PREREQUISITES FOR THE STUDY OF URBAN LANGUAGE AND SPEECH IN THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC ASPECT: ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE PITTSBURG DIALECT IN THE USA

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Abstract: The article is devoted to the study of the linguistic variability of the Pittsburgh dialect from the point of view of the sociolinguistic approach of ecolinguistics at the phonetic and lexical linguistic levels in accordance with the influence of extralingual factors on it. The role of language in the life of society and individual communities, the influence of social and stratification factors on linguistic changes in society, the totality of linguistic and political relations, motives of behavior and activities of the subjects of such relations - this is the spectrum of linguistic activity of the state and society, individual, family, team, ethnic community, etc. In recent years, there has been a marked increase in interest in sociolinguistic areas of research in world linguistics, while the sociolinguistic categories that have been considered and studied in our research remain only partially outlined and investigated. An attempt is made to fill in some research gaps in the field of sociolinguistics.

Keywords: Dialect, Dialogue, Linguistic level, Linguistic variability, Sociolinguistics.

1 Introduction

The relevance of the work is determined, first, by a new perspective on the analysis of speech variability depending on the influence of selected extralingual factors: gender, ethnicity, social status and age, which, of course, corresponds to the current state of linguistics and growing interest in disclosing social factors of speech in different territories, as well as the application of the ecolinguistic approach to the analysis of sociolinguistic differentiation of the Pittsburgh dialect. Secondly, our study is quite interesting in light of the importance of the sociocultural role of the Pittsburgh dialect (object of study) in the holistic linguistic picture of the United States of America.

The aim of the work is to determine the main parameters of the concept of "language behavior of Pittsburgh residents" and to establish patterns of variation of language units of the Pittsburgh dialect in accordance with the impact of extralingual factors on their functioning: gender, ethnicity, social status and age.

Achieving this goal involves the implementation of specific tasks:

1) To systematize scientific approaches to the concept of "language norm";
2) To give a general description of the phonetic and lexical linguistic features of the Pittsburgh dialect;
3) To describe the structure of the "portrait" of speech of Pittsburgh residents, taking into account external factors of the environmental context: interaction with other languages, dialects and variants;
4) To establish the influence of gender, ethnic, class and age differentiation on the sociolinguistic variability of speech of Pittsburgh residents (phonetic and lexical language levels) in accordance with the influence of internal factors of the environmental context;
5) To reveal the variability of lexical units of the Pittsburgh dialect in accordance with the influence of social factors;
6) To identify the heterogeneity of the Pittsburgh dialect as a manifestation of sociolinguistic differentiation.

The object of the study is the phonetic and lexical properties of the Pittsburgh dialect, determined by gender, ethnic origin, social status and age.

2 Materials and Methods

Methodologically, the study is based on the latest advances in various linguistic fields. The issue of defining the term "language norm", territorial differentiation, the influence of social factors on the speech of the inhabitants of different territories were considered by linguists: V.D. Bondaletov, V.M. Zhirmunsky, L.P. Chrisin, O.D. Petrenko, E.Sh. Isayev, L.I. Prokopov, the main idea of whose works is the dependence of the language norm on the situation of communication, the influence of extralinguistic factors on its use. Among linguists working in this field, we note: R. Bell, S. Kiesling, B. Johnstone, W. Labov, P. Traji, J. Fishman, K. Henson, who in their works highlighted the influence of extralinguistic factors (social status, gender, age) on speech. The identification of sociocultural variation of speech within ecolinguistics has been studied in the works of the following scientists: A. Fill, E. Haugen, M. Halliday, I.S. Shevchenko, O.O. Selivanova, V.G. Pasinok, V.V. Ivanitsky, A.P. Skovorodnikov, N.N. Kislitsyna, V.V. Zhukovskaya, S.V. Ionov, G.A. Kopnina, N.O. Kurashkina, D.O. Narusheva, O.V. Sukhoverov, P. Finke, S.M. Tolstoy. The language norm as an object of scientific research has already taken its place in the field of sociolinguistic studies. Getting into a context that expresses a certain scientific problem with the help of special units, the term 'language norm' gradually goes from a commonly used lexical phrase to the name of a professional concept based on the analysis of related concepts and definitions. This is evidenced by a number of scientific studies in linguistics that operate on this concept, and language behavior itself is the main or tangible object of their analysis. However, there is a need to determine the structure of the concept of "language norm" in sociolinguistics based on the analysis of the content of the concept, linguistic and extralingual elements, as well as collective and individual patterns of language behavior to scientifically interpret sociolinguistic parameters of the category "language norm" and identify trends in language behavior and the possibilities of a reasonable sociolinguistic forecast of this type of behavior in different social conditions [1, 5-8, 13, 14, 17, 19, 22, 24-26].

