

UDC 811.111

DOI <https://doi.org/10.32447/2663-340X-2023-14.8>

SOCIOLECTAL LINGUISTIC VARIABILITY AMONG CONTEMPORARY BRITISH YOUTH: COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

Lelet Iryna Oleksandrivna

Candidate of Philological Sciences,

Associate Professor at the Department "Philology"

Odessa National Maritime University

34, Mechnykova str., Odesa, Ukraine

The linguistic landscape of contemporary Britain is undergoing a dynamic transformation, particularly among its youth. This research delves into the complexities of sociolectal variation, exploring how social factors like age, ethnicity, and geographical location influence the language choices and communication styles of young Britons. The research acknowledges the presence of established British dialects like Cockney or Scouse. However, it emphasizes the emergence of new, dynamic sociolects shaped by various social and cultural influences. These include the growing influence of multilingualism, the rise of online communication, and the blending of regional and global trends. This comprehensive examination will explore various aspects of sociolectal variation: phonological features (analyzing the unique pronunciations, sound patterns, and intonation specific to different youth groups); lexical choices (examining the vocabulary specific to different groups, including slang terms, neologisms, and appropriation of language from other cultures); grammatical variations (investigating deviations from standard grammar commonly used by young people, such as reduced verb conjugations or non-standard sentence structures); discourse features (exploring the distinctive ways young people structure their conversations, use humor, and navigate different social contexts through language). The research will utilize various data collection methods, potentially including: sociolinguistic interviews (engaging with young people from diverse backgrounds to understand their language use and perceptions); corpus analysis (examining large datasets of online communication, such as social media posts or online forums, to identify patterns in language use); ethnographic observation (immersing oneself in the social contexts of different youth groups to observe their natural language use and interactions). By employing these methods, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the diverse and evolving linguistic landscape among contemporary British youth. It seeks to contribute to the ongoing dialogue about language change, social identity, and the dynamic nature of communication in the modern world.

Keywords: *multilingualism, phonological features, sound pattern, lexical choices, grammatical variations, discourse.*

Problem statement. Language is a characteristic and integral part of the culture of any nation. It is not only an act of interpersonal communication, which is a specific system of signs for communication, but it is also a record of what we see, feel, experience and think about. As a code passed down from generation to generation through education, communication with people, and hence the process of socialization, it not only consolidates the social experience, but determines the existence of man and determines the affiliation of the individual to this society. However, today's English, like any other language, is not something homogeneous, static and common across the UK – it is different. Despite the common name "English", it is represented by various regional and social dialects, which are in constant motion, development and interaction.

The **relevance** of this research work is that slang, argon and jargon are commonly used lexical items. The study of modern British youth slang is of

particular interest to teachers, translators, people who want to learn modern, not always literary language, which penetrates into English literature. Sociolect is an example of modern living language of youth.

The **aim** of the study is to investigate the linguistic variability of the sociolect of modern British youth.

Achieving this goal involves addressing the following **tasks**: to explore the concept of social dialect and its components (slang, argot and jargon); to determine the socio-cultural features of the linguistic picture of the world; to reveal the specifics of the features of the language consciousness of British youth; to analyze the variability of the sociolect of youth in Britain; to summarize the course work.

The **object** of the study is sociolect, namely slang, jargon and argon of modern youth in Britain.

The **subject** of the study is the variability of the sociolect and sociocultural features of the language consciousness of British youth.

The following **methods** are used in research: the elaboration of scientific sources that studied the issues of British slang and its variability; the linguomethodical analysis of the material; the methods of generalization, systematization, comparison were used; the method of continuous sampling was used – slang words and expressions that are found in the everyday life of British youth were selected from English dictionaries.

The presentation of the main material. The way a person speaks is an indicator of his social origin. To open up the issue of sociolects, one should first remember what a dialect is, and then define the difference between a social dialect and a dialect. It is also necessary to differentiate the social dialect from the regional dialect. Since we know that a dialect is a variety of language spoken in a certain geographical region, it is a natural variety of the base language that has characteristics that can identify the speaker with a region, an era, for example: American English, British English, etc. The term "sociolect" can be understood narrowly and broadly. In the narrow sense, sociolect is understood as an expressive or professional social variety, i.e. professional dialects, such as: student dialect, military dialect or criminal dialect. In turn, in a broad sense, sociolects are language varieties associated with social groups, such as class, social class, environment, and professional groups (Korzhova, 2013).

