



YOUTH SLANG AS A PECULIAR WAY OF VERBALIZING BEING IN THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

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Annotation. The relevance of this article stems from the keen interest of the linguistic community in the issues of marginal communicative codes (jargon, youth slang, etc.) – a phenomenon that has long been hushed up and requires increased attention. The object of this study is the lexical (and, in part, phraseological) units recorded in youth slang dictionaries. The subject of this study is the methods of lexical and semantic word formation in youth slang dictionaries. The main objective of the study is to identify and describe the features of lexical and semantic word formation in slang and to identify their functional significance in the context of the specifics of such a phenomenon of linguistic reality as youth slang.

Keywords: Linguistics, Vocabulary, Semantics, Lexical-Semantic Field, Slang, Youth Slang, Jargon.

Introduction

For a long time, the study of jargon sublanguages was practically taboo in Russian linguistics: the prevailing notion was that everything worthy of study was present in the literary language, while jargonisms merely distorted and defamed the Russian language. Currently, the situation has changed, and a kind of "jargonological boom" (V.M. Mokienko) is being observed, as a result of which many gaps in this field have been filled, primarily in the collection and lexicographic systematization of relevant material. Here we can mention at least the dictionaries of D.S. Baldaev, V.K. Belko and I.M. Yusupov (1992), V.B. Bykov (1992; 1994), J. Rossi (1987; 1991), V.S. Elistratov (1994), I. Yuganov and F. Yuganova (1994), S.I. Levikova (2003), T.G. Nikitina (2004), H. Walter, V.M. Mokienko and T.G. Nikitina (2005); these and other dictionary publications provide a fairly complete picture of Russian jargon.

Youth slang in the Russian language represents a relatively pure form of language play, as one of the main conditions for classifying a phenomenon as a game is precisely the absence of a practical purpose – play is intrinsically valuable and derives its meaning primarily from within itself, not from somewhere external. This, of course, does not mean that the use of youth slang is meaningless for its speakers – through it, they assert themselves, express their involvement in a youth subculture, and contrast themselves with the world of adults and respectable members of society. However, these installations in themselves are essentially playful and are not equivalent to the utilitarian goals of professional or criminal jargons determined by considerations of the efficiency of the production process, business understanding, or conspiracy.



Jargon (including youth jargon) is closely linked to obscene language, which in a sense constitutes its "archetype." All "favorite topics" and corresponding productive groups of jargon have their representatives, primarily in obscene words and expressions. The semantic spheres most productive in terms of the circulation of nominations form corresponding "communicative contours," which easily absorb lexical units of a wide variety of semantics to express their typical meanings. The "standard" fillers for such situationally defined forms are precisely "obscene" lexical units – largely desemantized, obscene words can be used like a joker card, capable of performing any function required of them in a given situation. Therefore, slang circulates a multitude of verbal substitutes designed to euphemize and disguise obscene language, while preserving, as far as possible, its emotional power. Many of these substitutes are characterized by an extreme degree of polysemy, inherited from the obscene source word. (The slang word "kolbasa" (sausage), which has 13 meanings, and its derivatives are indicative in this regard. Cf. the verb "kolbasit" (to make sausage) can mean: to have fun; to entertain others; to dance; to upset, to cause suffering; to stroll, to take a stroll; to drink alcohol; to experience a hangover; to be depressed. From this it is clear that the word "kolbasa" (sausage) and its derivatives in slang are typical wildcard words, the meaning of which is determined mainly by the situation.)

Russian youth slang is a fascinating linguistic phenomenon, its existence limited not only by specific age groups, as its very definition suggests, but also by social, temporal, and spatial boundaries. It is found among urban student youth and certain more or less closed reference groups.

Like all social dialects, it is merely a lexicon that draws its cues from the national language, living on its phonetic and grammatical soil. Since the early 20th century, three turbulent waves have marked the development of youth slang. The first dates back to the 1920s, when the revolution and civil war, having destroyed the structure of society to its foundations, gave birth to an army of homeless children, and the speech of students, teenagers, and young people who were not separated from the homeless by impassable barriers was colored by a multitude of "criminal" words.

The second wave occurred in the 1950s, when "hipsters" took to the streets and dance floors of cities. The emergence of the third wave is associated not with this era of turbulent events, but with a period of stagnation, when the stifling atmosphere of social life in the 1970s and 1980s gave rise to various informal youth movements and "hippie" young people created their own "systemic" slang as a linguistic gesture of resistance to official ideology.

