

Stylistic Configuration of Modern English Young Adult Literature

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Abstract--- *The article presents literary study of modern young adult prose in English. Stylistic and interpretative text analysis shows that this group of literary works has its own distinctive style. This style is not opposed to classical belles-lettres. Actually, it has the same wide arsenal of devices and expressive means. At the same time, youngsters' literary works are characterized by some youth colloquial communicative features typical for this group only. Literary stylistic devices themselves reflect specific features of youth language. These facts prove that it is necessary to single out young adult literature as a separate functional substyle as well as to provide precise parameters and linguistic characteristics which define it. Besides, the authors revealed the following categories of stylistic means and literary devices of youth literature: narrative techniques, specific lexical stylistic devices, carnivalization of values, emblems and symbols of youth culture. For this purpose, the authors chose and analyzed three popular youth novels that have been published recently. The analysis showed that dominating narrative techniques include interior monologues, first and second point of view in the text, familiarity of the author with the audience, short communicative distance, special lexical stylistic devices such as slang epithets, slang metaphor and etc. Carnivalization of values is not restricted to certain language means. It involves youth humour, sometimes rather violent and unexpected. This feature usually radically changes the understanding of common traditional values in the society. Emblems and symbols include words which denote concepts of modern youth life. The age of the author, audience and characters is also considered as a special factor which influences the stylistic characteristics of a literary work. The results of the research can be of great use for the development of literary theory, stylistics and text analysis.*

Keywords--- *Literary Style, Communicative Style, Young Adult Literature, Age, Youth.*

I. INTRODUCTION

From linguistic viewpoint, literary (or belles-lettres/fiction) style is characterized by the use of all stylistic resources of the language. Literary speech possesses wide and deep metaphorical power, imagery generated by units of different language levels. Most of them are created by authors themselves and thus, are unlimited in their variety. They are considered to depend on the author's individual world perception, occupation, family background, ethnicity and other social factors. In this article we focus on age as a crucial factor in formation of style, namely, the style of young adult literature (YAL). T. Akers refers YAL to a part of children's literature, defining it as "a

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subgenre of children's literature" whose audience is 10-16 years old (Akers, 2011: 6), though most authors still distinguish YAL as a separate subgenre (Jacobs, 2003; Eskridge, 2002; Goodson, 2004; Wagg, 2004).

The researchers consider the following categories of age limits and general parameters of youth literature:

- Age limits. The age of characters and the target audience. The young are a special social and age group, which is undergoing the transformation from childhood and adolescence to social responsibility (Bucholtz, 2013: 527). Except age, youngsters tend to have specific psychophysical features, cultural peculiarities, and a common system of values. Concerning the recent classifications of youth groups (Bekzhanova, 2016: 17-19), we set the age limits between 13 up to 35 years old.
- Youth topics. Research on youth spoken speech and written assignments shows that teenagers (13-17) prefer the following topics to discuss and write about: school, traveling/adventures, friends, freedom. Youngsters at the age of 17-30 are more interested in the topics connected with their activities and subcultures or groups they belong to. For students, priorities will be education and career opportunities, while working youngsters will probably prefer to discuss making money. However, due to their age they will definitely have some common topics such as love, fashion, celebrities, entertainment, and success (Bekzhanova, 2016: 21-26).

The age of the YAL author is not considered to be among the main parameters. It is optional, because a lot of authors are actually not youngsters, but adults, though very interested in youth topics as parents, doctors, teachers and etc.

The studies mentioned above consider YAL as a group of books which have special topics interesting for youngsters and characters of the same age range as their target readers. It is distinguished from children's and adults' literature. In contrast, we assume that topics and age are not the only factors which make YAL a separate literary category. We proposed the hypothesis that youth literature can be an independent functional substyle as it has specific stylistic features. In the framework of the current research "functional style" is understood as a system of language means which enables to achieve the purport of communication (Galperin, 2014: 249). Researchers single out belles-lettres (literary/fiction), publicistic, newspaper, scientific prose, and official documents functional styles. YAL belongs to belles-lettres functional style, though it has never been called officially a substyle of belles-lettres. Overall, age of the audience has never been a criterion for style/substyle formation. All functional styles differ in chosen language means, and belles-lettres is justly considered to be the richest and the most aesthetic one (Arnold, 1981: 12). In order to fix the position of YAL as a literary substyle, it is important to define the choice of particular language means which makes it stylistically different in contrast with the classical literary texts.

