

Oleksandr Pozdniakov,
Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor,
Associate Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages
and Country Studies, Faculty of Tourism,
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7525-7108>
Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine

Transfer of meaning in formation of adolescents' language subcode

Перенесення найменування в утворенні мовного субкоду адолесцентів

Summary. *The transfer of meaning at forming vocabulary of German-speaking adolescents has been studied in the article. This language subcode has become a popular and efficient means of verbal self-identification, which is used to satisfy certain communicative needs of young people in a certain range of communicative situations. The analysis of lexicographic sources has shown an active use of semantic derivation, first of all metaphorizing, for creating new language units. We have also singled out the most productive types of meaning transfer in the language subcode under study. The latter include metaphorizing on the basis of similarity of an internal or external feature. Semantic derivation on the basis of semantic transfer from physical concepts to abstract concepts is productive as well. Language behavior of adolescents is strongly affected by factors which are mainly of social and psychological origin. That is why representatives of this socio-age group verbalize their own ideas about the similarity of the compared people and things when making new words by means of semantic derivation. In many cases, their associations are based on personal experience. The lexemes under study are often formed as a result of changes in the semantics of standard vocabulary. It can be regarded as an evidence of a close correlation of the language subcode of adolescents and standard German. In their vocabulary, semantic derivation is also characteristic for loanwords, mainly of Anglo-American origin. Some lexical units popular among adolescents are used in at making compound nouns, in the processes of prefixation and suffixation. Young people's verbal self-identification is often expressed in the use of stylistic lowered words and phrases, lexemes with pejorative components.*

At the next stage of the study, we have singled out the largest lexico-semantic groups of metaphorized lexemes in German adolescents' vocabulary. They encompass words that are used to name peers and adults, point to subcultural affiliation, express subjective assessments, describe mental abilities, physical state, and appearance. The young people's vocabulary has a relatively high value in terms of its potential impact on communicative partners or target audience, which significantly increases its pragmatic efficiency.

Key words: *language subcode, language behavior, semantic changes, metaphorizing, derivation, word-building, lexico-semantic groups.*

Анотація. У статті досліджено перенесення значення при формуванні словникового запасу німецькомовних адолесцентів. Цей мовний субкод став популярним і ефективним засобом вербальної самоідентифікації, який використовується для задоволення відповідних комунікативних потреб молоді у відповідних комунікативних ситуаціях. Аналіз лексикографічних джерел засвідчив активне використання семантичної деривації, насамперед метафоризації, для створення нових мовних одиниць. Також ми виокремили найпродуктивніші типи перенесення значення в досліджуваному мовному субкоді. До останніх відноситься метафоризація за подібністю внутрішньої чи зовнішньої ознаки. Продуктивною є семантична деривація на основі семантичної трансформації через співвідношення конкретного та абстрактного. Мовна поведінка адолесцентів значною мірою детермінована чинниками соціального та психологічного характеру. Тому представники цієї соціально-вікової групи вербалізують власні уявлення про подібність порівнюваних людей і речей при утворенні нових слів за допомогою семантичної деривації. У багатьох випадках їхні асоціації ґрунтуються на особистому досвіді. Досліджувані лексеми часто вворюються внаслідок зміни семантики загальноновживаної лексики. Це можна вважати свідченням тісного взаємозв'язку мовного субкоду адолесцентів і літературної німецької мови. У їхній лексичі семантична деривація притаманна також запозиченням, переважно англо-американського походження. Деякі лексичні одиниці, популярні серед адолесцентів, використовуються при утворенні складних іменників, у процесах префіксації та суфіксації. Мовленнява самоідентифікація молоді часто виражається у вживанні стилістично знижених слів і словосполучень, лексем із пейоративними компонентами.

На наступному етапі дослідження нами виокремлено найбільші лексико-семантичні групи метафоризованих лексем у вокабулярі німецькомовних адолесцентів. Вони охоплюють слова, які є найменуваннями одолітків і дорослих, вказують на субкультурну приналежність, виражають суб'єктивні оцінки, описують розумові здібності, фізичний стан, зовнішність. Лексика молоді має відносно високу цінність з точки зору потечійного впливу на комунікативних партнерів чи цільову аудиторію, що значно підвищує її прагматичну ефективність.

