

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18454/RULB.2021.25.1.31>**МОТИВИРОВАННОСТЬ АРГО (НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ РУССКОГО И АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКОВ)**

Научная статья

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Аннотация

Статья посвящена исследованию мотивированности русского и английского арго на материале соматической лексики. В ходе исследования выявлены типы мотивированности, преобладающей в рамках данного пласта лексики, определены компоненты-соматизмы, характерные для каждой из подсистем языков (нога, рука, голова, волосы, глаза, нос, уши, рот, лицо, пальцы, мозг). Результаты показали, что соматизмы активно участвуют в деривационных процессах обоих языков. Было определено, что в русском и английском арго наблюдается высокая частотность употребления арготизмов с компонентами нога, рука и голова. Также компоненты-соматизмы активно участвуют в создании длинных синонимических рядов, что подтверждает антропоцентричность мировоззрения представителей преступного мира.

Ключевые слова: арго, арготизм, мотивация, соматизм, соматический код, криминальная субкультура.

MOTIVATION OF THE ARGOT (ON THE MATERIAL OF THE RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES)

Research article

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of the motivation of the Russian and English argot on the material of somatic vocabulary. During the investigation, the types of motivation that prevail within this layer of the vocabulary were identified, the somatic components (foot, hand, head, hair, eyes, nose, ears, mouth, face, fingers, brain), characterizing each of the language subsystems, were revealed. The results showed that somatisms are actively involved in the derivational processes of both languages. It was determined that in the Russian and English argot there is a high frequency of the use of argotic units with such components as leg, hand and head. Also, somatic components are actively involved in the creation of long synonymic chains which confirms the anthropocentric worldview of the representatives of the underworld.

Keywords: argot, argotic unit, motivation, somatism, somatic code, criminal subculture.

Introduction

Comparative analysis of substandard systems of languages of different structures, such as Russian and English, is of considerable interest, since lexical units, belonging to them, accumulate various facts of subcultures, reflect specific phenomena, features of the worldview and mentality of linguistic communities. In the substandard vocabulary, including argot, the uniqueness of the way of life and culture of the particular people is clearly manifested.

Being an evolving system, argot constantly enriches its vocabulary, conceptualizing the knowledge of representatives of the criminal subculture. Due to the anthropocentric nature of argot, the names of body parts play an important role in the conceptualization of a person's experience. Modern studies show that it is the part of the vocabulary related to the ancient layer of the language that is widely used to create words with abstract semantics and is actively involved in derivational processes [1], [2], [3], [7].

The purpose of the research is to examine the specifics of the motivation of Russian and English argotic units on the basis of somatisms. To achieve it we used the dictionaries of argot: Grachev M.A. "Dictionary of the Thousand-Year Russian Slang" [4] and T. Danzell "The Concise New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English" [8].

Method

Over 600 relevant examples of somatisms were collected on the basis of the argot dictionaries of the Russian and English languages by using the method of continuous sampling. To determine their motivation and to classify them, semantic analysis, as well as comparative analysis was used.

Discussion

The problem of reflecting reality in language is the basis for studying the motivation of a derivative word [5]. Motivation clearly expresses the main epistemological function of the word – the linguistic fixation of knowledge. In addition, motivation introduces the name into the language system as a linguistic unit. Motivation develops a linguistic unit and actualizes it in the process of functioning [10, P. 291].

Motivation is understood as the relationship between the signified and the signifier in a linguistic sign or the relationship between signs, explaining the use of a sign as a name for some entity [9].

It should be noted that the prevailing number of argotic units have a certain motivation. The stimulus for updating the argotic vocabulary is the emergence of realia for which there is no special name in the language and the obsolescence of an argotic unit or its transition to other categories of the vocabulary, for example, slang and then even standard language.

Language nomination is based on the choice of a feature that explains the name. This feature is called motivating. The specificity of argot, used within the criminal subculture, is achieved by the choice of special features that characterize the phenomena of the surrounding reality [6]. The choice of a motivating feature is an extra-linguistic aspect, associated with the cognitive activity of a representative of the criminal world.

There are three types of motivation in linguistics:

phonological,
structural,
semantic [10, P. 297].

Phonetic motivation is practically not inherent in the argot of the languages under consideration. In Russian and English argot, lexemes of the literary layer, based on onomatopoeia, are rethought and receive new designations. For example, Russian argotic unit *кукушка* means an *informant* (arg. *куковать*, i.e. to make the sounds of a cuckoo; figurative meaning is to inform) or the English lexeme *boo-yakka* means to *shoot* (the imitation of the sounds of a shot). However, the examples given are motivated not only phonetically, but also semantically.