The work is devoted to the study of speech properties of the inhabitants of Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, United States, from the point of view of the sociolinguistic approach of ecolinguistics at the phonetic and lexical language levels. The study is based on the definition and analysis of the implementation of phonetic and lexical variables under the influence of extralinguistic parameters (gender, ethnicity, social affiliation of the informant, age). An integrated approach to the study of data allowed identifying differential features of speech depending on social factors. The results of the study of the speech of the inhabitants not only reveal the uniqueness of this dialect, but also the dependence of the variation of language units on the social characteristics of society in the region.

The material of the study was dialect units of phonetic and lexical levels, selected from written sources and authentic records of speech of the speakers of the Pittsburgh dialect in the period 2000-2014, recorded in full in the electronic online archive. The array of listening experimental material is 44 recordings of spontaneous speech and 4 samples of reading passages of text. The total duration of the sound of the analyzed material is 34 hours 30 minutes 23 seconds. The array of lexical material, selected from written sources, was presented in the form of a glossary, the volume of which is 592 units: nouns (429), verbs (104), adjectives (36), adverbs (13), prepositions (8), conjunctions (3), pronouns (1).

The research methods were chosen taking into account its tasks. To achieve the goal of the study, a set of methods and techniques

was used: 1) survey, questionnaire, standard interview and included observation in order to obtain material for further study; 2) descriptive and comparative methods for the classification and interpretation of the studied language units; 3) a continuous sample of lexicographic sources; 4) audit analysis by native-speaking auditors in order to identify the variability of informants' speech; 5) audit analysis by phonetics auditors, performed by native speakers – philologists – to verify the accuracy of the data obtained; 6) mathematical analysis of the frequency of use of language units to be analyzed; 7) method of graphic and linguistic interpretation of research results for systematization of the obtained data and presentation of the peculiarities of their variation.

The theoretical significance of the work performed on the basis of our own experimental study of phonetic and lexical language levels is to further develop theoretical aspects of the functioning of territorial and social varieties of language within a broad ecological context (influence of social factors and interaction with other languages and dialects according to the theories of sociolinguistic variability of language through the manifestation of the role of extralinguistic factors in the speech of the inhabitants of a particular city).

The practical value of the work is determined by the possibility of applying the main provisions of the study, the results and conclusions obtained in courses on theoretical and practical phonetics, lexicology of modern English, sociolinguistics. The vocabulary of the Midland dialect continuum and the Pittsburgh dialect (collected qualitatively and quantitatively in the course of our own experimental research) collected and systematized in the glossary developed can be used in lexicographic practice to compile regional and dialect dictionaries of the English language.

3 Results and Discussion

The purpose of this analysis is to use the sociolinguistic approach of ecolinguistics to identify the linguistic properties of Pittsburgh speech on the basis of experimental material collected during 2000-2014.

The obtained data allowed systematizing the glossary, which contains 592 tokens. All lexical units are divided into independent (proper and common nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, adverbs) and official parts of speech (prepositions and conjunctions). The volume of all lexical units of the glossary is as follows: nouns – 412; verbs - 109; adjectives – 44; pronouns – 1; adverbs – 13; prepositions – 8; connectors – 3.

Based on the results of the analysis, 4 graphs were constructed, which clearly demonstrate the use of all lexical units during communication. For convenience, a separate graph is built for each part of the language.

In the study, all tokens are divided into semantic subgroups, which allows outlining in more detail and understand which tokens are most common among certain groups of residents. The study of vocabulary allowed us to consider the use of vocabulary, taking into account the influence of various extralingual (social) factors on speech.

In the course of consideration of these tokens, it was determined that the most influential extralingual factors are gender, speaker' status, and age.

Let us consider the tokens of different parts of speech separately.

