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Cultural codes of slang

Abstract

In recent decades, non-codified language, particularly slang, has been an attractive subject of linguistic research as far as at present, it is becoming a part of the cultural code of an entire nation. This article aims to examine the linguocultural role of slang units manifested in speech. The total of 100 slang tokens were chosen as the material for the study, they were randomly selected from dictionaries of social dialects. The National Corpus of the Russian Language was taken as the source of contexts for the tokens. As a result, for 56 slangisms out of 100, the contexts were found reflecting the functional load of the tokens. The paper describes the most significant examples from fiction and journalistic texts in terms of representing cultural codes. Contextual analysis has shown that slangisms conditioned by the subcultural environment act as markers of interests, intellectual abilities and indicators of the social level of the Speaker. The examples also indicate that aggressiveness and increased expressiveness of the slang units enable the speakers to represent themselves, to affiliate themselves with the system of life values and those cultural universals that define society. Consequently, the main cultural codes of slangisms are precisely the code of self-expression and the code of social adaptation.

Keywords: slang, cultural code, culture, expression, speech

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