We conducted stylistic and interpretative analysis of youth literary texts. The analysis showed that YAL has the same stylistic characteristics as classical belles-lettres prose. Nevertheless, these devices and techniques have their peculiarities, borrowed from youth communicative style. By "youth communicative style" we mean communicative behavior of people belonging to a certain social and ethnical group (Kulikova, 2006: 15). In our case it is typical behavior of youngsters in their interaction with each other. So, YAL is a hybrid stylistic formation which combines signs of belles-lettres and youth communicative style. There are stylistic and linguistic features common for this group. Thus, we have singled out the following categories of stylistic characteristics: narrative techniques, specific

lexical stylistic devices, carnivalization of values, emblems and symbols of youth culture. All of them bear the elements of youth culture and communicative behavior.

II. METHODS

Text fragments from pieces of YAL were selected from three books of American and British authors: “Everything, Everything” by Nicola Yoon (2015), “Girl Online” by Zoe Sugg (2016) and “The Fault in Our Stars” by John Green (2012). They were selected according to their recent popularity both among youngsters and older readers. The total number of the fragments is about 1200 units, including 700 lexical and 500 textual extracts. We used 85 pieces of YAL to detect focalization peculiarities. After extensive reading and underlining the stylistic devices and expressive means, we conducted made interpretative analysis of the units and after that, classified these units into groups. Quantitative analysis was widely used. As a result, we could single out four main trends in YAL stylistics.

The materials were divided among the group of analysts for initial interpretation, and then exchanged between them in order to avoid subjective conclusions. After that common consensus about classification was reached.

In total, material choice, stylistic description and interpretation, editing and designing typology took approximately 8 months.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quantitative analysis of 85 pieces of youth prose works showed that 58 books were written in first person narrative combined with second person addressing a reader (68%). The proportion of narrative points of view are presented in Figure 1.

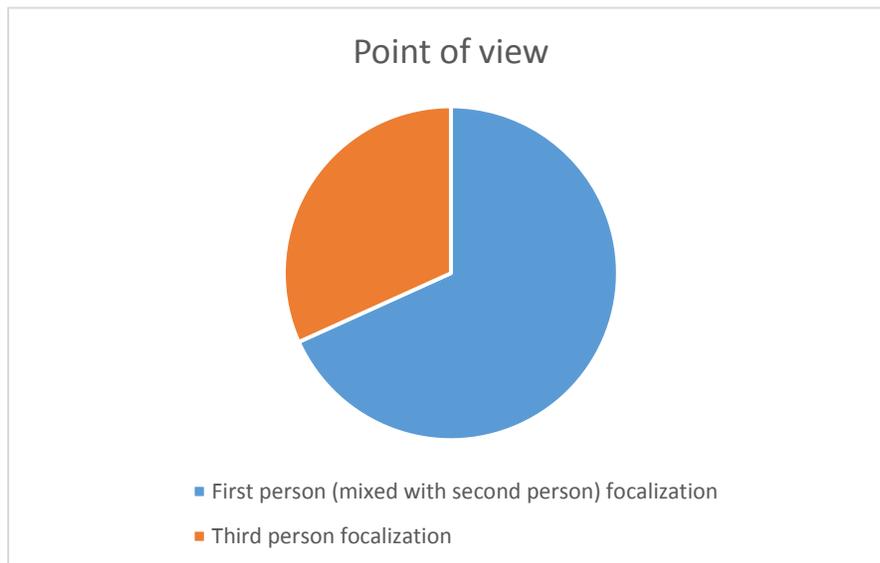


Figure 1: Narration in youth prose

The three works selected for stylistic analysis also belong to first person narration. In “Everything, Everything” the main character Madeline describes her life:

“I do not know why I am doing it, there is no one else here, no one, but my mother who never reads and my nurse Carla who has no time to read because she spends all her time watching me breathe. I rarely have visitors, and so there’s no one to lend my books to. There is no one who needs reminding that the forgotten book on his or her shelf belongs to me”.

