thus, in cantons Bern, Geneva, Jura, Valais, Neuchatel and Vaud there is two-level education system (Knecht, Thibault, 2012, p. 205). In Quebec, preschool education *éducation préscolaire* begins only from the age of 5, and from the age of 3 children can stay in the so-called *écoles gardiennes*, where games and various activities are offered to children for three hours a day (Klokov, 2004, p. 198).

The category “optional preschool educational institution” is common and it is characterized by the following general categorical notions that differ in four language variants under study: maternal care and affection (*maternelle* – in the French variant), methods of teaching and upbringing (*F.Fröbel* (German teacher) – in the Belgian variant), child care (*gardien* – in the Quebec variant), age category (*enfantin* – in the Swiss variant). There are also differentiating features providing information about certain parts of the semantic content, such as “private preschool educational institution”, “state preschool educational institution” or “extended day-care group”. In addition, there is a difference in the age of pre-schoolers attending these institutions.

The second subgroup “Secondary educational institution” includes the subconcepts “Elementary school”, “Secondary school”,

alternatively nominated in the four variants of the French language.

The notion ‘elementary school’ in common French is *école primaire*, *enseignement primaire*, ‘primary school’ – *cours élémentaire* (starting from the last year of kindergarten until entering college) (Le Petit Larousse illustré..., 2021, p. 411). In France, *école primaire* includes 2 cycles of 3 years duration. In the Quebec variant – *école élémentaire*, *cours primaire* (in the primary school of Quebec, students study for 6 years, that is, 3 cycles of 2 years duration) or *cours 101* (primary course). In Belgium, *enseignement primaire* also consists of 3 cycles, as in Quebec. In Switzerland, depending on the cantons, the duration of primary school education at the *école primaire* may vary. In cantons Bern, Fribourg, Geneva, Jura, Valais the term of education for children from 6 to 12 is six years, in canton Neuchâtel it is a year less, in canton Vaud it is only four years [Dzyubenko, 2016, p. 83].

Differences in the volume of nominations are noted within a single variant of the French language. The French *école primaire* is a hyperonym (a nomination of broad meaning) in relation to the *école élémentaire* and *cours élémentaire*. The differential feature ‘primary’ indicates the study at primary school only in three variants of the French language (Belgian, Swiss, and Quebec), since in France primary school also includes staying at kindergarten. There are also denotative differences within the two variants (French and Quebec), that are referred to social and institutional organisation. Elementary school in France, *école élémentaire* means the primary grades of the secondary school, and in Quebec – a secondary school for children from the age of 11 [Dzyubenko, 2011, p. 241].

The notion of ‘secondary school’ in common French is *école secondaire*, *enseignement secondaire*, *cours de l’enseignement secondaire* (second-level schools, from the sixth to the first grades). If a secondary educational institution is considered by the levels of education, the first level in France belongs to *collège* ‘the establishment of the first cycle of secondary education’ (including four grades – the 6th (11–12 years), the 5th (12–13 years), the 4th (13–14 years), and 3rd (14–15 years); three cycles – *cycle d’adaptation* ‘adaptation cycle’ (6th grade), *cycle central* ‘main cycle’ (5th – 4th grades), and

cycle d’orientation ‘orientation cycle’ (3rd grade). In Switzerland, the first level of secondary education is called *école secondaire* or *cycle d’orientation*, which last from three to five years, depending on the canton. In cantons Bern, Jura, Fribourg, Geneva, Valais the first level of secondary lasts three years, in Neuchâtel it is a year longer, in canton Vaud education lasts up to five years.

Prégymnase (progymnase) is the last year of compulsory education in French-speaking Switzerland before the gymnasium (Knecht, Thibault, 2012, p. 543). Secondary school education in Quebec (*cours secondaire*, *école secondaire*) lasts 5 years (from 12 to 16 years) and consists of two cycles: 1) three years of study; 2) two years of study [Landry, 2006, p. 16]. In Quebec, a secondary school (*cours secondaire*, *école secondaire*) means the education period from the first to the sixth grades. In Belgium, there used to be *école moyenne* or *enseignement moyen*, where education was conducted for the first three years of secondary education, now a secondary school (*humanités*) means ‘secondary education with or without Greek or Latin courses’ [Francard et al., 2021, p. 215].