Ключові слова: мовний субкод, мовна поведінка, семантичні зміни, метафоризація, деривація, словотворення, лексико-семантичні групи.

Introduction. Adolescents' language subcode is a unique vocabulary subsystem of a national language. Nowadays, it has become a popular and efficient means of verbal self-identification, which is used to satisfy certain communicative needs of young people in a certain range of communicative situations. At the same time, there is a close correlation between the adolescents' language subcode and other components of standard and non-standard vocabulary. In our article, this set of lexical units is analysed on the example of modern German. Language behavior of adolescents is strongly affected by factors which are mainly of social and psychological origin. First of all, it should be taken into consideration that adolescents tend to use non-standard vocabulary in order to identify themselves

against the versatile language background of the German-speaking community. The latter consists of different social, age, professional groups with their own verbal means inventory. The second important reason for using specific vocabulary is the adolescents' effort to hide the real content of utterance from other representatives of their everyday communicative environment.

The above-mentioned factors determine a significant degree of young people's creativity as an integral part of making new lexical units. They, in turn, contribute to expression of a subjective, emotionally charged estimating attitude when verbalizing the surrounding world. As a rule, this process is accompanied by expressing personal assessments and judgments.

The relevance of our research is determined by the growing spread of the adolescents' language subcode, which is often preferred by speakers of different ages and occupations in various communicative situations. For example, a lot of young people's words and phrases have been successfully incorporated into formal and casual styles of communication, mass-media and advertising language, as well as chatting through messengers and social networks.

In contemporary German studies, researching formation, structure, and functions of the adolescents' language subcode has been developed to a comprehensive, multi-faceted issue. This can be clearly seen in a number of scientific papers by both foreign and Ukrainian Germanists dedicated to the above-mentioned linguistic phenomenon. Their analysis shows diversity of viewpoints regarding the place of the adolescents' language subcode in the system of modern German, its distinctive lexical-semantic features, determinants of word-building processes, trends and prospectives of further development.

When studying the works of foreign researchers, it is worth paying attention to emphasizing the heterogeneity of the given vocabulary subsystem caused by the heterogeneity of adolescents, as well as finding out reasons for young speakers' verbal self-identification. In particular, H. Henne considers the tendency of forming peer microgroups with distinctive vocabulary to be a typical feature of adolescents' language behaviour. The researcher sees the reason for this in the need to stand out from members of other social and age groups [8, p. 5]. This point of view is shared by E. Neuland, who is emphasizing the significance of subcultural affiliation influence on choosing ways to create new lexical and phraseological units within a certain young people's communicative environment [10]. M. Reinke, in turn, defines the general group of adolescents as a theoretical entity. However, the possibility of distinguishing common features of young people's language behavior has also been pointed

out [13, p. 2]. The publications of P. Schlobinski and other researchers are dedicated to the study of correlation of intra-group social status with giving preference to certain vocabulary patterns [14], where focusing on specific communicative situations is a considerable issue [15].

Having analysed the papers of Ukrainian Germanists, we can assert that their most popular issues encompass lexical-semantic and linguistic-cultural aspects of the language subcode under study. For example, M. R. Tkachivska is of the opinion that an uninhibited style of adolescents' communication with its grotesque exaggeration and risky jokes reflects verbal courage, frankness, and predisposition to generalization. The researcher suggests that consistency of productiveness at creating adolescents' vocabulary is determined by changing of their generations [5, p. 114–115]. L. A. Levytska and I. S. Mykytka define specific vocabulary as one of the most important features of young people's language culture, substantiating its origin by combination of needs to show protest, on the one hand, and express originality, on the other hand [1, p. 95]. According to H. R. Sokol, awareness of adolescents' language culture and learning their vocabulary belong to key components of developing German language communicative competence [3]. In the research by S. M. Soldatova and A. V. Kozonak, the most frequent thematic groups of German young people's vocabulary have been singled out, and intensity of its use in online communication has been emphasized [4, p. 345–346], while O. S. Khrystencko, studies the specifics of using adolescents' vocabulary in various types of discourse, and notes its low stylistic status [6, p. 112].