There are several conditions that must exist for a sociolect to arise: the existence of a social environment, the members of which are connected by strong intragroup ties; relative stability of the group; a strong sense of difference from other groups; continuity of traditions.

Sociolect is the variation of language between different social groups, while dialect is the variation of language from region to region. The main purpose of this research work is to talk about the sociolect: jargon, and slang.

Sociolinguistics is the relationship between language and society. This research development is carried out through linguistics, which interacts with other academic disciplines related to language, such as sociology, social psychology and anthropology. If we try to analyze language from a social point of view, we use all these connections. In linguistics, a sociolect is a type of language associated with a certain social group. This term comes from the morphemes "socio-", meaning social and "-lect", meaning variety of language. Examples of social groups with distinctive language use styles include those based on socioeconomic status, age, occupation, and gender (Mokaovskiy, 2000).

The relationship between language and social class has been the subject of many studies. There

is much evidence to support that members of different social classes use language differently. For example, in Great Britain there is a higher frequency of regional features in the speech of representatives of the lower social class. In other words, speakers of higher social classes are more likely to use standard English, and their speech tends to be closer to conventional pronunciation.

Perhaps the most noticeable difference in social groups of different ages is between the language of teenagers and the language of older members of the same community. Teenagers have a large and constantly changing lexicon of slang words and expressions. This vocabulary serves to strengthen their identity as a social group and separates them from older generations. Older generations have been found to use archaic or old-fashioned vocabulary that may not be widely used in English today.

In modern domestic and foreign sociolinguistics, various variants of the existence of language are studied: its literary form, separate functional-linguistic varieties, first of all colloquial speech, the language of mass media, as well as professional jargons, territorial and social dialects. The study of sociolectic forms involves the study of language in close connection with the individual's personality, his thinking, worldview, spiritual culture and practical activities. In this context, youth language is an important and promising field of linguistic and cultural research and analysis.

Sociolects of youth communities are a frequent subject of sociolinguistics research. The youth sociolect is open, like the entire linguistic system, willingly enriches itself with external means, uses phraseological means borrowed from other languages, and gives them new meanings (Matiello, 2008).

The terms used in the adolescent sociolect in relation to various spheres of life are expressive, humorous and witty, bringing a certain joke and ironic effect to the statement. They contain many harsh terms that express reluctance, disdain or contempt. An important element of communication is word connections, which, in addition to language play, contain conscious intentions to influence interaction in interactive relationships. They indicate such behavior as: insult, bullying, etc. Terms related to the emotional expression of certain spheres of life in the language of teenagers can arise as a result of a free combination of words, sometimes semantically and stylistically very distant. We are dealing with an intended game of meanings in a metaphor, the interpretation of which is related to the reference to the linguistic system of constant definitions contained in the

code, stereotyped phrases, common knowledge about the world or the so-called auxiliary theme that evokes meanings, contexts and a number of lexical connotations, known to the new, figurative use of words (Klymenko, 2000).

The language of young people is very creative, because young people create many new neologisms. They can be semantic, word-forming, lexical (for example, borrowings) or phraseological. Interesting forms created by young people very often also arise as a result of reverse derivation (Korzhova, 2013).

Characteristic features of youth communication are a relaxed, informal, humorous tone of communication, a high degree of emotionality, a desire for non-standard self-expression, which is characteristic of this age group. The need to demonstrate one's belonging to a given subculture and at the same time not belonging to other subcultures, which to varying degrees is characteristic of representatives of any social formations, leads to the development of a certain set of identifying signs. These are not only external signs – clothing accessories, hairstyles, tattoos, and the language of this subculture. In the youth sphere of communication, it is not the desire to make the language secret, but the idea of contrasting one's morality, one's ideals, one's way of thinking and one's behavior to the world of adults, to generally accepted social models. English youth language is imbued with expressiveness. If in the colloquial speech of the older generation the expressive function is not dominant, but only secondary, then in the speech of the youth it dominates (Vylilian, 2005).

Another feature of modern youth language is the frequently used profanity which appears in the utterances of young people as a very high degree of expressivism. They are used not only to offend the interlocutor, but also to relieve tension and stress.

