

## SUBSTANDARD FORM AS A CULTURAL CODE: FROM NEWSPAPER DISCOURSE TO FICTION TEXT

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*Abstract.* This article describes a complex approach to the study of substandard forms as a special ethnocultural code of the Russian language on the material of newspaper and fiction (poetic) authored discourse. Substandard vocabulary enriches the communication system and facilitates the development of the linguistic and cultural space. The lexical units under study are not static; they pass over from one set into another, functioning not only as elements of imagery but also as a means of coding historical and everyday social events. The dynamic nature of these language forms has influenced the choice of practical research material: newspaper and authored (fiction) discourse. This thesis determines the urgency of this study.

Linguo-culturological analysis of the lexicographic inventory of newspaper and fiction texts makes it possible to identify conceptual projections and semiotic diffusion, contributing to doubled expressiveness, aesthetic choice, and axiological marking of substandard vocabulary. The aim of the study is to establish the relationship between the form and contextual realization of the lexical units in question, which constitute a special cultural code that ensures semantic stability and molds the general linguistic and a specific authored worldview. The research results corroborate the hypothesis about the dynamic nature of substandard vocabulary via register switching, indicating the culturally determined mechanisms of linguistic evolution.

*Keywords:* *substandard* vocabulary; linguocultural dynamics; cultural code; fiction discourse; newspaper discourse

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## СУБСТАНДАРТ КАК КУЛЬТУРНЫЙ КОД: ОТ ГАЗЕТНОГО ДИСКУРСА К ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОМУ ТЕКСТУ

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*Аннотация.* Предпринимается попытка комплексного изучения субстандартных форм как особого этнокультурного кода русского языка на материале газетного и авторского (поэтического) дискурса. Субстандартная лексика обогащает коммуникативную систему и способствует развитию языкового и культурного пространства. Рассматриваемые лексические единицы – не статичны, они переходят из одного регистра в другой, выступая не только элементом образности, но и способом кодирования исторических

и социально-бытовых реалий. Динамичность данных языковых форм обуславливает выбор материала исследования: газетного и авторского (художественного) дискурса. Данный тезис определяет актуальность настоящего исследования.

Лингвокультурологический анализ лексикографического инвентаря в газетном и художественном тексте позволяет установить концептуальные проекции и семиотическую диффузность, способствующие двойной выразительности, эстетическому выбору и аксиологической маркировке субстандартной лексики. Целью исследования является установление связи между формой и контекстуальной реализацией данных лексических единиц, являющихся особым культурным кодом, обеспечивающим смысловую устойчивость и определяющим общезыковое и авторское мировидение. Полученные результаты подтверждают нашу гипотезу о динамическом характере субстандарта, когда переключение регистров выступает культурно детерминированным механизмом языковой эволюции.

**Ключевые слова:** субстандартная лексика; лингвокультурная динамика; культурный код; литературный дискурс; газетный дискурс

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## 1. Introduction

This article focuses on the study of Russian substandard forms within the issue of their register-switching and functioning. We assert that substandard forms are not uni-dimensional operational elements when considered in communal and individual discourse varieties. We conduct the research regarding literary texts as an individual discourse variety, while newspaper texts constitute communal discourse and dictionary data makes the linguistic background for identifying the general principle of substandard forms' existence in a language and can be treated as communal language variety.

The study of the colloquial layer of vocabulary in some type of discourse provides the opportunity to decode most salient metaphorical groundings and new interpretations of culturally determined national features. Common language forms allow the reconstruction of significant conceptual domains within and across languages and cultures. They do not only encode the specifics of linguistic organization, but their semantics reflects historical and social processes, fixes and transmits cultural models. Using the resources of vernacular language, authors create a special system of images, a kind of illusion of 'live communication' with readers. These elements make an adaptive system that organizes itself as a result of collaboration with the new environment as a way to comply with its requirements.

We assume that common language forms as part of everyday life act as a mechanism that

transfers the fixed hierarchy of stylistic registers into overlapping fields and promotes diffusion and convergence of standard and substandard language varieties. From this standpoint, we are observing substandard forms typical of the Russian communal discourse penetrating literary discourse and ensuring expressiveness of individual poetic diction by reference to the Russian translations of famous Scottish poets Robert Fergusson and Robert Burns.

