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Research article

New ways of developing Russian avant-garde idioms: a corpus-based approach

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Abstract. The research studies the functioning of Russian avant-garde idioms, a unique group in the lexical-phraseological system of the Russian language, which formed at the beginning of the 20th century in language experiments of the early avant-garde representatives (Cubo-Futurists). The relevance of the research is determined by linguists' constant interest in the fundamental issues of the general theory of phraseology, reproduction (in a broad sense) of phraseological units in various discourses, their variability and modification, as well as the need for a comprehensive analysis of the foundations of certain classes of set figurative units and their role in the renewal and development of the Russian phraseological system. The purpose of the study is to establish, by means of the corpus analysis, the directions of distribution and the spheres of functioning of idioms that make up the core of the Russian avant-garde idiomatics; to identify the nature, forms, or ways of their structural, semantic, grammatical, and pragmatic changes for over one century. Four avant-garde idioms were selected as the research material: *заумный язык* (*beyonsense language*), *самовитое слово* (*the self-sufficient word*), *пощечина общественному вкусу* (*a slap in the face of public taste*), and *(с)бросить кого-либо с парохода современности* (*to throw someone overboard from the ship of modernity*). Their functioning was studied on the material from Russian National Corpus with the help of the elaborated analysis algorithm. The author proves that avant-garde idioms which appeared in the Cubo-Futurists' manifestos, articles, poems, speeches, etc. have been spreading in different types of discourse (newspaper discourse, journalistic discourse, social networks, etc.). Accordingly, they are understood and developed in new ways. The main strategies of their modification in discourse, leading to their semantic, grammatical, etc. transformations, include the insertion of new components, the combination with other figurative means,

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the splitting of their basic form, the recomposition, the pre- and/or postpositional augment of new components, and double actualization. The corpus analysis clarifies the mechanisms of the adaptation of avant-garde idioms to the pragmatic tasks of a certain discourse, as well as the factors that determine their transition from avant-garde discourse to general linguistic usage or, conversely, to more specialized discourses, e.g. political, legal, memoir, or educational ones. The results obtained can be used in lexicographic practice.

Keywords: avant-garde idiomatics, Cubo-Futurism, corpus analysis, avant-garde idiom, modification, non-usual functioning

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Introduction

Technological equipment of modern science gives the opportunity to create large linguistic databases. This significantly expands the possibilities of language study both from the synchronic and diachronic points of view, allows to thoroughly investigate various language units, and increases the objectivity and reliability of the obtained results. Such bases primarily include different text corpora. Their compilation and application, their scope, structure, advantages, and shortages are widely covered in the modern works on philology, linguistics in particular (see Baranov, 2003; Kopotev, 2014¹; Altenberg, Granger, 2002; Weisser, 2016). Depending on the specifics of working with the corpus, three main types of research are distinguished: 1) corpus-based research; 2) corpus-driven research; and 3) research where the corpus is a source of illustrative material (corpus-illustrated, or corpus-informed). Existing application options realize two different research principles, ‘from empirical data to theory’ and ‘from theory to empirical data’ (see Tognini-Bonelli, 2001; McEnery et al., 2006; Boulton, Carter-Thomas, Rowley-Jolivet, 2012; Dobrovol'skii, 2020).

The corpus approach with its fast-growing demand is widely used for studying phraseology. Studies of phraseological units are carried out not only on the material of national corpora of different languages, but also on the material of author's (or individual, private) collections of texts, selected

¹ Kopotev, M. (2014). *Introduction to Corpus linguistics : Electronic training manual*. Praha: Animedia. (In Russ.).

according to certain criteria and labelled according to the scientific tasks to be solved. The latter could be characterized as “small databases”. For example, to study the distribution and frequency of English formulaic expressions and their Italian equivalents in dialogues in film discourse, M. Freddi uses several corpora. *The Pavia Corpus of Film Dialogue* and Freddi’s own corpus are used as the main ones, *the British National Corpus* and *the Corpus of Contemporary American English* are used as additional ones. The corpus-driven investigation reveals two types of formulaic expressions: diegetic, i.e. reflecting the specifics of film dialogue, and conversational ones, i.e. most characteristic (or maximally imitating) natural conversation (Freddi, 2011).

The corpus can be used to study certain classes of idioms or individual phraseological units. For example, B. Lypez Meirama analyzes the frequency of the polysemantic phrase *a conciencia* in modern Spanish language with the help of the *Corpus del Espacol del Sigl XXI* (CORPES XXI). As a result, the most and the least frequent meanings of this phrase and its semantic shifts in specific contexts are detected (Lypez Meirama, 2017). Parallel subcorpora of the *Russian National Corpus* (primarily German-Russian and Russian-German) allow D.O. Dobrovol’skii to sequentially compare pairs of correlating phraseological units of the two languages and identify the differences between them (semantic, syntactic, pragmatic, and combinational). The corpus-based analysis establishes two types of equivalence, equivalence at the level of the language system and equivalence at the level of the text (Dobrovol’skii, 2020).

Since the second half of the 20th century, there is a tendency to create specialized replenishable databases with information on the functioning of phraseological units. The example of such database is *the Database of Modern Idiomatics*, that has been created at the Institute of Russian Language of the Russian Academy of Sciences since 1985. According to A.N. Baranov, D.O. Dobrovol’skii, “up to now, it includes more than 50 thousand contexts of idioms in journalism and modern fiction (since 1960s), obtained in continuous sampling of idioms from texts” (Baranov, Dobrovol’skii, 2024: 234).

