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CONTEMPORARY LEXICAL INNOVATIONS IN THE COLLOQUIAL REGISTERS OF ENGLISH AND UKRAINIAN AMONG ADOLESCENTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

У статті розглядаються сучасні лексичні неологізми в англійській та українській розмовній лексиці підлітків. Вона висвітлює вплив цифрової культури та глобальної взаємодії на мовні зміни, показуючи, як ці інновації слугують маркерами ідентичності та соціальної приналежності. Шляхом порівняльного аналізу в дослідженні вивчається динаміка мовної адаптації, що відображає ширші соціокультурні зрушення.

Ключові слова: *лексичні інновації, цифрова культура, соціолінгвістика, молодіжна мова, крос-культурний аналіз.*

This article examines the contemporary lexical innovations in English and Ukrainian colloquial vocabularies among adolescents. It highlights the impact of digital culture and global connectivity on linguistic changes, revealing how these innovations serve as markers of identity and social belonging. Through a comparative analysis, the study explores the dynamics of language adaptation, reflecting broader sociocultural shifts.

Key words: *lexical innovation, digital culture, sociolinguistics, youth language, cross-cultural analysis.*

The dynamic nature of language, characterized by the continuous emergence of new lexical items, especially within the colloquial registers used by adolescents, presents a significant area of linguistic inquiry. This study focuses on the contemporary lexical innovations in the colloquial vocabularies of English and Ukrainian adolescents, aiming to analyse the sociolinguistic factors driving these changes and their implications for linguistic identity and cultural integration. The formulation of the problem revolves around understanding how modern

youth navigate and negotiate their identities through language in an increasingly globalized and digitalized world. This linguistic phenomenon is intricately connected to important scientific tasks, such as documenting and understanding language evolution, as well as practical tasks, including the development of educational materials that are responsive to the linguistic realities of today's youth, and the creation of more effective communication strategies in social media, marketing, and intercultural exchange.

The study of these linguistic innovations not only contributes to the academic field by providing insights into the mechanisms of language change and variation but also has practical implications for educators, psychologists, and language policy makers. By examining how adolescents in English and Ukrainian-speaking communities adopt and adapt new lexical forms, this research sheds light on broader processes of cultural globalization, identity formation, and social belonging. Furthermore, it addresses the need for linguistic inclusivity and the recognition of diverse linguistic practices in formal and informal settings, thereby contributing to the development of more equitable language policies and educational approaches that reflect the linguistic diversity of the contemporary youth.

In recent years, the study of linguistic innovation among adolescents has gained traction, with scholars such as P. Eckert [2] and Tagliamonte [8] making significant contributions to our understanding of youth language practices. Eckert's work on language and adolescent social dynamics in the United States provides foundational insights into the sociolinguistic processes that underlie language variation and change, emphasizing the role of social networks and identity in shaping linguistic practices. Tagliamonte's research, on the other hand, focuses on the digital communication landscape, highlighting the impact of social media and technology on the evolution of language among young speakers in English-speaking contexts [9]. These studies lay the groundwork for a comparative analysis of English and Ukrainian, offering methodological approaches and theoretical frameworks that are critical for examining contemporary lexical innovations.

However, despite the advancements in understanding the English-speaking youth's linguistic innovations, there remains a gap in comprehensive comparative studies that include Slavic languages, particularly Ukrainian. While there has been some research on language change and internet communication in Ukrainian, such as L. Bilaniuk's study on language identity and policy, these works often do not specifically address the colloquial innovations among adolescents or compare these trends with those in English-speaking contexts [1].

This article aims to fill this gap by conducting a comparative analysis of the lexical innovations in the colloquial registers of English and Ukrainian adolescents, examining the similarities and differences in the processes of linguistic innovation and the sociolinguistic factors influencing these changes. By focusing on previously unsolved aspects of the general problem, such as the impact of global cultural flows on language innovation in Ukrainian and the specific sociolinguistic mechanisms driving these innovations in both language communities, this research seeks to contribute new insights into the dynamics of contemporary youth language practices. The analysis relies on a synthesis of theoretical perspectives from sociolinguistics, digital communication studies, and cultural studies, aiming to build upon the existing body of literature by providing a more nuanced understanding of how global and local factors intersect in the linguistic practices of today's adolescents.