3.1 Nouns

In the course of studying lexical units, it was found that the group of "nouns" is the largest. This fact is logical, because, in every language, nouns are the most common tokens. Thus, 412 tokens were considered, of which 55 belong to proper names (13.3%): names of famous people, names of places and buildings in Pittsburgh. One should note that among the proper nouns the lion's share is made of the names of famous people involved in sports: Pittsburgh is a sports city, all known for its professional

hockey club (Pittsburgh 'Penguins, which plays in the NHL). The Pittsburgh dialect has acquired a number of Pittsburghisms thanks to world-renowned commentator and journalist Myron Cope.

The next group of tokens consists of common nouns (69.5%). This category includes tokens, which are conditionally divided by semantic content into: "sports" – 13.6%, "life" – 38.5%, "shopping and fashion" – 4.9%, "food and drink" – 11,6%, "professional vocabulary" – 9.7%, "hospital vocabulary" – 1.9% and "other" – 6.3%.
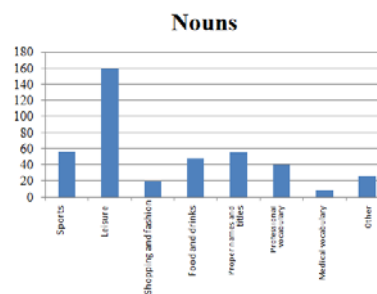

Figure 1 – A group of lexical units belonging to nouns

According to the results of the analysis, the largest groups of "nouns" are formed by household and sports vocabulary, as household vocabulary is used most widely, and sports vocabulary indicates the city's affiliation to sports and interest in various sports, including hockey, football, and more.

3.2 Verbs

The second largest group of tokens consists of "verbs" – 109 units (18.4%). During the study of lexical units related to the action, semantic subgroups were identified, which include the following: "everyday" (46.7%), "hobby" (7.3%), "life" (21.1%), and "others" (19.2%). The tokens of the semantic group "life" include those that denote women's and men's responsibilities – 11% and 10.1%, respectively.
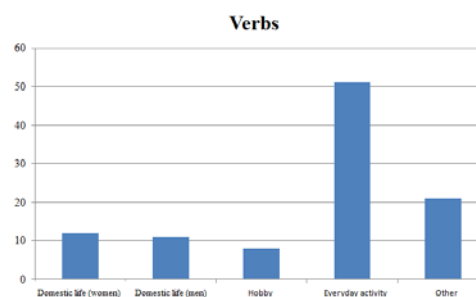

Figure 2 – A group of lexical units belonging to verbs

3.3 Adjectives

The tokens that belong to this group are 44 units (7.4%). They usually identify qualitative and relative features of objects used in various spheres of life of Pittsburgh residents. The studied adjectives are divided into thematic subgroups, namely: "color" and "nationality" (conditionally combined into one subgroup due to the small number of tokens), which together make up 9%;

- "Weight and size" – 20.4%;
- Other – 43.1%.

We also identified lexical units that have a negative (13.6%) and positive meaning (11.3%).
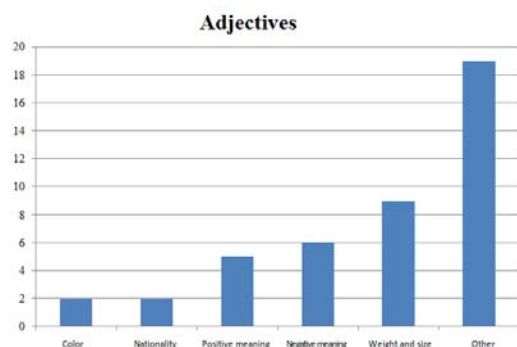
Figure 3 – A group of lexical units belonging to adjectives

3.4 Adverbs and Pronouns

In the course of our research, a rather small group of lexical units was recorded, which includes adverbs and pronouns. Specific pronouns include only one token (0.16%), which is a characteristic feature of the Pittsburgh dialect and is the most commonly used and studied among scholars – yinz (denotes 'you guys' or 'you two'). Pronouns include 1.3% of tokens that denote the object of action, direction, place, reason, purpose, and time. All of them are frequent among the speakers of the Pittsburgh dialect. Among the most common, there are the following: pertineer – almost; zackly – exactly; onest – once; pacific – specific (Figure 4).
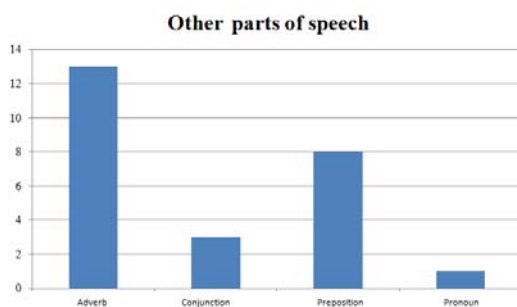

Figure 4 – A group of lexical units belonging to other parts of speech

3.5 Auxiliary Part of Speech

This group includes prepositions and conjunctions, the percentage of which is 2.1% and 1.3%, respectively.