Madeline shares her inner thoughts, and it seems to a reader that she does not control her words, as there are a lot of unnecessary repetitions (never read –reads, there’s – there’s). This is obviously the author’s technique of creating an effect of reality and truthfulness of the character’s inner speech. The story sounds like a girl’s diary and she is addressing no one, just sharing ideas. Y. Yassakova calls it “interior monologue” and “stream of consciousness”, when thoughts are arranged chaotically to produce the effect of a character’s hesitations, fear and other negative psychological states (Yassakova, 2005: 18-19).

Sometimes interior monologue and stream of consciousness can be confused. The difference is that an interior monologue can reflect all the thoughts, ideas, preferences and impressions that appear in the character’s consciousness, and it can be limited to an arranged presentation of the narrator’s “normal” thoughts.

In young adult prose the interior monologues acquire additional features.

Hello, World!

I’ve decided to start a blog.

This blog.

Why, you might ask?

You know when you shake a Coke can and then you open it and it explodes everywhere? Well, that is how I feel right now. I have so many things I want to say fizzing up inside of me, but I don’t have the confidence to say them out loud.

This extract from “Girl Online” illustrates that young authors can either talk to themselves or talk to a reader as if he is near you. Moreover, the author addresses to the reader as if they have known each other for some time and are close friends. The fact of “shaking a Coke and its exploding everywhere” shows that the audience of the book must be very similar to the narrator, and the narrator appeals to it without any doubts. “Hello” is an informal word for greeting, though it has become more common. The author uses this form to establish the close connection with the reader at once.

Zh.E. Bekzhanova mentions that youngsters tend to be extremely sincere and spontaneous in their communicative behavior (Bekzhanova, 2017: 38). Thus, being frank and spontaneous are an inseparable part of youth language in real world. They detest official style of speech or formal settings. Even if this style is used in youngsters’ interactions, it mostly makes fun of the adults’ speech and mocks at it. High stylistics is not typical of youth speech and sounds like speech of theatre, language of drama, has humorous elements and ironic exaggerations.

“Oh, no, my darling, would you be so kind as to keep yourself out of my room for a while....otherwise I am gonna eat you up, you, piece of shit!!!”. His girlfriend was probably a bit upset...I suppose...

This extract develops the idea of mocking or making fun of the adults’ speech. First, the speaker wanted to deride the situation imitating the language of drama, persuading her interlocutor that she is completely indifferent to him. For this purpose, she chooses high literal style (*darling*), sophisticated construction (*would you be so kind*). However, as the youth language is full of sudden emotions and spontaneity, she immediately switches to the informal register (*gonna eat you up*) and foul language (*shit*).

The following example shows the playful tone of the characters and intentional exaggeration of the situation as they are trying to imitate and mock at their clothing style:

“Lady Penelope!” he cries. He’s wearing a vintage pin-striped suit and braces and a bright red pair of Converse—this is him dressing down.

“Lord Elliot!” I cry back.

(From “Girl Online”)

However, in everyday life the characters call each other Penny and Elliot. The narrator’s name is used in its shortened form as a nickname.

Generally, it is not only formal style and adults’ way of communication which are intended to add humor into youngsters’ prose. American self-irony in the style of “Catcher in the Rye” is still typical for modern works. The piece of prose “The Fault in Our Stars” presents a totally different view of a young teenager towards his fatal disease. Being one step close to her death, the narrator can speak in an incredibly humorous manner.

“I looked like a normally proportioned person with a balloon for a head”.

Hazel, a narrator, characterizes herself objectively, as round cheeks and face were side effects of treatment she was undergoing at that time.

The author (through the narrator) pursues an intention to become closer to the reader, and in his epigram he reveals the truth about the story:

“This is not so much an author’s note as an author’s reminder of what was printed in small type a few pages ago: This book is a work of fiction. I made it up. Neither novels nor their readers benefit from attempts to divine whether any facts hide inside a story. Such efforts attack the very idea that made-up stories can matter, which is sort of the foundational assumption of our species. I appreciate your cooperation in this matter”.

The last sentence connects the addresser and addressees of the story, and there is hope for future collaboration and feedback.

Youth prose is more dynamic than classical literature. In the analyzed pieces of prose, we identified very few long descriptions with long digressions. In most cases even discourse markers, linking words and conjunctions between sentences are omitted, i.e. strong tendency for asyndeton is getting more and more popular. Dynamic descriptions occur more frequently than the static ones.

“I walked into the circle and sat down next to Isaac, two seats away from the boy. I glanced again. He was still watching me. Look, let me just say it: He was hot”.