The scientific novelty of our study consists in distinguishing main ways of meaning transfer in German adolescents's language subcode, finding out reasons of their productiveness, providing a structural and semantic description of this vocabulary.

The purpose of the article is to reveal the characteristic features of the processes of meaning transfer in the vocabulary of German-speaking adolescents. The paper aims to define productive ways of metaphorizing in young people's vocabulary, establish determinants of this semantic derivation type, as well as specifics of structural division and lexico-semantic groups of words and phrases under study. The research object is represented by adolescents' vocabulary formed by means of metaphorization processes, while the subject comprises semantic and structural features of the above-mentioned language units.

The material of the research consists of nearly 1500 lexical units taken from dictionaries of German adolescents' vocabulary [7; 9; 11; 12]. The given sampling includes lexical units of four main parts of speech, namely nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

Methodology. In the article, the methods of analysis and synthesis have been used for studying the works of foreign and Ukrainian Germanists on the linguistic phenomenon under research. We have applied the descriptive method to give characteristics of the most common semantic changes and word-building processes in young people's language subcode. The inductive method has been applied for drawing conclusions about the features of meaning transfer in the vocabulary of German-speaking adolescents and establishing determinants of this process. By using quantitative methods, we have singled out the most productive types of meaning transfer and word-building morphemes, as well as lexicosemantic groups.

Results and Discussion. The analysis of lexicographic sources has shown an active use of semantic derivation, first of all metaphorizing, for creating new language units of all parts of the speech under study, in particular: nouns (*Murmelschuppen – Kirche*); verbs (*vorlöten – vor einer Party Alkohol trinken*); adjectives (*gamsig – sexuell erregt*); adverbs (*unheimlich – sehr*).

The obtained results have proved a close correlation of the language subcode of adolescents and standard German, where transfer of meaning by means of metaphorizing is considered a productive way of enriching vocabulary [2, p. 181]. On the other hand, the semantics of these lexemes is determined by age and social factors of language behavior during the adolescent stage of personality development. For instance, in the first example, we can see the use of a stylistically lowered lexeme in order to achieve an ironic effect along with the realization of the need for language creativity, which is peculiar to the vocabulary under study. The semantics of the root morpheme in the verb “*vorlöten*” points to the young people's attitude to drinking alcohol as one of the common harmful habits. In the case of the adjective “*gamsig*”, the attitude to sexual relations as one of the most popular adolescents' communication topics is verbalized. The last example given above shows the combination of traditional morphological structure and unusual semantics.

Since the essence of the metaphor is the thinking process of associating on the basis of similarity [2, p. 182], semantic inter-connections in the vocabulary of German adolescents' language subcode reflect the worldview, perception of reality, feelings of speakers belonging to this socio-age group. We have singled out the most productive types of meaning transfer in the research material:

- on the basis of similarity of an internal feature (*lecker – gut aussehend*);
- on the basis of similarity of an external feature (*Korallenriff – Pickelgesicht*);

- on the basis of semantic transfer from physical concepts to abstract concepts (*Hirnblähungen – dumme Idee*);
- on the basis of semantic transfer from external concepts to internal concepts (*blond – dumm*);
- on the basis of similarity of shape (*Tomate – Kopf*);
- on the basis of similarity of function (*Laufwerk – Gehirn*);
- transition of proper names into common names (*Bettie – süßes Mädchen*).

We can also clearly see evaluative components in the meaning structure of the above-mentioned lexemes, since one of the reasons for metaphorizing in adolescents' language subcode is to satisfy the need for expressiveness [1, p. 97]. Making new words by means of semantic derivation, representatives of this socio-age group verbalize their own ideas about the similarity of the compared people and things. In many cases, their associations are based on personal experience.

This often results in ambiguity, when various components of meaning are actualized in the process of semantic derivation. For example, the noun "*Rüssel*", according to the lexicographic sources under study, is used by adolescents in three different meanings – 1. *Mund*; 2. *Nase*; 3. *Penis* (in all cases, metaphorizing occurred on the basis of similarity of shape). On the example of the noun "*Kappe*" – 1. *Kopf*; 2. *Leitfaden*, *Norm*, we can see semantic transfer from physical concepts to abstract concepts.