Thus, in the analysis of experimental material, all vocabulary is divided into parts of speech and classified into semantic subgroups. The largest share of tokens is made up of nouns and verbs that belong to such groups as "sports", "everyday", "fashion and sports".

The use of these lexical items is a direct indicator of the influence of the social category "gender", because sports are inherent in men, and fashion and shopping – in women. Professional vocabulary also makes up a significant share: "production" and "medicine". This fact confirms that the main contingent living in Pittsburgh is the working class, i.e., the influence of the social factor can be traced. Vocabulary belonging to the group "food and drink" indicates the names of specific dishes and is of Scottish, Irish and German origin. Thus, the influence of the ethnic factor on the interaction between the speaker and speech is confirmed. This vocabulary has ethnic roots and is supported by the elderly, i.e., the age factor is very important in the interaction of speech and its performer.

The population of Pittsburgh as of 2014 was 305.704 people, of which 148.101 people were men and 157.603 were women. Thus, among the speakers of the Pittsburgh dialect, women make up 51.5%, and men – 48.5% [23].

The language and speech of Pittsburgh residents are characterized by certain variability. Depending on the situation of the speaker, the words can be used in different meanings, with different frequency. The speakers of the Pittsburgh dialect have created a number of unique dialect words, common mainly in Pittsburgh and its environs, commonly referred to as "Pittsburghisms" and which also take on different meanings depending on the context.

Of particular importance for our work are individual words and phrases. It is quite typical for men to use a number of nouns, including those related to everyday vocabulary:

Ahr – Hour;
Fahr – Fire;
Fire Tire – Fire tower;
Flahr – Flower;
Haus – House;
Hollah – Hollow;
Raht – Rout;
Pahr – Power;
Pahn –Pound;
Tahl –Towel;
Tahr – Tire;
Tahrarn – Tire iron;
Tahrs –Towers;
Wahr – Wire;
Yella – Yellow;
Souled aht − Sold out;
Dahnthan – Downtown;
Dahn nair – Down there;
Chawt! – Look out!

Here are some examples that illustrate the functioning of male vocabulary in everyday life:

S'not mine yella tahl.
Derivative from: *It's not mine yellow towel;*
Sgo! Da raht is right.
Derivative from: *Let's go! The rout is right!;*
Da haus is dahn nair.
Derivative from: *The house is down there;*
Chawt! We are doing da tahrarn.
Derivative from: *Look out! We are doing the tire iron!*
They need a Fire Tire! Da fahr is very stong.
Derivative from: *They need a fire tower! The fire is very strong;*
All goods are souled aht.
Derivative from: *All goods are sold out.*

The next layer of word usage is sports vocabulary, which occupies a special place in the life of Pittsburgh. There is no doubt that men are more likely than women to enjoy sports. Not an exception are the male inhabitants of Pittsburgh, who use monophthongization to create additional names of favorite teams, sports games, other names related to sports and change the names of favorite players:

Bill Cahr (Bill Cowher) – a famous American football player of the US National Football League, coach;
Pahrts (Pittsburgh Pirates) – a professional baseball team in Pittsburgh;
Bullin '(Bowling)
Da Meddahs (The Meadows) – the name of the complex, consisting of a hotel, racetrack, and casino;
Cahr Pahr – literally "Cowher's force" – the force that will lead the "Stillers" to the Super Cup;
Brahn Gahles (Brian Giles) – a famous baseball player, played in the team "Pittsburgh Pirates";
Kerdell Stewrt (Kordell Stewart) – a famous American football player (quarterback) of the US National Football League;
Rocky Blahr (Rocky Blier) – a famous American football player of the US National Football League;
Marn Cope (Myron Cope) – Myron Cope – a famous sports commentator.

Much of the difference in the word usage of Pittsburgh residents is due not only to the gender and age characteristics of the

speakers, but also to their social status. The Pittsburgh dialect is traditionally associated with the working class, its way of life, activities, and the specifics of speech.