Most argotic units are structurally or semantically motivated. In this regard, the category of argotic somatic units /units with a somatic component is especially representative. By somatism we understand the name of the parts of the human body. This type of vocabulary belongs to the most ancient layer of language and is distinguished by a high frequency of use, lots of connotative meanings, and high word-forming productivity. For example, *руки в гору* – raise your hands up, *an eye* – a passport; *brain surgeon* – a poker player who over-analyzes every situation, *button your lip* – to stop talking.

Obviously, for all languages of the world, the somatic code of culture is recognized as universal, which is explained by the desire of a person to discover the world around him, projecting onto him and society the specifics of the structure of his own body and the functional characteristics of its parts. It is essential for a man to correlate his orientation in space and the assessment of the environment with parts of his body. However, the proportion of the somatic cultural code among different peoples is nationally and culturally determined.

Results

The results of the research are given in the table below.

Table 1 – Frequency of usage of argotic units with somatic component

Somatism	Number, Russian argot	Number, English argot
leg	50	45
hand	45	51
head	44	39
hair	37	18
eyes	29	34
nose	27	26
ears	27	18
mouth	21	25
face	15	12
fingers/toes	13	33
brain	7	31

The study of argotic units with somatism revealed the following body parts that act as the nuclear components of words and set expressions of the somatic linguocultural code: **leg**: *делать ноги* – to run away/ *dead-leg* – a useless person; **hand**: *рукопашиничать* – to misbehave / *chalk hand* – in poker, a hand that is almost certain to win; **head**: *голову на рукомоиник* – to stab smb./ *old head* – an older prisoner; **hair**: *волосатик* – a suspicious for professional criminals person, who communicates with them/ *hairbagger* – an experienced police officer; **eyes**: *глаз мутный* – an informan/ *eye in the sky* – a police helicopter; **nose**: *носонырка* – a face/ *freeze your nose* – to use cocaine; **ears**: *дать по ушам* – to hit hard/ *on the earie* – alert, informed; **mouth**: *палец в рот* – not a sound!/ *cotton mouth* – a dryness of the mouth as a result of smoking marijuana; **face**: *вывернуть на лицо* – to commit a crime/ *bagel face* – a Jewish person; **fingers/toes**: *гнуть пальцы* – to behave like an experienced criminal/ *stiff-toe gang* – the dead, *finger a collar* – to make an arrest; **brain**: *коптить мозги* – to lie/ *brain screw* – a prison psychological counselor.

The examples show that users of the Russian and English argot, most often appeal to the images of the legs, hands or a head. The least frequent in the Russian argot are the units with somatism *brain*, however, in English, on the contrary, this somatism is productive. Somatism *face* is rarely used in the English argot. Also, in addition to the examples listed in the table, we noted somatisms denoting *heart, bones, skin, back, tongue, genitals*, but to a much lesser extent.

Somatic components are a strong motivating basis for argotic units that characterize a person. The importance of the head as a part of the human body that contains the brain, organs of vision, smell and hearing is manifested in a significant number of the argotic units with components-somatisms (hair, eye, nose, ear), both in the Russian and English argot.

The component “*head*” is used to characterize a person in both languages. The lexeme “head” itself is a part of combinations of different structures and lexical and semantic features. At the same time, it is mainly used to convey the concept of “mental activity”. Thus, argotic units can denote the mental abilities of a person: *голова фанерная* – a stupid person or *масло в голове* – an intelligent person. In the above-mentioned examples, the figurative meanings of argotic units are realized, i.e. there is a comparison of the head with a “tree”, an object without feelings and the mind, or a receptacle of the mind.

In the English language, the argotic units with somatism *head* are used to convey certain states of a person: *juicehead* – an alcoholic, *debthead* – a prisoner who is continually in debt. These units have a similar structure (a combination of conventional “juice” (reinterpreted in argot as alcohol) or “debt” with *head* (a person considered as a single attribute), which allows us to deduce the figurative meaning.

It should be mentioned that a specific characteristic of argotic units with a somatic component of both languages is the synonymic chains: *делать ноги/ вставлять ноги/ рисовать ноги* – to run away; *cottonhead/ crackhead/ cube head* – a drug addict.

Conclusion

The research has shown that argotic units, which include somatisms, reflect the specifics of the worldview of representatives of the underworld due to a wide range of images embedded in their internal form. Thus, motivational relationships in argot are realized. The most common somatisms in both languages are *leg, hand, head, hair, eyes, nose, ears, mouth, face, fingers, brain*. They are part of argotic units, which can be different in their structure and lexical and semantic content and, due to rethinking, are actively involved in the formation of new units. A large number of lexemes with somatisms testifies to the anthropocentric worldview of representatives of the criminal subculture.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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