





UDC 81'233+81'371

DOI: 10.18413/2313-8912-2023-9-1-0-9

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Specifics of text derivatives propositions in speech ontogeny

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*Received 20 January 2023; accepted 15 March 2023; published 30 March 2023*

**Abstract.** Speech generation is an insufficiently explored process and text recalling is even more poorly understood. This article is aimed at studying the relationship between the primary expository text and its oral text derivatives. Oral recalls of educational social science texts produced by schoolchildren of the fifth grade were investigated as text derivatives. The article presents the innovative study of text derivatives generation specifics in ontogeny. The study draws on the achievements in the field of cognitive linguistics, ontolinguistics, psycholinguistics and discursology. It is stated that ontogenetically all text derivatives were framed by adolescents, who are in the process of their language and speech development. The material, which is the corpus of oral narrations of 297 text derivatives, was obtained empirically. Identification of the linguistic parameters of the complexity of primary and secondary texts was carried out with the help of the RuLingva automatic text complexity analyzer (<https://rulingva.kpfu.ru>) developed by the Text Analytics (TA) Research Laboratory of Intelligent Text Management Technologies, Kazan Federal University. The study employs the author's model that describes the semantic stages of a written text perception and its oral reproduction. This model includes some basic cognitive processes such as perception, memory, attention and thinking. All text derivatives were classified into several groups. The main classification criteria included such indicators as the number of reproduced text propositions. As a result of the analysis of secondary narrations of schoolchildren of the early teenage ontogenetic period of development, deep semantic roles are described, their translation and correlation with deep propositions of primary educational texts, the transformation of elements of propositions, which involves changing or preserving





the dimension of expression (syntactics) and the dimension of content (actant-predicate structure) in secondary oral narrative constructions.

**Keywords:** Ontogeny; Derivative texts; Proposition; Semantic role; actant-predicate structure

**How to cite:** Petrova, A. A., Privalova, I. V., Kazachkova, M. B. and Yessenova, K. U. (2023). Specifics of text derivatives propositions in speech ontogeny, *Research Result. Theoretical and Applied Linguistics*, 9 (1), 136-152. DOI: 10.18413/2313-8912-2023-9-1-0-9

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Особенности пропозиций текстов-дериватов в речевом онтогенезе

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*Статья поступила 20 января 2023 г.; принята 15 марта 2023 г.;  
опубликована 30 марта 2023 г.*

**Аннотация.** Порождение речи является сложным процессом, ещё более малоизученным является процесс пересказа прочитанного текста. Предлагаемая работа анализирует соотношение первичного письменного текста и его устных текстов-дериватов, представленных как устные пересказы школьниками 5 класса учебных текстов по обществознанию. Новизна работы заключается в исследовании специфики порождения устных вторичных текстов в онтогенезе. Исследование базируется на научных положениях из области когнитивной лингвистики, онтолингвистики, психолингвистики и дискурсологии. Мы исходим из того, что онтогенетически все вторичные тексты были оформлены подростками, т.е. носителями языка с формирующимся речевым и психическим развитием. Устный корпус нарративов, являющийся материалом изучения, представляет собой языковой ресурс, состоящий из структурированного набора вторичных текстов (297 нарративов),

полученных эмпирическим путем. Выявление лингвистических параметров сложности первичных и вторичных текстов производилось с помощью автоматического анализатора сложности текста RuLingva (<https://rulingva.kpfu.ru>), разработанного научно-исследовательской лабораторией интеллектуальных технологий управления текстами «Текстовая Аналитика» (ТА) Казанского федерального университета. Была разработана авторская модель закономерностей смыслового восприятия письменного текста и его устного воспроизведения с учетом действия когнитивных и психологических процессов, таких как восприятие, память, внимание и мышление. Все тексты-дериваты были классифицированы в несколько групп. Основными критериями классификации были такие показатели как количество воспроизведенных пропозиций. В результате анализа вторичных нарративов школьников младшего подросткового онтогенетического периода развития описаны глубинные семантические роли, их трансляция и соотношение с глубинными пропозициями первичных учебных текстов, трансформация элементов пропозиций, предполагающая изменения или сохранения плана выражения (синтактика) и плана содержания (актантно-предикатная структура) во вторичных устных нарративных конструкциях.

**Ключевые слова:** Онтогенез; Тексты дериваты; Пропозиция; Семантическая роль; Предикантно-актантная структура

**Информация для цитирования:** Петрова А. А., Привалова И. В., Казачкова М. Б., Есенова К. У. Особенности пропозиций текстов-дериватов в речевом онтогенезе // Научный результат. Вопросы теоретической и прикладной лингвистики. 2023. Т. 9. № 1. С. 136-152. DOI: 10.18413/2313-8912-2023-9-1-0-9

## Introduction

In ontogenesis, speech generation as well as text retelling are based on the mechanisms of language production and perception. We use the term “speech ontogenesis” for speech actions studies of a particular age group. Such approach is believed to be quite valid since speech ontogenesis can be analyzed not only longitudinally and in comparison, but also at individual stages of ontogenesis. Text retelling represents a variety of speech generation within a definite semantic framework. In other words, text retelling – is not just a collection of individual thoughts, rather it is the presentation of the information sent by the author of the text to the addressee. In the speech of adolescents, there are practically no complex synonymous constructions or clarifying constructions. This is due to rather limited vocabulary and the presence of predominantly simple syntactic constructions. The speech development of the

group of our subjects (age 11-12) is characterized by a number of features. On the phonological level, the formation of the phonetic apparatus and the awareness of articulatory actions are noted. The active individual vocabulary is compiled and it varies from 10,000 to 15,000 units. However, there is a significant discrepancy between the number of actively used lexical units and those of the passive dictionary since many units are understood but are not actively used in speech. There is grammatical patterning and self-correction of “incorrect” grammatical forms. Children at this age have difficulty with correct syntactic constructions, especially word order. The foregoing explains some uniformity, similarity and primitivism of the text derivatives produced by them.