(from “The Fault in Our Stars”)

We assume that this tendency in literature is connected with the way young generation perceives the world. Due to rapid development of information technologies and gadgets, youngsters’ world perception is more visual rather than verbal. And the phenomenon of so-called “clip-thinking” is more and more obvious.

So, this feature of real life youth style certainly reveals itself in young adult prose as literature has always been a mirror of the time, and it is natural and logical that modern prose demonstrates these language peculiarities.

As it is vividly shown in the extracts of “Girl Online”, the narration of youth prose resembles modern blogs style in Internet communication.

Blog is a special genre of writing which possesses the following stylistic features: expressiveness, evaluation, modality, persuasiveness, controversy. Such expressive means as simile, metaphor, metonymy, alliteration are rather typical for blogs. The texts are usually discussion-provoking so that they could attract, engage and involve as many readers as possible. On syntactic level we can observe rhetoric questions (answers are supposed to be given by commentators), series of rhetorical questions or authors’ answers themselves.

“So, how to choose your future career? What to start with? A gap year? A low-paid job?...”

English blogs have numerous repetitions of personal and possessive pronouns. All these things convey the effect of intimacy and solidarity, involving a reader into a certain social group. Second-person addressing is definitely borrowed into youngsters’ prose from blog style.

Why, you might ask?

You know when you shake a Coke can and then you open it and it explodes everywhere? Well, that’s how I feel right now.

(Girl Online)

The text sounds like a real blog, not a literary piece of work. Perhaps, the reason is author’s familiarity with the blog style, as she is considered an experienced blogger. It may seem an author’s individual style at first sight, peculiar only for this piece of prose. However, if we analyze other works, we can see a lot of traces from blog style as well.

“What else? She is so beautiful. You don’t get tired of looking at her. You never worry if she is smarter than you: You know she is. She is funny without ever being mean. I love her. I am so lucky to love her, Van Houten. You don’t get to choose if you get hurt in this world, old man, but you do have some say in who hurts you”.

(from “The Fault in Our Stars”)

Informal language is usual for addressing a reader. Communicative distance between the reader and the narrator is short and reminds a talk of two friends or at least potential friends. Syntactic constructions of the analyzed

fragments are as simple as possible. Authors avoid complicated constructions and inversions typical of belles-lettres style. Grammar is clear and simple.

Youngsters' real-life talks are also characterized by a very short social distance, which is reflected in literature. We understand communicative distance the characteristic of relationship between interlocutors. In real life youngsters' interactions are considered to have shorter distance rather than distance in adults' communication, though, certainly, they may vary depending on some social factors and the closeness of their relationships (friends, acquaintances, neighbours, groupmates, family members, etc). Equality in communication is an obligatory feature of any youngsters' talks. In the recent decades the distance between younger and older generations has reduced and communication has become more democratic. In youth prose this feature reveals itself in narration style.

As for youth prose, here we should mention communicative distance between the narrator and the reader. In fact, the narrator does not really know the reader, though in advance perceives and positions him/her as a peer, sharing the same interests, topics and life values, and consequently, knowing the narrator's language and understanding his manner of presentation. The narrator addresses the reader as "you" or without "you", just using imperatives in an informal way: "*Let's look at my story from a different angle*", "*Just imagine you are all alone in a big city....*", "*Don't trust any guy from San Francisco!*" The narrator of the last utterance is probably sure that her reader is a young girl aged between 13-35 who is in a romantic relationship with the opposite sex or in process of seeking such a relationship. So, the sentence sounds as a piece of advice, showing solidarity and cooperation with the reader-friend. That is the way young adult prose writers attract their readers.

On the other hand, narration is not the same as authorship. The author of the novel "The Fault in Our Stars" warns his reader in advance that his story is a complete fiction. Although it is written from the first person perspective, narrator Hazel is not author John Green who was thirty-two at the time of the book's first publication. Here it is relevant to consider the communicative distance between the narrator and the reader. From our perspective, in YAL the message conveyed by the text is always between the author and his audience, not the narrator. The exception is the pieces of fiction where the narrator and the author are the same people, and using first-person focalization is not just the way of making the story sound real.

Thus, we can observe that closeness and short communicative distance which is a sign of youth everyday communicative style have penetrated into literary style. It has become a recognizable feature of YAL.

