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THE CONCEPT OF “PROCRASTINATION” WITHIN THE LINGUISTIC WORLDVIEW OF REPUBLIC OF KOREA’S ADOLESCENTS

РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦІЯ КОНЦЕПТУ «ПРОКРАСТИНАЦІЯ» В МОВНІЙ КАРТИНІ СВІТУ ПІДЛІТКІВ В РЕСПУБЛІЦІ КОРЕЯ

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The presented article carries out a comprehensive analysis of the "procrastination" concept within the linguistic worldview of Republic of Korea's adolescents. The relevance of the study is due to the fact that the complex conditions of the modern world require high self-organization, mobility, and internal motivation from young people. At the same time, disorganization, delayed life syndrome, and procrastination are increasingly observed during adolescence. Procrastination is considered not as ordinary laziness, which consists in an unwillingness to act, nor as relaxation that helps to restore energy resources. Instead, it is a complex psychological phenomenon and a habit of postponing important tasks, focusing on less urgent and more pleasant matters despite potential negative consequences.

In the context of the Republic of Korea's highly competitive educational environment, adolescents constantly face stress and overload, which complicates their ability to focus on tasks and triggers putting them off until later. The research focuses on the linguocultural features of the verbalization of this phenomenon, revealing how the Korean language reflects theories of self-regulation, avoidance, and motivation. According to the avoidance theory, procrastination arises as a way to avoid negative emotions (fear of failure, boredom, anxiety) associated with performing difficult tasks. The article explores the lexical units Republic of Korea's adolescents use to designate the five main types of procrastinators: perfectionists, postponers, disorganized individuals, easily distracted people, and the unmotivated.

The results of the linguistic data analysis show that in the short term, adolescent vocabulary reflects relief from avoiding unpleasant emotions. However, in the long term, the semantics of statements shift toward describing the accumulation of problems, inhibition of personal development, stress, and even symptoms of depression. It has been established that Republic of Korea's adolescents often use specific slang to describe feelings of futility of effort, decreased self-esteem, and exam anxiety. The work is of a theoretical and applied nature and opens new perspectives for the psycholinguistic study of personal development problems in a cross-cultural aspect.

Key words: procrastination, linguistic worldview, adolescence, Korea, personal maturity, psycholinguistics.

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У представленій статті здійснюється комплексний аналіз концепту «прокрастинація» в межах мовної картини світу південнокорейських підлітків. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена тим, що складні умови сучасного світу вимагають від молоді високих рівнів самоорганізації, мобільності та внутрішньої мотивації. Водночас у підлітковому віці дедалі частіше спостерігається неорганізованість, негативні емоції, синдром відкладеного життя, навчена безпорадність та прокрастинація. Прокрастинація розглядається не як звичайна лінь, яка полягає в небажанні діяти, і не як релаксація, що допомагає відновити енергетичні ресурси. Натомість, це складний психологічний феномен, що полягає у свідомому відкладанні суб'єктом намічених дій, не дивлячись на те, що це спричинить певні проблеми.

У контексті надзвичайно конкурентного освітнього середовища Республіки Корея – підлітки постійно стикаються зі стресом та перевантаженням, що ускладнює їхню здатність зосереджуватися на завданнях і провокує відкладання їх на потім. Дослідження фокусується на лінгвокультурних особливостях вербалізації цього явища, виявляючи, як корейська мова відображає теорії саморегуляції, уникнення та мотивації. Згідно з теорією уникнення, прокрастинація виникає як спосіб уникнути негативних емоцій (страху невдачі, нудьги, тривоги), пов'язаних із виконанням складних завдань. У статті досліджується, якими лексичними одиницями південнокорейські підлітки позначають п'ять основних типів прокрастинаторів: перфекціоністів, відкладачів, неорганізованих осіб, людей, що легко відволікаються, та немотивованих.

Результати аналізу мовних даних показують, що в короткостроковій перспективі лексика підлітків відображає полегшення від уникнення неприємних емоцій. Проте в довгостроковій перспективі семантика висловлювань зміщується в бік опису накопичення проблем, гальмування особистісного розвитку, стресу та навіть симптомів депресії. З'ясовано, що південнокорейські підлітки часто використовують специфічний сленг для опису відчуття марності зусиль, зниження самооцінки та тривоги перед іспитами. Робота має теоретико-прикладний характер і відкриває нові перспективи для психолінгвістичного вивчення проблем особистісного розвитку в крос-культурному аспекті.

