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Internet Pseudonyms of Polish YouTubers. Their Origin, Structure and Place in the Modern Anthroponymy System

Pseudonimy polskich YouTuberów. Ich pochodzenie, struktura oraz miejsce we współczesnym systemie antroponimicznym

The subject of the article are pseudonyms of Polish Internet personalities, i.e. YouTubers. The name refers to individuals whose main Internet platform is YouTube – one of the most frequently chosen web portals. They will be subjected to linguistic and semantic analysis, including the indication of their basic functions. The material was collected *via* computer network. In its presentation, the term *pseudonym* will be used, understood as "Internet pseudonym", as it must not be associated with a pseudonym from the "real world".

Over the last dozen-or-so years, the specificity of the virtual world and social media has changed dynamically in many ways. The year 2005 witnessed the creation of YouTube – a website that dominated the world of films and videos posted on the Internet. Today, everyone can create their own YouTube account and start publishing their own content, both for fun, entertainment and for strictly financial purposes. All YouTubers are united by a great passion, charisma and concrete ideas for their careers. They are people who believe in their abilities and who create their own channels. They usually do it as a hobby, but with time, thanks to great effort and luck, they become Internet celebrities and further their careers. And what could be better than dealing with your passion on a daily basis? Since YouTubers' passions

are diverse, there are also different categories of channel content, such as gaming or gameplay (currently one of the most popular categories), lifestyle, vlog, music, education, travel, fashion, technology, automotive.

Every creator, and concurrently the host of their YouTube channel, has a pseudonym. It is their trademark, something that distinguishes the creator and host (in one person) from the many other YouTubers. I will mention here the most popular ones in Poland at the moment – these are: *SA Wardega* (undisputed leader in pranking people in public), *Blowek* (the most popular gamer), *ReZigiusz* (who has no equal in computer games), as well as: *Polski Pingwin*, *Naruciak*, *Multi*, *Wapniak*, *Negatyw*, *Taoczin* and many others.

Thanks to the Internet access, people can manipulate their own sense of identity and personality, and virtual reality offers unlimited possibilities of naming and identifying themselves. In virtual space a person can become someone else than in the real world.

Since they first appeared in the 1990s, Internet pseudonyms (nicknames) became a subject of interest for onomasticians. There were many interesting onomastic works devoted to this subject, which I often referred to. *Pseudonimy internetowe* or *pseudonimy netowe* (Łobodzińska and Peisert, 2003, p. 649) or *nicki* – these are the terms most frequently used by Polish researchers in their previous studies; they denote individual personal names used for the purposes of communication on the Internet. The term *autonim internetowy* (Internet autonym) also appears in the literature (Tomczak, 2005, p. 151). Most Polish Internet users use the term *nick* from English "nickname" translated in Polish dictionaries as *przezwisko*, *przydomek*, but Internet users believe it to be a kind of pseudonym and they are right, because due to the way this category of personal names is created and functions, it is closer to the Polish meaning of the term "pseudonym", but it also has several specific features.

The Internet nickname is certainly an individual name, and as Barbara Czopek-Kopciuch notes: "An attempt to identify and associate a nickname with one of the categories of individual personal names leaves no doubt that it is closest to a classic pseudonym" (Czopek-Kopciuch, 2004, p. 106). Nick is an online variation of a pseudonymic category and, like pseudonym, is created or chosen by its bearer, often in order to hide their true identity. It should be remembered, however, that a pseudonym is a name that should primarily conspire. A net pseudonym does not conceal identity, but creates an image of the bearer. Creating a virtual identity does not have to be connected with disinformation activities. Names used in Internet communication are not always referred to as pseudonyms; in some cases their users are not interested in anonymity at all, and providing their names increases the credibility of participants in Internet communication. And this is the difference between a classic pseudonym and an Internet pseudonym: the first one is to conceal the identity of the bearer, the

second one is to create an image which, according to its creator, will give them a certain position and will be an important element of self-presentation.