The aim of the current research is to identify conceptual projections, semiotic complexity, and cultural specificity of common language forms functioning as an aesthetic linguistic code in individual artistic and communal discourses. The study bares the analytical traits of both compliance with a linguistic norm and stylistic appropriation of function with an individual or communal discourse varieties. The comparative stylistics scope of this research concerns the areas of sociolinguistics, cognitive semantics, and modeling. We implement the continuous sampling analysis to extract the empirical data from The Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language edited by S. I. Ozhegov and N. Yu. Shvedova (1999). Dictionary data is the authentic space that embodies original semantic and structural models of substandard elements and forms the basis for identifying their semantic, linguo-cultural, and stylistic peculiarities in the Russian language. We associate the newspaper style with communal discourse variety and employ it as a source for applying the semantic method based on the

principle of using dictionary interpretations in establishing semantic relationships of words used and the method of cognitive modeling to structure common word figurative potential. The search tools of The National Corpus of the Russian Language serve the purpose of providing everyday context from such quality periodicals as *Trud* (T), *Komsomolskaja Pravda* (KP), and *Izvestija* (I), the three giving authoritative insight on international news, advocating the principles of data relevance and credibility. These editions being the means of shaping people's thinking and ways of life do not typically associate with the usage of stylistically low vocabulary register. Therefore, the application of substandard forms here realizes a supplementary double expressive function. Finally, we survey Russian translations of Robert Fergusson's and Robert Burns's poems in order to reveal the potential of substandard forms to render another language cultural codes through the transmission mechanism of stylistic register interchange with common language forms being totally alien for literary (especially poetic) texts.

Thus, considering the ways of semantic and Russian language inter-register interpretation of colloquial and substandard vocabulary is undoubtedly relevant. The same language forms marked as substandard or colloquial in the dictionary smoothly penetrate through registers pervading newspaper and literary discourses, thus acting as codes between discourse and extra-linguistic reality. A dictionary being an impartial source of language and culture equalizes people and a community. At the same time utilized by newspaper or poetic discourses common language forms serve as patterns that are purposefully employed to express biased attitude that resides in derogatory or ironic vision of basic values, symbols, traditions of the Russian community from history to present day.

## 2. Theoretical background

Baudouin de Courtenay's idea on territorial and social language stratification gave impetus for further linguistic research on a language community that can be rather heterogeneous involving several varieties like regional and social dialects, styles, registers, idiolects, diglossia, and code-switching [Chomsky 1965; Bell 1976; Lyons 1981; Mukařovský 2014; Stell & Yakpo 2015]. They

all exist as a dialect (a sociolect, an idiolect) and the standard language correlation types [Van Coetsem 1992].

Choosing substandard forms as a subject matter of the present research, we can turn to a spectrum of ideas. Firstly, it is worth noting that scientists make inventories of these forms, compile dictionaries. Secondly, within the functional focus colloquial constructions characterize a certain sphere and particular users, for example urban substandard speech or online discourse [Crystal 2003] etc. Thirdly, common language forms are to comply with the norm. Although at this point there are various discussions on whether substandard words are part and feature of language development, or users are to avoid them as the ones not being standardized. Moreover, colloquialisms have a special stylistic potential that enables them to perform emotive, expressive, or evaluative functions. Thus, 'the study of linguistic and stylistic switches in discourse provides important clues as to the interactive functions of switching in variety usage in conversations, narrations, and other types of discourse' [Hartmann 1995: 161].

The present research focuses on the issue of vertical division within a language that traditionally gained consideration by A. Meillet, Ch. Bally, V. Mathesius, B. Havránek, E. Sapir, J. R. Firth, E. D. Polivanov, B. A. Larin, V. M. Zhirmunsky, M. N. Peterson, V. V. Vinogradoff, G. O. Vinokur, etc. Turning to functional styles in general and vocabulary registers in particular, researchers [Leech 2008; Losev 2009; Vachek 2014] maintain the idea of operating the five varieties: exquisite (addressing God), high flown (literary works), standard (formal discourse), colloquial (everyday communication), and substandard (addressing oneself) [Losev 2009: 315]. However, in recent decades the exquisite style has disappeared from everyday life contexts, with the high flown having contaminated with the standard, while the substandard performs the function of everyday intercourse [Verbitska 1993: 28]. Thus, there takes place a kind of cultural adaptation of figurative elements through common language forms in newspaper and literary texts.