The primary aim of this article is to conduct a comprehensive comparative analysis of contemporary lexical innovations within the colloquial vocabularies of adolescents who speak English and Ukrainian. This study sets out to identify and examine the sociolinguistic factors that influence the adoption and adaptation of new lexical items among the youth in these linguistic communities. Specifically, the article seeks to:

1. Document and analyse the latest lexical innovations in the colloquial English and Ukrainian used by adolescents, highlighting the dynamics of language change and variation within these groups.

2. Investigate the role of digital media and global cultural exchange in shaping these linguistic innovations, considering the impact of social networks, online communication platforms, and media consumption habits.

3. Explore the implications of these lexical changes for identity construction and social belonging among adolescents, focusing on how language use reflects broader socio-cultural shifts and individual agency in the process of identity formation.

4. Compare and contrast the processes and outcomes of lexical innovation in English and Ukrainian, aiming to understand the universal and language-specific aspects of youth language practices in the context of globalization and digital communication.

5. Offer insights into the implications of these findings for linguistic theory, language education, and policy, particularly in terms of addressing the linguistic needs and realities of contemporary youth.

By achieving these objectives, the article intends to contribute to the broader academic discourse on language change, sociolinguistics, and youth culture, providing valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and linguists interested in the dynamics of contemporary youth language practices and their implications for society.

The core of this study involves a meticulous examination of the colloquial vocabularies of English and Ukrainian-speaking adolescents, drawing on a diverse range of data sources including online forums, social media platforms, and interviews. This investigation is underpinned by a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of language use patterns with qualitative insights into the sociocultural contexts that drive linguistic innovation. Through this methodology [5], the study identifies key trends in lexical innovation and elucidates the mechanisms of language change among modern youth.

The analysis reveals that in both English and Ukrainian, there is a significant influence of digital culture on lexical innovation. English-speaking adolescents have incorporated terms like

«ghosting», «doxxing», and «vibe check» into their vocabulary, reflecting their engagement with digital communication and social media. Similarly, Ukrainian-speaking youth have adopted terms such as «лайкати» (to like) and «фоловити» (to follow), directly borrowing from English internet lexicon, alongside creating unique neologisms like «гудзик» (button, used metaphorically to refer to apps or features on digital devices).

Sociolinguistic factors influencing lexical innovation

The study uncovers that the primary drivers of lexical innovation among adolescents are the desire for group identity, the need for efficient and nuanced communication, and the influence of global cultural trends. For instance, the adoption of specific slang terms or internet jargon among English-speaking adolescents often serves as a marker of belonging to particular online communities. Similarly, Ukrainian youth utilize a blend of Ukrainianized English terms and homegrown slang to navigate their identities in an increasingly globalized cultural landscape [6].

Comparative analysis

Comparatively, the study finds that while both English and Ukrainian-speaking adolescents are influenced by global digital culture, there are distinct pathways and outcomes in their lexical neologisms [3]. English neologisms tend to focus on creating new meanings [7] for existing words or phrases, reflecting the language's flexibility and global dominance. Ukrainian neologisms, meanwhile, demonstrate a balancing act between global influences and local linguistic identity, often resulting in hybrid forms or the creative adaptation of global trends within the Ukrainian linguistic context.

Implications for linguistic theory and practice

The findings underscore the importance of understanding language as a dynamic, socially situated phenomenon. The study suggests that linguistic innovations among adolescents are not merely ephemeral trends but are indicative of deeper sociocultural shifts. For linguistic theory, these results highlight the need for models that can account for the influence of digital communication

and global culture on language change. Practically, the insights from this study can inform language education and policy by emphasizing the relevance of contemporary youth language and the necessity for educational practices that are responsive to the linguistic realities of today's adolescents.