Ключові слова: прокрастинація, мовна картина світу, підлітковий вік, Корея, особистісна зрілість, психолінгвістика.

Problem statement. Modern global challenges, characterized by rapid technological advancement and high socio-economic competition, demand that individuals possess high levels of autonomy, self-organization, and internal motivation. Within the psychological paradigm, personal maturity in adolescence is defined as a multi-dimensional construct. According to the foundational research, it encompasses the ability to take responsibility for one's actions, maintain emotional stability, and make timely, independent decisions, which are elements that constitute the "life philosophy" of a developing individual. This period is a critical developmental stage where self-regulation mechanisms are formed, setting the vital foundation for future adult functioning and social integration.

However, the phenomenon of procrastination is defined as the voluntary and conscious delay of intended actions despite the awareness of future negative consequences, which acts as a significant psychological barrier to this development. Instead of fostering "personal maturity" traits such as responsibility and goal-directed behavior, procrastination reinforces disorganization and the "delayed life syndrome". This behavior leads to a state where adolescents stall their personal growth by avoiding necessary challenges, effectively paralyzing the formation of their autonomous identity.

In the specific context of the Republic of Korea, this issue is exacerbated by "education fever", a cultural phenomenon that creates an exceptionally hyper-competitive environment. For adolescents in the Republic of Korea, the pressure to achieve perfect academic results often leads to a paralyzing fear of failure and harsh self-criticism. Consequently, procrastination becomes more than a habit; it evolves into a maladaptive defense mechanism and a linguistic hallmark of the younger generation.

The problem lies in the fact that while the youth of the Republic of Korea are linguistically expressive regarding their stress and academic burden, their specific slang and speech patterns often verbalize a resignation to procrastination. This linguistic normalization of avoidance further hinders the development of the "responsibility" component of maturity, as individuals stop recognizing themselves as the authors of their own actions. Understanding how the concept of procrastination is embedded in their linguistic worldview is therefore crucial. By identifying the lexical markers of this phenomenon, we can better understand the internal crisis of adolescent maturity and develop targeted

psycholinguistic interventions to support mental health, self-regulation, and the search for life meaning in this high-pressure society.

Analysis of recent research and publications. In contemporary psychology, procrastination is increasingly recognized not as a simple time-management issue or laziness, but as a complex emotional regulation problem. Leading researchers, such as Piers Steel, define it as the voluntary delay of a planned action despite expecting to be worse off for the delay [1]. Theoretical frameworks often categorize this phenomenon into three main areas: self-regulation failure (the inability to follow through on intentions), avoidance theory (the urge to escape negative emotions like anxiety or boredom), and motivation theory (the lack of intrinsic or extrinsic value in a task).

Recent studies have also identified five primary types of procrastinators: the perfectionist, the dreamer, the worrier, the defier, and the crisis-maker [2]. However, in the context of the Republic of Korea, these types are uniquely manifested through the cultural lens of "education fever". While Western research emphasizes individual psychological traits, there is a growing need to analyze how these states are verbalized and conceptualized within the linguistic worldview of adolescents in the Republic of Korea, where social and academic pressures create a specific "delayed life syndrome".

The purpose of the research is to provide a comprehensive psycholinguistic and cognitive analysis of the "procrastination" concept as it exists in the linguistic worldview of adolescents in the Republic of Korea. The study aims to identify the lexical and semantic markers that represent the causes, manifestations, and consequences of procrastination, and to determine how these linguistic patterns reflect the level of personal maturity among youth in a high-pressure society.

To achieve the research objectives, a multidimensional approach combining cognitive linguistics and psycholinguistic analysis was employed, utilizing an empirical database of over 150 lexical units, including slang, neologisms, and abbreviations, collected through continuous sampling from prominent digital platforms in the Republic of Korea such as Namuwiki, DC Inside, and Naver Cafe during the 2024–2025 period. The analysis integrated conceptual analysis to reconstruct the structure of the "procrastination" concept within the linguistic worldview, the semantic differential method to track the evaluative shift in meaning from "temporary relief" to "existential debt", and distributive analysis to identify typical contexts of slang usage within the nation's hyper-competitive environment.

Presentation of the main material. The linguistic worldview of adolescents in the Republic of Korea is a vivid reflection of their psychological struggle to achieve personal maturity. According to the original research, personal maturity involves autonomy, responsibility, and the development of a "life philosophy". However, the language used by Korean youth often highlights a significant gap in these areas. The frequent use of slang related to "escaping" or "postponing" academic tasks suggests a widespread reliance on the avoidance mechanism to cope with the fear of failure and harsh criticism.