The second level of secondary education in France is called *lycée* (including three grades – 2nd, 1st, and final), in Belgium – *athénée*, in Swiss cantons Bern, Vaud – *gymnase* (3 years of education) in the canton of Valais – *lycée*, *lycée-collège*, in Geneva and Fribourg – *collège*, in the canton of Jura and Neuchâtel – *lycée* and in Quebec – *cours secondaire*, *école secondaire* (that is, the same as the first level). After graduating from secondary school with a BA (Gallicism *baccalauréat*, Helvetism *maturité*), students have the right to enter higher educational institutions.

The subconcepts ‘primary school’ and ‘secondary school’ differ in the countries under consideration. This is due to different educational systems, duration of training periods, local programs, that is, with differences at the denotative level.

The most distinguishing feature in this subgroup is “secondary educational institution”. Each of the listed concept nominations does not characterize the secondary educational institution in its full scope, but provides partial information of the conceptual content. Thus, the concept of “ordinary school” implies the presence of “unusual

school”, that is, “non-traditional school”, which has its own program and forms of education, for example, with a focus on a particular subject.

The third subgroup “Specialized or vocational educational establishment” includes the following Gallicisms, Belgicisms, Helvetisms, and Canadianisms, involving hyperonym *école* with the indication of differentiating features **on the methodology (focus) of training** (ordinary school – *école ordinaire* (French, Belgian), regular school – *école régulière* (Canadianism), non-traditional school – *école innovatrice* (French), alternative school – *école alternative* (Canadianism), private school – *école privée* (French), juvenile correctional facility – *école de réforme* (Canadianism)); **on the vocational training** (special education school – *école spécialisée* (including lyceums and all vocational educational institutions except universities (Canadianism), boarding school, residential school – *école spéciale* (French), educational establishment training lower secondary teachers – *école normale primaire* (French)); **on military training** (basic military training – *école du soldat* (archaic French), four-month military training – *école des recrues* (Helvetism) (common French *recrue* ‘recruit, conscript, draftee’)); on the location (village school – *école de village* (French), rural school – *école de rang* (Canadianism)).

Driving school in France, Belgium, and Switzerland is called *auto-école*, and in Quebec – *école de conduite*. The form of the name is formed by compounding and in Quebec – by word combination. Both lexemes have the same signifier and denotation, which indicates complete inter-variant synonymy.

The fourth subgroup “Higher educational institution” includes the following concepts: university, higher school, pedagogical institute.

‘University’ in common French *université*, in Switzerland *université* also means *alma mater* or *Uni* (student innovation, which is used in the speech of Franco-Swiss people and the headlines of the daily press), and in Belgium – *Université de Bruxelles* ‘University of Brussels’ or *Bloc* [Hanse, Doppagne, Bourgeois-Gielen, 1995, p. 25].

‘Higher school’ in common French *Grandes Ecoles*; in Belgium – *Haute école: écoles supérieures, Ecoles supérieures, Instituts supérieurs*; in Switzerland – *Hautes écoles*

spécialisées, Ecoles supérieures; in Quebec – *Ecoles supérieures*.

‘Pedagogical institute’ in common French *école normale supérieure (ENS)* trains teachers for secondary schools, universities and researchers. Lexemes with this seme have not been noted in other variants of the French language.

The “University” concept is noted in all the territories under consideration, but training systems at universities in France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Quebec differ, which explains certain differences and alternations in the nomination basis. Thus, training at French universities includes various stages and corresponds to the international “bachelor – master – doctorate system”. Universities in Belgium have always fluctuated between the Dutch and French educational systems. Eventually, in the French part of Belgium, training was conducted according to the French system, in the Flemish part – according to the Dutch. Swiss universities are subordinate to both the federal government and the cantons, in this regard, there is no single educational program. There are also no exam sessions at Swiss universities. This is followed by a three-year training course, after which a licentiate degree or diploma is awarded, it corresponds to a Master of Science degree. Quebec applicants intending to enter the university are required to complete a two-year college course after high school (preparation for university admission). There is no such requirement in other provinces of Canada. Higher education here is divided into three cycles [Bégin et al., 2012, pp. 15-32].

All higher educational institutions of the non-university type are called schools, but the differential components of the hypernym *école* vary: *Grandes Ecoles* ‘large schools’, *Hautes écoles* ‘higher-education schools’, *Ecoles nationales* ‘national schools’. There are also differences in their denotative meaning, which confirms the impossibility of referring these educational institutions to complete inter-variant synonyms.