Lexical Stylistic Devices in Youth Prose

The first peculiarity that characterizes youth style in everyday life and virtual communication is slang. It has invaded the Internet, the language of the mass media, adults' speech and has entered a literary genre as well.

We define slang as a set of words or new meanings of the existing words which are used by representatives of various social groups.

In the style of youth literature, particularly in its lexical aspects, slang is used much wider than words referring to certain words and neologisms. The concept of slang is treated differently. Youth slang is often defined as a lexical layer, "originally formed in one of sociolects (argot, jargon), but which transformed into interjargon and became

popular among young people". I.R. Galperin understands slangism as official dictionary units which do not belong to the standard vocabulary (Galperin, 1956: 106). In some works, slang is contrasted to the language of representatives of high status, making slang synonymous with conventional lexical units. D.V. Gromov defines slang as a kind of sociolect whose lexical composition reflects the realities of the community that uses it in speech (Gromov, 2009: 231).

In general, most linguists agree that slang words are stylistically reduced lexical units or, at least, are at a level below neutral vocabulary. D.V. Gromov distinguishes between general slang and slang of subcultures, which is the determining factor in the prevalence and literacy or "secrecy" of slang: general slang is explained as innovations "released", and slang of subcultures is an indicator of a certain reference group. Moreover, subculture slang can belong to only one subculture or be used by several subcultures simultaneously. These ideas are reflected in the works of P. Eckert who distinguishes slang for territorial and social groups: youth slang of the slums of Rio de Janeiro, Verlan slang, spoken by North Africans and residents of the poor district of Paris. These slang words mark the great difference between its speakers and the speakers of the standard language (Eckert, 2003: 118).

In this interpretation, slang is considered as anti-institutional lexical innovations that are opposed to the standard language, the language of the school, university, other institutions which are attended by young people. However, nowadays this opposition of youth slang to the language of the school is not entirely correct, as it is no secret that slang has clearly made its way into the language of adolescents, namely, about the school (nerds – obsessed with study, jocks – sportspeople, delinquents – spoilt bullies). Communicative style in this case is closely related to the style of clothing, appearance, musical preferences, place of residence, hobbies, etc. The creation of slangs is connected with these features.

We analyzed the lexical layer on the materials of YAL in order to compare real-life youngsters' speech and the style of youth fiction. In the three literary pieces of work we defined a great number of slang words (Table 1):

Table 1: Proportion of Slang Words in Pieces of Youth Prose

Work	Number of slang units
Everything, Everything	67
Girl Online	318
Fault in Our Stars	227

The first and the last pieces of prose contained a bit smaller number of slang words due to the mood and atmosphere of the works. Overall, the characters are the tragic ones, and the mood of the books is sad and depressive which is expressed better with conventional lexical units. However, the surprising fact is that these works still contain slang.

The nature of slang in youth literature has its peculiarities. Slang here carries a significant stylistic load. In fact, slang becomes a stylistic device rather than a simple lexical unit.

"I used to hate hearing his music all the time but now that he's at uni I like it"

"I get up and quickly scramble out of my school uniform and into my snow leopard onesie. Elliot hates onesies".
(Girl Online)

"I'm not moping," I say, though I've been moping a little. (Everything, Everything)

The use of “uni” instead of “university” demonstrates the author’s intention. In real life youngsters prefer lexical economy, shortening all possible words in spoken communication and virtual talks as well. They want to save time. However, when writing a piece of prose one can hardly lack time. Analyzing the cognitive reasons in referring to such kinds of spoken slang, we came to the conclusion that this is an intentional technique in writing. The writer is eager to reproduce the natural way of her usual thinking. And in natural speech she will probably use the slang version of “university”.

The same intentions can be observed in the example with the word “onesie”. In youth slang it denotes “the most comfortable clothes one cannot live without”. Though the author could write “my most comfortable pyjamas” or “the coziest slops”, she chooses the teens’ word “onesie” which will be probably understood by the target audience anyway and show the connection with those readers. Sounding natural is again the priority here.

As for “moping”, here the slang stands for “presenting oneself uneducated, regressing”. The narrator chooses this word both for citation of her speech in a dialogue and in her narration. The latter is done to make her thoughts sound authentic. The utterance sounds as if it had just been written spontaneously, simultaneously with her thoughts.