Internet pseudonyms may be assigned the appropriate attribute of the category of pseudonyms. They are secondary, optional and substitute to official anthroponyms. They occur in the form of singular noun, and are usually different from the former. They are created or selected by nominees, in other words, by the will of the bearer. The network users decide for themselves what personal information they want to disclose and what information they want to hide, thus, they can create their own identities.

Internet nicknames can characterize a bearer by providing information about their interests, their cherished values, often age and gender, although they can also hide this information. Having a pseudonym is characteristic of certain environments, especially artists, journalists and conspirators. Not everyone uses it, a pseudonym is not a mandatory anthroponym. The Internet nickname, in turn, must be in place if we want to exist in the network.

While writing about the motifs of adopting Internet nicknames, Czopek--Kopciuch (2005, pp. 108–109) emphasizes: "The motive for nicknames is the requirement of the Internet as a medium". According to Adam Siwiec, "there are reasons to believe that a nickname as a type of personal name is a variation or counterpart of a pseudonym, and it has some distinctive properties that are particularly strongly revealed in connection with the communicative medium" (Siwiec, 2014, p. 121). The names used on the Internet are pseudonyms, albeit specific, non-traditional ones. Although originated from pseudonyms, they are something else, a new anthroponymic category. As Siwiec (2014, p. 107) states, "they are a version of pseudonyms with onomastic status and functions established for them".

What are the functions of these names in Internet communication? Like other categories of unofficial anthroponyms, in real life, this type of pseudonyms has an identification and differential (designation) function in the Internet communication. Each name in the virtual space refers to only one object, distinguishes its bearer and, at the same time, hides their real personal data, separates them from other participants of the virtual reality. These names also have a purely informative function. One can also indicate the descriptive function, because the discussed onyms carry information about certain attributes of their bearer and creator of the name, real or idealized, or invented for the use of auto-creation. The name bearer, and at the same time its creator, solely decides whether they would like to expose some of their features through self-expression, or maybe limit their role to identification, using a pseudonym with a non-transparent motivation.

Web nicknames play an expressive role, which serves to create a desired and attractive image of oneself. They can be a kind of self-promotion of the bearer and

creator, informing about their values. They also have an impressive, persuasive function. The nickname is intended to attract the attention of the potential viewer by positively influencing the author and encouraging them to visit the channel again. The role of a pragmatic name is played by the choice of vocabulary and various types of linguistics means.

YouTuber's pseudonym is an important element of the image, it is also a certain message, providing direct and indirect information about its author, often also about the values or passions they consider important. The form of a pseudonym, which depends on the creativity of its maker, and semantic connotations influence whether and what type of audience wants to follow a given channel.

About 200 pseudonyms of the today's most popular YouTubers in Poland, as well as those less recognizable, were analysed. Among them there were also pseudonyms with non-transparent motivations. It is difficult to establish the authenticity of a pseudonym, even when asked directly about the genesis of their nickname, the interlocutor may provide false information or manipulate their own identity, although it is possible to learn about the naming situation and motivation for creating the pseudonym.

There are several basic semantic types that are more or less formally differentiated. It is because of this variety of collected anthroponyms that I divided the ones used by YouTubers into several groups.

I. The first group consists of names used secondarily, in the new function and meaning. These are forms resulting from the transonymisation of various personal names, especially anthroponyms, both real names and surnames, and those referring to mythonyms, theonyms, literary personal names and medionyms.

1. Among them, we have onyms associated with a YouTuber person – by the "real" personal name referring to them, that is, a personal name, a surname or a combination of both.

First names used as the basis for Internet nicknames are very popular. The name does not provide a full personal identification, hence the repetition of forenames in nicknames used for Internet communication is not something unusual and happens quite often. Diminutive names are of particular persuasive value, reducing the distance between the author and the audience by referring to common experience. There are neutral forms – names in full (metric) and in hypocoristic form. Names appear both in Polish form, e.g. *amelka*, *daniel*, *karolek*, *Kuba*, *Serafin*, and in English, e.g. *Alex*, *Andy*, *johnny*, *Mike*.