Having considered the fourth subgroup, we note that there are both similarities and differences in the nominations of higher educational institutions in the four variants of the French language. The analysis of the concepts related to higher

educational institutions reveals a fairly broad understanding of the residents of France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Quebec about the educational system as a whole. The most similar are the French and Belgian systems of higher education, the Swiss and Quebec systems have specific features in terms of content and reality itself [Dzyubenko, 2011, p. 243].

The conceptual group “Teaching staff”

The conceptual group “Teaching staff (établissements d’enseignement)” in the territorial variants of the French language in France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Quebec includes concepts characterizing teachers of various educational institutions, teachers or specialists engaged in particular scientific and educational activities. The conceptual group “Teaching staff” consists of three subgroups: a person engaged in the tutorial activity, a person engaged in teaching activity, a person with a scientific degree.

The first subgroup “A person engaged in the tutorial activity” includes subconcepts “kindergarten teacher”, “headteacher for education at school”: ‘kindergarten teacher’, in common French *précepteur*, ‘tutor, mentor’ – a person educating a child at home, *éducateur* – a person engaged in the tutorial activity (in broad sense), *éducatrice de garderie* ‘a teacher in a kindergarten or in an extended day-care group (for primary school children)’; Gallicism *éducateur/trice de jardin d’enfant*, *instituteur/trice de maternelle*; Belgicism *froebélien/ne*, Helvetism *maîtresse enfantine*; Canadianism *gardien*, *travailleuse en garderie*.

The internal form of the names of persons engaged in the tutorial activity includes the common archiseme – meaning ‘teacher’ and the differential components in the meanings of the words: *de jardin d’enfant* (fr.), *de maternelle* (fr.), *enfantine* (Helvetism), and *en garderie* (Canadianism). These components indicate the place of work of the tutor (kindergarten) or the age category of the students (children) [Dzyubenko, 2016, p. 84].

“Headteacher for education at school”, in common French *censeur* ‘lyceum supervisor’ – the official responsible for the general discipline of the lyceum; Canadianism 1. archaism *préfet de discipline* ‘headteacher for educational work

at school’; 2. modern pejorative “gendarme” (a person who rigorously enforces the discipline); 3. responsible for educational work (in a youth sports team). In this conceptual subgroup, we cannot talk about a complete intra-variant synonymy, since these concepts reflect in the minds of the French, Belgians, Swiss, and Quebecers different ideas about their content.

The second subgroup “Person engaged in teaching activity” includes teachers of various educational institutions: primary school teacher, secondary school teacher, university teacher.

“Primary school teacher”, in common French *instituteur/trice* – lower secondary school teacher; in France and Switzerland, the lexeme *instituteur* is used with this meaning, and in Switzerland, the lexeme *régent* is also found, but this lexeme is considered obsolete and is used very rarely. In the dictionary of Canadianisms, the expression *enseignant titulaire* was found. The differential components of the meaning of the phrases *professeur d’école* (French), *enseignant d’école primaire* (French), *enseignant au primaire* (Canadianism) indicate the educational institution where the teacher works (*école*) and the level of training (*primaire*).

“Secondary school teacher”, in common French *maître* – a school teacher. In France and Switzerland, the lexeme *professeur*, *maître* or the feminine form *maîtresse* is used in this meaning – a school teacher (Knecht, Thibault, 2004, p. 452). In Belgium, the lexemes *professeur*, *régent* is used – a junior secondary school teacher. The official name in Belgium is *agrégé de l’enseignement secondaire du degré inférieur* ‘agregé of primary secondary education’ [Lemaire, 2000, p. 28].

The following names of secondary school teachers are composed of the single term *professeur* ‘teacher’ and differentiating features indicating **place of teaching** (college or lyceum) (college teacher – *professeur de collège* (Fr.), lyceum teacher – *professeur de lycée* (Fr.)) and **teacher status** (the teacher who has the right to teach – *professeur agrégé* (Fr.); *professeur titulaire* (Belgicism); *professeur agrégé* (Belgicism)) [Bal, Doppagne, Goosse, 1994, p. 118].

“University teacher”, in common French *universitaire*; Gallicism *enseignant*, *professeur* ‘high school or university teacher’, Gallicism,

Helvetism *universitaire* ‘university lecturer’, Canadianism *professeur, académicien, professeur assistant* ‘assistance lecturer (university lecturer without a scientific degree)’.

