

Y.V. Ponomarchuk, E.V. Leleka
Ural Federal University named after the first President of Russia B.N.
Yeltsin
Yekaterinburg, Russia

THE FEATURES AND TRANSLATION OF SLANG

Abstract: this article is about different approaches to the definition of slang. It also gives a classification of slang and transformations used in the translation of the novel «The Catcher in the Rye».

Key words: slang, classification of slang, youth slang, translation of slang, translation transformations.

The world today is developing very rapidly while language is constantly following its development. According to Eric Partridge, a linguist and slang dictionary compiler, «slang is as old as the world itself» [14]. Undoubtedly, people have always had the desire to revitalize speech, and so diversified it using figurative words. All languages without exception observe this similar tendency in live speech. Slang is an integral part of the English vocabulary.

In recent decades, a surge of interest in slang has been remarked. This is explained by the appearance of many youth TV shows, whose characters fill their speech with diverse slang expressions.

Slang has a vivid national, linguistic and social specifics, for which reason it is often used in literature for adding a certain figurative quality to the character.

The attitude to the question of using slang and its translation is rather ambiguous. In this regard, it would be interesting to consider the translation from English into Russian of slang expressions from the novel «The Catcher in the Rye» by Jerome David Salinger, an American classical writer of the twentieth century, one of the most famous and well-read authors in the world [15].

It is known that in the translation of 1965 made by Rita Rait - Kovaleva – the Soviet writer and translator (born April 19, 1898 in the village of Petrushevo, Kherson Oblast, [4]) – she largely omitted the «substandard» vocabulary.

As is known, three basic lexical-stylistic categories are distinguished: **book vocabulary** (which appears in the scientific, as well as in fiction, journalism or official business documents), **stylistically neutral vocabulary** (lacking an expressive marking) and **colloquial vocabulary** (specific to oral speech) [11]. The substandard vocabulary includes the following: slang, jargon, vulgarisms («rude words, which are not used by educated people in the society») [2].

We do not know when the word **slang** first appeared in oral English speech. While in writing, it is first discovered in England in the XVIII century in the sense of insult [9]. Since 1756, slang has acquired the meaning of low vulgar language. After 1802, it is defined as jargon of a certain social class or period. Approximately in 1850, this concept was used as a designation of the colloquial vocabulary [12]. Hence, originally slang was defined as the popular language specific to the common people.

E. Partridge, one of the major scholars of slang, gives slang the following definition: «very fragile, unstable, not codified, and often completely colloquial subjects of lexemes, reflecting the public consciousness of people belonging to a particular social or professional environment» [14]. In his opinion, the word slang is understood by many researchers as a synonym of jargon, argot or kent.

In modern linguistics there is no common opinion on the definition of the concepts of jargon and slang. You may find many definitions of slang, which are sometimes contradictory to each other.

The dictionary of American slang states that «American slang represents the words and expressions that are used by a relatively large part of the broad strata of the American people, or that are understandable to them, which are however not suitable for official use in speech in the opinion of the majority» [13].

I.V. Arnold describes slang as «a special, genetic, very heterogeneous layer of vocabulary and phraseology, which is common in colloquial speech and residing outside the limits of the literary norm». She also remarks that slang includes only «spoken words and expressions with a rude or playful emotional coloring» [1]. Obviously, I.V. Arnold does not take jargon and slang as two different phenomena.

Meanwhile, I.R. Galperin describes slang as «the layer of vocabulary and phraseology, which appears in the sphere of a live spoken language as colloquial neologisms, and easily translates into the layer of generally accepted spoken literary vocabulary» [5]. He delineates the concepts of

slang and jargon, representing jargon as a code system. Thence, slang is not a secret code. According to Galperin, slang has a wider prevalence.

It should be noted that there is such a phenomenon as **youth slang**, «a social dialect of people aged 13 to 30 years, which arose from opposing oneself not so much to the older generation as to the official system. It exists among urban youth students» [10].

Nowadays, almost everyone uses slang in everyday communication. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify certain types of slang that relate to a profession or society layer: student slang, political slang, medical slang, sports slang, etc.