Demographic change in Pittsburgh itself – the baby boom of the 1960s and 1970s – in the families of workers greatly helped to create the lexical basis of the Pittsburgh dialect. Children born during this period were the grandchildren of immigrant industrial workers who arrived between 1880 and 1920; they no longer spoke their native language and had weakened ties to religions, while their parents and grandparents continued to realize themselves in context of their ethnicity and religion. The growing generation developed their regional and, very importantly, class and social consciousness, which became a source of dialectisms [2, 3].

At the same time, the needs of production are growing and communication within the working class leads to the emergence and active use of a number of unique Pittsburgh vocabulary, which means materials for production or manufactured products, in particular:

Alunamin – Aluminium;
Arn – Iron;
Carbon Oil – Kerosene;
Concreek – Concrete;
Erol – Oil;
Still – Steel;
Oral – Oil;
Sheetrock – Drywall;
Wahr – Wire;
Skiw-et – Skillet;
CEEE−ment – Cement;
Hork – Steel;
Cender truck – Cinder truck;
Greeze – Grease;
Mannies – Marbles;
Bob wahr – Barbed Wire.

Here are some examples of the functioning of dialectisms designed to denote materials for production or manufactured products:

Da concreek is strong enough. Do not worry!
Derivative from: *The concrete is strong enough. Do not worry!*
This wall is made from sheetrock.
Derivative from: *This wall is made of drywall;*
One can buy da best still only in Burgh!
Derivative from: *"One can buy the best steel only in Pittsburgh;*
I need to change da tahr in my car.
Derivative from: *I need to change the tire in my car.*

Some of the "Pittsburghs" that are still used by the working class today relate to tools, equipment, and jobs:

Still Mills – Steel mills;
Iron city – Pittsburgh;
Clodhoppers – Work boots;
Hoosafratz – Mechanical Device;
Toll – Tool;
Plowers – Pliers;
Cucky – An organic gooey subsance.

These tokens can be found in a variety of language situations:

Iron city is da place where I am living and working.
Derivative from: *Pittsburgh is the place whare I am living and working;*
I will wear my clodhoppers a take my toll −
Derivative from: *I will wear my work boots and take my tool;*
Still mills in a da city are functioning since 1875.
Derivative from: *Steel mills in the city are functioning since 1975.*

In addition, the working class uses specific words directly related to the workflow, including:

Dooder Jobs – Do their job;

Tahrarn – Tire iron;
Cinstruction – Process used to build and repair things;
Tet-ni-kal – Technical;
Cadillac converter – Catalytic converter;
Masonry – Masonry.

It is advisable to demonstrate examples of the use of tokens associated with the workflow (working process):

Yinz guyz need to git da cadillac converter fixed if yinz'r gonna pass da test!
Derivative from: *You guys need o git the catalytic converter fixed if you are giong to pass the test;*
We dooder jobs every day.
Derivative from: *We do our jobs every day;*
Da masonry was made last month.
Derivative from: *The masonry was made last month.*

In the late 1970s and 1980s, Pittsburgh experienced a significant industrial downturn, many steel mills were closed, and factory workers were laid off. The population of the city decreased sharply to 311 thousand people. The main areas of economic activity of the city were education, tourism, medicine, high technology, financial services [4, 9, 15]. Thus, there is a need for more qualified professionals who are able to work in new economic conditions. At the same time, many members of the working class were forced to leave the city in search of new work. Thus, the middle social group and the intelligentsia are strengthening their position in the city, and at the same time the use of the Pittsburgh dialect is becoming less common. The largest wave of population outflow occurred in the 1980s with the final closure of most local metallurgical plants. At this time, the working class is becoming less homogeneous than in previous periods, residents are beginning to communicate more with others who have a different social status. In addition, there is social mobility: a significant number of children of workers already belong to the middle social group. In the local language, the share of tokens formed as a result of monophthongization decreases sharply.

Medicine and university education are gaining ground in the city's economy – many students and highly qualified professionals from other parts of the United States come to Pittsburgh. Communicating with the local population, members of the intelligentsia and the middle class began to use some Pittsburgh dialects related to education and medicine, including:

Am-blee-unce –Ambulance;
Angioplastic – Angioplasty;
Artheritis –Arthritis;
Caw-idge – College;
Liberry – Library;
Lice-ness – License;
MU-se-um – Museum;
Peel –Pill;
Newkyaler –Nuclear;
Dennis – Dentist;
Dinge – Tooth;
Fiscul Thirpy – Physical Therapy;
Quirpracter – Chiropractor;
Skull – School.