Psychologists argue that at the age of our control group of subjects (12 years old), the evolvement of memory and attention takes place. Children are developing their ability to concentrate for a long time on large volumes

of the studied material, they can manage and control attention. Mechanical memory starts functioning along with intellectual memory. Teenagers actively master mnemonic techniques. They start applying logical thinking and deduction along with such operations as classification, analogy and generalization. Teenagers begin to operate with hypotheses and to solve intellectual problems. They get an awareness of their own intellectual operations and their thoughts management. A setting for the development of thinking is being formed.

All psychological transformations described above can be traced in the speech behavior of adolescents retelling a given text. Analytical thinking and imagination form a single psychological complex that contributes to the manifestation of creativity. There is a convergence of imagination with theoretical thinking, it gives an impetus to the development of creativity. Emotions and feelings that overwhelm a teenager get transferred into imaginary situations. Speech behavior becomes more controlled and managed. The richness of the vocabulary is expanding due to irregular or non-standard forms and structures of speech. The self-correction mechanism comes into play. Teenagers can independently detect the violation of rules in written and oral messages. Teenagers begin to vary his speech depending on the style of communication. Speech becomes more personal-oriented towards a concrete addressee. Adolescents' understanding of the linguistic meanings individualizes their self-awareness. The linguistic consciousness of a teenager becomes more individualized since the arsenal of lexical meanings of words is replenished, and each language unit acquires personal sense.

The expansion of the array of personal meanings happens due to the development of the system of internally consistent ideas about oneself, images of the "I". In terms of content, self-consciousness turns into social con-

sciousness transferred inward. It happens thanks to new relationships with others, and with the world of values. Self-consciousness performs a socio-regulatory function. The desired image of one's own personality is created from the merits of different people. In the search for oneself, a new palette of feelings appears, among which there are such as the tendency to solitude, feelings of loneliness, incomprehensibility and longing. A certain confusion in the presentation of the text can be explained by the fact that adolescence is the period of violent inner experiences and emotional difficulties. Teenagers have social phobias that is why they become easily shy and attach great importance to the shortcomings of their appearance and behavior, which leads to a reluctance to communicate with certain people. The development of communicative activity occurs precisely during this period as adolescents strive for communication and joint activities with peers. They have a desire to have close friends with whom they develop trusting relationships (and in some cases, such relations are more trusting than with the members of their own family). This is a period of self-affirmation, so there is a desire to be accepted, recognized, respected by peers due to their individual qualities, to take a satisfying position in the group of peers. In the adolescent group as a psychological space, the main neoplasms of adolescents arise, in which their own special rules of communication operate.

The psychological features, which have been mentioned above, are manifested in speech production, which includes texts derivatives. They contain: new word formations (as a result of the development of abstract thinking); reflective evaluation of the text (as a result of self-knowledge and understanding of other people); the emergence of new information (mediated by abstract thinking and fantasy); the emergence of value judgments (as a result of the development of self-esteem and self-concept;

structured speech behavior (as a result of the development of personal regulation, control and management of speech behavior).

### **Main part**

#### **Purpose of the paper**

This article discusses the features of ontogeny that are revealed in textual memories or oral retellings. “Recalls as secondary texts or text derivatives are also considered to be a good material to explore cognitive aspects of secondary texts production, information conversion procedures and types of transformations of primary texts” (Petrova and Solnyshkina, 2021: 221). The material of the study was oral spontaneous secondary narrations, which are termed as text-derivates. All of them were produced by students of the younger teenage ontogenetic period (5<sup>th</sup> grade) of development. The authors of this article have made an attempt to analyze how in ontogeny the deep structure of a previously read written text is being relayed in the process of secondary text production. The studies of other authors (which are not numerous and are focused on testing the ability to retell various texts in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades) have shown that 70% of students demonstrate a low level of text retelling abilities to retell the text (Parfenova, 2010: 164). We do not set the task to double-check the data, which have been obtained by our colleagues before, rather we strive to study the problem of oral spontaneous retelling taking into account the cognitive-speech skills development of students at this stage of ontogenesis.

**The target** of this article is to study the ontogeny specifics of the text derivatives propositions. The authors of this article have made an attempt to analyze how the competence of mastering an oral story is being shaped in ontogenesis. The assumption is that an oral narration does not suddenly appear by itself, rather it is the result of some basic psychological components activation of a linguistic personality in evolving process.

The following tasks were set forth:

1) analysis of actant-predicate structures of the written educational text and similar structures of the text-derivatives;

2) modeling of all types of propositions representing macro-situations and micro-situations of the initial text and the text derivatives;

3) comparison of macropropositions and micropropositions of the original and the text derivatives;

4) identification of inconsistencies (loss or addition of atomic propositions, loss or addition of new actants and predicates that are not present in the primary text);

5) transformation of the elements of propositions, involving changes or preservation of the expression dimension (syntax) and the content dimension (actant-predicate structure) in secondary oral narrative constructions;

6) identification of ontogenetic features in schoolchildren’s development and the reflection of this process in their text derivatives;

7) compiling the pool of discursive elements indicating the formation of psychological structures of reflection, self-esteem and “I-concept” in text derivatives;

8) identification of the stages in retelling process.