The internal form of the names of teachers of higher educational institutions indicates: **the educational institution where the person teaches** (university lecturer – *universitaire, professeur d’université* (Fr.), *académicien* (Canadianism), college teacher – *enseignant au collégial* (Canadianism) (college in Quebec, as we have already said, is the first step to higher education); **faculty** (professor of Law, Economics, and Medicine – *professeur agrégé* (Fr.)); **teacher status** (assistance lecturer – *assistant* (Fr.), *professeur assistant* (Helvetism, Canadianism), emeritus professor – *professeur émérite* (Fr., Canadianism, Belgicism), the highest-ranking university lecturer – *professeur ordinaire* (Belgicism, Helvetism); *maître d’assistant* (Belgicism), **teacher for the probationary period** – *professeur adjoint* (Canadianism)); **the discipline taught by the teacher** (lecturer, seminar leader – *maître de conférence* (Fr.), teacher of practical lessons – *maître de formation pratique* (Belgicism)); **employment status** (full-time teacher – *professeur titulaire* (Fr.), *professeur agrégé* (Canadianism), part-time university lecturer who has some other regular workplace (in Brussels – a teacher waiting for this status) – *professeur extraordinaire* (Belgicism) [Dzyubenko, 2011, p. 242].

The third subgroup is “A person with an academic degree”. It may be: 1) ‘a person with an academic degree’; common French *licencié* – licentiate, Candidate of Sciences (gained an academic degree). In Belgium and France, the lexeme *licencié* is used – a person who has gained a university license; in Switzerland, the lexeme *gradué* is used with this meaning; 2) ‘external doctoral candidate’; common French *chercheur de doctorat*; Belgicism *doctorant (doctorand)*.

All these words are united by the hypernym concept ‘teacher’ – a person engaged in teaching or educational work. Kindergarten teachers in the considered countries perform approximately the same function: they care for and look after children, organize games and holidays, teach self-service skills, rules of behaviour and safety. But the methods of working with children and the organization of preschool education itself differ

from each other, which mean that the “kindergarten teacher” concept is perceived differently in France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Quebec. Persons engaged in teaching and/or gained an academic degree cannot be considered full inter-variant synonyms.

The conceptual group “Students”

The conceptual group “Students” (*étudiants*) in the territorial variants of the French language in France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Quebec includes three conceptual subgroups: students of a secondary educational institution, students of a higher educational institution, students who do not follow certain rules in an educational institution.

In the first subgroup, three concepts were noted in the territorial variants under study: 1) ‘pupil, student’, in common French *élève* ‘person receiving education at school’; Canadianism *étudiant* (the English calque *student*), Helvetism *gymnasien* ‘a student of a Swiss gymnasium, i.e. a secondary school’; 2) ‘college student’; several lexemes with this meaning were noted in the Canadian variant *cégépien, collégien, étudiant de CEGEP (Collège d’enseignement général et professionnel)* and one lexeme in the French language of France *collegian*; however, the denotations of these lexemes do not coincide, since the college in France is the lower grades in secondary school, while in Canada, after graduating from college, students receive secondary education and it is considered as the initial stage of higher education (Klokov, 2000, p. 145); 3) ‘pupil who has graduated from a secondary school’, in common French *bachelier* ‘a student who has passed the baccalaureate exam’, Helvetism *maturant* ‘a student who has graduated from a Swiss gymnasium’. After completing secondary school, students receive a certificate of secondary education in France – *C. F. E. S. (Certificate de fin d’études secondaires)*, in Switzerland – *Certificate de maturité*, which gives the right to enter a university or a higher educational institution.

To the second subgroup, “Students of higher educational institutions”, we have assigned six additional elements of the main meaning:

1) ‘student’; in France and Belgium *étudiant*, Switzerland *universitaire*, and Quebec, *étudiant universitaire, cleric, uquamien* (from

the abbreviation *U.Q.A.M.* (*Université Québécois à Montréal*), a student is a person receiving education at school, university, or any other higher educational institution; in Quebec, a student also means a college student (two-year preparation for entering a university);

2) ‘student-assistant’; this concept was noted in Canada – a teaching assistant at the university in practical classes *auxiliaire d’enseignement* and a teaching assistant in scientific research *auxiliaire de recherche*. In other territorial variants of the French language, this concept was not noted;

3) ‘medical student’; *étudiant de médecine* – in France, *clerc-docteur* – in Canada;

4) ‘student of Germanic Philology’; the lexeme *germaniste* in this meaning was noted in the French and Swiss dictionaries;

5) ‘student of pedagogical institute’; in France – *normalien*, in Belgium – *normaliste*;

6) ‘certified student’; common French *diplômé*; Helvetism *académicien* (from German *academiker*); Canadianism *détenteur d’un diplôme* ‘holder of a diploma’ or *gradué* ‘certified specialist, holder of a diploma’.