As a rule, such lexemes are formed as a result of changes in the semantics of standard vocabulary, which is determined by the secondary status of adolescents' language subcode. The latter doesn't have its own grammar system [8, p. 5]. A lot of young people's words and phrases are simply synonyms for commonly used and known vocabulary of written and spoken German. A good example of this is the noun "*Lungenbrötchen*" – *Zigarette*. Therefore, it can be argued that the linguistic phenomenon under study affects the development of standard and colloquial German at lexico-semantic level, changing to some degree the language behavior of a large group of representatives of the German-speaking community.

The pragmatic aspect plays a crucial role in this process. The young people's vocabulary has a relatively high value in terms of its potential impact on communicative partners or target audience, which significantly increases the efficiency of the utterance. This contributes to the popularization of certain elements of the adolescents' language subcode and their promotion as pragmatically reliable verbal tools.

The pragmatic value of this German language subsystem is closely related to the semantics, which represents a combination of common and unusual components, emphasizing subjectively identified features of

referred people and things. This is also the reason for productiveness of semantic derivation in the given vocabulary.

Some lexical units popular among adolescents are used in further word-building processes, such as making compound nouns (*Kohle-Geld* → *Kohlenbeschaffer – Eltern*).

In our opinion, adolescents tend to create the above-mentioned compounds in order to satisfy the need for language uniqueness, assessive attitude to commonly established social norms and values. The use of these lexemes is usually complemented with certain dressing style and set of activities to create an effective means of subcultural or social self-identification.

The transfer of meaning is often accompanied by affixation, in particular, prefixation (which is typical for the formation of verbs) and suffixation (which is productive at making adjectives and adverbs). In the research material, the most frequent prefix is *be-* (*bedönnern – beschwatzen; belöffeln – viel auf jemanden einreden*). As for suffixation, it is characterized by productiveness of the morpheme *-ig* (*keimig – eklig, widerlich, dreckig*). This structural heterogeneity is a perfect evidence of the effectiveness of using metaphorical meaning transfer for demonstration of adolescents' language creativity, where changing semantics is combined with word-building to make something new and extraordinary at the same time. This contributes to the growth of the pragmatic potential of the given vocabulary, along with additional prerequisites for its potential application in a much wider range of communicative situations.

Semantic derivation is also characteristic for loanwords that have become components of German adolescents' vocabulary. The popularity of borrowing from other national languages, mainly from American English, is considered to be one of the main features of modern young people's communication [14]. For this vocabulary, we have singled out the following types of meaning transfer:

- on the basis of semantic transfer from physical concepts to abstract concepts (*abhotten – Spaß haben, in Hochstimmung sein*);
- on the basis of similarity of an external feature (*Diver – Taschendieb*);
- on the basis of similarity of an internal feature (*Jump – Scherz, Spaß, Witz, Vergnügen*);
- transition of proper names into common names (*Barbie – attraktives Mädchen*).

Considering that adolescents tend to focus on personal interests, which is accompanied by active participation in various types of subcultural activities [8, p. 187], the largest lexico-semantic groups of the vocabulary under study indicate its original functioning at the level of intra-group communication. Young people's verbal self-identification is

expressed in the use of stylistic lowered words and phrases, lexemes with pejorative components. At the same time, popularity of such vocabulary shows predisposition to emotionality, exaggeration, on the one hand, and subjective assessments and irony, on the other hand.

We have singled out the following lexico-semantic groups of German adolescents' vocabulary made by means of semantic derivation, which include lexemes to name:

- peers (*Nabelküsser – kleiner Junge*);
- lifestyle and subcultural affiliation (*Gaucht – Abenteuertourist*);
- adults (*Onkel – Polizist*);
- subjective assessments (*hammerhart – sehr gut, super*);
- mental abilities (*Teletubbyzuwinker – naiver Mensch*);
- physical state (*ausgepumpt – erschöpft*);
- appearance (*Puddingdampfer – dicke, übergewichtige Person*);
- communication (*anblöken – jemanden in einer frecher Weise ansprechen*);
- prohibited items (*Sportzigarette – Joint*);
- sexual relations (*brettern – Liebe machen*);
- elements of technical progress (*Kommunikationskeule – Handy*);
- food and drinks (*Dreieck – Döner*).