An analytical review of scientific publications on corpus analysis of phraseological units of different languages shows the advantages of the corpus method in solving theoretical and applied issues of modern phraseology, including distribution spheres of certain phraseological units, their typical contexts, the emergence of new set expressions in the language system, best interlingual equivalents, and paradigmatic innovations (in particular, the

emergence or reduction of synonyms of phraseological units in different languages) (Filipenko, 2004; Parina, 2008; Moon, 2007; Wulff, 2008). Our study is based on the Russian National Corpus (hereinafter RNC).

The RNC is a reliable platform for large-scale research in fundamental issues of phraseology theory: the creation of phraseological units of various structural-semantic classes (e.g., *на блюдецке* (*on a platter*), *приходить в голову* (*come to mind*), *место под солнцем* (*somebody's place under the sun*) and their functioning in different types of discourse (epistolary, fiction, journalistic, poetic, or memoir). The methodological toolkit of the RNC, the variety of proposed scenarios for working with its texts, a wide range of search parameters for the units under study, and options for analyzing the results make it possible to solve different research tasks: to establish the periods of greatest activity of certain groups of phraseological units, to determine the priority areas of their functioning, to identify their possible changes (structural, stylistic, functional, or pragmatic) in different discourses and communicative situations. Our study solves these tasks for such a class of Russian phraseology as Russian avant-garde idiomatics. **The main goal** is to trace their structural-semantic development in the corpus-based research and to detect functional-pragmatic transformations of Russian avant-garde idioms over a period of more than a century, from the beginning of the 20th century up to June of 2024.

Material and research methodology

We first introduced the concept of “(Russian) avant-garde idiomatics” to designate non-conventional and conventional multiword units formed and/or functioning in avant-garde discourse (see Zykova, 2018; 2022; Zykova, Sokolova, 2019). We analyzed it on the material of literary and artistic works of representatives of the early avant-garde (Cubo-Futurism) and the authors who were close to them. These are the most significant works or texts (manifestos, poems, articles, speeches, memoirs, and paintings) of such poets and artists as D. Burlyak, V. Khlebnikov, A. Kruchenykh, V. Mayakovsky, V. Kamensky, B. Livshits, E. Guro, I. Terentyev, K. Malevich, and P. Filonov. The period from the 1900s to the end of the 1920s, which is the period of activity of this avant-garde movement (Cubo-Futurism), is the focus of our attention. Our method of identifying the units of Russian avant-garde idiomatics based on the method of frame semantics (Zykova, 2018) allowed us to develop a definition of avant-garde idiomatics, to establish the most relevant categorical features of avant-garde idioms and their main (sub)types, and to identify the units in the core and periphery of this class.

Avant-garde idiomatics is a set of verbal and non-verbal means, purposefully created by avant-gardists (in particular, Cubo-Futurists) in their experiments with aesthetic and pragmatic intentions to form a new artistic language of literature and art.

Verbal idiomatics is divided into two types. The first type is **avant-garde idioms proper**; these are linguistic units purposefully created in the literary avant-garde as a result of language experiments (e.g. *баячи будущего* (*bayachi budushhego*, from the verb *bayat* ‘to tell, to sing’, ‘those who sing about the future’), *следить мир с конца* (*watch the world from the end*)). The second type includes common phraseological units which are (experimentally) used in literary avant-garde in their usual and modified forms (e.g. *с ног до головы* (*from head to toe*), *попадать пальцем в небо* (*to get a finger in the sky*), *пляска смерти* (*death dance*) > *смертирей беззыбких пляска* > *the dance of many un-fragile deaths*))².

At this stage of our research, we use the corpus analysis for **avant-garde idioms proper**; they are divided into four main subtypes: (a) avant-garde idioms-terms, e.g.: *заумный язык* (*beyonsense language*), *маршрут шаризны* (*the rout of sharizna*, from the noun *shar* ‘sphere’); (b) avant-garde expressive idioms, e.g.: *остричь слова* (*to quip words*), *весна в пинсене* (*a spring in a pince-nez*); 3) avant-garde experimental idioms, e.g.: *че воды* (*the che of the water*), *дыр бул шыл* (*dyr bul shyl*); 4) avant-garde proverbs, having a sentence structure and aphoristic nature, e.g.: *Кто не забудет своей первой любви, не узнает последней* (*He who will not forget his first love will not know the last one*). Emerging in the works of Cubo-Futurists (manifestos, articles, poems, etc.) and possessing vivid imagery and expressiveness, avant-garde idioms proper are used in certain types of discourse and, accordingly, receive new vectors of comprehension and structural-semantic development and realize their functional and pragmatic potential in a new way.

We selected four avant-garde idioms for the study, *заумный язык* (*beyonsense language*), *самовитое слово* (*the self-sufficient word*), *пощечина общественному вкусу* (*a slap in the face of public taste*) and *(с) бросить кого-либо с парохода современности* (*to throw someone overboard from the ship of modernity*). The idioms satisfy certain criteria. These linguistic units belong to the core of avant-garde idiomatics as they fully represent all the dominant features of avant-garde idioms proper³. These

² For more detail about non-verbal idioms see (Zykova, 2022).