If in relation to language as a whole the question of the literary norm formation and its development through the replacement by the

colloquial norm is rather debatable, then in the poetic discourse, the problem cannot be simply reduced to the opposition of common language and literary forms. We rather can describe this system in terms of modeling. The contemporary cognitive stylistics framework [Tsur 1992; Stockwell 2002] enhances the postulates on functional styles by Prague Linguistic Circle (V. Mathesius, R. Jakobson, J. Mukařovský, J. Vachek, R. Wellek), Russian Formalism (B. Eichenbaum, V. Propp, B. Tomashevsky), and, for instance, Halliday MAK (1989), thus, providing a model-centered approach [Lakoff & Johnson 2003] to the study of figurative implications of both authors and recipients.

Given that cognitive mechanisms are universal, substandard forms turn into specific means that designate the individual choice of elements, determine the thinking process, characterize speech, and foreground more conscious and expressive stances closely linked to a mythological, naïve, commonplace, or vernacular outlook. These linguistic units encode the perception of the world around becoming characteristics not of a certain social group, but rather of a certain communicative situation (creating aesthetic effects) [Lotman 2000: 620]. They do not only have a role in aesthetic design of artistic space, but also fulfil the function of guiding the semiosis generated by the co-evolution and co-existence of people, culture, and community. Being a cultural and a linguistic challenge themselves common language forms continuously adapt to social encounters. This enables community to employ them in a variety of signifying practices in specific social and cultural settings. In this regard, we propose to consider low-colloquial speech elements as multi-codal mechanisms of culture with certain semiotic resources that possess grounds for cognitive modeling described through the target and the source domains. The denotative paradigm undergoes figurative, ironic, and allegorical transformations with speakers choosing variants in a dynamic population-based process of meaning formation. Still, the sense does not alter completely, however their semantics is far from the direct subject matter. The expressive potential of a substandard form acquires metaphorical or metonymic images that represent a cultural code.

Basing on this assumption, we study the common cultural code in the language and literary text from various language and discourse perspectives. Common language forms realize the potential of the cultural code by means of the socio-cultural aspect of the communicative competence of speech actors that is within and across linguistic and cultural contexts. We cannot but acknowledge that the use of the system of substandard forms nowadays is the question ambiguously interpreted by the scientists. Common language forms are opposed to literary norm, being, on the one hand, the phenomenon, which is practically extinct, used in the situation of informal communication (the speech of an educated person should be free from common linguistic elements), and, on the other hand – a way to create a specific ironic or distancing psychological, emotional, and stylistic effect and accentuation in real speech and translation.

Intra- and inter-linguistic usage of common language forms is either a special model for creating emotiveness or a simplifying language tool, switching the stylistic register of the text. In use and interpretation, a lot depends on the author's intention, the target audience, the talent of the author [Lotman 2002], because feeling for the language does not imply merely rejecting a word or phrase one considers tasteless, but the idea of proportion and appropriateness [Pushkin 1962: 15]. The replacement of high-flown speech with standard and sometimes colloquial (for example, that of the politicians) raises serious concerns, but perhaps it is inherent in language development.

In this regard, linguistic complexity of, for instance, Robert Fergusson's and Robert Burns's poetry (the poets' multilingualism) instigates Russian translators to apply common language forms, and it is this combination of colloquial and bookish styles that gives the translations (by V. Fedotov, S. Marshak, E. Feldman) specificity and expressiveness. The colloquial nature of the poets' language, their rough style [Hecht 1981; Smith 2007; Broadhead 2014] is traced in the choice of collocations and figurative means that result in imaginative inter-linguistic reconceptualization. Here the words and expressions of the familiar colloquial register, sometimes even vernacular forms are foregrounded. In the Russian interpretations

they are mostly rendered by substandard forms and in recent translations even appealing to prison jargon. At the same time, the early translations of Robert Fergusson's and Robert Burns's poetry into the Russian language are characterized by such stylistic modifications as the replacement of colloquial lexemes with neutral and even bookish words. Even in those cases when vulgarisms of the original text are translated with an appropriate common language element, these equivalents sound more bookish than the initial construction.