Humorous and ironic style of a text is also typical for youngsters’ literature.

“And we’re not only next-door neighbors but next-door-bedroom neighbors, which is seriously cool”. (Girl Online)

“I’m-the-doctor-and-I’m-afraid-I-have-some-bad-news-for-you face”. (Everything, Everything)

Generally, epithets are devices which are used to describe objects, characters and phenomena in a literary work, providing them with prominent traits and emphasizing these traits with emotional vocabulary. We distinguish compound type of epithets in a classical variant of classification, where epithets are formed by combining two or more nouns together to be used as an adjective. However, in the case of youth prose we see much more than two nouns, for instance, verbs, articles, personal pronouns, prepositions and others. On the one hand, it seems to be author's or youthstyle of word innovations. But on the other hand, there is a certain trace of mocking at a classical epithet-formation technique, exaggerating and ironizing. Nevertheless, apt and unexpected effect of the epithets is doubtless.

Avoiding trite expressive means is another tendency in stylistics. For example, instead of saying “awfully beautiful”, the author of “Girl Online” writes: “..if you wanna be wildly attractive to the opposite sex”.

Slang becomes deeply metaphoric in youth literature. The following examples illustrate this point:

“I’m on a roller coaster that only goes up, my friend” (The fault in Our Stars)

The narrator is citing one of the sick patient’s phrases when he describes his treatment. By “roller coaster” he definitely means that his treatment is not stable and does not give substantial progress. It slows down or goes up, and overall, is unsteady. He compares his health state with a roller coaster referring to this specific metaphor and slang expression at the same time. In youth vocabulary “roller coaster” has a lot of different meanings including difficulties in a romantic relationship. However, in this case the author prefers to use the slang in his own context.

“...I can feel a ball of dread growing in the pit of my stomach..”(Girl Online)

Metaphoric slang appears here to convey the fear and negative emotions of the narrator who remembers a threatening incident at dinnertime. She finds some physical associations of this fear with a ball rolling inside her. Emotional and expressive aspects are well developed in youth prose. Some of them do not just reveal precise feelings of a character, but demonstrate some astonishing choices of expressive means as well:

“He had some fantastically improbable eye cancer”.

In common sense, it is a simple oxymoron where two opposing notions come together in a word combination. However, the combination itself sounds really incompatible: a positive adverb+adjective+negative noun with fearful meaning”. That confirms the fact that English youth fiction does not accept trite stylistic devices, but opts forword innovations and unusual combinations.

Other works can provide fragments with collocations:

I've really missed him...

I gotta outlast four of these bastards

The guy was still staring at me. I felt rather blushy.

Contractions (I've, I'd, I'll) and fusions (gotta, wanna, gonna) are typical for informal speech and are common features of youth literary style. Lexical means of colloquial speech also occur frequently. “Really” is an intensifier very widely used by youngsters inserted in any place in everyday communication. Along with junk words “sort of”, “like” and “just” it is one of the commonest vague word which can also refer to slang (Stenström et al, 1996: 65).

One of the prominent features of youth communicative behavior is playful attitude to each other. Verbally, this manifests itself in their habits to give nicknames to each other, teasing, addressing with vulgar words and bullying in a playful or aggressive manner. By the way, youngsters express their closeness by using insulting nicknames and teasing rather than aggression. For example, saying “Hey you, bastard”, “You, damn dude, come here” is typical between really close friends or brothers. In youth prose this side of youth language is recognizable. Youngsters’ language can provide very interesting alternative stylistic devices concerning this point. One of the expressions is giving nicknames for characters of the stories.

Regular Doctor Jim is a facetious name for Madeline’s doctor in “Everything, Everything”. Regular is written as his first name with the capital letter as if it has already become a part of his real name. It is amazing that in such a tragic case the narrator is able to laugh and mock at her current sad state of illness.

“Hey, Pen-Pen,” he calls back.

Penelope’s brother in “Girl Online” addresses her like Pen along with her other friends. This form of teasing points to her favourite activity of writing. In fact, this is not teasing, but it gives an accurate description of a person with just one nickname.