³ See (Zykova, 2018) about different manifestation of categorical features of avant-garde idioms proper.

avant-garde idioms belong to different subtypes, idioms-terms (*beyonsense language, the self-sufficient word*) and expressive idioms (*a slap in the face of public taste, and to throw someone overboard from the ship of modernity*). Due to their characteristic features, structural, semantic, and pragmatic, the two subtypes more frequently, than experimental idioms and avant-garde proverbs, move from avant-garde discourse to other types of discourse and to common vocabulary. In addition, the selected linguistic units are the most indicative in terms of revealing the specifics of avant-garde artists' experimental linguistic work aimed at creating a new language of literature and art; they are frequent in the works of representatives of Cubo-Futurism and other avant-garde movements.

We used the following algorithm of work with the RNC.

We searched for contexts of avant-garde idioms proper (hereinafter AI) in four corpora: “Main corpus” (the corpus includes Russian written prose texts of various genres created after 1700 and represents the modern Russian literary (written) language), “Newspaper corpus” (the corpus of modern mass media, which includes texts of both printed and electronic newspapers since 1983), “Social networks” (the corpus includes more than 150 million word usages from open sources: VK, Telegram, Livejournal, Liveinternet, Blogspot, and reflects live linguistic changes outside the literary language), and “Poetry Corpus” (the corpus contains poetry, including plays in verse and translations of poetry since the 18th century).

Of all the search options in the RNC, we used the “lexical-grammatical search”. The AIs *Beyonsense language, self-sufficient word, and a slap in the face of public taste* were searched in their basic form. The verb AI *to throw someone overboard from the ship of modernity* was searched firstly in its main verb form and then in its shortened form with no verb *the ship of modernity*. The second query was more representative and productive. In the “Main corpus”, all the AIs were compared statistically by such parameters as “sphere of functioning”, “text type”, and “text topic”. In the established contexts of AI usage in all the corpora, the functioning of the studied units in their basic and modified forms were differentiated. For modified forms, the ways, principles, and the degree of transformation were established.

Results

A complex methodology of studying the specific functioning of units from a unique stratum of Russian phraseology, Russian avant-garde idiomatics, in various discourses in 1912 — June, 2024 has been created and tested. The basis of the methodology is a step-by-step algorithm of work with

RNC. The methodology gave representative quantitative and qualitative data on the distribution of the avant-garde idioms in different discourses and on the directions and methods of their structural, grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic transformation.

These are the main theoretical and applied results:

- The ratio of the frequency of avant-garde idioms proper of two different subtypes, avant-garde idiom-terms and avant-garde expressive idioms, in discourses representing the functioning of the Russian language within and outside the modern literary norm in printed and electronic formats, and reflecting the peculiarities of written and oral (spoken) communication according to the data of the RNC four corpora has been revealed.

- The spheres of functioning and types of texts where the studied avant-garde idioms are most and least widespread have been identified. They show new vectors of the AIs further spread and the factors that stimulate their transition into the common language vocabulary and, on the contrary, into (more) specialized areas of communication (according to the data of the RNC “Main Corpus”).

- The quantitative and qualitative correlation between the topics of texts with the avant-garde idioms has been established. Cases of their functioning in discourses with topics that are not related to art and literature (crime, finance, armed conflicts) have been revealed. The new (i.e., not originally peculiar to them) topics depend on the features of the AIs (according to the data of the RNC “Main Corpus”).

- The correlation between the use of the units in basic (usual use) and modified forms (non-usual use) has been detected. The modification strategies when various transformations in structure and semantics take place, grammatical possibilities and pragmatic potential are realized in a new way have been established. The dependence of (non-)usual functioning and a certain type of AI has been identified. Avant-garde expressive idioms are (significantly) more often modified.

- The expediency of selecting certain corpora of the RNC for studying Russian avant-garde idioms, certain search queries and scenarios for working with texts of different types and genres has been proved.

Discussion

Statistical data processing revealed the frequency ratio of the analyzed avant-garde idioms in the four RNC corpora. The data are summarized in the table 1.

Table 1

The number of uses of the studied avant-garde idioms

Avant-garde idioms	1 Main corpus	2 Media corpus	3 Social networks	4 Poetry	Total number of samples
<i>beyonsense language</i>	59	28	2	1	90
<i>the self-sufficient word</i>	26	7	2	1	36
<i>a slap in the face of public taste</i>	16	43	10	0	69
<i>to throw someone overboard from the ship of modernity</i>	58	43	4	1	106
Total:	159	121	18	3	301

Note: *The calculations excluded cases when a language unit could not be qualified as an avant-garde idiom.

Source: calculated by I.V. Zykova based on the Russian National Corpus. Retrieved April 20, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

Table 1 shows that the AIs *beyonsense language*, *throw (someone) overboard from the ship of modernity* and *the self-sufficient word* are the most frequent in the main corpus, while the idiom *a slap in the face of public taste*, in the newspaper corpus. Few cases for the AIs *beyonsense language*, *the self-sufficient word* and *throw someone overboard from the ship of modernity* were found in the poetic corpus. In the “Social Networks” corpus, the largest number of uses is for AI *a slap in the face of public taste*. The conclusions about the distributional features are mainly due to the volume of the corpora, as the main and newspaper corpora are the largest.

The analysis of data in the “Statistics” mode in the main corpus revealed the difference of the studied AIs by such parameters as “sphere of functioning”, “text type”, and “text topic” (Table 2).