Thus, the present research considers a substandard form to be a kind of a semiotic mechanism integrating cognition and social interaction. Prototypical and situational cognitive models compress the semantic potential of lexical concepts and activate different sorts of knowledge in common language nominations. Conceptual projection derives from the intention of the speaker who perceives the reality and has a cognitive image of it to self-express and create a vivid picture highlighting the imagery and the emotional component of their values. This research encompasses the Russian language lexicographic material and its actualization in newspaper and poetic translations.

### 3. Empirical Data

The empirical data, that we research, comprise three levels of study: the study of dictionary data as common language variety, the discourse analysis of newspaper evidence being common discourse variety, and the literary insight into the Russian language Fergusson's and Burns's poetic translations as an individual discourse variety.

The interaction of world knowledge and language semantics scales accumulated social experience as a fixed reflection of the lexical system of a language in a dictionary. Common language forms mirror practically every fragment of reality; thus, they can be described as a separate semantic landscape filled with various nominations from simplified units for space and time parameters used in everyday speech to stylistically (emotively, expressively, or evaluatively) marked ones. Knowledge and experience allow an individual to associatively and interpretatively process language segments and emotionally reflect on oneself, subjects, objects, phenomena, relations, characteristics,

actions, and functions that develop through specific cognitive models. Common language forms employ existing inventory, which acquire expressive pejorative shades ranging from familiarity to brutality and have neutral synonyms in literary language (sharakhnut' (colloquial for 'to strike'), drykhnut' (to sleep sluggishly and immoderately), drapanut' colloquial for 'to run away'), as well as other ways of figurative and descriptive nomination of realia, which have no synonyms in the literary language, for instance, zabuldyga ('a debauchee'). All language forms cited further and above are extracted by means of a continuous sampling analysis from The Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language by S. I. Ozhegov and N. Yu. Shvedova (1999).

Interpreting their biological, social, ethnic, personal, and professional qualities, speaking individuals implement the human factor in explaining the zones of meaning covered by substandard forms. Thus, anthropocentrism is an inherent property of common language units and a common cultural code that simulates reality within the semantic scope Human life, which, on the one hand, serves as the source sphere, and on the other hand – as the target sphere of common language form schemes. Functioning as part of this vicious cycle, the sphere Human life initially projects a negative connotation, helping to simplify the whole image. Metaphorical mechanisms help to achieve some consistency and organize a socio-cultural hierarchy of common language nominations.

Observing Human life as a source sphere, we can provide examples of deictic nominations within a cognitive model a Human is Time / Space: otrodjas' ('from birth'), naprolom ('right through / baldheaded') that further generalize and achieve maximum abstraction as a target domain. Moreover, Human life target domain in terms of zoomorphic metaphors generates the cognitive model an Animal is a Human in cases of: svinja ('a pig' of a low, mean, or dirty man), karakatitsa ('a cuttlefish' of a short-legged, clumsy person). The Artifact cognitive models are verbalized in Locatives: akvarium ('an aquarium' of a room), djra ('a hole' of a house); Household items: kanitel' ('a very thin metallic thread for embroidery' of a boring long-time trial), kartinka ('a picture' of a boring long-time trial), karusel' ('a merry-go-round' of a waste of time, confusion);

Food: *kasha* ('a dish of boiled or steamed cereal' of something chaotic, confusing); Behavioral habits: *kadit'* ('smoking incense, swinging a censor' of flatter); *kayat'sya* ('to confess the sins' meaning 'to admit mistakes').

At the same time the dictionary cognitive sphere Human life can be verbalized through human substantive nominations: *zabuldyga* ('a debauchee'), *obrazina* ('an ugly mug'), *puzo* ('a belly'), attributive nominations: *mutornyy* ('tedious'), *nakhrapistyy* ('cheeky'), *tolstorozhiy* ('with a thick face'), and predicative constructions: *vtemyashit'sya* ('to hammer'), *drykhnut'* ('to sleep'), *oblaposhit'* ('to cheat'), *khapat'* ('to seize'). Thus, creating a whole picture of reality, common language forms fill the dictionary space. Yet, the discourse characteristics of common language forms are different from their dictionary features.

In the Russian newspapers the function of substandard forms is not limited to the expressive one. They create the background of Russian cultural landscape, appealing to the national identity and developing an associative link to some outdated historical realia:

*Chto hranit v sebe potolstevshaja avos'ka* (KP, 2010.09.18).