In our work, we drew upon the following theoretical considerations:

1) In a number of scientific papers that study the semantic structure of a sentence, there is a trend to describe the components of the semantic structure: predicates, actants, sir constants (A. Mustajoki, E. V. Paducheva, N. Y. Shvedova, etc.). Another tendency is to describe only the objective content of sentences (propositions), identify types of propositions (T. B. Alisova, T. P. Lomtev, O. I. Moskalskaya, etc.). There are works that describe not only the objective, but also the subjective content of the sentence: dictum and modus (N. D. Arutyunova, T. V. Shmeleva, etc.). Having summarized the observations within the framework of these directions, we proceed from the theory of the functional



syntax by A. Mustajoki and his approach to the description of linguistic material in the direction from meaning to form (Mustajoki, 2019); also, we use the inventory of semantic roles developed for the Russian language by A. Mustajoki, E. V. Kashkin and O. N. Lyashevskaya (Kashkin and Lyashevskaya, 2013: 334). When creating the FrameBank system<sup>1</sup> the researchers were guided by the following ideas: the interpretation of the first and second arguments should be carried out from the standpoint of the semantics of the predicate; the construction of the role on the account of its prototype and its periphery; the existence of dual roles and their splitting.

2) While analyzing the mechanism of text derivatives production, we proceed from the psycholinguistic model of utterances generation by I. A. Zimnyaya (Zimnyaya, 2001). This model does not contradict other models (A. A. Leontiev, T. V. Akhutina) but refines them. According to I. A. Zimnyaya, the level of speech production includes the phases of meaning formation and formulation. These phases act along with the choice of words, the mechanism for temporal scanning and the articulation program; the latter objectifies the idea in the process of thoughts embodiment through language.

3) The nature of the cognitive-semantic structures of the actual discourse and their interaction are determined by the general pragmatics of the text and goal setting (Arutyunova, 1973; Arutyunova, 1982; Gusarenko, 2015; Gusarenko, 2016; Gusarenko, 2017). When constructing an actual discourse model, the fundamental position is that a proposition is a stable, inevitably present component. It is independent of the composition of the surface structure of the utterance and it is formed during the cognitive processing of the utterance. Hence, “for a deeper understanding of the speech works processing procedures, it

is necessary, first of all, to consider the interaction of a proposition with other cognitive-semantic structures involved in the cognitive processing of an utterance” (Gusarenko, 2015: 163).

4) Oral realization of an unprepared text retelling is associated with the functioning of memory as a complex cognitive-mnemonic process. It includes memorization, preservation, reproduction, forgetting and it is accompanied by mnemonic emotions (Vasilevskaya et al., 2011).

### **Ontogeny of retelling**

We assume that retelling competence development is associated with the ability to present a monologue and to memorize a certain amount of information. “The verbal product is considered by psycholinguists as an indicator of the work of thought processes” (Privalova, 2021: 186). Memorizing and comprehension are also shaped along with other cognitive activities, as a matter of fact, “reading comprehension relies on a variety of complex skills” (McCarthy et al., 2019: 231). Along with phonetic-phonological, morphological-syntactic and “semantic competencies, there is also the process of mastering pragmatic and discursive competencies” (Petrova, 2015: 318). These competences are basic skills along with mastering of writing (Ehlich et al., 2008a; Ehlich et al., 2008b: 18-21).

The pragmatic basic indicators arrange the communicative basis for the acquisition of language competencies in children up to two years of age. Initially, they are acquired in the process of early interaction of a child with his/her first communication partners (parents or peers). For instance, the main structures of formal speech communication are treated as discursive indicators, in other words, it is the experience of changing communication moves and tactics. The abilities for monologue communication are such indicators that appear in children at the age of three as primitive interaction steps.

The competence of retelling has several ontogenetic phases and for each phase particular discursive skills are typical. The

<sup>1</sup> FRAMEBANK, retrieved from: [https://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/fndrupal/frame\\_nets\\_in\\_other\\_languages](https://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/fndrupal/frame_nets_in_other_languages) (Accessed 26 December 2022).

above-mentioned age levels are important for the genesis of any story retelling, including the description of a picture, an autobiographical story and an oral reproduction of what has been heard or seen. At the age of 3-4 years, children produce a story-exposition that is something in between of narration, description or reproduction. The first stories are abrupt and inconsistent with a vague structure and the absence of lexical tense markers. A certain event sequence is built with the use of temporary present-perfect verb forms which children of this age know rather well.

At the age of 5-6 years, there happens a significant change in the story telling competence. Real and imaginary events are not clearly separated, but are verbally described as a whole. Therefore, complex syntactic constructions and unstructured presentation appear in the retelling. All these are accompanied by an individual assessment of events and self-reflection. Along with that, a child may add such descriptions of his/her feelings as 'frightened', 'delighted' or 'concerned' etc. In the age group of 7-8 years, such type of retelling as "a story-experience-memory" is recorded, which is marked by the increase in the number of language means. "The age interval group from 9 years and onwards is characterized by the variety of emotional qualifications of the story. There is also an expansion of the subject-predicate grid of sentences with the inclusion of actant markers and connectors for expressing causal and temporal relationships" (Petrova, 2015: 320).