Table 2

The parameters in the “Statistics” output mode (absolute indicators)

Parameters	заумный язык (<i>beyon- sense language</i>)	самовитое слово (<i>the self- sufficient word</i>)	пощечина общественному вкусу (<i>a slap in the face of public taste</i>)	(с)бросить кого-либо с парохода современности (<i>to throw overboard from the ship of modernity</i>)
«domain»	4	3	4	4
«text type»	11	6	15	13
«text topic»	12	10	13	11

Source: calculated by I.V. Zykova based on the Russian National Corpus. Retrieved April 20, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

The corpus analysis of the information about the “sphere of functioning” showed that the AIs *beyonsense language* and *a slap in the face of public taste* are used in journalism, fiction, academic, and day-to-day life spheres. At the same time, they have different relative distribution rates in these spheres. For example, *beyonsense language*: journalism, 81.36%; educational

and scientific spheres, 8.47%; fiction, 6.78%; day-to-day life sphere, 5.08%; *a slap in the face of public taste*: journalism, 83.08%; fiction, 7.69%; day-to-day life sphere, 4.62%; educational and scientific sphere, 4.62%. In contrast to these AIs, *the self-sufficient word* is not used in fiction, but is found in those spheres: journalism, 73.08%; educational and scientific sphere, 23.08%; and day-to-day life sphere, 3.85%. The AI *throw (someone) overboard from the ship of modernity* is not found in the day-to-day life sphere, but it is found in electronic communication: journalism, 82.14%; fiction, 14.29%; educational and scientific sphere, 1.79%; electronic communication, 1.79%. Journalism is the sphere with the largest number of uses for all the AIs. Here are examples from journalistic texts:

- (1) *The “beyondsense language” for the future is not a trifle either: we must “make it carry useful weights”, so that the word accurately reflects the relations between objects and their names.* (I.N. Virabov. Andrei Voznesensky (2015))⁴.
- (2) *When L.Y. Ginzburg referred to “the cursed inheritance, the self-sufficient word which is nowadays useful only for historical novels”, she meant Tynyanov* (Omri Ronen. “Naturalness” // “Zvezda”, 2002)⁵.
- (3) *L.Y. approached two half-familiar ladies who were snorting and asked: “Isn’t it boring without boyars?” This, of course, is a slap in the face of public taste, everything looks strange.* (Vasily Katanyan. Patchwork Quilt (1960–1969))⁶.
- (4) *In the twenties, they were no longer going to burn Raphael and throw Pushkin overboard from the ship of modernity, but greedily and seriously awaited the arrival of genius, looking with hope at every new figure on the literary horizon.* (Varlam Shalamov. The Beginning (1962))⁷.

The “text type” parameter shows the difference in functional capabilities of AIs and their typical text types. The data in Table 2 demonstrate that the highest indicator for this parameter belongs to the AI *a slap in the face of public taste* (15); it is followed by the AI *to throw (someone) overboard from the ship of modernity* (13) and *beyondsense language* (11). The lowest indicator belongs to the AI *self-sufficient the word* (6). According to the degree of relevance, the text types are arranged in the following order (three types with

⁴ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved February 7, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

⁵ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved February 15, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

⁶ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved March 1, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

⁷ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved March 24, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

the highest scores): *beyonsense language*: article — 45.76%, memoir — 16.95%, and monograph — 10.17%; *self-sufficient word*: article — 38.46%, monograph — 23.08%, and diary, notebooks — 15.38%; *a slap in the face of public taste*: memoir — 35.38%, address — 13.85%, and article — 12.31%; *to throw (someone) overboard from the ship of modernity*: article — 30.36%, memoir — 17.86%, and novel — 14.29%. According to the data from the RNC main corpus, the studied AIs are also used in essays, novellas, autobiographies, stories, reviews, forums, tourist guides, obituaries:

- (5) novella: *I enjoyed studying this book as a sort of typography font collection. There were many books written in **beyonsense language***. (K.G. Paustovsky. Story of a Life. Southern Adventure (1959–1960))⁸.
- (6) essay: *Antonioni's aim in The Scream is greater. He does what the Futurists failed to do when they "tried to **throw Pushkin overboard from the ship of modernity**." He tried to overcome the "cultural" pattern and take the next step <...>*. (Reed Grachev. M. Antonioni. The movie "The Scream" / The Aesthetics of Fact in M. Antonioni (1967))⁹.

As far as the quantity of topics is concerned (from 10 to 13), all the analyzed AIs are used in a rather diverse range of texts (see Table 2). Based on the relative indicators, we can conclude that AIs are most frequently used in contexts devoted to the following topics (in descending order): *beyonsense language*: "art and culture" — 62.71%, "private life" — 11.86%, and "philology" — 11.86%; *the self-sufficient word*: "art and culture" — 50.00%, "cultural studies" — 19.23%, "science and technology" — 19.23%, and "philosophy" — 19.23%; *a slap in the face of public taste*: "art and culture" — 63.08%, "private life" — 16.92%, and "politics and public life" — 13.85%; *to throw someone overboard from the ship of modernity*: "art and culture" — 62.50%, "politics and public life" — 16.07%, and "private life" — 8.93%. The dominance of the topic "art and culture" in all the AIs testifies to their strong connection with the field where they were created. Their use in discourses on other topics determines the priority directions of further dissemination of the analyzed AIs, contributing to their development from the semantic and pragmatic points of view. For example, the second most frequent topic for the AI *the self-sufficient word* is "cultural studies", and the second most frequent topic of the AI *to throw someone from the steamer of*