“...and her mom falls in love with this Dutch tulip trader Anna calls the Dutch Tulip Man”, “...and then just as the possibly Dutch guy and her mom are about to get married and Anna is about to start this crazy new treatment”

Anna gives a nickname to her mom's sweetheart. She refers to his occupation which is a tulip trader and his nationality. Of course, there is an element of teasing and neglect towards this man in the nickname. His real name along with his personality are not important to Anna at all. However, she has to name him somehow, and she chooses the prominent features of him and connects them in one nickname.

"...no one calls you m or maddy or mad or maddy-mad-mad-mad? i'll pick one for you. no one calls you m or maddy or mad or maddy-mad-mad-mad? i'll pick one for you..."

These are the options of nickname proposed by Madeline's neighbor Olly who opened a new world for her, out of her room and her boring life of a sick and lonely young girl. Giving nicknames is also a sign of normal youth life which she is deprived of. Besides, "Mad" sounds like mocking at her disease in a positive sense, making her take it easy and treat it with humour.

"He thinks Ollie's really vain and calls him the Walking Selfie, but, to be fair, he doesn't really know him..."

This antonomasia tells about the character's habit of making selfies (photos of himself).

These are not simple nicknames; these are curious forms of antonomasia. Antonomasia (or speaking names) is a figure of speech expressed by substitution of the person's or thing's name with his/her/its prominent feature. In youth style these features are rather unusual and have a jocular teasing effect.

Thus, there is a sharp contrast: while lexical side of youth prose is rich, unusual and very creative, syntactic part is extremely simple. Its simplicity can be regarded as stylistic peculiarity as well. Youth prose has certain stylistic features which manifest themselves in the choice of lexis. Slang used to be a part of youth everyday speech. It was definitely incorporated into literary texts. However, nowadays we can see the tendency of its active usage in new metaphor (epithets, allusion, simile) formation.

Carnivalization of Fixed Values as a Stylistic Feature

Communicative behavior of young people tends to be playful and jocular overturning things and phenomena. This is connected with the theory of carnivalization, the culture of laughter. Such culture is characterized by entertainment, festivity, and, in the opinion of some researchers, reveals the borderline, transitional or crisis state of modern culture. There is regularity in the overturning of values. According to the regularity, all the topics which are mocked at and overturned in an absurd way, are usually sacred for this culture. For example, the Russian folk song genre, chastushka, contains a huge number of jokes about sex, infidelity of spouses, whereas the most sacred values for the Russian people are family, fidelity and children.

In the language, carnivalization manifests itself in special lexical means such as the use of slang and jargon, the use of graphic images and some specific figurative language in a literary text.

The nature of carnivalization and the culture of laughter confirms the rebellious nature of youth, categorical and radical, potential danger and deviance, impatience with everything that is generally accepted. That is the reason why they strive for doing something shocking, to be distinguished from the mass, to be different from others.

Youngsters' rebellious nature, an outrage against society and common values influence youth literary texts and their style.

"Hey, Penny, did you know that William Shakespeare is an anagram for "I am a weakish speller?"

"He's supposed to be doing it to relieve my boredom but, seriously, does anyone really need to know that Shakespeare was baptized in 1564? Or that he had seven siblings?"

(Girl Online)

Intertextuality concerning Shakespeare seems a usual phenomenon in a literary piece of work at first sight. But if we look deeper, in this case the author does not refer to Shakespeare as to a classical figure, sample and model of the English literary language. She does not refer to any of Shakespeare's works, characters or ideas. In the first extract the author compares his name with the anagram "weakfish speller", insulting the great writer's name, nation's heritage in such a simple manner. Although the name of Shakespeare is a recognized classic and a sacred symbol for British people, the author is brave enough to mock at him, committing sacrilege.

The second extract does not make fun of Shakespeare himself, but neglects him as something one must know. Despite the fact that for more than a century people over the world have been studying Shakespeare with all ins and outs of his creative activity and private life, including him into the educational programmes, our young character Penny wonders why she needs all this information. She is frank and direct in her opinion. She truly believes that she has a right to express her opinion about such sacred things. Rebellious nature of the youth shows itself in the language.

"He's also the reason our version of Romeo and Juliet is set in a Brooklyn ghetto and Juliet is leaning out of a trailer rather than a balcony"

Youngsters are considered quick in proposing brave alternatives to the conventional things. The given example is an evidence for it. This time not Shakespeare himself, but Shakespeare's characters become the object of overturning, bringing them from their time into the reality of the modern world in a Brooklyn ghetto (a part of a city for national minorities) and with a trailer instead of a balcony.