At the same time, narrative competencies get improved. Along with storytelling structures, the presentation competence is developed; this competence presupposes to retell what was heard or seen by the speaker. Initially, the skills of retelling are formed on the basis of the original microtext which is perceived by ear (auditory) or by eye (visually). In the early stages of ontogenesis, it may happen through playing the game "lotto" with pictures on which one can see different things or animals. An adult

while showing a picture, first correlates the image with the sound complex and then with various activities. Then, an adult asks a child to repeat what was heard.

Retelling skills get excelled through the process of speech competencies development before a child starts reading and writing (up to 5-6 years). As a rule, it happens in joint activities with adults or senior friends. For instance, while reading a fairy-tale together an adult reproduces a text that includes images. A child perceives this text audibly and visually, looking at the pictures in the book. Then, a child is invited to reproduce what he has just heard and seen in his own words. Thus, microtexts are formed – micro-retellings, which are improved with the development of reading and writing skills when a child becomes 6 or 7 years old. Retelling represents itself an integrative type of activity, which joints together perception, understanding, analysis and generation of the text. Good memory, receptive and perceptual communication skills are important in mastering retelling (Petrova, 2015). Receptive skills are indispensable since they help to subordinate one's statement to the main idea, to build a statement in accordance with the type of speech, and to express one's thoughts accurately. Perceptual skills help to understand the topic and to highlight the main idea of the statement, to see the compositional and typological features of the text, to analyze and assimilate the vocabulary and grammatical structure of the author's speech, to convey the content of the text "in their own words", etc. (Ladyzhenskaya, 1998: 40).

V. A. Lemeshchenko argues that in school practice there are more than 28 types of retelling, which although can be "reduced to five: free retelling (as I remember), detailed, short, selective and artistic retellings" (Lemeshchenko, 1997: 9-10). Free retelling is based on the first impression and the general idea is transmitted as a whole ("in your own words"). As far as the compositional-typological structure is concerned, there are retellings of the text-description, narrations, reasonings, and

contaminations. Retelling is closely related to reading comprehension. The ontogenesis of retelling shows that often students in grades 5-7 are not able to highlight the main idea of the text, rather they focus their attention on minor details. They also do not know how to carry out a semantic analysis of the text. Text understanding involves creating an awareness about the logical structure of the text. Also, text comprehension presupposes an adequate semantic reading of the linguistic means used by the author, and establishing the author's intention. Free retelling or retelling in one's own words causes difficulties since a teenage student is not always able to find "his own words". At this stage of speech development, the student does not yet have those speech capabilities that would allow him to express in a different way what he has to convey (Smirnov, 1987: 136). Text comprehension is hampered by ignorance or inaccurate representation about the meaning of a particular word (Parfenova, 2010: 35).

The studies of the senior stages of ontogenesis (S. V. Gusarenko, G. I. Isenbayeva, E. L. Parfenova, A. A. Petrova, M. I. Solnyshkina) show that the genre of a primary text affects the type of oral retelling. In unprepared oral retellings of educational texts, the following transformations of the actant-predicate structure may be carried out: 1) the replacement of logical propositions with the event propositions which convey the deep structure assimilated in the process of speech ontogenesis; 2) the replacement of actants with an abstract meaning by subjects-agents, in other words, actors which actively perform any types of actions.

#### **Material and methods of research**

The following methodological operations were used as the main ones in this study: the description of semantic roles and interpretation of the first and second arguments from the standpoint of predicate semantics; the application of the psycholinguistic model of utterance generation in ontogenesis; the assessment of adolescents' psychology and of the cognitive

speech skills evolution; the understanding of memory functioning as a complex cognitive-mnemonic process; the definition of the cognitive-semantic structures of the actual discourse; the presentation of the proposition as a stable component that does not depend on the composition of the surface structure utterance.

#### **Description of the experiment:**

Secondary school students in the control groups were asked to read original texts from the social studies textbook for grade 5, edited by L. N. Bogolyubov. The original texts were simplified and modified according to the method of K. S. McCarthy and D. Sh. McNamara, who conducted similar experiments in the American educational space. The modification of the texts was based on the data about the schoolchildren's psychological development in the 5th grade and the fact that their cognitive speech skills continue to be in the formative stage. The experiment involved 458 students of the 5<sup>th</sup> (n=220) grades of secondary schools of the Republic of Tatarstan. The experiments included a number of stages, among which was the preparation of materials and necessary documents. In addition, there was a meeting with parents in order to obtain their legal consent to testing schoolchildren. The proprietor of rights of all experimental data is the Text Analytics Laboratory (TA), Kazan Federal University. A total of 297 secondary texts were analyzed. As seen, this survey is on the nexus of several disciplines – linguistics, psycholinguistics, psychology, corpus linguistics, and statistical methods since "in order to show groundbreaking results, scientists have to go beyond the borders of one linguistic discipline" (Privalova and Kazachkova, 2021: 555).

The assessment of the quality of the reproduced information was assessed by counting the main propositions and subpropositions in the text derivatives and their subsequent comparison with the test proposed for reading. The identification of the main propositions and subpropositions was carried out on the basis of the methodology proposed



by Charles Fillmore (Fillmore, 2012), (Rakhilina and Testeleis, 2016) for the English language: “The theory embedded in this view is that semantic relations (“deep cases”) are directly linked to argument meanings. Grammatical roles (subject, object) and markings (choice of preposition, etc.) are predicted from case configurations” (Fillmore, 2012: 710). This theory happens to be effective when taking into account the specifics of the Russian language (Kashkin and Lyashevskaya, 2015), (Solnyshkina et al., 2020), (Mustajoki, 2006).

