

**Biletska I. O.**

doctor of pedagogical sciences, professor,  
the head of the chair of foreign languages theory and practice

*Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University*

*Uman, Ukraine*

## **SEMANTIC DERIVATION AS A WAY OF SUB-STANDARD VOCABULARY REPLENISHMENT**

The ability of the language, with the help of limited means, to capture and convey human experience is expressed in the fact that many words can transmit not one but several meanings, that is, the imposition of an old semantic grid into a new reality is accompanied by changes in the field of not only the primary but also the secondary nomination reflected peculiar associative realities of a particular socio-linguistic group.

Such a development of the semantic structure of words is typical of sub-standard vocabulary: a significant number of slang arises as a result of rethinking the previous meanings of words and is a part of the semantic structure of stylistically neutral words as stylistically marked lexico-semantic variants. It is called semantic derivation [2, p. 93].

Semantic derivation is fairly widespread in sub-standard subsystems, because the non-standard vocabulary is developing, mainly, by the means of the language on the basis of which it exists. In the basis of the semantic derivation are the universal processes of transfer of the meaning – metaphor and metonymy. They allow to generalize, compare and reflect in the linguistic form the quality of real objects. Epidigmatic meanings in many cases are the consequences of metaphorical transference, although it is often possible to trace the cases of metonymy, generalization and specialization of meaning.

Metaphoric transfer is the most common mechanism of semantic derivation in substandard subsystems. The leading role of metaphor in the formation of slang words is due to the fact that it uses the specific nominative features of language.

In the formation of slang words by metaphorizing from a variety of different features of objects of the world, one feature which becomes the basis of metaphorical transfer is distinguished. Such a feature can be significant and insignificant qualities related items in the mind. The features of direct and figurative word meanings are combined in a new meaning. The names that appeared as a result of this rethinking are the most motivated, their meanings can easily be deduced from the meanings of the initial lexico-semantic variants.

Y. Kubryakova believes that «the metaphorical name allows to see the main subject in a new way, reveals some of its features and shades others» [4, p. 48]. An illustration of this statement can be slang words, the meaning of which reflect the negative properties of objects: *beast* – rapist, *wolf pack* – gang marauders.

The feature that becomes the basis of metaphorical transference can be veiled. It can be attributed to an object based on subjective observations and associations, for example: *airhead*, *bubblehead*, *dipstick* – fool, idiot, *ambulance-chaser* – a lawyer specializing in accidents, *back-seat driver* – irresponsible leader, third party observer, *crumbly*, *wrinkle* – old man, *dream-boat* – attractive person or thing, *family jewels* – secret information, *fat cat* – rich, privileged person [6, p. 209].

In contrast to the metaphorical transfer based on the similarity or coincidence of object features of the surrounding reality, the metonymic transfer is based on the contiguity of two objects on the barely noticeable psychological connections between various objects and phenomena, which is sometimes very difficult to trace and identify. The essence of metonymy was disclosed by G. Paul as «the transfer of the name on the basis of spatial, temporal and casual ties as one of the varieties of semantic changes» [5, p. 117].

Metonymic models strictly correlate with certain associations. For example, the metonymic meaning of the slang words *suit*, *vest* – the person who deals with business is probably connected with historical associations, since in the minds of native speakers perhaps the image of a business man dressed in a coat or a vest is preserved. The new meaning of African-American *high-five* – greetings, congratulations shows the enriching of the semantics of numerals with objective meaning.

Semantic slang words *bag lady* – a homeless woman who wears all her things in plastic bags, *a boob tube* – TV, *berries* – wine, *grunt work (job, labour)* – unskilled labor, *reptiles* – shoes, *play* – activity have been also formed by means of metonymic transfer [1, p. 54].

In some cases, the mechanism of the formation of figurative meaning is based on both the metaphor and the metonymy at the same time, for example: *couch potato* – a person who in his free time passively lies on the couch in front of the TV.

Researchers point out that the antonymic rethinking of literary words is also characteristic of slang and social dialects, that is, a change in meaning in the «reverse or contrast direction» [3, p. 121].

Antonomastic use of people's names and surnames is quite common in substandard, since inadequate use of a proper name has a certain pragmatic purpose. So, the name of the character of the animated W. Disney cartoon, Mickey Mouse, denotes «small, insignificant, worthless» [6, p. 136], and the name of the character of the movie «King-Kong» has become «anyone of outstanding size and strength» [6, p. 119].

Slang words can also be created on the basis of common names that act as symbolic proper ones, for example: *Mr. Big* – criminal offender, an important person, *Mr. Clean (Mr. Clean hands)* – a public figure who has an impeccable reputation, a crystalline person; *Dr. Feel Good* – a doctor who assigns drugs to patients to maintain their vitality.

## LITERATURE

1. Арутюнова Н. Д. Время : модели и метафоры / Н. Д. Арутюнова // Логический анализ языка : Язык и время. – М. : Наука, 1997. – С. 51–61.

2. Беляева Т. М., Хомяков В. А. Нестандартная лексика английского языка / Т. М. Беляева, В. А. Хомяков. – Л. : Изд. ЛГУ, 1985. – 135 с.

3. Карлинский А. Е. Понятие языковой общности и речевой нормы в связи с проблемой двуязычия / А. Е. Карлинский // Мови європейського культурного ареалу : розвиток і взаємодія. – К. : Довіра, 1995. – С. 111–125.

4. Кубрякова Е. С. Когнитивные аспекты в исследовании семантики слова / Е. С. Кубрякова // Семантика языковых единиц : доклады VI международной конференции. Том 1. – М. : СпортАкадемПресс, 1998. – С. 47–50.

5. Пауль Г. Принципы истории языка / Г. Пауль. – М. : Изд. иностр. лит., 1960. – 500 с.

6. Ayto J., Simpson J. The Oxford Dictionary of Modern Slang / J. Ayto, J. Simpson. – Oxford, New York : Oxford University Press, 1996. – 300 p.