

Albanian borders inside Russian

Internet language variation and change - an approach towards a classification of a new national Russian internet slang

The aim of this work is to describe and analyze the formal features of the so called *albansky/olbansky* or *padonkaff language*¹. This new Russian language code started to spread in Russian Internet (Runet) from the end of 1990-ies from Fido² and became widely spread after 2004. Recently it entered the realm of print mass media, and not only through its use in advertisement³. The albansky code includes words and cliché's from other slangs and jargons as well as Russian non-normative vocabulary. Yet, linguistic descriptions are still under construction.⁴

The formal analysis aims towards a classification of the paradigm of the rules of misspelling in the albansky code. These units will then be classified on the basis of their formal and semantic correspondence to the normative words and compared by their quantity of appearance in different segments of Runet as well as by their origin⁵. This is the basis to classify the lexicon in units that are simply mechanically misspelled and units that have undergone a semantic change.

Main features are so called erratives, grotesque orthographical mistakes. They emerge in a specific pattern of alternate spelling. Voiced consonants are replaced with their voiceless counterparts (which are sometimes doubled) *avtor-afftar*, and vice versa. Silent consonants are not resembled *uchastnik-uchasneg*. For unstressed vowels, *o* is replaced with *a* and *e* with *i* (*privet-preved*), or vice versa. But sometimes orthographical changes are followed by changing of lexical semantics. For example unusual wordbuilding patterns that seem to be rather borrowed from other languages like German; i.e. the numeral *pitsot* (five hundred or many) is combined with *sto* by simply eliminating the blank, and this new word *stopitsot* means "a great amount".

Using computational translation systems is also a source for generating new words/meanings in the albansky code. The English word *fans* can be translated as *ventilators* or as *supporters*. In albansky both are combined to *fantilatory*, with the meaning of "greeting to funny guys".

Therefore it is proposed to analyze the semantic addition that follows the orthographic changes. This will be achieved by analysis of the vocabularies, by analysis of web/blog contents and third by questionnaires given to the students of Moscow State University.

As a result, the criteria relevant for creating the representative vocabulary of albansky should be elaborated. In one 'corpus' of albansky (located at Yandex.ru) more than 160 units are listed, out of them 81% have undergone semantic changes. This research provides a source of information to foreigners as well as to the majority of Russians that barely use the internet. Moreover, albansky adds to the traditional opposition of "ours/aliens" a new meaning – it separates the pro albansky users from the ones that oppose it or have never heard of it. Thus a new border inside Russia is created, which this research seeks to make more permeable.

¹ Named after an incident in which an American user asked: "What language is that? Albansky?" Podonok (=amoral person). Padonky, probably connected to the heroes of the novel "Bolshe Bena" by underground writers Sergey Sakin (Spider) and Pavel Tetersky. http://www.guelman.ru/slava/debut/sakin_tetersky1.htm

² The Russian attempt to create an internet of their own.

³ It's interesting, that in presidential PR-campaign of Medvedev the image-makers emphasized his knowledge of this "language" to increase his popularity by the slogan "The new president will speak a language we understand"

⁴ Here are to name the works by Gassan Gussejnov: Berloga Weblog. 2005.

http://www.speakrus.ru/gg/microprosa_erratica-1.htm and bz Ch. Boutler 1997-2008 <http://www.russki-mat.net/d/padonkoff.htm>

⁵ The main sources of origin are known quotations of popular Russian politicians, Russian (fantasy) fiction, national anecdotes, teenager slang, borrowed words, humorous quotations from various chats, sport- and criminal jargons.

Example of a table of albanian units classified on their origin and changing of semantics.

Example	Meaning	Origin	Additional meaning vs. original words
Adnaznachna!	Expression of an emphasized confidence of correctness of the words mentioned above	From «odnoznachno», popular unit from lexicon of a famous politician V. V. Zhirinovskiy	Emotional connotation
Abanamat!	Exclamation of irritation or great astonishment	(errative from abusive (<i>eb'ona mat'</i>). Probably, concerned to often quotation of the book by S. Dovlatov «Nashi».	Emotional connotation
Achtung!	Warning about shocking content of postings. Quite often as a hint that gays take part in chatting (<i>achtunggi, achtungery</i>)	From German <i>Achtung</i> – attention	New meaning on the basis of metonymical transformations
Bajan , bojan, bajancheg, also gormoshko	Expression of blaming in comments censuring “kreatif” and emphasizing that it is a mere copy of old famous text/texts. Like: “Bajan. Bylo god nazad!”	The origin is connected with regular posting old joke “Horonili t’oshchu, porvali dva bajana” on the sites like <i>anekdot.ru</i> (from 07.03.1999.)	New meaning on the basis of metonymical transformations. (+ <i>gormoshko</i> as a metaphor)
V Bobrujsk, zhyvotnoe!, f Babrujsk, zhyvotnaje	Absolutely negative expression that can be addressed to a low intellectual or amoral person. The author should be absolutely ignored	Connected with the virtual community <i>bobruisk</i> that created «getto № 101 of Bobruisk-city», where they used to send people with low IQ. ⁶	New phraseological unit on the basis of ironical interpretation of a popular fiction text
V gazenvagen!	Very negative reaction to the author or his <i>post</i>	(from broken German <i>Gaswagen</i> - mobile gas chamber) i.e.: go to the gas chamber! Connected with „black jokes” about tortures and executions. Also: F topku!	New meaning on metaphorical basis
Zachot, zachod; zachotnyj	High positive mark; perfect, very good	Parody of a Russian system passed/not passed.	New meaning on the basis of metonymy with amelioration

⁶ The Community of *bobruisk.ru* was named probably after the mentioning of the Belorussian city of Bobruisk in the story by V. Sorokin “The Accident”. The connection with Bobruisk as an image of fiction can also be found in the mentioning of it as an ideal city for *the Children of Lieutenant Shmidt* in the famous novel “The Golden Calf” by I. Ilf and E. Petrov.