⁸ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved March 18, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

⁹ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved March 20, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

modernity is “politics and public life”. Particularly interesting are the cases explicating the connection of AIs with topics that are relatively or significantly far from the original (literary or artistic) sphere of their functioning. From our point of view, among such topics are “crime”, “religion”, “health and medicine”, “travelling”, “army and armed conflicts”, “leisure, entertainment and amusement”, “business, commerce, economics, finance”:

(7) topic “crime”: *Its [the “Club of Madmen”] members had to do something amazing, surprising for others: to smoke several cigarettes at the same time, to greet others “in the Chinese way” with their noses, to talk about something simple in a very scientific, **beyonsense language**. (G.V. Andreevsky. Everyday life in Moscow in the Stalin era. 1920–1930s (2008))¹⁰.*

(8) topic “leisure, entertainment and amusement”: *The girls were not wearing shoes because they did not have money to buy them. Their hairstyles were created by Vidal Sassoon. For free. That is why **the slap in the face of public taste** cost Rabanne a ridiculous sum. Only five thousand francs. (Asya Tavelinskaya. How Steel Was Tempered (2003) // “Expert: Thing”, 22.12.2003)¹¹.*

(9) topic “business, commerce, economy, finance”: *We invited experienced advertiser Georgy Minaev <...> to comment on the issue of epatage in advertising. “In general, if the target group perceives itself as a counterbalance to the establishment, is inclined to **“slap the public taste”** (e.g., teenagers or “bohemians”), then it will be attracted by the epathetic image of the product itself. (Vladimir Lyaporov. Marketing: how it is done (2004) // “Business Journal”, 30.01.2004)¹².*

As the analysis of the four corpora of the RNC has shown, AIs are used both in their basic and modified forms. By basic form (or usual use), we mean cases when there AI components do not change and the AIs realize their original or initial meanings developed in texts by representatives of the early avant-garde and/or directly referring to those texts¹³.

The analysis of the examples with the AI *beyonsense language* in the RNC revealed the following ratio of its basic and modified forms, respectively: 70 (78%) vs 20 (22%). This AI is used in its basic form in the following

¹⁰ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved April 30, 2024, from URL: <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

¹¹ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved February 7, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

¹² Russian National Corpus. Retrieved March 21, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

¹³ For more details on modification strategies, see (Zykova, 2015).

contexts: *we love **beyonsense language**; this **beyonsense language**; a play written in a **beyonsense language**; newly invented **beyonsense language**, introduce **beyonsense language**; to create a **beyonsense language**; he used his **beyonsense language**; written <...> not in a **beyonsense language**; the creator of **beyonsense language**; words of **beyonsense language**; created <...> **beyonsense language**; compared to **beyonsense language**; nature and functions of **beyonsense language**; he had his own **beyonsense language**; the inventor of **beyonsense language**. In these examples, the avant-garde idiom-term keeps its initial composition and denotes the language of poetry (literature) and/or art created by or peculiar to the avant-gardists. The original meaning can be intensified by post- or prepositional attributing component, for example: *it goes to **Khlebnikov's "beyonsense" language***.*

The modifications demonstrate that certain semantic and/or pragmatic shifts are the result of AI metaphorization and, accordingly, of its initial specific (terminological) meaning weakening, for example, through personification: *the path of **beyonsense language**, to mock the **beyonsense language** of futurists*. Here is a vivid example:

- (10) *Yet, though **naked**, though **beggarly**, **their soul exists**. Though in their **beyonsense language**, they can **pour it out** before those who are as liberated as they are.* (K.I. Chukovsky. Cubo-Futurists (1922))¹⁴.

In example (10) the idiom-term conveys a caustic-ironic, ridiculing attitude to the poetic work of the Cubo-Futurists. The metaphorizers are the two interrelated units: the figurative expression *naked, beggarly, their soul exists* and the literary phraseological unit *to pour out one's soul in front of someone*. The AI metaphorization through its “embedding” in a complex metaphorical complex as an instrument of the action (*to pour out [naked, beggarly] soul in a **beyonsense language***) strengthens the pragmatic effect of the utterance, makes the AI meaning pejorative and develops its negative connotation, which is not characteristic of terms.

A more radical modification involves new (non-terminological) meanings of the AI *beyonsense language*, such as ‘extremely complex’, ‘incomprehensible’, and ‘deceitful’: *you talk to children in a **beyonsense language**; textbooks are written in a **beyonsense language**; you praised him in a **beyonsense language**, with lies and exaggerations*. The analysis showed that these semantic changes are rarely accompanied by changes in the AI composition (its expansion, change of the component order, adding new

¹⁴ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved May 10, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

components, etc.). There are few examples in the corpus: *to master the beyonsense cyber-language; I am learning your beyonsense language*.

The corpus data reveal the ratio of basic and modified forms of the AI *self-sufficient word*: 19 (53%) vs 17 (47%) respectively. Here are the contexts with the basic form: *to form the “self-sufficient” word; a secret thought about the self-sufficient word; the idea of the “self-sufficient” word; the self-sufficient word <...> does not sound*. Pre- or postpositional additional components indicating authorship strengthen the original meaning of the idiom-term: *Khlebnikov’s self-sufficient word, the self-sufficient word of Khlebnikov; practitioners of the self-sufficient word like Kruchenykh*. It is noteworthy that this AI is used in the plural form in discourse; this shows the possibility of its morphological development: *V. Khlebnikov’s “self-sufficient” words*.