(What a fat handbag keeps inside).

The lexeme *avos'ka* ('a handbag') identifies the Russian realia of the 60-s. In the contemporary Russian language, it has lost its direct meaning and currently denotes a generalized idea of the container. This common language form is personified with the help of the attribute *potolstevshaja* (in the meaning of 'fat, gaining in weight'), which is used only with the reference to a Human.

In many cases common language forms in newspaper discourse identify a negative or ironic concept that is a part of a foreign culture: *zabegalovka* ('a third-rate place') about MacDonald's net (T), *bezpredel* ('anarchy') of the situation in Ukraine (I) or *barahlo* ('goods of low quality') of products from China (KP). In these examples, it is not only the semantics of those constructions, but the general negative connotative field, that creates a multi-modal social context, determined by the contrast between their previous usage and current newspaper application. The similar stylistic

register opposition lies at the basis of the following passage:

*I kul'turologi vsego mira ne mogu ponjat' pochemu eta ahineja imeet stol' oglushitel'nji khal'avnji uspeh* (I, 2013.10.11).

(...and anthropologists of the whole world cannot understand why this nonsense has such a stunning success).

In the sentence the colloquial word *ahineja* ('nonsense') makes an expressive emphasis on the contrast between the literary norm used in the newspaper, the topic discussed (serious debates on the future of art and culture) and the low stylistic register, which creates the negative connotative context. Meanwhile, the common language form again has a standard generalized meaning, and the author does not have to specify the considered. Other stylistically marked lexical elements *khal'avnji* ('provided for free'), *stavit' v tupik* ('to be puzzled') help to maintain the opposition and do not ruin the narrative structure of the newspaper text.

It is worth mentioning that etymology of the outdated colloquial constructions today can hardly be identified by native speakers: *barjsh* ('benefit'), *ahovji* ('being in poor condition'), *artachit'sja* ('to do something unwillingly'). They carry negative connotation, and their semantics depends on the metaphorical component encoded in it. So, their usage in the newspaper can be well justified by its stylistic potential. The same metaphorical patterns are involved in the objectification of the attributive categories: *kanitel'nji* – *kanitel'* – *kanitelit'sja* ('rigmarole' in the meaning of 'being slow'):

*Pripominaju kanitel' v aeroportu* (KP, 2012.06.25).

(I remember a rigmarole at the airport).

The semantic transfers determining the common language forms in the previous examples are difficult to distinguish while quite numerous are the cases when the expressive potential of a substandard form acquires metaphorical image based on conceptual domain integration:

*On hotel babahnut' ves' svoi arsenal vo vremja sudebnogo zasedanija* (KP, 2013.11.01).

(He wanted to bang his whole arsenal of arguments during the court session).

The colloquial form *babahnut'* ('to bang, to explode ammunition'), follows the sound

imitation pattern and a conventional mapping a War is an Argument. It aims at attracting attention, defusing the situation, and easing the tension of the narration. The word sounds rather childish and makes the whole context less aggressive and grave. The construction 'to bang his whole arsenal of arguments' performs a predicative function, which turns to be very productive preserving the initial semantics along with new metaphoric interchange, well supported by the next examples:

Obskakat' 1% za 1.5 mesjaza cenj mogut ochen' legko (KP, 2013.11.14).

(Prices can easily exceed a 1% rise in 1.5 months).

...perenosili server ...uronili i razbili vdrebezgi (I, 2014.02.14).

(they carried the server from one place to another, dropped it and broke it to pieces).

The colloquial form *obskakat'* ('to exceed, to run over') performs a purely stylistic ornamentation function decorating the utterance and increasing its expressiveness. Some more neutral variants are devoid of the image dynamics, while here we observe the semantics of 'a leap', 'quick and sudden movement'. More to the point, we also can trace the overall decrease in connotative background. Common language form *vdrebezgi* ('to break to pieces') is used to emphasize the meaning of intensity of the action, its finality, irreversibility. Application of the lexeme contributes to the greater expressiveness of the utterance due to the additional shades of meanings realized. That function is also performed by some synonymous expressions: *vdryzgi* ('with the same meaning'), which sounds more rough and vulgar.

