

Title: Barbarization of the Russian Language

Author: Sedova- Hotaling, Elena, and Soboleva, Valentina S., Defense Language Institute

With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia has gone through a range of dramatic changes - political, economic, social, cultural, and so on. The most striking of these changes is the linguistic one, witnessed in the area of the Russian lexicon. The pace and magnitude of Russian lexicon changes are astounding: within less than two decades, the language has gone through such an abrupt and sweeping “liberalization” process that it provoked both passionate and controversial discussions in the public to the extent that some people call the current form of Russian a foreign language for its native speakers. The two on-going processes in the development of 21<sup>st</sup>-century Russian lexicon that bring about the most controversy are barbarization and borrowings.

The present paper has come to life as the authors’ response to the controversial discussion of recent developments in the Russian lexicon. The most notable works among a rich array of passionate opinions are *Русский «Тусовочный» как Иностраный»* (Yantarnyj Skaz, 2005) by Shkapenko T. & Huebner F.; *Молодёжный Сленг в Современной Культуре* ([http://archvuz.ru/magazine/Numbers/2004\\_02](http://archvuz.ru/magazine/Numbers/2004_02)) by Bukina, E. V.; «Экспансия разговорности в сферах средств массовой информации» (June 6, 2007) by Chokhonelidze, N.; and *Языковой Вкус Эпохи* (СПб., 1999) by Kostomarov, V. G.

The paper will consider two strata of the new lexicon that exemplify the above-mentioned processes; these are criminal jargon and youth slang. It will also discuss two major positions on the witnessed developments in the lexicon, critical and supporting. The authors will argue that there is a need to teach this type of vocabulary in the classroom. A mini-lesson sample in the form of task-based activity will be demonstrated.