Here are some examples of the use of "Pittsburghisms" by the middle social group and the intelligentsia:

Pittburgh caw-idge has a very good liberry. You can use it.
Derivative from: *Pittsburth college has a very good library;*
I will go to da dennis to cure my dinge.
Derivative from: *I will go to the dentist to cure my tooth;*
I will take a pell, there is no need to call the am-blee-unce.
Derivative from: *I will take a pill, there is no need to call the ambulance;*
His grandmother has a terrible artheritis.
Derivative from: *His grandmother has a terrible arthritis.*

The change in the economic orientation of Pittsburgh attracted representatives of the creative intelligentsia to the city. The availability of affordable housing, studios and offices in former industrial areas has allowed young artists, designers, musicians, and other creative professionals to stay in the city after graduating from local universities. They notice the regional features of the language, interact with the local population, realize the uniqueness of the Pittsburgh dialect and begin to use some tokens in order to claim local identity and demonstrate their knowledge of Pittsburgh [3, 6, 13]. The words used by the creative intelligentsia are also related to its activities:

> *Cammra – Camera*
> *Gum – Eraiser;*
> *Keller – Colour;*
> *Pin – Pen;*
> *Pitcher –Picture;*
> *Videoin – Video taping.*

For the scientific intelligentsia, which communicates mainly in literary language, the Pittsburgh dialect has become the object of study. Today, the University of Pittsburgh has a group of scholars who study the features of the local dialect, among them: B. Johnstone, M. Eberhardt, S. Kiesling, M. Wisnoski, S. Gooden. Given all the above, we can outline three main differences in the word usage of the speakers of the Pittsburgh dialect in terms of social status of speakers:

1) The working class is characterized by a much greater tendency to use dialectisms than the middle social group and the intelligentsia;
2) In the language of the working class, dialects that arose as a result of monophthongization are much more common;
3) The working class mainly uses words related to industrial production, and the middle and intelligentsia use tokens that are related to education, medicine, and creative work.

It should be noted that in the current living conditions of Pittsburgh, the local dialect is mainly seen as a tool of regional identification, self-identification with the city, and the identification of the speaker by social status and differences in word usage of speakers with different social status are secondary. Despite the indisputable and strong connection of this dialect with the working class, modern culture forces the integration of different social groups, which reduces linguistic differences between them, so the Pittsburgh dialect is unlikely to be widely used in the future, but its preservation will be a matter for all segments of the population among carriers.

American researchers [15, 16] observed the use of the Pittsburgh dialect by young people aged 19-25, surveying 100 Internet users living in Pittsburgh. When asked how long they have lived in the city and its environs, 91% of respondents answered "all their lives", 3% of respondents indicated living in the city for 7-10 years, 2% for 4-6 years, for 3 and less – 4%. Survey participants were asked if they knew what "Pittsburghisms" were (specific words typical of the Pittsburgh dialect). 96% of respondents answered "yes, of course" to this question. The remaining 4% stated that they have a common understanding of this topic. The most popular words that young people associated with Pittsburgh were:

Yinz – derived from you guys – you (friends);
Dahnthan – Dowtown;
Stillers – a Pittsburgh variant of the Steelers football team's name.
Bright example of youth word usage is the question: *Yinz, what do you think about Stillers 'game today?*
Derived from: *You guys, what do you think about Steelers' game today*? Or offer:
> *Let's go dahnthan.*
Derivative from: *Let's go to downtown*.

It is important to note that the purpose of other research on age characteristics [18] was to find out the attitude of young people to "Pittsburghisms". According to this criterion, 4 main groups were identified: young people with a positive attitude to

Pittsburgh vocabulary – 57%; negative – 15%; neutral – 9%, young people who have a positive attitude to Pittsburgh, but negative to "Pittsburghisms" – 19%. Let us note the positive attitude of Pittsburgh youth to the local dialect, while a significant percentage (34% in total) negatively perceive this feature of the city and its environs. The researcher was also interested in the arguments that guided the survey participants in their attitude to the Pittsburgh dialect. For positive youth, Pittsburgh is part of their hometown with which they identify themselves. Those who are negative think that the Pittsburgh dialect sounds bad and that its speakers give the impression of uneducated people.