The image of Water often becomes metaphorically interpreted in many languages. It is one of the most productive metaphorical codes. No wonder that in the Russian language this concept lies at the basis of several colloquial constructions:

Oni ne stanut lit' vodu, a skazut korotko (KP, 2013.02.16).

(They will not beat about the bush but will say in short).

The common language form *lit' vodu* ('to beat about the bush, to talk much about nothing') has negative connotation and charges the newspaper text with certain expressiveness. The Water

metaphor here manifests an abstraction, devoid of concrete thingness, creating an impression that the topic discussed also lacks its object, or essence. Overall, metaphor becomes the most efficient mechanism that keeps even outdated common language forms alive, ensuring the transposition of those from one register of the language into another. By no means a zoomorphic metaphor nominating an individual, for instance, a pig (of a 'mean, dirty man'), a cuttlefish (of a 'short-legged, clumsy person') possess the highest stylistic potential in colloquial speech. The authors in the newspapers tend to avoid such direct nominations due to their obvious vulgarity and offensive character. Nevertheless, for the newspaper discourse it is common to apply lexical variations and derivatives of those zoomorphic metaphors, when an animalistic component occurs in the root morpheme:

...avtoljubitel' mozet nasobachitsja, no obuchenije stanovitsja opasnjm (KP, 2006.12.06).

(...the amateur driver can be easily taught but driving becomes dangerous).

Ne bjchit'sja na zhizn' i ne iskat' vinovatjkh (T, 2008.06.03).

(Don't be aggressive and don't look for anyone to blame).

Animalistic components *sobaka* ('a dog'), *obezjana* ('a monkey'), *bjk* ('a bull') form common linguistic variations possessing a high expressive potential. Thus, the colloquial word *nasobachitsja* ('to become more skilled') sounds rather rude and rough yet has a positive connotation. This image of a dog becomes frequent in the Russian language: there is also a colloquial unit *sobachitsja* ('to quarrel, shouting and being aggressive like dogs'). Meanwhile, the prefix totally changes the meaning in *Nasobachitsja* ('regarded above').

Common language form *obezjannichat'* ('to copy, to act like a monkey') is used in the newspaper *Izvestija* to characterize the work of the system of governance. This expression has a long history of being applied both in literary and public discourse. It enhances the expressive potential of the context, yet, at the same time, this metaphorical image charges the utterance with purely negative connotation. The name of the animal (a monkey) that lies at the basis of metaphorical expression renders a derogatory meaning.

The colloquial word *bjchit'sja* ('to behave with aggression'), when used in the newspaper, does not only manifest negative connotations, but also gives the text some ironic twist. We can observe again the overlapping of two negative expressive fields: the semantics of the metaphor itself and the switch of the sphere of applicability of the construction (the switch between the registers of colloquial and newspaper styles). All the newspapers cited are not referred to the yellow press, where substandard forms are rather typical. On the contrary, these are reliable quality newspapers and the usage of common language forms here carries additional message and is the means of expressing one's attitude to the concept discussed. For example, lexeme *bjchit'sja* carries negative connotation in its semantics ('being aggressive') and using a register not appropriate unit the author shows his negative attitude to such a style of life.

Quite a different set of functions is performed by substandard forms in the individual discourse. Literary text operates the concepts of different levels: from the common language forms, corresponding to the literary norm, to vernacular forms and expressions. It is common knowledge that the overuse of conversational clichés makes the entire text sound very colloquial. However, often, the specific combination of linguistic units, belonging to different stylistic registers, creates an individual discourse variety, can capture the spirit of the literary epoch, the uniqueness of the national culture. In this aspect, of special interest are the poetic translations of the famous Scottish poets Robert Fergusson and Robert Burns into the Russian language. The scientists refer the literary works of these poets to the period of the Enlightenment. They both use the pastoral tradition, romanticizing it by means of the unexpected mixture of styles, creating literary images with common language forms [Burgess 2000: 150]. Thus, the poems entail the extensive use of substandard forms. Yet, modern Russian translators trying to imitate the authors' original rather vulgar style make use of an excessive number of colloquial constructions. Even in those cases when the authors do not use any they appear in Russian translations. Emphasizing a range of axiological tones and, therefore, encoding the images of the poets into the associative context of the contemporary

Russian culture, interpreters resort to using not only common language expressions, but also slang forms. That is why the study of the Russian translations of Fergusson's and Burns's poetry is relevant from the perspective of linguo-stylistic, linguo-cultural, and linguo-cognitive paradigmes.