The third subgroup “Students who do not follow certain rules” in an educational institution/consists of the following concepts:

1) ‘student who has to repeat the grade level of study, a repeater’; this concept is noted in all four variants of the French language: Gallicism *doubleur, redoublant*; Belgicism *bisseur, doublant, doubleur*; Canadianism *redoubleur*; Helvetism *doublard* (Geneva), *doubleur* (Geneva, Neuchatel, Bern, Jura), *redoublard, redoubleur* (Valais), *doublon* (Vaud);

2) ‘student who regularly misses classes; truant’: *absenteeiste* – in France, *brosseur* – in Belgium;

3) ‘difficult student’: Gallicism *élève difficile*, Canadianism *élève exceptionnel*.

The “student” category as a concept demonstrates differentiating features when the words provide information about various types of activity within certain periods (“a student of a certain educational institution”, “a student with a certain level of education”) or quality of study (“a student experiencing difficulties with the study”). Thus, nominations vary in the age of students, the form and method of their education

in a particular educational institution. More than that, it is observed that one language unit may belong to different subconcepts, for example, in the French language of France, Belgium and Switzerland, a person is called a student only if studying at a higher educational institution, whereas in Quebec a student is thought to be a person enrolled at any educational institution type, which indicates an inter-lingual alternation among the territorial variant of French.

Conclusions

An onomasiological analysis of the subconcepts “Educational institutions (établissements d’enseignement)”, “Teaching staff (personnel enseignant)”, “Students (étudiants)” related to conceptual field “Education” has revealed certain discrepancy between generic and specific instances of education perception by the French, Belgians, Swiss, and Quebecers, which is represented in the sets of words that nominate them. The research results points to the fact that between territorial variants of the French language there exists some general categorical frame that demonstrates hieratical structures with predominantly hypernym-and-hyponym relations. It is stated that every subconcept under study has a set of generic and basic hypernyms that are specified in hyponyms and verify in a number of categorical features (indicating functions, location of training or teaching, specialty, disciplines studied or taught, age, status of the teacher or student, level and methodology of training). However, conceptual realizations in words shows not-full identity in the four variants of French under study, that is reflected in alterations on, the principles of nomination by function, location, level of training, study results, professional specialisation, teaching method, status. In the course of the onomasiological analysis it was identified, that the nomination by function may differ in relation to the designated object due to social and institutional differences in the system of education in France, Belgium and Switzerland, and Canadian Quebec. Thus, in the sector “Educational institution” there is a general hypernyms *école*, which demonstrates conceptual specificity while being used to classify types of preschool institutions in France (*école maternelle*), in Belgium (*école Froebel*), in Switzerland (*école enfantine*), but in French-

speaking Switzerland they are kindergartens with a various training levels, and it is reflected in the nomination; in the Province of Quebec (Canada), preschool education is marked with *écoles gardiennes, éducation préscolaire*.

The alternative basis for nominations in the field of education is reflected in the subconcepts “Teachers” and “Students”. A general principle of teaching staff nomination was noted in all four variants of the French language (from the name of the profession – *gendarme, précepteur, éducateur, éducatrice de garderie, éducateur/trice de jardin d’enfant, instituteur/trice de maternelle; froebélien/ne, maîtresse enfantine; gardien, travailleuse en garderie*. Much more variations were found in nominations of the student types, from common French *élève* to *étudiant, gymnasien, cégépien, collégien, étudiant de CEGEP (Collège d’enseignement général et professionnel)*, to *universitaire, étudiant universitaire, clerc, uquamien* (from the abbreviation *U.Q.A.M., Université Québécois à Montréal*), *auxiliaire d’enseignement, auxiliaire de recherche, étudiant de médecine, clerc-docteur, germaniste, normalien/normaliste*, etc.

Finally, it should be stated that the issue of inter-conceptual variations and alternations in the process of nomination concerning human languages with a number of territorial dialects deserves further investigation.

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