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## ENGLISH SLANG IN UKRAINIAN YOUTH COMMUNICATION

*This article is devoted to the topic of translating youth slang into English. We have turned to the study of English-language youth slang lexemes as an important component of the linguistic picture of modern society. We examine the peculiarities of the functioning of English-language youth slang lexemes in modern Ukrainian, the peculiarities of their adaptation and the difficulties in translating them into Ukrainian, which has led to the relevance of our study. We believe that the most productive way of translation is to search for alternatives when translating non-equivalent vocabulary, transliteration, abbreviation and other types of abbreviations, direct inclusion or calculation, descriptive translation, always taking into account the context. Often the language of young people is not understood by other segments of the population, which provokes a tendency to actively study these lexemes in modern linguistics as a bright and original phenomenon. Also, youth slang is closely related to other groups of slang: computer slang, SMS slang, professional jargon, the language of drug addicts, prisoners, etc., as young people select the "most fashionable" and "most expressive" lexemes and use them in their vocabulary to be "in trend" and "cool." Because of this, a large number of young people almost completely switch to an informal style of communication, which leads to misunderstandings between them and other members of society, who often do not know what these "trendy" words mean.*

*The theoretical significance of the study is that it comprehensively outlines the peculiarities of the functioning of English-language youth slang lexemes and ways of translating them into Ukrainian on the example of units collected on the basis of modern websites and forums, social networks, as well as online dictionaries of youth slang, the most modern research on the study of English-language youth slang lexemes and ways of translating them. The results of the study can be used in the compilation of English-Ukrainian dictionaries of youth slang, in the development of special courses related to the study of youth slang vocabulary, for writing graduate theses in higher education, in the further study of youth slang lexemes and in writing articles and theses on this topic.*

**Key words:** *youth slang, anglicisms, translating, non-equivalent vocabulary, transliteration, abbreviation, direct inclusion, calculation, descriptive translation, context.*

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## АНГЛІЙСЬКИЙ СЛЕНГ В УКРАЇНСЬКОМУ МОЛОДІЖНОМУ СПІЛКУВАННІ

*Ця стаття присвячена темі перекладу молодіжного сленгу англійською мовою. У науковому доробку розглянуто вивчення англомовних молодіжних сленгових лексем як важливої складової мовної картини сучасного суспільства. Ми дослідили особливості функціонування англомовних молодіжних сленгових лексем у сучасній українській мові, особливості їх адаптації та труднощі перекладу українською мовою. Найбільш продуктивним*

способом перекладу, на нашу думку, є пошук альтернатив при перекладі безеквівалентної лексики, транслітерація, аббревіація та інші види скорочень, пряме включення або калькування, описовий переклад, обов'язково з урахуванням контексту. Теоретичне значення дослідження полягає в тому, що в ньому комплексно окреслено особливості функціонування англійських лексем молодіжного сленгу та способи їх перекладу українською мовою на прикладі одиниць, зібраних на основі сучасних веб-сайтів та форумів, соціальних мереж, а також онлайн-словників молодіжного сленгу, що є найсучаснішим дослідженням з вивчення англійських лексем молодіжного сленгу та способів їх перекладу. Часто мова молоді є незрозумілою для інших верств населення, що провокує тенденцію до активного вивчення цих лексем у сучасній лінгвістиці як яскравого та оригінального явища. Також молодіжний сленг тісно пов'язаний з іншими групами сленгу: комп'ютерним сленгом, СМС-сленгом, професійним жаргоном, мовою наркоманів, ув'язнених тощо, оскільки молодь відбирає «наймодніші» та «найекспресивніші» лексеми і використовує їх у своєму лексиконі, щоб бути «в тренді» та «крутим». Через це велика кількість молодих людей майже повністю переходить на неформальний стиль спілкування, що призводить до непорозуміння між ними та іншими членами суспільства, які часто не знають, що означають ці «модні» слова. Результати дослідження можуть бути використані при укладанні англо-українських словників молодіжного сленгу, при розробці спекурсів, пов'язаних з вивченням молодіжної сленгової лексики, для написання дипломних робіт у вищих навчальних закладах, у подальшому вивченні молодіжних сленгових лексем та при написанні статей і тез на цю тему.