Let us consider the examples. In the Russian translations of Robert Fergusson, made by O. Koltsova, we can observe substandard forms as extended colloquial images, forming a dynamic scene, which creates a vivid picture in the readers' mind:

Edinburzhanki kosili pod francuzhenok ... [Burns 1999: 646].

(Edinburgh girls pretended looking like the French.)

In the Russian translations of Robert Fergusson's poetry, the expression *kosit'* (in the meaning 'to imitate, to copy') has both expressive and evaluative connotations. Together with other vernacular forms it charges the entire text with additional shades of meanings and thus models the poem into a verbal framework. Meaning expands not only at the semantic level, but some kind of 'aesthetic values' re-coding takes place. In a poetic text, certain language forms become a special mechanism coding and transforming purely Russian colloquial words in particular realia, rendering the unique character of another culture. Due to their inherent expressiveness common language forms create a literary model, and thus facilitate multiple interpretations. In another context the literary text slang expression *zalit zenki* ('to drink heavily') does not initialize the sphere of its everyday use, but on the contrary, is interpreted as a specific, vivid stylistic device:

No koli zenki ty zaljesh / prokisshim starjm zeljem ... [Burns 1999: 646].

(But if the eyes tell that you have drunk a lot...)

This form entails a metaphorical transfer of meaning: a Human is observed in the terms of a container, a tank, filled with liquid (alcohol). In this case, the word form *zelje* ('a potion, a spell'), which has mythological implications, in the vernacular context transforms into 'alcohol of poor quality'. The overall negative connotative background gets on the surface. Lexeme *zenki* ('eyes') verbalizes metonymic model 'a Part of the human body is a Human', as it is in the eyes of a person that we can tell if he is drunk. Eclectic



mixture of different layers of vocabulary allows common language forms function as stylistic means, having bright, expressive and evaluative potential. Modern translators interpret poetic images, creating interesting weave of meanings:

A potomu – ostav' alchbu [Burns 1999: 647].

(And thus, stop drinking heavily.)

The expression *ostav' alchbu* ('stop drinking') in the context of the above-mentioned examples, in the contemporary Russian language can be treated as a neologism, based on already existing forms and language laws. Yet, initially, *alchbai* is an outdated word of native Russian origin ('craving, seeking'). There occurs not only a certain narrowing of meaning, but a complete transformation of values takes place. The outdated form receives a new life, increasing the potential of dictionary meaning, encoding the actual perception through the transition from high to low stylistic register the same as in the example below:

Hotja ponjatno, – ne podmazh' – loshadka ne poskachet ... [Burns 1999: 648].

(Evidently, unless you bribe the problem will not be solved.)

Common language form *podmazjvat'* ('to bribe') in the poetic text also gets its semantic development and is perceived as a specific stylistic image-creating tool. Stylistic register interchange becomes a cognitive mechanism due to which colloquial forms are decoded, organically incorporated into the language system, enriching the literary language with expressive codes of semantic compression and verbal polyphony. Ironic modeling is one more productive pattern encoding common language forms in a literary text:

Nam krasno-sinie czveta zaveschanj vekami,

A na pobitjh gamma ta prostupit sinjakami ... [Burns 1999: 648].

(We inherit red and blue colours (of the national flag) which appear on the faces of those bitten as the bruises.)

Transformation, based on the mixture of different stylistic registers, leads to the fact that these expressions are almost impossible to imagine functioning aside from the context, they are determined by. Originally high-flown speech: *gamma* ('range, palette'), *zaveschanji* ('bequeathed'), *veka* ('ages') – is lowered by the means of allegory: contrast in colors of the

national flag and bruises received in a fight. At the heart of irony is a color-based metaphor. Such lexico-semantic combinations make the whole context more vivid, giving a jump start to the new shades of emotional coloring. The combination of words of different stylistic registers facilitates dual interpretation in the translation by A. Appel:

Omari nozkami suchat i krab kradetsja... [Burns 1999: 633].

(The lobsters curl their toes and the crab is sneaking.)