The forms derived from forenames used by YouTubers, which are the most common form of self-presentation, display the richness of hypocoristic mechanisms. We encounter forename-derived diminutive and hypocoristic forms resulting from back-formation and suffixation, e.g. *Agniesia* (< *Agnieszka*), *Sebek* (< *Sebastian*),

mutilation, e.g. *Dezy* (< *Dezydery*), *Seba* (< *Sebastian*), *Mil* (< *Kamil*), *Minik* (< *Dominik*) or suffixation, e.g. *Arturas* (< *Artur*), *Kayka* (< *Kaja*), *Karolek* (< *Karol*), *Maciejus* (< *Maciej*) as well as mutilation and suffixation, e.g. *CeZik* (< *Cezary*), *Edi* (< *Edek*), *Matus* (< *Mateusz*).

There were also two instances of forms with a changed paradigm: *Olciiak* (< *Olcia* < *Ola* < *Aleksandra*), *Klaudusiek* (< *Klaudusia* < *Klaudia*). There are definitely fewer augmentatives, e.g. *Jacol* (< *Jacek*), *krzych* (< *Krzysztof*), *Lechu* (< *Leszek*). Some of the more interesting nicknames are: *Kubson*, *PrzemsoN*, which were created following the model of English patronymics such as *Gibson*, *Jackson*, *Johnson*.

The analysed material contained pseudonyms of short, concise forms with the final -*u*, e.g. *Doniu* (< *Daniel*), *Michu* (< *Michał*), *Woju* (< *Wojciech*) and -*o*, e.g. *Miro* (< *Mirek*). These formations are formally close to the diminutive-hypocoristic forms of the forename. Similar to common forms of names, they are characterized by a high expressive load.

There are also transformations of (ortho)graphic names, such as *Da Mian* (< *Damian*), *EwUs* (< *Ewa*), *Kayka* (< *Kaja*), *Yaro* (< *Jarosław*), *lukasz* (< *Łukasz*), *michau* (< *Michał*). The most interesting are: the pseudonym *ReZigiusz*, which was created as a result of changing the letter *m* to *z* in the forename of the bearer (Remigiusz Wierzgoń), and the pseudonym *Vojtaz* (from the name *Wojciech* with graphic modification). One can also find forms resulting from gemination, e.g. *allicja* (< *Alicja*), *olaa* (< *Ola*). Names written in lower case letters were noted, e.g. *amanda*, *daniel*, *johnny*, *krzysiek*.

A part of the discussed anthroponyms are foreign names, which are sometimes written phonetically, e.g. *Dejvid* (< *David*), *Ajgor* (< *Igor*), *Kris* (< *Chris*), *Sindi* (< *Cindy*), as well as in foreign form, written in accordance with the English spelling rules, e.g. *Kate*, *Jack*, *Vanessa*. There were noted pseudonyms created under the influence of foreign names, based on the structure of foreign languages, i.e. "polyglonyms". These are the names: *Kati* (< *Kasia*), *Norbi* (< *Norbert*), *Tomy* (< *Tomek*).

Furthermore, characteristic are onyms which are the effects of combining names (also transformed in various ways) with digits (these digits may indicate the age of YouTuber, the year of their birth, or have no additional meaning; these can be a sequence of random digits, or their semantics is known only to the name holder), e.g. *Bartek99*, *paul10*, *Dem3000* (from the abbreviated surname *Dębski*), *MichalF1*. We also find nicknames with an additional element added to the name in the form of letters, usually the initials (which is not a rule, however), such as *grzegorzD*, *Darek.c.m*, *McGrzesio* (the YouTuber is actually named Adam, and his nickname is the result of a combination of the words "Mc" because, as he says, he likes hip-hop, and "Grzesio" because he thought it was a very funny name). We

also have names in the form of letters and their combinations, e.g. *MK* (< *Maciek*). This group of names also includes graphic non-letter characters, e.g. *k@rol*, *Q-Ba*.