A general analysis of the number of reproduced propositions among fifth-graders showed that the modified text was retold by respondents with the preservation of 40.07% of the number of propositions.

Below, we provide the example of the primary text that was given to school students in our experimental studies (all sentences in this text are numbered for ease of the analysis, and the sentences that have been analyzed in oral retellings are in italics):

1. *This text will focus on the differences in the labor of animals and humans.* 2. **Let's imagine such a scene.** 3. *You are lying in a meadow and watching what is happening around.* 4. **Here is a bird set flying to the nest to feed its chicks.** 5. **Here is a squirrel jumping from branch to branch — probably making supplies for the winter.** 6. *Here an ant is dragging home a straw.* 7. **Does it mean that animals also work?** 8. **No, such a conclusion would be wrong.** 9. *Why don't animals work?* 10. *An animal always performs the same actions necessary for its life: it searches for food, pursues prey, prepares food.* 11. *These are conditioned and unconditioned reflexes that you will be told about on your biology classes.* 12. *Only a person can create something new, never seen before, never done, never tried.* 13. *No animal can think about work, set targets, select means to*

*achieve these targets, and calculate time.* 14. *A person can only do what he has learned, and as well as he has mastered his business.* 15. *A man learns to work.* 16. *The animal does not know how to plan its work.* 17. *Planning is a feature of human labor activity.* 18. *Only a person can create means that facilitate labor.* 19. *Only a person can create various machines and tools for their activities.* 20. *There is one more difference between the “labor” of animals and the labor of men.* 21. *A man is constantly changing, improving what has been created.* 22. *Thus, the animal does not create, think, plan, or facilitate its work, and therefore it does not work.*

The text contains: the number of words – 225; the total number of main propositions – 62, the total number of subpropositions – 67. In our experiment, the initial text-reasoning was perceived visually, then it was reproduced as a retelling (exposition) of oral free (detailed) nature. Identification of the linguistic parameters of the complexity of primary and secondary texts was carried out with the help of the RuLingva automatic text complexity analyzer (<https://rulingva.kpfu.ru>) that has been developed by the Text Analytics (TA) Research Laboratory of Intelligent Text Management Technologies, Kazan Federal University.

There are some features of the primary text that must be noted. Some modifications of the text were carried out on the syntactic level, however, the main idea of the text (or its meaningful level) was preserved. In general, the text is about a person, his work, the difference between his work and the work of an animal. Hence, logical and event-logical propositions predominate here with a small inclusion of existential (event) propositions. In texts with a sufficiently high level of abstraction, it is difficult to identify a specific agentive component, in other words, to determine the agent-doer and the background

sign of his actions or the predicative component.

There are some psychological neoplasms of this stage of ontogenetic development. Among them are: abstract thinking (associated with the transition of the intellect to the stage of formal operations according to Piaget); reflection (contributes not only to self-knowledge, but also to understanding other people); imagination (mediated by abstract thinking and “goes into the realm of fantasy”); self-esteem and self-concept (contributes to greater regulation, control and management of behavior, personal growth). Meanwhile, these psychological neoplasms are still on the stage of formation and development. Respectively, we can assume that the understanding of abstract texts in the tetrad “perception – understanding – interpretation – reproduction (especially oral)” will inevitably cause some difficulties, and will bring some changes of the actant-propositional structures in texts derivatives.

### Findings and discussion

The propositional structures in the oral retellings of children of the fifth grade have been analyzed. As a result of this analysis, the combinations of changing or maintaining the expression (syntax) and the content (actant-predicate structure) in secondary oral narrative constructions have been recorded. The semantic roles in propositional schemes were designated through the following conventional signs:

A (X) – Doer, (X) – non-expression or absence of actants or predicates, A – Actant, Ag – agent, Cir (temp) – Time circ constant, Cir (loc) – Place circ constant, Obj – Object, G – Goal, S – Source, Th – Subject, Dat – Dative, Ben – Beneficial, Obl – Other, Rec – Recipient, Act – Actor, N – Neutral; modifiers: – Cause – Causation; ModPhase – modal phase, Func – speech function, Aut – authorization, Modep – epistemic modality; differences – Neg – Negation, Asp – aspectuality, Asp=PROC – short procedural/dynamic state of affairs,

Asp=MO momentary state of affairs, Asp=DYN dynamic state of affairs; Predicate types: Ac – Action, Ex – Existence, Ch – Characteristic, Id – Identification and Classification, Mod. ed. – Opinion author modifier, Quant – Quantity specifier, Det – Definiteness/uncertainty specifier, Det Spec – Specified, Det Indef – Indefinite, Man – The manner and mode of action specifier.

Let us consider the individual sentences of the original text with the follow-up comparison of their secondary oral counterparts. The sentence of the primary text: **Here is the bird set flying to the nest to feed its chicks.**

Propositional structure (we use the terminology of A. Mustajoki, O. N. Lyashevskaya, E. V. Kashkina): A (N) Pr Temp Phase (Asp=PROC; short procedural / dynamic) Cir (loc) “to” A ( X metaunion G) Pr inf A. Expression of existence/being Ex when answering the question “What do we see?” when describing aspectual states of affairs (Mustajoki, 2006: 235).