The ironic implications are manifested due to the interaction of substandard forms: *suchat nozkami* ('to quickly sort out') and nominations typical for the higher strata of vocabulary: *omar* ('a lobster'). Image becomes more prominent, enriched with new expressive nuances. Common language forms, thus, do not correspond to the norm. However, it does not concern evasion of the literary standards, its simplification, rather a new development of linguistic forms, occurring due to the break of linguistic predictability. Juxtaposed dominant stylistic registers exchange their attributes and, as a result, the words of high register transform into substandard forms, and can be regarded to be the stylistic mechanisms of image creation.

Robert Burns's common language patterns as rendered by Russian translators (1999) most commonly form the semantic field of Booze. Frequently, it is the predicative constructions that illustrate the process of consuming alcohol: *nalizat'sja* ('to lick'), *narezat'sja* ('to consume too much'), *sosat'* ('to suck'), *lakat'* ('to lap, to swill'), *hlebat'* ('to drink like an animal'), or the state of being drunk: *bjt' pod muhoj* ('to be tiddly'). Colloquial nominations of a rather offensive character: *vosh'* ('a louse'), *kurilka* ('a smoking man'), *balda* ('a dummy'), or even vernacular forms: *mudila* ('an asshole'), *psih* ('a psycho'), *shlyuha* ('a slut'), *shalava* ('a whore'), encode the semantic field of a Human. Apart from the spheres mentioned above, we can identify the semantic field of Realia introduced via substandard nominations: *sortir* ('a toilet'), *pojlo* ('swill'), *morgalki* ('eyes'). Those isolated common language constructions depict the low colloquial manner of the poet-plowman style in Russian interpretation. Only in some certain cases, we can observe substandard forms creating a bright image as translated by S. Marshak:

Zato strigut nas kak ovets zhestokie nalogi ... [Burns 1999: 121].

(We are squeezed by tax levy as if we are sheep sheared.)

Voda stoyachaja v bolote – dusha u vas ... [Burns 1999: 260].

(Your hearts are just a standing pool [Burns 1994: 184].)

The ironic twist of stylistic registers and coded perception of common language forms contribute to metaphoric interpretations: strigut kak ovets ('to shear like sheep' in the meaning 'to levy taxes'), stojachja voda ('..your hearts are a standing pool'), or formation of zoomorphic metaphors: louse, dog, pig – of a human. Consequently, the set of semantic transformations is constantly enriched with new shades of meaning.

#### 4. Conclusions and Perspectives

Thus, common language forms are based on the semantization of reality. They create a unique cultural code, evolving the synthesis of concepts: substandard forms being regarded both as rudiment and as specific expressive means. Due to emotiveness, they are an integral part of the language, enriching its communication system, and their eradication seems to be impossible. Common language forms become a special mechanism embedding the mythological layer into the text structure.

We can well assume that at the current level of the Russian language development substandard forms act as a model, ensuring cultural landscape transformation. Their main function is double expressive. Most common language forms possess negative connotation, and their usage in certain contexts (newspaper style) charges the utterance with additional evaluation due to inappropriate application. It creates a very powerful functionality, namely, the opposition,

a stylistic contrast that ends in a stylistic layer shift.

In the dictionary (a communal language variety) they ensure polysemy and expressiveness due to the semantic codes rooted in their meanings. Analyzing context devoid of substandard forms, we can only observe the spheres of metaphoric transfers, out of their cultural considerations.

The newspaper text as a communal discourse variety, in its turn, provides this cultural context due to evoking stylistic layer opposition. Common language forms entering the diction of the newspaper style serve the mechanism of stylistic transfer, which enables both additional expressiveness and decoration, thus adding the function of attracting attention to the concept described. Metaphorical images can be partially read. Expressiveness is achieved primarily by register switching.

In the literary text (an individual discourse variety) substandard forms, plus to all the functions mentioned above, add a new and quite unexpected one – they render foreign language realia, thus transmitting cultural codes. In poetic text common language forms manifest culturally marked foreign language patterns due to the highest degree of inappropriateness of their usage in this stylistic diction. They seem so 'unreadable' that start being perceived as alien, more typical of another language. Here we can trace the maximum level of image abstraction: it is practically impossible to represent those common language forms in terms of metaphoric modeling through individual interpretations. In such way, substandard forms in the Russian language are not an isolated register, but rather overlapping stylistic fields. Thus, the function of common language forms in the language is multidimensional.

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