The analysis of all cases with the AI *self-sufficient word* in the RNC has established that the main strategies of its modification are the incorporation of synonymous or new components (*“self-sufficient”, extra-sense word; self-sufficient native word*); replacement of the original component (*“self-sufficient scene”*), pre- or postpositional additional components (*the Eden of the self-sufficient word*) and their combination with common phraseological units:

- (11) *Viktor Stepanovich has both courage and drive, he is natural, the self-sufficient Russian word flies out of him like a sparrow*. (The first landing on the “Planet of Clowning” // *Izvestia*, 27.07.2001)¹⁵.

In example (11), the idiom-term is integrated with a modified form of the proverb *Word is not a sparrow, it will fly out, and you won’t catch it*. The integration and embedding of the component *Russian* (meaning ‘Russian obscene language’) play out and change into negative the original meaning of the AI. This eventually determinologizes the idiom-term. All the transformations in the context convey an ironic attitude (sarcasm and criticism) to the person discussed and produce a comic effect.

The results obtained from the four RNC corpora showed that, unlike idiom-terms, the expressive idiom is more frequently used in a modified meaning and has more diverse ways of modification accompanied by grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic transformations.

According to the analysis, the AI *a slap in the face of the public taste* has the following ratio of basic and modified forms: 21 (30%) vs 48 (70%), respectively. The basic form is the usage without changing the AI composition which actualizes the meanings it has in the source texts, ‘a break with the old literary or artistic tradition, rejection of the previous

¹⁵ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved March 10, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

aesthetic values, their censure; approval of new canons of (true) creativity; a breakthrough or innovation in various fields of art'. The following contexts demonstrate this usage:

- (12) A.B. — *Nabokov's "Lolita," a slap in the face of public taste, gave him the right.* (Valery Pletner. Ramadan, playboy, ramadan. Almost imaginary conversation of living classics // Nezavisimaya gazeta, 14.02.1996)¹⁶.
- (13) *And it is silly to overthrow anything nowadays, to make one's performances a slap in the face of public taste; public taste has become so stiff since the time of Turgenev that it perceives any cuff as a tickle* (Gleb Sitkovsky. Empty Bamboo // Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 26.03.1998)¹⁷.

Example (13) is rather illustrative because it uses the AI in its basic form and plays with its meaning through a commentary explaining and mocking its component *public taste*. The special means of the comic effect are metaphorization, through the expression *to become stiff*, and occasional synonymy, the paradigmatic series with the AI component *slap*, the lexeme (any) *cuff* and the lexeme *tickle*, which also has a terminological meaning. The latter two lexemes endow their occasional synonym *slap* with negative connotation and strengthen the pragmatic effect of the utterance.

These semantic and pragmatic changes are often caused by the expanded referential range of the AI *a slap in the face of public taste*. It can refer to objects or situations (actions) not related to art, poetry, or literature; this is a certain kind of deviation from its original figurative meanings. *A slap in the face of public taste* can mean, for example, popularity of a TV presenter, the changed character type, scandal (or scandalous behavior), manicure, manner of dressing, refusal to participate in an award, personal photos, place taken at a championship, appearance, law, interior (restaurant) design:

- (14) *His restaurant Bon, which opened in Moscow on Wednesday, is a real slap in the face of public taste. Or — public tastelessness, when money decides everything, and freedom is necessary only to buy a cool car.* (Valentina Lvova. Philippe Starck: Neither in hell nor in heaven chairs are necessary // Komsomolskaya Pravda, 14.04.2006)¹⁸.

Certain vectors of grammatical (morphological and syntactic) and semantic development of this AI are due to the plural form of the component

¹⁶ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved May 15, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

¹⁷ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved April 15, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

¹⁸ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved April 15, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

slap and its metaphorization by means of new verb components (*to give, to slap, to hear*; etc.), which provide a double actualization of its meaning:

(15) *Kusturica likes to slap public taste*. (Alexandra Sopova. Blessed show business // *Izvestia*, 10.04.2012)¹⁹.

(16) “*Sensation*” did not become a sensation in any of them. Who can hear **a slap in the face of public taste** in a boxing training hall? (Sergei Ostrovsky. Provocation of feelings // *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 15.11.1997)²⁰.

New meanings and structural transformations, which open new possibilities of the expressive idiom pragmatic potential, are realized by means of such strategies as embedding of new components, pre- and postpositional augmentation of components and combining AI with other figurative means:

(17) <...> *activists of the youth movement “Provo” (short for “provocation”) gathered, believing that the main task of progressive youth was to slap bourgeois social taste every now and then*. (Anastasia Smirnova, Maria Baker, Olga Grinkrug. Amsterdam (2014))²¹.

(18) *Only the Futurists, Mayakovsky, Khlebnikov, having “slapped the public taste in the face”, throw these furs as expensive ballast “off the ship of modernity”; here the poet already looks at the sky and at himself through different eyepieces, not at how “the flying clouds are thinning”, but sees himself as “a cloud in its pants”* (Mikhail Kapustin. Our life is a blue sea // *Nezavisimaya gazeta* (Kulisa NG supplement), 09.04.1999)²².