The prototype of the frame or concept “to fly” is represented by a cognitive-propositional structure that reflects the situation of unidirectional movement oriented towards the starting and ending points. It has a basic model: SUBJECT – PREDICATE OF ONE-DIRECTIONAL MOVEMENT – POINT OF DEPARTURE – POINT OF ARRIVAL, as well as the main predicates: *to move, to descend, to migrate, to relocate, to rise, to follow, to go down, start off*. The lexical variant of the model is the following: “The animal moves in a certain way and direction on a solid surface, in an air or water environment independently, with the help of their own organs of movement”.<sup>2</sup> The minimum structural scheme (MCS) implies the presence of the nominative form of the noun, the conjugated form of the verb, the

<sup>2</sup> Babenko, L. G. (ed). Experimental syntactic dictionary, retrieved from: <https://www.slovari.ru/default.aspx?s=0&p=2847> (Accessed 26 December 2020).

indefinite form of the verb (infinitive): N1Vf; Inf ♦ RRP: – without the main propagators of the predicate. Predicates: *to fly, to descend, to swim, to gallop, to trot*. This version of the model does not open positions for actants; however, it assumes the presence in complex semantic structures of non-nuclear model extenders: specifiers of place, aspectuality and logical relations – goals. The sentence of the primary text is already a derivative construction with explicitly added non-nuclear participants, not provided for by the frame prototype. Thus, one may observe in it a two-predicate complex semantic structure, consisting of two simple ones, with the elimination of the metaconjunction “to” with the logical relation of the goal.

### The main types of the transformations in expression and content on the text-derivatives

#### 1. Removal or addition to the derivative construction of the secondary text of a non-nuclear participant in the situation, not provided for by the frame prototype

“Here is a bird flying to feed its children” (K5A18) – A (N)Ps Pr (Asp=PROC; short procedural/dynamic) (X metaconjunction G) Pr inf {A(N)Ps Pr A}A.

##### A) Removing a non-nuclear participant in the situation:

- elimination of Cir (loc) “to” A (to the nest) (K5A18).

B) addition at the semantic level of a non-nuclear member of the possessor, indicated by the definiteness specifier and expressed by the lexically possessive pronoun “ours”, which implies the presence of a complex semantic structure with immersion (Mustajoki, 2019: 155): {A(N)Ps Pr A}= “someone/neutral / the possessor has something, someone” (K5A18). The object is coreferential to the agent in constructions with reflexive verbs, but here it is not a reflexive verb, the emphasis is on the possessor who has this thing or object. The

number of elements of the surface structure of the secondary oral construction is lower than the number of elements of the similar semantic structure of the original text. We observe the elliptization of the predicates “to have, to possess”. Such a complex semantic structure can be considered an immersive structure that lacks the third predicate “to have”. Therefore, we can assume that a three-predicate complex semantic structure is presented in this example. Consequently, we fix one more feature of the propositional structure:

#### 2) Splitting a deep proposition into 2 or more propositions.

As for the use of the actant “children” ← “chicks”, according to Ozhegov’s dictionary, the lexemes “children-child” are attributed to a person, not an animal, but the derivative version “cub” corresponds in the main meaning to a young animal that is with its mother. It can also be assumed that for a schoolchild all baby animals are children, as in human families, it is also quite likely that this is a metaphor or a certain degree of generalization (on the development of a metaphor in ontogenesis, for example, see: (Barlyaeva, 2016). In 30% of oral retellings, the replacement of the lexeme “birds/a bird” → “little birds/a little bird”, i.e. the appearance of a diminutive zoonymic diminutive with a meliorative emotional assessment “little bird” instead of “bird”, which describes the subjective-evaluative meaning of small size. The formation of diminutive forms with the help of suffixes serves for a subjective assessment and is typical for colloquial, expressively colored speech. Diminutive forms are often used to convey close relationships, in particular when communicating with young children.

#### 3) Change of actant vectors, replacement and elimination of predicates.

“and the bird goes to feed its animals, its chicks a (.. 3c)” (K5B16) – A (N)Ps Pr (Asp=PROC; short procedural/dynamic) (X metaconjunction G) Pr inf {A(N)Ps Pr A}A. The replacement of the surface structure verb “flies” → “goes” is noted. On the one hand,

the predicate reflects the situation of a unidirectional movement oriented to the starting and ending points and has the same typical semantics as the “fly” predicate.<sup>3</sup> However, the verb “to go” has the meaning “to move, stepping over”, “to move around, stepping over; taking steps (about a person and an animal)”, “to move on the water; float”, therefore, on the surface, and not in airspace. In other words, we have a different situation at the semantic level. On the other hand, one can also assume a certain figurative meaning of the modality of intention: “the bird goes = intends to feed the chicks”. This reconstruction is also interesting since it displays at the surface level in the form of auto-correction hyper-hyponymic genus-species relations “animals – chicks”.

**“...birds carry worms to the nest to their chicks” (K5B24)** - A (N)Ps Pr (Asp=PROC; short procedural / dynamic) A Cir (loc) ‘to’ A {A(N)Ps Pr A}A; {A(N)Ps Pr A}. In this oral secondary structure, the following is fixed:

- the appearance of a possessor of the beneficiary;
- elimination of the goal;
- elimination of the predicate “feed”;
- replacement of the predicate of the semantic structure “to fly” → “to carry”, which implies the appearance of other actants associated with the new predicate and the generation of another situation.