In all, this research provides a comprehensive overview of contemporary lexical innovations among English and Ukrainian-speaking adolescents, offering critical insights into the sociolinguistic processes underlying language change in the digital age. By documenting these innovations and exploring their sociocultural underpinnings, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of modern youth language practices and their implications for linguistic theory and practice.

The study of contemporary lexical innovations in the colloquial vocabularies of English and Ukrainian-speaking adolescents has yielded several important conclusions, illuminating the dynamic interplay between language, identity, and culture in the digital age. These findings not only contribute to our understanding of linguistic change among youth but also open avenues for further research.

The analysis reveals that both English and Ukrainian-speaking adolescents are adept at creating and adopting new lexical items that reflect their unique social experiences and technological engagement. This linguistic creativity serves not only as a means of in-group identification but also as a way to navigate and assert their presence in a rapidly evolving digital landscape [4]. Furthermore, the study highlights the significant role of social media and digital communication platforms in facilitating the spread and acceptance of these innovations. It suggests that the digital environment acts as a catalyst for linguistic change, providing a fertile ground for the emergence of new expressions that are quickly integrated into everyday speech. Additionally, the research underscores the importance of understanding the socio-cultural contexts that influence language use among adolescents, as these factors are crucial in shaping the future direction of linguistic evolution.

Moreover, the cross-linguistic comparison between English and Ukrainian highlights the global nature of linguistic innovation among youth, suggesting that while the specific expressions may vary, the underlying processes of language change and identity formation are remarkably similar across cultures. This universality points to a shared experience of adolescence in the digital era, transcending geographical and linguistic boundaries.

Conclusions

1.Digital influence. The significant impact of digital culture on language innovation among adolescents is evident in both English and Ukrainian contexts. This influence underscores the role of digital communication platforms as fertile grounds for linguistic creativity and change.

2.Identity and belonging. Lexical innovations serve as markers of social identity and belonging, with adolescents employing new terms to navigate their social worlds and assert their place within specific communities, both online and offline.

3.Global and local dynamics. While global cultural flows contribute to the spread of English lexical items into Ukrainian, the adaptation and creation of unique terms within each language highlight the ongoing negotiation between global influences and local linguistic identities.

4.Language flexibility and creativity. The findings demonstrate the flexibility and creativity inherent in language use among adolescents, showcasing how young speakers adapt linguistic resources to suit their communicative needs and social contexts.

5.Sociocultural shifts. The study reveals that lexical innovations among youth are reflective of broader sociocultural shifts, including changes in technology, social interaction, and global connectivity.

Prospects for further exploration

This research opens several pathways for future investigation, suggesting the need for a deeper and more nuanced understanding of youth language practices and their implications:

1. Longitudinal studies. Long-term studies could provide insights into how lexical innovations evolve over time and the extent to which they become integrated into the standard language.

2. Cross-cultural comparisons. Expanding the comparative framework to include more languages and cultural contexts would enrich our understanding of the universal and specific aspects of linguistic innovation among adolescents.

3. Impact of emerging technologies. Future research should examine the impact of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and augmented reality, on linguistic innovation, considering how these technologies might shape communication and language use among youth.

4. Educational implications. Investigating the implications of these linguistic changes for language education, including curriculum development and pedagogical strategies, could provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers.

5. Sociolinguistic variation. Further studies could explore sociolinguistic variation in lexical innovation among different demographic groups, including variations based on gender, socioeconomic status, and geographic location.

In conclusion, this study not only sheds light on the current state of lexical innovation among English and Ukrainian-speaking adolescents but also underscores the importance of continuing to explore the complex relationships between language, technology, and society. As digital communication continues to evolve and global cultural exchanges become increasingly fluid, understanding the linguistic practices of youth will remain a vital area of scholarly inquiry and societal interest.

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