**Ключові слова:** молодіжний сленг, англіцизми, переклад, безеквівалентна лексика, транслітерація, аббревіація, пряме включення, калькування, описовий переклад, контекст.

**Problem statement.** In the modern Ukrainian literary language, trends characterized by the desire to move away from the study of language as a traditional linguistic system are becoming increasingly relevant, and researchers are increasingly attracted to the vocabulary of various social groups as the basis for people's social and practical activities. Since the language of every nation is constantly evolving and being replenished with new lexemes both through the emergence of new words within the mother tongue and through borrowing from other languages, especially English, there is a need to systematize and codify new lexemes.

**Research analysis.** The theoretical and methodological basis of the work is made up of the works of such foreign and domestic scholars devoted to the coverage of theoretical problems of studying slang, youth slang, computer slang and SMS slang in linguistics (M. Adams, V. Balabin, J. Coleman, E. Partridge, O. Hlazova, I. Nikoliv, O. Ponomariv, L. Stavvytska, O. Forsa, T. Tymoshenko, O. Romanova, O. Selivanova, L. Lysak, S. Martos, I. Kirienkov, V. Dorda, P. Grabovyi, etc.), translation problems (V. Balabin, I. Byk, A. Parshin, V. Komisarov, etc.).

**The aim of the work** is to examine English-language youth slang lexemes in modern Ukrainian and the peculiarities of translation into Ukrainian.

**Article basic material.** Youth slang is undergoing particularly rapid changes and additions, as young people are too much resorting to borrowing “buzzwords” and thus actively polluting their native language. Anglicisms are most often borrowed from popular social networks (Facebook, Instagram, etc.), numerous reality shows, sitcoms, media, and computer games, which indicates the active promotion of the American way of life and thinking. In general, the desire to be “in trend” has become the key to the

behavior and, ultimately, the language of a large part of young people.

Therefore, the study of this layer of the vocabulary of the modern Ukrainian language is becoming quite relevant nowadays, since the so-called assimilation of anglicisms into the national language causes certain difficulties in translation and use, since such words have not yet been recorded in dictionaries, which indicates problems with the systematization and codification of youth slang lexemes in the national language. Often the language of young people is not understood by other segments of the population, which provokes a tendency to actively study these lexemes in modern linguistics as a bright and original phenomenon. Also, youth slang is closely related to other groups of slang: computer slang, SMS slang, professional jargon, the language of drug addicts, prisoners, etc., as young people select the “most fashionable” and “most expressive” lexemes and use them in their vocabulary to be “in trend” and “cool.” Because of this, a large number of young people almost completely switch to an informal style of communication, which leads to misunderstandings between them and other members of society, who often do not know what these “trendy” words mean.

As for our study, we have turned to the study of English-language youth slang lexemes as an important component of the linguistic picture of modern society. We examine the peculiarities of the functioning of English-language youth slang lexemes in modern Ukrainian, the peculiarities of their adaptation and the difficulties in translating them into Ukrainian, which has led to the relevance of our study. We believe that the most productive way of translation is to search for alternatives when translating non-equivalent vocabulary, transliteration, abbreviation and other types of abbreviations, direct inclusion or calculation,

descriptive translation, always taking into account the context.

The theoretical basis of our work is the concepts of “slang” and youth slang, which is determined by the topic of our study. Let us turn to the achievements of our predecessors. Linguists from many countries (e.g., M. Adams, J. Coleman, E. Mattiello, G. Mencken, E. Partridge, etc.) have been actively researching social dialects, especially professional jargon and youth slang, for many years, since these social groups are rapidly replenished with new lexical items in parallel with the emergence of new realities or trends in modern society. Thus, in Ukrainian linguistics, slang and youth slang in particular have been studied: I. Andrusiak, O. Hlazova, P. Hrabovyi, V. Dorda, M. Makovskyi, S. Martos, L. Lysak, O. Ivanova, I. Nikoliv, O. Petryshyn, O. Romanova, L. Stavytska, T. Tymoshenko, O. Fursa, etc, foreign linguists have also devoted a lot of work to the subject (M. Adams, J. Coleman, M. Krongaus, E. Mattiello, G. Mencken, E. Partridge, L. Tepesch, etc.). It should be noted that there is no single definition of the term “slang” in linguistics, which refers to non-standardized speech along with “argot” and “jargon” (Stavytska, 2005). In general, linguists emphasize that there is no clear distinction between the concepts of “jargon” and “slang”, and a significant number of linguists call “argo”, “jargon”, “slang” synonyms, as they “intersect and pass into each other” (Romanova, 2013).