The simple semantic structure can be extended with such modifiers as Speech function (Func), Phase, Causation (Caus) and Authorization (Aut). Secondary narrative structure **“And then a bird flies / and we think / that it is carrying food in the nest for its chicks” (COP506)** A (N) Pr (Asp=PROC; short-procedural / dynamic) and (connective metaconjunction, simultaneity) Mod Phase Aut (metaconjunction “therefore”) that A (N) Pr (X) A Cir (loc) “in” A {A(N)Ps Pr A} is characterized by the fact that the information expressed by the core of the semantic structure is specified using the

modifier. Authorization takes place through an indication of the fact from whose point of view the state of affairs is being considered. Here is the correlation of the author/authors of the opinion “I-we” with the metaverb “to count”; there is an epistemic modifier (Modep) with moderate confidence (medium probability). One cannot observe such a state of affairs in the primary similar structure, where a consistent narration is carried out. This is typical for a written text with fixation of a neutral state of affairs without reflection and authorization. It seems that every student who is an oral narrator positions himself as a participant in the situations displayed in the text.

By creating an oral retelling, a student also virtually generates another participant in the situation, to whom he describes a specific case. This case once has been seen and reflected by him, then, it has been stored in long-term memory, extracted from it, and correlated with the text. Saying the phrase “and we think”, a student emphasizes that the situation of birds’ breeding, feeding and caring for their offspring is familiar to everyone. Among others, it is familiar to a “quasi-participant” of the “quasialog” in the situation of spontaneous retelling. Introducing the plural pronoun “we” into the text-derivative, a student gives to the narration features of dialogism, as if he/she were telling someone a story. This also applies to the examples **“I see in front of me birds that fly near me (K5P09)”** A(X) Pr Cir (loc) “before” A(N); A(N) Pr (Asp=PROC; short procedural/dynamic) Cir (loc) procedural / dynamic) Loc meta-preposition “by”, **“you see / how a little bird carries e... food to its children in the nest (K5A06)”** A Pr A(N) {Ch N}Pr (Asp=PROC; short procedural / dynamic) A {A(N)Ps Pr A} to Cir (loc) A. A tetrad of personal pronouns “I-you-we-you” is being built. This tetrad indicates the previously formed initial stages of the “I-Concept”, when the situation is described from the position of an observer – a participant in the situation. The “I-image” is identified with the reference group, and the

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



views, attitudes and behavior of this group are accepted. The main activity of adolescent children is communication with peers. Studies have shown that for children aged 11-13, peers become the main reference group. The main necessity for this age group is the necessity for communication, the desire to meet the standards of adulthood is realized in the community of peers (Palacheva, 2010). It is likely that this aspect also affects the form of oral secondary narrations: all of them are marked by increased dialogization. As for the development of the "I-concept" in ontogenesis, it is known that the most significant changes in its formation occur at the age of three, when a child stops talking about himself in the third person and the merged image of the world is finally differentiated into two independent constructs: "I-concept" and the image of the external environment (Chesnokova, 1978).

In some text derivatives, we also have noted the inclusion of elements of the modal phase into the semantic structure of the retelling: **"here a bird has flown / probably she is feeding her chicks (KS 513)"** A (N) Pr (Asp=MOM; momentary) Modep A Pr A(N) ; {A(N)Ps Pr A}, **"a bird flies/across the sea and/perhaps/it seeks/food for chicks (KSP06)"** A(N) Pr (Asp=PROC; short procedural/dynamic) Loc "through" Modep A(N) Pr (Asp=PROC; short procedural/dynamic) A lexeme "for" A addressee Ben; {A(N)Ps Pr A}. We assume here the appearance of the Authorization modifier with the metaverb "count" and the epistemic modality (Modep) with moderate certainty (medium probability) (Mustajoki, 2019: 287). Epistemic modality (Modep) encompasses semantic elements that indicate the speaker's relationship to the certainty of the state of affairs. The occurrence of such cases in the analyzed oral retellings is 20%. In our opinion, the elements of interpretation, reasoning, expressing one's own opinion are also associated with a further stage in the development of the "I-concept".

**4. Dialogic presentation and demonstration of the situation as a**

**dynamically developing real event; appeal to situational models from previously acquired practical experience and reality, activation of long-term memory; inclusion of a narrator into the retelling as an observer with an increased reflection.**

The analysis of the material has revealed that in the text-derivatives of younger students, some types of reflection become of particular importance. The first type is the reflection with primary distortion that happens during the visual perception of a written text. And the second type is the reflection with pragmatic comprehension during secondary distortion that precedes the stage of oral implementation. Noteworthy, cognitive interpretation and reflection are constantly present in the process of narration. They may cause self-interruptions, auto-corrections with the elements of cross-reference in certain segments of the oral reproduction of the secondary text. Also, they may contribute to the reconstruction of the main propositions. This phenomenon is characterized by retraction, inclusion of non-existent actants in the propositional structure of the primary text, what leads to an increase in derivable from the main propositions. On top of that, one may notice the inclusion of actant modifiers in subpropositions, strengthening the links between the actants of the main propositions through the use of possessive pronouns that help focus on the aspect of 'belonging'. The inclusion of additional elements of the semantic structure of actant modifiers into subpropositions such as speech function or authorization is also recorded (Mustajoki, 2019: 8). The speech function is manifested in an explicit change of statement according to the target: an answer is constructed from the question and the proposition of the question is replaced by the proposition of the message. The implicated information in the primary text is explicated in the text-derivatives.

Authorization (Aut) additionally characterizes the person to whom the statement belongs, or how the state of affairs is assessed (Mustajoki, 2019: 9).