Analysis shows that procrastination in the Republic of Korea is deeply rooted in the perfectionism encouraged by the competitive educational system [2]. Adolescents verbalize their state through concepts of "overload" and "emotional exhaustion", which leads to the "delayed life syndrome", a state where personal growth and happiness are postponed for a future that never seems to arrive.

The linguistic manifestation of this phenomenon allows for a detailed classification of five distinct procrastination models among adolescents in the Republic of Korea, each identified through specific lexical markers and cognitive patterns. The Perfectionist (완벽주의자 – wan-byeok-ju-ui-ja) model is predominantly characterized by the idiom "Mo-animyeon-do" (모 아니면 도). This expression originates from the traditional Korean board game Yut-nori, where "Mo" (모) represents the highest possible score and "Do" (도) represents the lowest. In the context of academic procrastination, it literally translates as "all or nothing." This linguistic marker reflects a paralyzing dichotomic cognitive pattern: if the outcome cannot be guaranteed as a "Mo" (absolute perfection), the individual cognitively equates it with a "Do" (total failure), leading to a defensive cessation of activity.

In contrast, the Postponer (미루는 사람 – mi-ru-neun sa-ram) utilizes the sophisticated verbal strategy of "Naeil-ui-na" (내일의 나). Derived from the verb "miruda" (미루다 – to postpone), this expres-

sion literally translates as "Tomorrow's me." The use of the possessive particle "-ui" (-의) serves to linguistically externalize responsibility, creating a semiotic distance between the "current self" and a "future self." By treating the future self as a separate, more capable entity, the individual achieves temporary psychological relief while accumulating what can be described as an "existential debt."

Cognitive disorganization among the Disorganized type (무계획자 – mu-gye-hwek-ja) is marked by the four-character idiom (사자성어 – sajaseong-eo) "Jung-gu-nan-bang" (중구난방 – 衆口難防). Etymologically, the term refers to the difficulty of "stopping many mouths from speaking", which serves as a metaphor for a chaotic, unfocused mental state. This lack of "gye-hwek" (계획 – planning), where the prefix "mu-" (무 – non/absence) denotes a void, directly correlates with a failure in self-regulation. Without a structured verbal framework, adolescents experience a state of linguistic disorder that renders SMART-planning impossible.

The Easily Distracted (판짓하는 사람 – ddan-jit-ha-neun sa-ram) model is verbalized through the specific colloquial term "Ddan-jit" (판짓). This term is a compound of "ddan" (판 – other/different) and "jit" (짓 – an act or behavior, often with a negative or pejorative connotation in Korean). Thus, it does not merely mean "doing something else," but implies engaging in "inappropriate or deviant behavior" relative to the primary task. This term highlights the role of digital environments as a "buffer zone" where students escape from academic pressure into unproductive but low-stress activities.

Finally, the Unmotivated type (무기력한 사람 – mu-gi-ryeok-han sa-ram) is represented by the pervasive hybrid slang "Gwichanism" (귀찮이즘). This term is derived from the adjective "gwichana" (귀찮아 – "it's a bother" or "I'm too lazy") combined with the English suffix "-ism." By attaching a suffix typically reserved for formal ideologies or belief systems, adolescents do more than describe a temporary state of laziness; they effectively ideologize and normalize apathy as a legitimate, shared lifestyle or a form of "silent protest" against intense societal expectations.

Following the sociocultural linguistic framework, identity emerges through linguistic interaction and communicative positioning. As Bucholtz and Hall note, "Identity is the social positioning of self and other" [3, p. 586]. Within this perspective, Korean adolescent slang related to procrastination can be interpreted as an indexical resource that constructs in-group solidarity and shared experiential meaning.

A more profound semiotic analysis of the Korean adolescent discourse reveals that procrastination is often encoded through a specific "lexicon of resignation." Central to this is the metaphorical construct "Hell Joseon" (헬조선 – Hel Joseon). This hybrid term combines the English word "Hell" with "Joseon" (조선), the name of Korea's last imperial dynasty known for its rigid class hierarchy. In the linguistic worldview of students, this term functions as a justification for academic withdrawal: by framing the modern educational environment as an inherently "infertile" or "hellish" feudal system, the subject linguistically negates the value of timely effort, rebranding procrastination as a rational response to a broken system.