A kind of advertisement for the life of Pittsburgh are Pittsburgh T-shirts with funny inscriptions using the local Pittsburgh vocabulary. Such T-shirts are usually bought by tourists or young people. Of course, sometimes this is done by members of the middle age group, but bright T-shirts are considered more appropriate for the youth style of clothing. Thanks to Pittsburgh T-shirts, tourists get acquainted with the local dialect, and the youth of the city and its environs (even those who do not use the dialect) begin to be not only "active" but also "passive" speakers of the dialect.

Pittsburgh T-shirts are sold everywhere: in specialty gift shops, at points of sale along the city streets, on the Internet. They are usually white, black, yellow, or orange. The letters on them are white, black, or gold. These colors are considered the colors of the city and the football, basketball, or hockey teams that represent it. The front usually depicts a cityscape with the obligatory inscription "Pittsburghese" (sometimes, "Pixburghese"). The most popular words on T-shirts are:

> *Dahntahn – Downtown;*
> *Worsh – Wash;*
> *Jynt iggle – "Giant Eagle" (supermarkets network);*
> *Gumban – Chewing gum;*
> *Redd up – Tidy up;*
> *Slippy (slippey) – Slippery;*
> *Yinz – You two;*
> *Jagoffs – idiots.*

Thus, the younger age group of Pittsburgh residents most often among all the "Pistburgers" use the tokens that are depicted on T-shirts.

4 Conclusion

The study of lexical units on the basis of the glossary of the Pittsburgh dialect indicates the variability of the use of lexical units. Experimental language material in the amount of 452 tokens demonstrates the dialectal features of speech of Pittsburgh representatives and allows checking previously substantiated theoretical assumptions about the dynamics of changes in the functioning of the Pittsburgh dialect in the modern period and establishing the basic patterns of lexical units. It was found that the most influential extralingual factors are gender, social status of speakers, and age.

Pittsburgh is a place of the steel industry, as well as a developed center with educational institutions, hospitals, business structures, which conditionally divides residents into different social groups, and certainly influences the choice and use of certain language tools.

In addition, the specific language is most characteristic of Pittsburgh residents of the older age group – 54%. Young people tend to use fashionable lexicon and slang – 3.9%, and the middle age group (19%) use codified language, due to the fact that they are involved in the work process, which implies the use of standardized language. The influence of the age factor is observed in the use of special lexical units, namely those related to everyday life and national cuisine.

By analyzing the nature of the origin, development, and functioning of the Pittsburgh dialect from the point of view of the sociolinguistic approach of ecolinguistics, the expediency of its heterogeneity within the Midland dialect continuum and

consideration of features from the standpoint of social factors, such as gender, age and ethnicity is revealed. An experimental author's study of phonetics and vocabulary was made on the basis of the author's glossary of the Pittsburgh dialect, which was systematized on the basis of material collected during repeated visits to Pittsburgh in the period from 1998 to 2017, as well as constant contact with Pittsburgh residents via the Internet, social network Facebook, Skype).

The characteristics of the general linguistic background are final in the detailed sociolinguistic study of certain social groups living in the study area and being active or passive speakers of a particular language. One of the key tasks of this study is to study the sociolinguistic picture of the city, which allows establishing the features of the language situation based on the analysis of social types and language portraits of this area.

The language situation in Pittsburgh is characterized by the use of different languages and language subsystems. We have recorded that, in addition to literary language, in Pittsburgh there are subsystems of uncodified language: youth slang, jargon, professional slang. In modern life, a resident of the city, who is a native of the literary language, uses in his daily speech various forms of existence of the American version of the English language. The Pittsburgh dialect plays the most important role in the city's informal communication.

The formation of the Pittsburgh dialect was due to the interaction of local languages, dialects of immigrants from Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Slavic countries during the American Revolution, as well as professional jargon of the steel industry. At the same time, the Pittsburgh dialect is not a closed system and manifests itself in the speech of native speakers in different volumes and frequencies, depending on the social characteristics of the speakers.

The application of the principles of ecolinguistics to the study of the Pittsburgh dialect revealed sociocultural variation in the speech of Pittsburgh residents and identified a number of transformational processes in the studied subsystem of the American version of English and changes in the social environment. The speech of Pittsburgh residents in everyday communication is a significant manifestation of the characteristics of the dialect, the functioning of which depends on factors such as gender, ethnicity, social status of the speaker and his age, which play a crucial role in shaping Pittsburgh speech, i.e., social influence on speech.

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