Youth slang is not only a reflection of how students say what they think, but it also shows how they relate to school, teachers and peers. Most of them perceive school as an unpleasant compulsion. Most of the negative emotions used by students refer to teachers, as there are no terms that indicate a student's hierarchical subordination. Students who are in a very good relationship with their friends express their emotions using the terms: dude, mate, fella, and in bad ones: wanker, sloven. The youth environment is also characterized by a specific attitude of students to appearance, which is also reflected in the vocabulary they use. Fashionably dressed people are described as: styling, doll, ideal or negative as wallpaper, catwalk, fashion show. In turn, neglected people are called Summing up

this brief analysis of youth slang, we can clearly say that emotions play a huge role in it, which also have their own terms, for example, joy: chuffed; fear: sadness : gutted, dump squib, knackered. On the basis of the above considerations, a specific linguistic image of the world emerges, which young people perceive either positively or negatively with great emotionality.

Sociolinguistic parameters of youth language are: age criterion (schoolchildren, students, etc.), social affiliation (type of activity), territorial feature (city, suburbs), gender criterion and level of education. The most important qualities of youth, in addition to age, are also: social qualities (the process of socialization - the formation of a personality and inclusion in the material and spiritual life of society); psychological features (need for friends and collective forms of activity, desire for self-affirmation); cultural signs (creating one's own sociocultural space, contrasting one's culture with the culture of adults) (Zatsnyi, 1998).

It is worth emphasizing that the sociolect should be used only in the environment of the people it concerns, otherwise you will have to observe a misunderstanding of your speech.

English slang can be found in every movie or series we watch in the original. This is why it is sometimes so difficult to understand what the characters are talking about when we are not familiar with English slang. Learning English slang, unless you live abroad, is not easy - we can learn it from the Internet or from movies, but slang, depending on the region, can also be different. Unfortunately, we won't find many books for studying slang, as it is an example of a living language that changes – some of the slang expressions that were used 10 years ago are not in fashion today. In turn, thanks to the Internet, many new slang terms are constantly being created. Knowing American slang will allow us to understand spoken language and also help us express ourselves more naturally in English (Balabin, 2002).

Studying the specific features of its lexical enrichment, determining the productivity of various means of replenishing its vocabulary, and identifying the relationship between different ways of word formation are of great importance for the characteristics of youth speech. Youth sociolect is one of the spheres of emergence and the most active channel for the spread of language innovations: lexical, phraseological. It manifests itself not only in the replenishment of the vocabulary of the language, in the appearance of new words and new meanings, but also in the change of the semantic structure of the word and its volume.

Conclusions. The research work highlights the functions of sociolects in English-language media discourse. Different types of sociolects are considered and the most effective ways of their translation of the relevant language units into Ukrainian are demonstrated. The results of the study suggest that youth language interacts with other types of language, which, in addition to vernacular, professional and social jargon, includes slang, from which the bearers of youth sociolect borrow tokens to replenish their vocabulary. A significant role in the system of basic nomination methods in the creation of a formally new

nominative unit plays a role in the youth sociolect. Thus, word formation in youth language performs its own nominative and emotionally expressive functions (generation of bright, figurative words, many of which are expressive modifications of neutral literary and colloquial words). Thus, expressiveness is one of the most important distinctive features of youth language.

A crucial role in the development of youth vocabulary is played by the desire for language economy, which finds its expression in increasing the number of abbreviated units.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Алікберов В. І. Сленг та переклад. К.: Лілея, 2000. 32 с.
2. Балабін В. В. Сучасний американський сленг як проблема перекладу. К.: Логос, 2002. 313 с.
3. Вилюман В. Г. Про способи утворення слів сленгу в сучасній англійській мові. Львів: ЛНУ, 2005. 240 с.
4. Зацний Ю. А. Розвиток словникового складу сучасної англійської мови. Запоріжжя: Запорізький держ. ун-т, 1998. 430 с.
5. Клименко О. Л. Поповнення словникового складу англійської мови з нелітературних підсистем. Харків: 2000. 20 с.
6. Коржова Є. О.: Функціонування молодіжного сленгу сучасної англійської мови. Суми: СумДУ, 2013. 100 с.
7. Маковський М. М. Мовна сутність сучасного англійського сленгу. Вінниця: Нова книга, 2000. 160 с.
8. Mattiello E. An Introduction to English Slang: A description of its Morphology, Semantics and Sociology. Monza: Polimetrica, 2008. 250 p.
9. Partridge E. A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English. Partridge, Eric Beale, Paul. London, 2002. 382 p.