Complementing this is the pervasive use of the slang "no-jam" (노잼 – no-jaem). This portmanteau merges the English negative "no" with the Korean root "jaemi" (재미 – fun/excitement). In the digital generation's discourse, the absence of "jam" serves as a legitimate linguistic reason to postpone obligations. Procrastination is thus rebranded not as a failure of will, but as a rejection of "meaningless" or "unentertaining" labor.

Moreover, the micro-linguistic level of communication – characterized by jamo-slang (consonant-only shorthand) – creates a "digital buffer" that neutralizes social friction. Examples include:

“ㅋㅋㅋ” (kkk): An onomatopoeic representation of laughter (similar to "lol"), used to soften the tone of a late response.

“ㅇㅇ” (eung-eung): A truncated form of the affirmative “eung” (응), often signaling a casual or detached acknowledgment of a deadline.

“ㅈㅈ” (js): An abbreviation of “joesong” (죄송 – sorry). By reducing an apology to its consonants, the speaker strategically diminishes the weight of their social "debt," transforming a potential academic or interpersonal failure into a shared, neutralized experience within the peer group.

Furthermore, the research reveals that the vocabulary of procrastination changes over time. In the short term, the language reflects "relief" and "freedom" from avoided tasks. However, in the long term, it shifts toward a lexicon of "stress", "guilt" and "decreased self-esteem". This transition proves that procrastination is a barrier to the "responsibility" component of personal maturity, as adolescents fail to recognize themselves as the authors of their actions and the masters of their time.

A key component of the linguistic worldview of the Republic of Korea's adolescents is the digital environment, which functions as a major tool for procrastination. Social networking sites and mobile applications allow adolescents to quickly shift attention from academic tasks to short-term pleasurable activities, thereby reinforcing delayed behavior. Research indicates that online platform usage is associated with lower self-control and higher procrastination. Specifically, time perspective and self-control significantly affect adolescents' tendency to procrastinate in digital settings [4, p. 231–233]. Furthermore, social media serve as a source of additional emotional stress due to cyberbullying, social comparison, and the constant need for online presence. These factors increase impulsivity and promote task avoidance. It has been highlighted that online stressors and digital interaction can act as mediators of avoidance behavior among adolescents [5, p. 430–432]. Thus, social media in the linguistic worldview of Korean adolescents function not only as a communication tool but also as a mechanism of procrastination, which is verbalized through slang markers of distraction, escape, and emotional relief.

Korean adolescent procrastination has specific cultural characteristics that distinguish it from patterns in other countries. In the Republic of Korea, procrastination is often a response to societal pressure and 'education fever,' rather than purely individual traits [1, p. 70]. Western models attribute procrastination primarily to self-regulatory failure and personal disposition [1, p. 68]. In the Ukrainian context, according to psychological research, adolescents were more likely to procrastinate academic tasks due to internal motivation and self-discipline than due to external social pressure. "Ukrainian adolescents' procrastination is more associated with self-motivation deficits rather than societal pressure" [6, p. 55].

Thus, the linguistic worldview of the Republic of Korea's adolescents reflects a collective-oriented model of procrastination, while Western and Ukrainian models are more individualized. This emphasizes that cultural and social factors determine not only behavior, but also the lexical means of verbalizing procrastination.

Conclusions. Procrastination is a dominant and destructive concept in the linguistic worldview of adolescents in the Republic of Korea, serving as a primary obstacle to their personal maturity. The study confirms that the systematic delay of tasks, verbalized through specific linguistic markers, leads to a significant decrease in productivity, increased stress, and symptoms of depression.

The study concludes that the "procrastination" concept in the Republic of Korea is not merely an individual psychological trait but a culturally-constructed linguistic identity. The shift from seeing oneself as an "active agent" to a "passive observer" is mirrored in the transition from a vocabulary of "relief" to a lexicon of "existential debt" and "social pressure". Consequently, the linguistic normalization of avoidance through specific slang and digital codes acts as a significant barrier to the "responsibility" component of personal maturity.

To bridge the gap between procrastination and maturity, it is essential to promote strategies such as time-management, the "SMART" goal-setting method, and the development of a positive "life philosophy" that values the process over the result. For the youth in the Republic of Korea, shifting the linguistic focus from "avoidance" to "self-regulation" and "responsibility" is a vital step toward achieving emotional stability and personal maturity in the face of modern challenges.

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