Example (18) deserves special attention because it integrates the modified form of the AI *a slap in the face of public taste* with two avant-garde expressive idioms: the AI *throw someone overboard from the ship of modernity* in its modified form and the AI *cloud in pants*. These avant-garde idiomatic units in one segment of discourse convey irony in an utterance and strengthen its expressiveness.

One of the important features of the avant-garde expressive idiom *to throw someone overboard from the ship of modernity* is that its basic form stems from two original expressions: *to throw Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, etc. etc. overboard from the ship of modernity* (“A Slap in the Face of Public Taste,” 1912)²³ and *to throw the old greats overboard from the ship of*

¹⁹ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved April 30, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

²⁰ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved May 18, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

²¹ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved May 15, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

²² Russian National Corpus. Retrieved May 18, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

²³ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved February 7, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

modernity (Mayakovsky “A Drop of Tar” 1915)²⁴. The component *someone* in the structure of this AI indicates its initial significant possibilities of variation and creative use in discourse. All occurrences detected in the four RNC corpora showed that the component *someone* is only rarely represented by the whole initial syntagmatic series, consisting of three surnames of literary figures:

- (19) *Hot young people (the oldest, Burliuk, was 30) claimed that “the Academy and Pushkin are more incomprehensible than hieroglyphs” and suggested “**throwing Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and so on and so forth overboard from the Ship of Modernity.**”* (Vladislav Bykov, Olga Derkach. The Book of the Century (2000))²⁵.

The position of *someone* is most frequently substituted by the surname *Pushkin*; the other two (Dostoevsky and Tolstoy) are rarely used:

- (20) *Nowadays everybody seems to be in favor of classics, and those distant times when they suggested **throwing Pushkin overboard from the ship of modernity of modernity** have irrevocably passed... have passed.* (O. Mikhailov. Native // “Ogonyok”. № 9, 1970)²⁶.
- (21) *The gentleman in the hat is indignant, and the youth **throws both Pushkin and Tolstoy overboard from the ship of modernity.*** (S.C. Shamardina. Futurist Youth (1960–1970))²⁷.

According to the RNC data, the component *someone* can be substituted not only with the surnames its original form, but also by a wide variety of proper and common names. Here are the lexemes that can be used instead of *someone*: *Mayakovsky, Pushkin, other well-known classical authors and famous contemporaries; those who were still its helmsmen; everything that did not conform to their [Futurists’] tastes and views; all the poets who had gone before them; the classics; not only the classics; cultural authorities; all post-Soviet literature; the classics of Soviet literature; redundant Russian literature; all those bored with their greatness; Okudzhava; Lenin and Kostikov; spokesman; Kataev; Efros; old Schiller; classical corpses; former idols; Beatles and Rolling Stones; everything in a row; what was dear and sacred to us in the theater; nobody; itinerant artists; Russian-language titles; women; museum stones, etc.*

A very common strategy for modifying the AI is recomposition, when the order of the components changes (examples 21 and 22).

²⁴ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved February 14, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

²⁵ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved April 30, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

²⁶ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved April 30, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

²⁷ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved February 12, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

- (22) *In their manifesto “A Slap in the Face of Public Taste”, the Futurists suggested **throwing Pushkin, Lermontov, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy overboard from the ship of modernity...*** (E.V. Kolina. *Diary of Treason* (2011))²⁸.

The authors use the strategy of embedding additional components (Example 22) or substitutes for the initial, primarily verb component *throw* with synonymous or antonymous lexemes: *to throw down; to throw away; to push down; to throw away; to fly overboard; to return; not to fall out; to drop off* (Example 23); the combination strategy when the AI is integrated with different figurative means (Example 23) and the strategy of adding pre- or postpositional components (Example 24):

- (23) *This generation has been brought up with these slogans... We can only be glad that it has not adopted “**down with Pushkin overboard from the ship of modernity**”.* [Who is it reprehensible for a Russian to be called Russian??? (The Second Baptism of Russia: Perun will be demolished at the kapisha in Kupchino (forum) (2007))²⁹.
- (24) *Galkovsky shocked people even more than Viktor Yerofeev, who **with a slight movement of his pen threw all the sub-Soviet literature overboard from the ship of modernity.*** (Natalia Ivanova. *Between // “Novy Mir”, 1996*)³⁰.

Example (24) also reveals the word-formation potential of the *throw* component, which can be replaced by various derivatives: *throwing down, who threw down, who is throwing down, which are throwing down, thrown down, not throwing down, having thrown down*.

The most radical is the modification of the analyzed AI in poetic discourse:

- (25) *It’s good to get off the ship of modernity / It’s good for yourself before / Because of their stupidity or jealousy / The boys **throw you off it.** <...> The steamer is huge, three-decked, / There is a billiard and a buffet on it, / But its horn is vague and pitiful: / **There is neither Tolstoy nor Pushkin.*** (A.S. Kushner. “To get off the ship of modernity...” (2000–2005))³¹.

In example (25), the expressive AI is modified by several strategies: recomposition, insertion, splitting of the basic AI form, double actualization. These strategies make significant grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic

²⁸ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved May 18, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

²⁹ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved March 21, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

³⁰ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved March 21, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

³¹ Russian National Corpus. Retrieved April 9, 2024, from <https://ruscorpora.ru/>

transformations of this linguistic unit, which performs a special text-forming function in the poem. The transformations actualize the inner form of the AI and develop new metaphorical meanings and connotations.

