



THE LEXICAL-SEMANTIC STRUCTURE OF THE "TEEN/ADOLESCENCE" CONCEPT

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| Article history: | Abstract: |
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| Received: 11 th February, 2026 Accepted: 10 th March 2026 | This article examines the lexical-semantic structure of the concept "teen/adolescence" in the English language. It identifies core lexical units that directly denote adolescents, such as <i>teen</i> , <i>teenager</i> , <i>adolescent</i> , and <i>youth</i> , as well as peripheral words that describe their psychological, social, and behavioral characteristics. Peripheral lexical units include terms related to emotions, identity, independence, social relationships, education, daily activities, and behavioral traits. The study demonstrates that the concept of adolescence is multidimensional, reflecting not only age but also emotional development, social roles, and cultural context. Understanding this lexical-semantic structure provides insight into how language represents adolescence in contemporary society. |

Keywords: teen, adolescence, teenager, lexical-semantic structure, lexical field, cognitive linguistics, social development, emotional development

INTRODUCTION

A concept is a cognitive structure that contains knowledge, experience, and cultural information about a particular phenomenon and is represented in language through lexical and semantic units[1;P.15]. In modern linguistics, the study of concepts has become one of the important directions in understanding the relationship between language, cognition, and culture. Concepts are considered mental structures that reflect human knowledge, experience, and perception of the surrounding world. They are expressed in language through lexical units, semantic relations, and various linguistic forms. Therefore, the study of concepts helps reveal how language represents cultural values and social realities. One of the socially significant concepts in contemporary society is the concept of teen or adolescence. Adolescence is a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood characterized by physical, psychological, and social changes. This period is associated with identity formation, emotional development, and the establishment of social relationships. Because of its importance in human development, the concept of adolescence is widely represented in language through numerous lexical units and expressions.

The analysis of the lexical-semantic structure of the concept "teen/adolescence" makes it possible to identify the core and peripheral elements of the concept, as well as the semantic relationships between different lexical units. Such analysis helps to understand how the idea of adolescence is conceptualized and

represented in the English language. The aim of this research is to examine the lexical-semantic structure of the concept "teen/adolescence" and to identify the main lexical units that form its semantic field.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses descriptive and lexical-semantic analysis to examine the concept "teen/adolescence" in the English language. The research focuses on identifying key lexical units and their semantic relationships. Dictionary definitions and linguistic sources are used to analyze words related to this concept.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept has been widely studied in cognitive linguistics and semantics. Scholars such as Anna Wierzbicka, George Lakoff, and Ronald Langacker emphasize that concepts are mental structures expressed through language. They show how people understand and organize knowledge about the world. Linguistic studies often analyze concepts through lexical-semantic fields, which include core and peripheral lexical units related to a particular idea. Research on adolescence in linguistics focuses on the vocabulary used to describe teenagers, their behavior, and social roles. Such studies help explain how language reflects the cultural and social understanding of adolescence.

MAIN PART

The lexical-semantic structure of the concept "teen/adolescence" consists of several layers. The core of the concept includes key lexical units such as *teen*,



teenager, adolescent, and youth. These words directly represent individuals within the age group typically associated with adolescence. The peripheral layer includes words that describe characteristics and experiences associated with this stage of life. These lexical units include terms such as *growth, identity, rebellion, independence, peer pressure, and emotional development.* These words reflect psychological and social aspects of adolescence. Another group of lexical units describes social roles and activities typical of teenagers, such as *student, friendship, education, social media, and self-expression* [2;P.29]. These terms demonstrate how modern cultural contexts influence the perception of adolescence. The analysis shows that the concept of adolescence is not limited to biological age but also includes social behavior, emotional experiences, and cultural expectations. As a result, the lexical-semantic structure of this concept reflects the complexity and diversity of teenage life in modern society. The concept of teen/adolescence is represented in English through a network of words that form its lexical-semantic structure. This structure can be divided into core words, which directly denote the age group, and peripheral words, which describe characteristics, behaviors, emotions, and social roles of adolescents. Core lexical units include words such as *teen, teenager, adolescent, and youth.* These words directly refer to individuals in this stage of life and define the age group itself. Peripheral lexical units can be further grouped into several categories. Psychological and emotional traits include words such as *identity, independence, rebellion, self-awareness, self-esteem, emotional development, mood swings, confidence, curiosity, and risk-taking.* These words describe the inner experiences and personal development of adolescents. Social relationships are expressed through words like *friendship, peer group, family influence, peer pressure, social interaction, teamwork, and mentorship,* which reflect the importance of social connections and influence during adolescence.

Education and daily activities include terms such as *school, student, homework, extracurricular activities, learning, social media, clubs, hobbies, and sports,* representing common experiences and routines of teenagers. Behavioral traits are represented by words like *exploration, experimentation, responsibility, creativity, leadership, and communication skills,* which show the ways in which adolescents act, learn, and express themselves. The lexical-semantic structure of the concept "teen/adolescence" combines both core and peripheral words, forming a multidimensional network. The core words define who the adolescent is, while the peripheral words describe what adolescents feel, do, and experience in social, emotional, and

cultural contexts. This structure provides a comprehensive view of adolescence as a stage of human development reflected in language.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the lexical-semantic structure of the concept "teen/adolescence" shows that it is a multidimensional and complex concept in the English language. Core lexical units, such as *teen, teenager, adolescent, and youth,* define the age group, while peripheral words describe their psychological, emotional, social, and behavioral characteristics. Words related to identity, independence, peer relationships, education, and daily activities reflect the experiences and development of adolescents.

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