But V.G. Vilyuman, suggested distinguishing [3]:

1. **Common slang**, which is a “social language microsystem relatively stable for a certain period, widespread and generally understood in common parlance” [12]. As a rule, these are evaluative and emotive words widely used in the colloquial language. Often they are used as synonyms for words and phrases that exist in literary language.

2. **Specific slang**, which is “a specific vocabulary and phraseology of social jargons; words of such a professional or class jargon” [8].

Specific slang includes [6]: argo, a «kind of password», very often defined as the language of the declassed society groups; professional dialects, a part of «professional vocabulary, mostly available only to representatives of certain professions». Over time, some of the vocabulary penetrates into the literary language; cant is a British criminal jargon.

In order to translate substandard vocabulary, one can use the same methods of translation as for translating literary vocabulary.

V.N. Komissarov distinguishes the following types of translation transformations [7]: lexical, grammatical, complex.

Translation transformations, most often used by R. Rite-Kovaleva in her translation are, as follows:

1. **Holistic transformation** is transforming a single word, and sometimes a whole sentence [7]. In this case the transformation does not concern separate elements, but the whole. For example, Now, *shut up*, Holden, *God damn it!* — *Замолчи*, Холден, тебе говорят, *черт подери*; I felt sorry *as hell* for him. — Мне стало вдруг его жалко *до чертиков*; He's drunk *as a bastard*. — Он пьян *в стельку*; I felt like *giving somebody a buzz*. — Хотелось кому-нибудь *звякнуть по телефону*; So long, *crum-bum*. — Ну, пока, *дурачок!*

2. **Zero transformation** is a translation method which replaces the structure of the source language with a similar structure of the target language [7]: Boy, was I *blind*. — Фу, я был *пьян*; The kid was *swell*. — А мальчишка был *мировой*.

3. **Omission**: What the *hellya* reading? — Что ты читаешь?; I took a hold of the belt at the back of her coat, just *for the hell of it*, but she wouldn't let me. — Я взялся за хлястик у нее на пальто, но она не позволила. She only signed out for nine-thirty, *for Chrissake*. — Она из-за своей глупости отпуск взяла только до половины десятого.

4. **Compensation** is replacing the non-transferable element of the source language with some other medium expressing the same information, allocated in the same place within the text as in the original or not [7]: They did not have too much *dough*. — *Денег* у них было *в обрез*; Finally, somebody knocked on the door...I had my suitcase right in the way and I fell over it and *damn near* broke my knee. — Наконец кто-то постучал, и я пошел открывать, но мой чемодан стоял на самой дороге, и я об него споткнулся и *грохнулся* так, что *чуть* не сломал ногу.

5. **Explication** (or descriptive translation): ...they all have these *Holy Joe* voices... —... голоса становятся *масленные, противные*; She had on those damn *falsies* that point all over the place... — У нее в *лифчик* что-то *подложено, чтобы торчало во все стороны*...

Thus, in the course of studying approaches to the definition of the **slang** concept, it has been established that this is a collection of argotic words, jargon word combinations, which are understandable to a fairly large group of native speakers. We found that there are several classifications of slang, which basically distinguish common slang and specific slang. Among the translational transformations, R. Rait-Kovaleva most often used the holistic transformation, compensation (which quite often allows for preserving the author's original style), omission (this transformation makes the expressions less emotional), zero transformation and explication. It can be concluded that in the Soviet era (because of censorship) frequent use of vulgarisms and slang was not allowed.

Ю.В. Пономарчук, Э.В. Лелека

Уральский федеральный университет имени первого Президента России Б.Н. Ельцина
Екатеринбург, Россия

ОСОБЕННОСТИ СЛЕНГА И ЕГО ПЕРЕВОД

Аннотация: в данной статье рассматриваются различные подходы к определению понятия сленг, дается классификация сленга, а также приводятся трансформации, использованные в переводе романа «Над пропастью во ржи».

Ключевые слова: сленг, классификация сленга, молодежный сленг, перевод сленга, переводческие трансформации.

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