Conclusions. The transfer of meaning in German adolescent's vocabulary is an effective tool for verbalizing their value system, characteristics of social roles, emotions, and feelings. The psychologically determined need to achieve a certain degree of self-identification by means of expressiveness, subjective assessment, irony, exaggeration through word-building and semantic transformations is of significant importance. Taking into account a clearly seen correlation between the vocabulary under study with standard German, which is represented by a rich set of emotionally charged synonyms, the above-mentioned features determine the productiveness of metaphorizing processes, as well as establishing relevant lexico-semantic groups. Transfers of meaning on the basis of similarity of internal and external features belong to the most productive ways of semantic derivation in the research material. Meanwhile, extralingual factors, such as rapid changing of young people's generations, determine permanent creating new words and phrases. The latter can be regarded as search for new communication tools suitable for reflecting perception of social environment. As a rule, metaphorizing in the given vocabulary is accompanied by other word-building processes, such as making compounds and affixation (both suffixation and prefixation). Inherent features of adolescents' language behavior, namely communicative self-identification and demonstration of protest, are realized with the popularity of loanwords (which are mainly of Anglo-American origin) and lexemes with pejorative components.

In our opinion, the obtained results can be applied to further study of metaphorizing, as well as other types of semantic derivation in the vocabulary of particular subcultural, regional, ethnic groups of German-speaking adolescents.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Левицька Л.Я., Микитка І.С. Німецький молодіжний сленг та його лексико-семантичні особливості. *Вісник Харківського національного університету імені В.Н. Каразіна. Філологія*. Харків, 2013. № 1052. Вип. 74. С. 94–99.
2. Огуй О.Д. Лексикологія німецької мови. Вінниця : Нова книга, 2003. 416 с.
3. Сокол Г.Р. Сленг сучасної німецької молоді як засіб розвитку комунікативної компетенції студентів. *Науковий вісник Східноєвропейського національного університету імені Лесі Українки. Філологічні науки. Мовознавство*. Луцьк, 2013. № 20. С. 172–176.
4. Солдатова С.М., Козонак А.В. Лінгвістичний статус німецького молодіжного сленгу. *Молодий вчений*. Херсон : Молодий вчений, 2018. № 4(56). С. 344–348.
5. Ткачівська М.Р. Молодіжний сленг і його класифікації. *Одеський лінгвістичний вісник*. Одеса : Гельветика, 2015. № 6. Т. 2. С. 114–118.
6. Христенко О.С. Дискурсні сфери функціонування німецького молодіжного сленгу. *Вісник Сумського державного університету*. Суми : СумДУ, 2006. № 3(87). С. 110–114.
7. Hehl H. Das Megakrasse Lexikon. URL: http://hehl-rhoen.de/pdf/lexikon_der_jugendsprache.pdf (дата звернення: 24.01.2024).
8. Henne H. Jugend und ihre Sprache : Darstellung, Materialien, Kritik. Berlin; New York : de Gruyter, 1986. 385 S.
9. Langenscheidt 100 Prozent Jugendsprache. München: Langenscheidt, 2020. 160 S.
10. Neuland E. Jugendsprache – Jugendliteratur – Jugendkultur [3., korr. Aufl.]. Frankfurt am Main : Peter Lang, 2008. 277 S.
11. PONS 15 Jahre Wörterbuch der Jugendsprache – Sammelband [1. Aufl.]. Stuttgart: PONS, 2016. 288 S.
12. PONS Wörterbuch der Jugendsprache 2017. Stuttgart : PONS, 2016. 144 S.
13. Reinke M. Jugend, Sprache und Medien. Am Beispiel von Rundfunksendungen für Jugendliche. Hannover, 2000. 19 S.
14. Schlobinski P., Heinz H.-Ch. Jugendliche und “ihre“ Sprache : Sprachregister, Jugendkulturen und Wertesysteme. Empirische Studien. Opladen : Westdeutscher Verlag, 1998. 236 S.
15. Schlobinski P., Kohl G., Ludewigt J. Jugendsprache. Fiktion und Wirklichkeit. Opladen : Westdeutscher Verlag, 1993. 223 S.