2. A further sub-group is made up of pseudonyms created from the first and last name, or only the surname, of the bearer, and recorded both in accordance with the rules in force and with graphic modifications. The use of full name (which is more commonly applied by older YouTubers) indicates a desire to emphasize the true identity, although it may also be a deliberate procedure to inspire trust in the recipient. The official name is used, among others, by YouTubers *Krzysztof Gonciarz*, *Martin Stankiewicz* and female YouTubers: *Aleksandra Żuraw*, *Julia Kobus*.

The function of pseudonyms is sometimes taken by surnames without any formal changes, such as *Skrzypek* (< *Skrzypek*), or resulting from transformation, such as *Sukanek* (< *Suchanek*), as well as forms with notation based on the model of foreign names, such as *Doodek* (< *Dudek*), *Gadovski* (< *Gadzinowski*).

We have forms from the last name of the bearer resulting from its mutilation, e.g. *Skon* (< *Skoneczna*), *Wilk* (< *Wilkowski*) or mutilation and suffixation, e.g. *Graczol* (< *Graczyk*), *Kaluch* (< *Kaliński*), *Rembol* (< *Rembowiecki*), *Remik* (< *Remaszewski*), *Rojson* (< *Rojewski*), *Olo* (< *Oleś*), or as a result of back-formation and suffixation, e.g. *Sokołek* (< *Sokołowski*), i.e. as a result of negative derivation, sometimes with an additional inflectional ending, e.g. *Suchy* (< *Suchoński*). We will also find forms resulting from lexical assimilation, e.g. *Gural* (< *Górny*), *Kisiel* (< *Kisilewicz*), *Wapniak* (< *Wapiński*). Among the nicknames, there are formations with final -*u*, e.g. *Gilu* (< *Gilowski*), *Kislu* (< *Kisieliński*), *Mrozu* (< *Mróz*), sometimes enriched with digits, e.g. *Zajcu37* (Piotr *Zając*).

We also encounter nicknames with an additional element added to the surname in the form of letters, most often initials, such as *JDabrowski* (*Jan Dąbrowski*), *SA Wardega* (*Sebastian Adam Wardęga*) and names in the form of initials from first and last names, such as *DG* (*Darek Gutkowski*). An interesting structure is characteristic of pseudonyms formed from the initial letters of the name and surname of the bearer, the so-called acronyms, e.g. *Ravgor* (*Rafał Górecki*), some of which adopt additional letters, e.g. the pseudonym *skkf* for the YouTuber Florian Skowron.

3. The Internet nicknames also include nicknames of the bearer used in the real world. An example of this type of unofficial anthroponyms is: *Wodzu.* We also meet a phonetically written form *Szanella*, based on the pseudonym of French fashion designer Coco *Chanel*.

4. Among the collected pseudonyms we have also those inspired by the names of fictional characters known from computer games (and these comprise the majority), the names of fairy tale characters, characters appearing in literary works and films. When choosing this type of names as nicknames, the creators attribute certain socially recognized features to themselves, as if they were comparing themselves with

some recognized authorities like popular actors, singers or film characters. From the names of the film heroes, the following sample nicknames are taken as pseudonyms: *Gumiś*, *Rambo*, *Scarlet*, *Wielki Gatsby*. We learn about the origin of the pseudonym *Naruciak* from its bearer, Adam Zimmerman. As he himself states, his nickname is connected with an interesting story – when he was a boy he watched an anime series titled *Naruto* in the company of his cousin, who started to call him "Naruciak". In one case the pseudonym form was a result of paradigm change – *Hogaty* (from *Hogata* (Eng. Hogatha), the name of a witch in the *Smurfs* cartoon).

There also appear anthroponyms originating from heroes of books and comics, e.g. *Buggy*, *gandalf*, *Kaiko*, *Sinbad*, *Mały Książę*. The names taken from mythology, e.g. *Medusa*, *Sybilla*, *Ikar* and *Hadesiak* (created as a result of suffixation), as well as from Christian tradition, e.g. *izak*, *JUDASZ*, are popular among both men and women.