Authorization and autoreflection are manifested in the use of phrases like *'I think'*, *'we think, we see'* in the retelling, which at the same time contributes to an increase in the dialogic nature of the retelling. Dialogic elements generate a non-existent addressee – a dialogue partner. In text-derivatives, the verb of the second person singular is often changed for the verb of the 1<sup>st</sup> plural. For example, **'Let's imagine such a scene' (K5A17)**, **'We think that animals are working, but they are not' (K5A18)**. Such examples demonstrate the strategy of 'identifying oneself with a group of persons. This strategy facilitates younger students to create a retelling. This strategy helps to introduce the elements of reasoning, speaking with a quasi-addressee and autoreflection into the body of the text derivative. So, the statement **'We think that animals are working, but they are not' (K5A18)** is characterized as the sentence that reflects the way of thinking with primitive semantics. This substituting statement represents a complex combined semantic structure, which consists of two propositional constructions replaced in the primary text: **'It turns out that animals also work?'**, **'No, such a conclusion would be wrong'**.

In the statement **'You see how the squirrel climbs a tree, probably stocks up for the winter' (K5A17)**, a situation is generated with a non-existent addressee by means of a verb in the form of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular as if in front of the student there was an animated person with the function of visualization. Direct appeal to such a quasi-addressee contributes to the dialogue type of the text-derivative since it helps creating the situation of opinions exchange. In regards with the propositional content of the statement, there is an increase in propositions due to the retraction of the predicates of the physiological state. In the primary text, there is a sentence: **'Here the squirrel jumps from branch to branch – probably stocks up for the winter'**. This sentence in the text-derivative acquires the semantic structure **'You see how the squirrel climbs a tree,**

**probably stocks up for the winter' (K5A17)**. The structure includes the sentence with an unexpressed agent 'you', reflecting a situation of perception with typical semantics 'A person perceives someone or something with the help of external senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch). Basic model: 'subject – perception predicate – object' with the main predicates 'perceive, see, watch, listen'.<sup>4</sup> This semantic structure has two agent actants: unexpressed 'someone' and 'squirrel', as well as an additional element – modifier 'speech function'. According to A. Mustajoki, any utterance contains one of five speech functions (Func): Message, Question, Motivation, Announcement, Speech Etiquette (Mustajoki, 2019: 8). In our case, the speaker expresses the motivation in an open way. However, the direct observation of a living 'squirrel' object in a real situation and finding communication partners in a real forest is not possible in the process of oral retelling under experimental conditions. That is why a student resorts to virtual generation of an event with the inclusion of virtual dialogue partners. This strategy allows the retelling to take the form of a connected story and thus facilitates the retrieval of past experiences from memory.

Let us refer to the method of objective hermeneutics (Kostrova, 2018: 123), (Oevermann, 2001), where the methodological core is a sequential (detailed) analysis of the text. Then, we reconstruct a possible quasi-dialogue by comparing the sentences of the primary written text and the statements from the text-derivatives. At the same time, we assume that the stimulus (S) acts as X, to which responses (R) are directed: X - 1; X - 2; X - 3; X - 4. One can see that each of the proposed stimulus-reactions is an elementary dialogic unit – the minimum dialogic unity (MDU), which is the basis of any dialogue. The primary sentence: X (someone): **'Here's a squirrel jumping from branch to branch – probably stocking up**

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

for the winter' X (someone). Here are some examples of the text-derivatives:

**K5A17 'You see how the squirrel climbs a tree, probably stocking up for the winter.'**

**K5R09 'I see a squirrel that jumps from branch to branch, to branch, to branch'.**

**KS 513 'Here is a squirrel jumping from branch to branch – it collects food for the winter'.**

**K5G11 '...a squirrel is looking for / nuts to prepare, uh, for the winter'.**

### Conclusion

All in all, the following combinations of changing/preservation of the dimension of expression (syntactics) and of the dimension of content (actant-predicate structure) in text derivatives have been noted:

1. Addition of a non-nuclear participant of the situation (which is out of the frame prototype) to the derived construction;

2. Actant vectors change, along with the replacement and elimination of predicates;

3. Deep proposition splitting into two or more propositions;

4. The semantic structure expansion with the help of modifiers or specifiers;

5. The tendency of moving away from the abstract and generalized towards the concrete and real;

6. The development of the dialogue style; presentation and demonstration of the situation as a dynamically evolving real event;

7. Appeal in retellings to the situations and the situational models from previously acquired practical experience happens along with long-term memory activation;

8. Inclusion of "oneself" in the narration as an observer; the ongoing formation and activation of the "I – concept".

9. Enhanced reflection, as well as the introduction into the deep propositional structure and accentuation of the missing actants-possessors. All these lead to the original deep proposition expansion and the change of actant vectors.

All the above described features correlate with a specific stage of ontogenesis

and are ontogenetically, psychologically and cognitively conditioned. So, in texts-derivates, the preservation of the main propositional structures and the increase in their number are recorded. This happens due to the fact that younger students demonstrate the strategies of 'generating virtual dialogue partners' and 'identifying oneself with a group of individuals. Such strategies are more typical for real communication than oral retelling. The constructions that facilitate the creation of text derivatives include: the elements of reasoning, self-talk, autoreflexion, immersion of oneself and the quasi-addressee in an imaginary situation described in the primary text, as well as the generation of situations learned from past experience and different from the content of the original text.

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***Все авторы прочитали и одобрили окончательный вариант рукописи.***

***All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.***

***Конфликты интересов: у авторов нет конфликтов интересов для декларации.***

***Conflicts of interests: the authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.***

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