The need to distinguish between the concepts of “jargon” and “slang” emphasizes L. Stavytska, noting that jargon “historically indicates the limited group of its speakers, as well as the narrowness of the semantic field of lexical units”. Instead, “the language environment of communication of a large number of people, which differs from the language norm, was called ‘slang’” (Stavytska, 2005:61). According to O. Romanova, “the language of a modern city is a complex linguistic space that is subject to a three-dimensional coordinate system: age, territorial, social and group” (Romanova, 2013). The following groups of slang are most often distinguished: “youth slang”, “business slang”, “SMS slang”, slang of rockers, rappers, hip-hoppers, students, computer slang, slang of drug addicts, musicians, members of informal groups, etc. However, according to the researchers, it is impossible to unambiguously divide these lexemes into groups, since they “are not isolated from each other... and thus can be used in different communication situations” (Doloh, 2006). In general, researchers of social dialects divide “slang” into two groups: general («vernacular vocabulary ... which is not limited in its use to any professional or social dialects (Doloh, 2006) and special (slang of the

military, students, musicians, athletes, etc.) (Hrabovyi, 2008; Fursa, 2002; Dorda, 2009).

In our opinion, among all the groups of slang speakers, the most vivid and active is the group of youth slang speakers, since it is young people who react most quickly to any social changes. It is young people aged 12 to 25 who are active speakers of this linguistic phenomenon. Many researchers understand the concept of “youth slang” as “a special linguistic subcode characterized by the use of non-normative, often stylistically reduced, lexical and phraseological units that perform evaluative, euphemistic and nominative functions and are used in casual communication by young people” (Hrabovyi, 2008), “a set of language means of high expressive power, which are constantly transformed and used in communication by young people” (S. Martos, O. Potsulko)(Martos, 2004:12; Potsulko, 2017:299). Also, according to P. Hrabovyi and L. Stavytska, it is difficult to separate youth slang from special slang, as young people actively use slangisms of drug addicts, computer users, and even criminal jargon, etc. L. Stavytska and P. Hrabovyi emphasize the metaphorical nature of both youth and computer slang, as semantic humor ... and behavior as a language game are vivid examples” (Stavytska, 2005:191; Hrabovyi, 2008). Almost unexplored remains “the problem of the existence of the so-called SMS-slang, which is actively developing and functioning among the teenage generation, and, in turn, should influence youth slang” (Hrabovyi, 2008). Thus, according to P. Hrabovyi, “youth slang as a complex linguistic formation, which is characterized by mobility and openness, actively interacts with other group slangs and subcodes. Youth slang appears as a certain accumulator of slang vocabulary from other language subcodes (Hrabovyi, 2008) and actively influences the development of the modern Ukrainian literary language. It should be noted that the most common means of replenishing slang are: terminology, borrowed foreign words, borrowings from criminal jargon, metaphorization, etc. (O. Romanova, I. Nikoliv, L. Stavytska, T. Tymoshchuk, V. Fursa, M. Makovskyi, S. Martos, etc.) Also, a large part of youth slang vocabulary consists of neologisms that are formed and changed along with changes in society. Thus, “slang”, being an open system, is constantly being replenished with new words that denote various changes in our society, are characterized by expressiveness, metaphoricality, wit, and even some vulgarization. According to L. Stavytska, the study of youth slang lexemes is relevant for linguistics, since “substandard vocabulary is changing, developing, and therefore it will always be relevant to study it ‘here and now...’ (Stavytska, 2005:345).