5. We encounter net pseudonyms related to the Internet medium, coming from the world of computer games. Recently, computer games have become a significant element of contemporary mass culture. Among such pseudonyms we can find naming forms often alien to the average audience, but with understandable semantics for online gamers. These include, but are not limited to: *RoxMb*, i.e. Michał Baraniak, whose pseudonym is derived from his favourite childhood game *Rox* and the first letters of his name and surname. *Gimper*, in turn, is a pseudonym of Tomasz Działowy, derived from the GIMP software; *Sheo*, or Maciej Ejsmont, whose pseudonym is the abbreviation of the name *Sheogorath*, a character from *The Elder Scrolls* game franchise. We learn about the origin of the next pseudonym *Taoczin* from its bearer, Krzysztof Sikorski. The YouTuber's uncle had a friend with whom they together played a good old game *Heroes of Might and Magic 3*, and who used his own invented nickname *Taochin* (with *ch* written and pronounced as Polish *cz*). YouTuber decided that he would be *Taochin*, but has not forgotten to mention that his uncle gave him all the rights to this nickname.

II. The second group of YouTubers' pseudonyms are those of common, Polish and foreign (mainly English) words, representing various fields of reality. These names may characterise their bearer either directly – by reference to the lexical meaning of the appellatives used – or indirectly – metaphorically or metonymically. They function in a manner similar to nicknames, exposing selected features of the bearer. They are often enriched with non-letter graphic characters and digits.

Such pseudonyms characterize the bearer most often on the basis of their external features, character values, but they also express emotions, attitudes and passions. This function includes characterizing adjectives, e.g. *Bladii* (with applied graphic modification), *ciekawy*, *Czarna* and substantival names of the bearers of given characteristics, e.g. *Excentryk*, *Loozak*, *waryat*, *Zgrywus* and *Negatyw* (asked why such a positive

person has the nickname *Negatyw* [Eng. Negative], the YouTuber answered that he had a cat named "Pozytyw", and it would be weird to call yourself the same. It had to be the other way around, hence *Negatyw*. Apart from that, as he adds, he had a rather negative attitude towards everything). Some YouTubers have no problem emphasizing their intimacy, as exemplified by *SexMasterka*, a nickname of Aniela Bogusz, the creator of one of the most spicy, controversial and erotic channels on Polish YouTube. She claims to be a modern sex education teacher, for people of all ages.

Names of this type refer mainly to commonly accepted and desired character traits. Nickname is supposed to distinguish (preferably by emphasizing spiritual and intellectual qualities) its bearer from other Internet users, build their positive image in the eyes of a potential recipient, gain their interest and approval. The following examples can be cited: *Ciekawy człowiek*, *Obserwator*, *Pan kontekstualny*, *Poszukiwacz*. Semantically neutral terms predominate, but there are also meliorative forms, e.g. *Boska Babka*, *Wielmożny Igor* (Igor Szwęch, the author of one of the most aesthetic channels; he has his own individual style, knows how to conjure up beautiful shots while making films or taking pictures); occasionally there are forms in English, e.g. *Magical*. Ironically and wittily marked pseudonyms are also popular, e.g. *Generator Frajdy*, *Pan Śmietanka*, *Szajba*, *Ziemniak*, also in English form, such as *Red Lipstick Monster*. The creators of humorous pseudonyms distinguish themselves by self-distance and a sense of humour. There are also names motivated by pejorative appellatives, e.g. *Diabeuu*, *Demon w Sieci*, *Virus*, *Wredna krowa*, though these rarely appear.

Web nicknames can also individualize a person through the metaphorical use of common words, indicating, for example, the comparative similarity of characteristics, e.g. *czarna owca*, *Królewna*, *Magnolia*. There were also recorded pseudonyms derived from appellatives with final -*u*, e.g. *Mistrzu* (meaning "having leadership attributes") and *Wilku* (i.e. "having characteristics attributed to the animal", although it can also be a name motivated by the surname *Wilk* or *Wilczyński*).