It's true that one peculiarity of Russian works devoted to this topic should be noted: some linguists, as if ashamed to have undertaken the study of such an "unworthy," "base" subject, begin or end with calls to combat it, justifying their research by citing the need to deeply study the evil in order to determine how best to combat it. This approach seems unscientific to us: a linguist cannot and should not fight language; the linguist's task is to explore its diversity, including its deviant manifestations.

Slang reflects the lifestyle of the speech community that spawned it. The most developed semantic fields are "Person" (with differentiation by gender, family relationships, profession, and nationality), "Appearance," "Clothing," "Housing," and "Leisure" (partying, music, drinking, smoking, drugs).

Slang toponyms are also associated with leisure activities and youth gathering places in Moscow and St. Petersburg: Pushka (Pushkin Square), Pleshka (Plekhanov Institute), Luzha (Luzhniki). Far fewer slang words refer to the education or work of young people. Slang words



are increasingly permeating the language of the press. Almost all materials that discuss the lives of young people, their interests, holidays, and idols contain slang in varying concentrations. Newspapers are a valuable source because they promptly reflect the current state of the language. Common slang vocabulary finds its way into them very quickly, allowing us to objectively assess its frequency.

The proposed study of youth slang also provides some evidence of the evolution of youth slang. For example, the following: "chicks," "chicks," and "girls" are a thing of the past. Now young men call girls "aunts" or "bees." If a girl is strange or drunk, they might call her "off." Young men and women, accordingly, call them "uncles." If a young man is wealthy, well-dressed, and has a car, they say, "Well, you're a real ace," as well as "cool" or "no joke." Young people can be "extremely cool," but there are also those who are "undercooked," i.e., not so "cool." In light of the above, it's worth quoting what's probably a fashionable saying these days: "Only the balls are cooler than you, only the stars are higher than you."

When talking about each other, young people call themselves "weirdos" ("We were with this 'weirdo' yesterday..."). It's a harmless term, a synonym for the former "dude." When a group gets together, it's called a "get-together" or "session." A "get-together" can be "poor," i.e., unsuccessful, or successful – "awesome."

Russian youth slang is primarily concentrated in Moscow and St. Petersburg. However, some of its elements reach the periphery, and some are even born there. Slang is universal. Many features of Russian youth slang are similar to other argots. A distinct ideological element is evident here: from its very inception, "systemic" slang has opposed itself not only to the older generation, but, above all, to the rotten official system.

The second feature that Russian youth slang shares with all argot is its intense metaphorical nature. B.D. Polivanov aptly described argot word formation as "word creation": "Here we truly encounter not an individual invention of a single organizing device, but, in the true sense of the word, a broad, collective, and sometimes widely diverse linguistic creativity."

Youth slang is the password for all members of the reference group. The third characteristic that characterizes Russian youth slang as universal, a characteristic that connects it with other argots, and especially with student argot—French, German, Bulgarian, and others – is its ludic focus. Youth slang is more than just a means of creative self-expression.

Our research shows that youth slang, like any argot and, more broadly, any sublanguage, is characterized by a certain blurring of boundaries. Isolating it as a closed subsystem, as an object of observation, is only tentative. The gradual spread of youth slang proceeds from the center to the periphery, and in the periphery, it takes root minimally.

Youth slang is a functional style used by relatively highly educated speakers (its "Anglicization" is compelling evidence of this) only in specific communicative situations. In other situations, they utilize other strata of the style scale. Chemists say that dirt is a substance in the wrong place (oil paint on a jacket sleeve, black soil on a parquet floor). As long as youth slang is used by young people when they communicate among themselves in relaxed, informal settings, no "pollution" occurs. The same applies to the language of fiction: when slang words are incorporated as elements of a character's speech pattern, this does not provoke any protest, as long as it is done tactfully and aesthetically.

Youth slang in the Russian language, which adults began to become familiar with through reading young writers and poets, youth magazines, and listening to their children, is primarily appealing for its expressiveness and playful, playful wordplay. Against the backdrop of the dreary, mendacious official propaganda, slang appealed with its fresh metaphors, free spirit,

and sometimes even brevity of meaning (for example, "iron" – "a black marketeer strolling along the sidewalk in front of a hotel, waiting for a client"). The composition of slang reflects the dangerous, alarming fact of the spread of drug addiction: dozens of words and expressions. Slang also bears witness to persistent everyday xenophobia (negative, smoked, chuchmek, churka, Churkestan, etc.).

Youth slang in the Russian language is the most open and non-closed system in the modern Russian language, the vocabulary of which is constantly expanding not only through borrowings and semantic reinterpretations of commonly used words, but also through other active processes of word inflection.

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