Let us consider computer slang and SMS slang, which are related to youth slang and are actively used in the vocabulary of modern youth. Computer slang is a heterogeneous phenomenon that “encompasses lexical items formed on the basis of the national language. These lexemes constitute the lexical and grammatical basis of slang; slang words and phrases that duplicate terms officially accepted in a special computer language and name something that has no officially accepted terminology” (Shchur, 2006). According to I. Shchur, “most often, stylistically neutral words in English acquire a functionally determined reduced stylistic color in the slang speech of computer users: roughly familiar, ironically dismissive, actually vernacular” (Shchur, 2006), which is very appealing to young people. “English words not only enter the computer slang, but also receive morphological formations in it, tend to be Ukrainized. Another researcher of youth slang, O. Potsulko, singles out the group of youth computer slang as a combination of youth slang and computer slang in general into one group. It can be said that youth computer slang is “a mediator between inter-jargon and the language practice of the people, the colloquial and everyday language of the general population” (Potsulko, 2017). As for another type of slang, SMS slang or Mobileslang, which is actively used by young people, it is a new linguistic phenomenon that has not yet been sufficiently studied in linguistics. Thus, in this paper we will follow P. Hrabovuyi’s definition of slang as a complex linguistic formation “characterized by mobility and openness, actively interacting with other group slangs and subcodes.” We will also conditionally include youth computer slang and SMS slang in the youth slang category, as young people actively use these types of slang in their speech, so it is difficult to clearly distinguish between these groups.

According to many researchers, the translation of English-language youth slang lexemes and related youth computer and SMS slang into Ukrainian is a complex process. The problem often lies in the delay in fixation and codification in modern dictionaries or the absence of these concepts. Another problem is the ambiguity of translation due to the expressiveness, metaphorical nature, and vulgarization of youth slangisms. Just as Ukrainian slangisms and English slangisms may be similar in their basic meaning, they may have different expressive colors or differences in usage in a particular context when translated. Another problem is the translation of non-equivalent vocabulary by finding a good match in the target language. According to Y. Nyzenko and N. Hryhorenko, “the first reason for the difficulties of adequate translation

of non-standard units of English into Ukrainian is the difference in the composition of lexical and semantic groups of words, although in general the direction of lexical and semantic variation of words in these languages coincides” (Nyzenko, 2012). The second reason is the divergence of pragmatic components of the meaning of words equivalent in their basic lexical and semantic variants, which causes the results of lexical and semantic variation of these words in English and Ukrainian to differ” (Nyzenko, 2012). International slangisms, according to researchers, are transmitted in translation by a calque and do not require additional interpretation, for example: bucks – “бакси”, rap – “реп”, уррпие – “яппи”.

The difficulty for the translator is posed by new words based on such units, as well as puns and their updated variants. For example, the word buck (buck, dollar) has become the basis of the megabucks, gigabucks, extrabucks, meaning “a big pile of money”, and the colloquial phrase to make/earn a quick/fast buck – “to get rich quickly” in the updated form to make/earn megabucks has the meaning “to earn fabulous money” (Nyzenko, 2012).

In general, most scholars use the following main methods when translating slang: transcription, transliteration, calquing, descriptive translation, direct translation, and approximate translation. However, according to Y. Nyzenko and N. Hryhorenko, it is most appropriate to use the following methods when translating youth slang: 1) searching for a non-standard unit of similar expressiveness in the Ukrainian language (when translating slangisms and vulgarisms); 2) using descriptive translation, interpretation and explanation of the subject-logical meaning (when translating jargonisms and argotisms). The researchers also clarify that “when it comes to the meaning of non-standard units in the original text and their transmission by certain units of the language into which the text is translated, one cannot, of course, ignore the context in which they appear in the original and should be in the translation” (Nyzenko, 2012).

Researcher of translation theory I. Byk identifies the following methods of translation that should be used when translating youth slang, namely: 1) an equivalent is a permanent equivalent to a certain word or phrase in another language..., it does not depend on the context (Byk, 2014); 2) an analogue is one of several possible synonyms..., it depends on the context (Byk, 2014); 3) explanatory or descriptive translation – an explanation of the word is used..., it is used when there is no equivalent or analogues... of the original (Byk, 2014). Let us turn directly to the ways of translating these lexemes. Let us first consider youth slang, then the slang of users of social

networks, various websites and forums, SMS slang, and youth computer slang related to youth subculture, since young people actively use modern IT and computer terminology in everyday life, resorting to abbreviations, metaphorization, reinterpretation, often vulgarization, using affixes of the Ukrainian language or direct inclusion.