This group also includes English names written in accordance with native language rules, e.g. *Bad Girl*, *Beauty*, *Natural*, *Hunter*, *Rock Alone*, *Young Multi*, or phonetically, e.g. *kulmen*. There was a group of names with a slightly humorous character, i.e. pseudo-anglicisms, e.g. *Excentryk*, *Loozak*, *waryat*, *Wooyek*. We also have a nickname *Blowek* derived from the English word *blow* (meaning "to strike") with the addition of the suffix -*ek*, as well as a nickname *TheChwytak* created as a result of combining the Polish word with the English article *The*. Noteworthy is the nickname *Eleven* derived from the English numeral. Because of this ambiguous pseudonym and channel of Mateusz Gajewski, which contains mainly gameplays, it is easy to confuse it with any football channel or even with an English-speaking YouTube channel.

III. The last group includes Internet nicknames with non-transparent motivations. These include *Bremu*, *Donkes*, *Enzzi*, *Friz*, *Ljay*, *Vibe*, *Rafonix* (despite appearances, YouTuber with this pseudonym is not named Rafał at all, because his name is Marcin Krasucki). These include names of an acronymic type, consisting of any characters, i.e. upper and lower case letters, digits and keyboard characters, in any order, e.g. *KSH*, *MG*, *PEPE* and *PLKD* (pseudonym of Damian Kuszewski, hence the letters *KD*, the meaning of the letters *PL* we can only guess, perhaps *PL* is the abbreviation of the name of the country), as well as the pseudonym *CTSG87*, in which the sequence of letters means "Civilization Tastes So Good", and the number 87 is the year of birth of the YouTuber, Kamil Popielski.

We easily notice the extraordinarily creative approach to forming such anthroponyms by Internet users, who enjoy playing with language, and while creating their pseudonyms use various linguistic operations, reach for various graphic or spelling means, typical of such medium as the Internet. Emojis, foreign letters, multiplication of letters and differentiation of their size are among the applied techniques. A large part of pseudonyms retain the attention of the recipient in a form that often contradicts generally accepted spelling rules. They can be considered the result of a conscious decision of their author and a specific linguistic stylization. And thus we have: *Da Mian*, *Gural*, *Kszycho*, *zabujczy gracz*.

A pseudonym is often a thoughtful form consisting of carefully selected letters, including initials, first and last names and words, e.g. the pseudonym of YouTuber Marcin *MWK*, where *M* comes from Marcin, *W* from a surname he does not want to reveal, and *K* from channel (Pol. *kanał*). There were recorded cases of doubling and changing the capitalizing of letters, e.g. *Kllarra*, *Olciiak*, *Szanella*, *Disowskyy*, *CeZik*, *aREK*, *PrzemsoN*, or omitting diacritical signs, e.g. *JDabrowski*, *SA Wardega*. It is common to use names composed exclusively from capitals, e.g. *JUDASZ*. There is a great deal of freedom as regards using capital letters. The specific manner of writing first names and surnames in lower case only is also noticeable, e.g. *daniel*, *izak*. Sometimes multiple-word nicknames are written without space, although, according to spelling rules, they should be written separately, e.g. *DeeJayPallaside*, *IsAmUxPompa*, *SexMasterka*, *TheNitroZyniak*.

Among the collected onyms, single-form pseudonyms constitute the vast majority, e.g. *Blowek*, *Seba*, *Szafa*, *Obserwator*, *Poszukiwacz*. Apart from single-word pseudonyms, there are also numerous analytical ones in the form of nominal groups, e.g. Polish: *Ciekawy człowiek*, *Demon w Sieci*, *Generator Frajdy*, *Niekryty Krytyk*, *Pan kontekstualny* and foreign: *Red Lipstick Monster*, *Rock Alone*, *Young Multi*.

