

LEXICAL AND THEMATIC GROUPS OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SLANG

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Abstract: The article examines the specifics of English-language borrowings in contemporary Russian youth slang. It highlights the unique lexical, phonetic, and grammatical features of Anglicisms, emphasizing their expressive and social functions. The study identifies the main thematic groups of slang vocabulary, including youth parties, music, clothing, money, and personal designations, and demonstrates that borrowings primarily reflect leisure and entertainment rather than educational or professional spheres. The process of Anglicization in youth slang is shown to be oral, selective, and intensive, marking a distinctive stage in the development of modern Russian slang.

Keywords: Anglicisms; Russian youth slang; lexical borrowing; thematic groups; phonetic assimilation; grammatical assimilation; expressive function; leisure vocabulary

A more vivid manifestation of the specificity of borrowing is observed at the lexical level. This is explained by the fact that the phonetics and morphology of slang are not “its own,” not original, whereas the lexicon is the level of language most susceptible to the influence of extralinguistic factors.

English-language vocabulary in slang can be represented by several thematic groups.

1. Youth Party. The word сэйшн refers to a specific type of youth gathering that usually takes place in a private apartment — in a флэт — when parents and adult relatives are absent. А флэт may be однорумовый (“one-room”) or многорумовый (“multi-room”). In the флэт there is a дабл or джон (“toilet”), or a дабл-кросс (“combined bathroom”).

The young host of the apartment — the organizer of the сэйшн — is called a флэтер. Such an event is usually not prepared in advance, so the program of a сэйшн cannot be considered elaborate: at сэйшнены people drink wine, smoke, and dance. Thus, this group includes words from two other thematic groups — “drinking,” “smoking,” and “music.”

The concepts of “to drink,” “to get drunk” have many related slang derivatives: дринкать, дринчить (“to drink”), надринкаться (“to get drunk”), задринчить (“to start drinking heavily”), дринкованный, надринкованный, надринченный, дринканутый (“drunk, intoxicated”). What people drink is denoted by вайн (“wine, vodka,” or generally “any alcoholic beverages”), дринк (“alcohol, liquor”).

The word батл (батла, ботла) “bottle” is typically used only for bottles containing alcohol.

A similar pair to дринкать – дринк is смочить (“to smoke”) and смок (“smokes, cigarettes”). Slang also includes names for specific cigarette brands: засмочил лорда means “lit a cigarette of the brand ‘Lord’.”

2. Music. This thematic group includes the following words: мюзик (“music”), груп (“vocal-instrumental ensemble”), драмер, драмщик (“drummer in a vocal-instrumental ensemble”), диск, рекорд (“vinyl record”), тэйпер (“tape recorder”), and some others. Almost all of these words are used only in reference to jazz music.

3. Names of Youth Clothing. A significant place in the jargon is occupied by the names of clothing and footwear related to the so-called “jeans” style of clothing, which has recently become very fashionable among young people: батник (“a youth shirt of a special cut”), блайзер (“a light jacket, usually brightly colored”), джины (“jeans”), трузера (“pants, jeans”), and similar items.

Jeans may take the name of the foreign brand that produces them: вранглер (“Wrangler jeans”), луйс (“Louis jeans”), супера (“Superrifle jeans”), левиса (“Levis jeans”), etc. Both jeans and fashionable shirts and jackets have buttons (баттон) and labels (лэйбл) with the manufacturer’s name, as well as pockets (покет) and zippers (зиппер).

Among young people, the word шузы (“shoes,” sometimes “women’s shoes”) is very widespread. This thematic group also includes words referring to personal items: вон (вотчи) (“wristwatch”), кейс (“briefcase,” usually the so-called “diplomat” type), спектра (“glasses”).

4. Names of Money. A significant place among Anglicisms is occupied by the names referring to money and financial relations: голд (“gold”), грины (“dollars”), мани (“money”), прайз (“price”).

The names of paper banknotes of different denominations are formed according to a single model: ван (“one ruble”), файв (“five rubles”), тэн (“ten rubles”), твенти файв (“twenty-five rubles”).

5. Names of People. A fairly large portion of slang is occupied by terms referring to people, differentiated by gender or age, such as бой, гей (“boy, young man”), мэн (“man, guy”), and герла (“girl”). Kinship relations are represented by words like олды, пэрэнты (“parents”), мазер (“mother”), and фазер (“father”). Professional roles are expressed with terms such as драйвер, чиф (“taxi driver”) and драмер, драмщик (“drummer in a vocal-instrumental band”). Words indicating national or racial identity include блэк, нигер (“Black person”), джапаны (“Japanese people,” “tourists from Japan”), and джорджи (“Georgians”).

An interesting feature of some slang terms for people is their distinctly evaluative character. The word кент, for example, according to informants, refers to a man aged about 25–30 who is well-dressed, behaves confidently, and, despite not belonging to the circle of slang users, commands respect from young people because of his social position, mannerisms, and so on. The word хип denotes a fashionably dressed young person from “their own circle” and carries a strong positive evaluation. Notably, the adjective хиповый, derived from хип, functions less as a relative term (“like a хип”) and more as a qualitative one (“very good”): хиповая герла, хиповые джинсы, cf. the adverb хипово.

In contrast to these terms, кантри, кантра are used to refer to people who are hostile toward youth, do not understand their interests, as well as to young men and women who seek to be accepted into the circle of “their own,” partially adopting the behaviors, clothing style, and even slang of the group, but who have not rid themselves of certain habits, words, or attitudes that are unacceptable for a true хип.

The analysis showed that the majority of Anglicisms consist of words denoting various everyday objects, phenomena, and aspects of youth life related to leisure, free time, and entertainment. There are very few slang words reflecting the educational process or the professional activities of

young people: *ворк* “work,” *воркать* “to work,” *лэксшн* “lecture,” *сайэнс* “science.” Practically, they do not influence the conceptual structure of slang. Objects, phenomena, and actions connected with educational or professional processes are usually expressed in youth slang not through borrowings, but by words created using the resources of the native language. Thus, the productive core present in youth slang is absent in the English-language segment of slang described here.

Thus, English-language borrowings in youth slang represent a new phenomenon, and the intensity of Anglicisms entering slang is unique. Therefore, the current period in the development of youth slang can be described as the “Anglicization” of slang speech.

This process is largely specific compared to the literary language. Its specificity is due to: 1) the special expressive function of slang; 2) the oral form of borrowing and use of slang vocabulary.

Thus, the oral form has determined that only borrowings—i.e., words assimilated by the language—enter slang. Exoticisms and foreign insertions are absent in slang.

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