The conducted research showed that the AI *throw someone overboard from the ship of modernity* has the largest number of modifications. The ratio of its use in basic and modified forms is 9 (9%) vs 97 (91%), respectively.

The results correspond in some aspects with the linguistic facts established in the studies on other types of phraseological units in Russian and other Slavic languages and with the conclusions in phraseological studies of the last ten years, particularly in (Arkhangel'skaya, 2022; Mokienko, 2022; Dyadechko, Wang, 2022). The peculiarities of the use of avant-garde idioms proper agree with A.M. Arkhangel'skaya's conclusion that the quantitatively substantial and qualitatively diverse transformation paradigm of one phraseological unit, being a systemic totality of its real innovations in Russian speech, form an idea about the tendencies in the transformational potential of the phraseological unit invariant with its ratio of the systemic and asystemic (Arkhangel'skaya, 2022).

Our analysis also confirms V.M. Mokienko's conclusion in his work regarding the selectivity of synonymous lexemes that modify the basic form of phraseological units and proverbs by replacing the original component and the orientation of modifications to revitalizing the inner form (Mokienko, 2022). The research findings concerning the functioning of avant-garde idioms proper correlate with the data on the use of phraseological units in Russian poetry of the XX and XXI centuries, presented in (Melerovich et al., 2016). In our work, a new vector of comprehension is given to the assumption that the study of the modification in the lexical composition of phraseological units of certain classes (in our case, avant-garde idioms) reveals “the dialectics of interrelations between elite and national linguistic cultures” (Dyadechko, Wang, 2022: 162).

Conclusion

This study has shown that despite the initially very limited sphere of their functioning, avant-garde idioms, invented by representatives of the early avant-garde in different linguistic experiments aimed at creating a new artistic language, over time go far beyond the limits of avant-garde discourse. They become widespread in different genres and types of texts on different topics. Retaining their connection with art and literature, they are actively used in various socially, historically, and culturally significant spheres of life in the modern Russian society and fulfil a variety of not only artistic and aesthetic, but also pragmatic tasks. Under new conditions of functioning (in common

language or in “specialized” discourses, such as medical, political, legal), avant-garde idioms show their special linguistic possibilities, which determine the most important ways of their structural, semantic, grammatical, and pragmatic changes.

The main modification strategies include the strategies of embedding new components, combination with other figurative means, splitting the basic form, recomposition, adding new pre- and/or postpositional components, and double actualization. Unlike avant-garde idioms-terms, avant-garde expressive idioms are more often modified; accordingly, to a greater extent realize their creative potential and adapt more easily to new discursive practices. The latter shows the distinction between the analyzed two and other main subtypes of avant-garde idioms. This contributes to the development of the theory of avant-garde idiomatics and the general theory of phraseological meaning.

The results of the analysis are useful for lexicographic practice. The observations can be reflected in such zones of the microstructure of the dictionary *Idomatics of the Russian Avant-Garde* as “the zone of variants of the heading unit”, “the zone of synonyms and antonyms”, and “the zone of contexts”.

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Научная статья

Новые пути развития русских авангардных идиом: корпусный подход

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Аннотация. Изучены особенности функционирования единиц идиоматики русского авангарда как уникального класса лексико-фразеологической системы русского языка, формирующегося в начале XX в. в ходе языкового эксперимента, осуществляемого представителями раннего авангарда (кубофутуристами). Актуальность исследования определяется неизменным интересом лингвистов к основополагающим проблемам общей теории фразеологии — воспроизведения фра-

зеологизмов (в широком понимании) в разных дискурсивных практиках, их вариативности и модифицирования, а также необходимостью всестороннего анализа глубинных оснований порождения отдельных классов устойчивых образных единиц и их роли в обновлении и развитии фразеологического фонда русского языка. Цель исследования — посредством метода корпусного анализа установить направления распространения и сферы функционирования вербальных идиом, составляющих ядро идиоматики русского авангарда, выявить характер, формы или способы их структурных, семантических, грамматических или прагматических изменений, которые они получают за более чем столетний период. В качестве материала исследования были отобраны четыре авангардных идиомы: *заумный язык*, *самовитое слово*, *пощечина общественному вкусу* и *(с)бросить кого-либо с парохода современности*. Изучение их функционирования проводилось на базе Национального корпуса русского языка посредством разработанного алгоритма анализа. Доказано, что, возникая в работах кубофутуристов (манифестах, статьях, стихотворениях, выступлениях и т.д.), авангардные идиомы получают распространение в разных типах дискурса (газетном дискурсе, публицистическом дискурсе, социальных сетях и др.) и, соответственно, новые векторы осмысления и развития. К основным стратегиям модификации авангардных идиом в дискурсе, приводящим к их семантическим, грамматическим и т.д. преобразованиям, относятся стратегии встраивания новых компонентов, комбинирования с другими образными средствами, разбиения базовой формы, перекомпозиции, пре- и/или постпозиционного приращения новых компонентов, двойной актуализации. Проведенный корпусный анализ проясняет механизмы адаптации авангардных идиом к прагматическим задачам определенного дискурса, а также факторы, которые обуславливают их переход из авангардного дискурса в общеязыковой узус или, напротив, в более специализированные дискурсы (например, политический, юридический, мемуарный, образовательный и т.д.). Полученные результаты могут быть использованы в лексикографической практике.

Ключевые слова: идиоматика авангарда, кубофутуризм, корпусный анализ, авангардная идиома, модификация, неузальное функционирование

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