REFERENCES

1. Alikbierov, V. I. (2000). Slenh ta pereklad. [Slang and Translation]. K.: Lileia. [in Ukrainian]
2. Balabin, V. V. (2002). Suchasnyi amerykanskiy slenkh yak problema perekladu. [Modern American Slang as the Problem of Translation]. K.: Lohos. [in Ukrainian]
3. Klymenko, O. L. (2000). Popovnennia slovnykovoho skladu anhliiskoi movy z neliteraturnykh pidsystem. [Enlargement of English vocabulary from non-literary subsystems]. Kharkiv. [in Ukrainian]
4. Korzhova, Ye. O. (2013). Funktsionuvannia molodizhnoho slenhu suchasnoi anhliiskoi movy. [Functioning of Youth Slang of Modern English Language]. Sumy: SumDU. [in Ukrainian]
5. Makovskyi, M. M. (2000). Movna sutnist suchasnoho anhliiskoho slenhu. [Language Characteristics of Modern English Slang]. Vinnytsia: Nova knyha. [in Ukrainian]
6. Mattiello, E. (2008). An Introduction to English Slang: A description of its Morphology, Semantics and Sociology. Monza: Polimetrica.
7. Partridge, E. (2002). A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English. Partridge, Eric Beale, Paul. London.
8. Vyliuman, V. H. (2005). Pro sposoby utvorennia sliv slenhu v suchasni anhliiskii movi. [About the ways of building slang words in Modern English]. Lviv: LNU. [in Ukrainian]
9. Zatsnyi, Yu. A. (1998). Rozvytok slovnykovoho skladu suchasnoi anhliiskoi movy. [The development of lexical content of Modern English]. Zaporizhzhia: Zaporizkyi derzh. un-t. [in Ukrainian]

СОЦІОЛЕКТНА МОВНА ВАРІАТИВНІСТЬ СУЧАСНОЇ БРИТАНСЬКОЇ МОЛОДІ: КОМПЛЕКСНЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ

Лелет Ірина Олександрівна

кандидат філологічних наук,
доцент кафедри "Філологія"

Одеського національного морського університету
вул. Мечникова, 34, Одеса, Україна

Мовний ландшафт сучасної Британії зазнає динамічної трансформації, особливо серед молоді. Це дослідження заглиблюється у складнощі соціолектної варіативності, вивчаючи, як соціальні фактори, такі як вік, етнічна приналежність та географічне розташування, впливають на мовний вибір та стилі спілкування молодих британців. Однак воно підкреслює появу нових, динамічних соціолектів, сформованих під впливом різних соціальних і культурних чинників. Серед них зростаючий вплив багатомовності, розвиток онлайн-комунікації та поєднання регіональних і глобальних тенденцій. У цьому комплексному дослідженні будуть розглянуті різні аспекти соціолектної варіативності: фонологічні особливості (аналіз унікальної вимови, звукових моделей та інтонації, характерних для різних молодіжних груп); лексичний вибір (вивчення лексики, характерної для різних груп, включаючи сленгові терміни, неологізми та запозичення з інших культур); граматичні варіації (дослідження відхилень від стандартної граматики, яку зазвичай використовує молодь, наприклад, скорочені дієвідміни дієслів або нестандартні структури речень); особливості дискурсу (вивчення особливостей побудови молодими людьми своїх розмов, використання гумору та навігації в різних соціальних контекстах за допомогою мови). У дослідженні будуть використані різні методи збору даних, зокрема: соціолінгвістичні інтерв'ю (інтерв'ю з молодими людьми різного походження, щоб зрозуміти, як вони використовують і сприймають мову); корпусний аналіз (вивчення великих масивів даних онлайн-комунікації, таких як пости в соціальних мережах або онлайн-форуми, щоб виявити закономірності у використанні мови); етнографічне спостереження (занурення в соціальний контекст різних молодіжних груп, щоб побачити, як вони використовують природну мову і як взаємодіють між собою). Використовуючи ці методи, дослідження має на меті забезпечити комплексне розуміння різноманітного мовного ландшафту сучасної британської молоді, який постійно розвивається. Воно має на меті зробити внесок у постійний діалог про мовні зміни, соціальну ідентичність та динамічний характер комунікації в сучасному світі.

Ключові слова: багатомовність, фонологічні особливості, звукова модель, лексичний вибір, граматичні варіації, дискурс.