In our opinion, the following methods of translation are the most appropriate: transliteration and transcription. In our opinion, this group is the most numerous of all the ways to translate youth slang. Examples: фейл – failure, (transliteration); ізі – easy, without problems (transliteration), хайп – sensation – (from English hype) (transliteration); лузер – loser, (transliteration), слайм – lick toy (transliteration), чіл – chill (from the English word chill out – “to relax”). A separate group consists of lexemes that are translated by means of transliteration and denote modern greetings in the field of youth slang: for example, Хай! (Hi!), окей (okay), сенкс (thanks), сорі (sorry), супер (super), файн (fine), кул (cool), крейзі (crazy). Names of software (Word, Google, Point); names of social networks, chats, forums, channels, online platforms, blogs, etc. (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, etc.), names of various computer games and related concepts (Dotcom, Counter-Strike, Tanks) are used in the youth slang.

Another common way to translate youth slang is to use the original spelling of the English word in the translated text, it is called direct translation. Another productive way of translating youth slang into English is calquing and abbreviation – replacing the constituent parts – morphemes or words (in the case of stable phrases) of the borrowed word (phrase) with their lexical equivalents in the target language). Ukrainian affixes, including suffixes, are used: – Suffixes -er, -ast: for example: hater is a hostile person, a lexeme formed from the word hate, chill (a calque, a verb formed from the word chill. Other translation methods are less commonly used: literal translation, equivalent, analog.

**Conclusion.** Thus, the active creation of new words in the national language, in particular by borrowing from other languages, most often English, by using transcription and transliteration, abbreviations, various types of abbreviations, calquing with the use of national affixes, direct inclusion, translation of an equivalent or search for its analogues, as well as the use of descriptive translation is currently a relevant and ambiguous trend in the study of slang in general and youth slang in particular in the modern Ukrainian language, which provokes a lot of research and scientific dissertations. This is evidenced by a significant number of studies on the topic of our

work. Youth slang is a vivid linguistic phenomenon that incorporates features of the vocabulary of other social groups, including SMS slang, computer slang, prison slang, etc. That is why we considered along with youth slang also SMS slang and youth computer slang, which arose due to the active use of computer vocabulary and various abbreviations from this sphere by young people.

In this paper, we have briefly investigated the problem of learning slang, youth slang, SMS slang and youth computer slang. It is the addition of English-language youth slang lexical items to the lexicon of the modern Ukrainian language that is currently a relevant and productive trend, since not only is the IT and computer sphere, science, and industry actively developing, but the process of globalization is taking place, which forms a “single” Internet language and the language of youth subculture, blurs the boundaries of national and international.

After analyzing the above-mentioned groups of lexemes, we found out that the most productive ways to translate youth slang and related groups are: transliteration, various types of calquing, abbreviation and various types of abbreviations and truncations, and direct translation. Less used are the selection of equivalents from the Ukrainian vocabulary, search for analogues, literal and descriptive translation, and metaphorization. It should also be noted that when using these translation methods, the authentic meaning may often be lost or acquire a different stylistic or lexical connotation, and certain expressiveness may be lost or gained, so it is imperative to take into account the context and national peculiarities of both the “donor language” and the recipient language. However, in general, we should note that the use of English-language youth slang lexemes and the process of finding their successful translation is a productive and relevant linguistic mechanism for replenishing the modern vocabulary of the Ukrainian language. It is young people who are almost the first to feel and adopt new trends and modern trends in society and actively transfer them to their speech and communication, thus enriching the informal layer of the lexicon of the modern Ukrainian literary language. However, this, on the other hand, complicates the process of communication between young people and other segments of the population. That is why the study, systematization and codification of English-language youth slang lexemes along with lexical items of other social groups contributes to the replenishment and enrichment of the lexical richness of the modern Ukrainian language in the process of studying the linguistic picture of a modern speaker.

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