To sum up, the collected pseudonyms, being a product of online auto-nomination, constitute a diverse group in terms of both motivation and structure. We notice names belonging to specific naming classes and the motivations for using

given onyms are usually connected with the interests of their authors who are also their bearers. A clear feature of pseudonyms is the way they are created. They are most often created as a result of onymisation and transonymisation, without any formal change, as well as through derivation, most often suffixal. They also show a purely formal motivation, e.g. they can be sequences of signs, the motivation of which is known only to their creators. One-word forms dominate, two-component and multi-component pseudonyms are much less frequent.

Among the presented pseudonyms, the most numerous are the so-called secondary anthroponyms, created as a result of the transonymisation of probably real forenames and/or surnames, as well as mythological, literary or film heroes. Various forms of names prevail, including full names and shortened and hypocoristic names, as well as foreign names or formed under the influence of foreign names. Pseudonyms from the world of computer games form a distinctive group. Less numerous is the group of pseudonyms motivated by common words, terms characterising bearers by means of characterisation, metaphor or metonymy. Neutral and positive forms prevailed in the analysed material, which generally did not change in comparison with their bases.

As it turns out, the ways of creating pseudonyms on the Internet are the same as those of creating names in the real world, and they can also be enriched with digits and non-letter graphic signs. The presented material showed a huge invention of pseudonyms in the nomination acts, which is manifested in the creation of forms coined as a result of various language games. They often have an unusual graphic form, which conflicts with the generally accepted rules of spelling words, including proper names. All of them have the basic function of identifying and distinguishing the bearer from others.

Translated into English by Marek Robak-Sobolewski

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ABSTRACT

The subject of the article is nicknames (nicks) used by YouTubers, i.e. Polish Internet creators who have their own channel on YouTube, and also the methods of their creation. The aim of the article is to analyse the linguistic and semantic aspects of pseudonyms created in the act of Internet autonomy and to indicate their basic functions. Thus, the research is part of the area of media onomastics. The material was collected *via* a computer network. The conducted research revealed that YouTuber pseudonyms constitute a diverse group of anthroponyms, both in terms of motivation and structure. They are most often created as a result of onimisation and transonymisation of real names and/or surnames, as well as mythological, literary and film heroes, without any formal change, and also as a result of derivation, most often suffixal. Various forms of names prevail, including full names and shortened and hypocoristic names, as well as foreign names or those formed under the influence of foreign names. Less numerous is the group of pseudonymic forms motivated by common words. All of which have the function of identifying and distinguishing the bearer from others.

Keywords: media onomastics, nickname, nick, autonomy, pseudonymic forms

ABSTRAKT

Przedmiotem artykułu są pseudonimy internetowe, tzw. nicki używane przez YouTuberów, tj. polskich twórców internetowych prowadzących swój kanał w serwisie YouTube, oraz sposoby ich kreacji. Celem artykułu jest analiza językowa i semantyczna powstających w akcie internetowej autonominacji pseudonimów oraz wskazanie ich podstawowych funkcji. Tym samym badania wpisują się w obszar onomastyki medialnej. Materiał zgromadzono za pośrednictwem sieci komputerowej. Na podstawie przeprowadzonych badań stwierdzono, że pseudonimy YouTuberów stanowią zróżnicowaną grupę antroponimów tak pod względem motywacyjnym, jak i strukturalnym. Powstają najczęściej w wyniku onimizacji oraz transonimizacji zarówno prawdopodobnie prawdziwych imion i/lub nazwisk, jak i nazw bohaterów mitologicznych, literackich czy filmowych, bez żadnej zmiany formalnej, jak też przez derywację, najczęściej sufiksalną. Dominują różne formy imion, w tym imiona pełne oraz skrócone i hipokorystyczne, a także imiona obce lub powstałe pod wpływem obcych postaci imion. Mniej liczna jest grupa form pseudonimicznych motywowanych przez wyrazy pospolite. Wszystkie spełniają funkcję identyfikowania i wyróżniania nosiciela spośród innych.

Słowa kluczowe: onomastyka medialna, pseudonim internetowy, nick, autonominacja, formy pseudonimiczne