"I noticed this because Patrick, the Support Group Leader and only person over eighteen in the room, talked about the heart of Jesus every freaking meeting, all about how we, as young cancer survivors, were sitting right in Christ's very sacred heart and whatever".

"So here's how it went in God's heart: The six or seven or ten of us walked/wheeled in, grazed at a decrepit selection of cookies and lemonade, sat down in the Circle of Trust, and listened to Patrick recount for the thousandth time his depressingly miserable life story".

(From "The Fault in our stars")

At first sight the extracts seem blasphemy. Religious words "God", "Christ", "Jesus" appear in a mocking context, as irony at the sick youngsters' community, praying and setting themselves for positive thoughts. The

religious elderly or adults will be unlikely to continue reading this piece of prose after such words. But astonishing and shocking is a typical side of youth style, and here it is quite relevant.

“I’d learned this from my aforementioned third best friend, Peter Van Houten, the reclusive author of An Imperial Affliction, the book that was as close a thing as I had to a Bible.”

The author again alludes to a sacred thing for religious people, the Bible. Nevertheless, this time he does not laugh at it and does not make absurd comparisons. He just compares his favourite book with the Bible, though this action would probably be criticized by religious readers. However, this is a usual device for youngsters’ prose.

“...Slowly working his way toward a master’s degree that will not improve his career prospects, waiting, as we all do, for the sword of Damocles to give him the relief that he escaped lo those many years ago..”

Allusion “the sword of Damocles” helps the author to make an interesting comparison. In this case it means the threat and danger to life which always accompany freedom and power, according to the ancient classical legend.

Allusion is an expressive means in which the author refers implicitly to an object or an event from an external context. It is left to the reader to make the connections with sacred and classic things. All these examples of allusion demonstrate how easily and boldly youngsters use conventional information, how skillfully they refer to it in order to convey their mood and emotions, attitudes towards other character and events around.

So, mocking and ironizing is one side of youth nature, and it has become characteristics of YAL too.

Emblems and Symbols of Youth Culture in Youth Prose

In order to be attractive to a potential young reader, it is necessary to describe his or her lifestyle and culture. We define youth culture as the surface level of the word “culture”: everyday communicative behavior, clothes style, social manners, manners of communicating with elders, teachers, younger people, eating in public places, smoking, listening to a certain kind of music etc. Here one should also mention youth subcultures. Trying to explain to our children or older generation who hippies (or punks, or emos are), we first of all describe their characteristic features. If youngsters are hippy, these will be natural clothes with hand-made macramé, for emos – totally black colour of clothes, red and blue hair, smoky eyes make up with prevailing dark colours. These are all signs or symbols of youth culture and life. These features can also be found in youth prose to represent the real world of youngsters. However, these signs are not just physical objects, but general concepts and abstract notions as well.

*“All the normal teenagery things—learner’s permit, first kiss, prom, first heartbreak, first fender bender”
(Everything, everything)*

The author shows that the main character is deprived of all usual and habitual joys of an average teenage's life. This enumeration is used to emphasize how unhappy she is for her age and makes a reader evaluate what the character has. Although for an average adolescent it is only routine things, for someone sick like Madeline it is unbelievable pleasure and even miracle. “Prom” stands for school ball, and the word has a specific “youthful” connotation. “Fender bender” means “unserious troubles, inseparable from a normal teenage existence” in youth slang. Learner’s permit which is a simple obligatory thing in a youngster’s pocket, becomes a real symbol of the

age. So, speaking about symbols as expressive means in literary texts of youth prose, we can distinguish symbolism as a stylistic phenomenon.

Symbolism, as a special feature, is the phenomenon of naming objects representing another one, to give a different separate semantic meaning that is considered higher than the direct initial meaning, so events in the storyline can perform a symbolic role. The following example can refer to a symbol and is supposed to recall youngsters' usual realities and humour at the same time:

"Buy me a fake ID so I can go to clubs, drink vodka, and take pot (select blindly from the available options)"
(From *The Fault in Our Stars*)

The "sick narrator" perceives the world of the normal youth a bit differently from what the "sick girl" imagines it. The girl's imagination about "normal life" is much more naive than the young man's opinion. While she sees first kisses, proms, heartbreaks, the young man imagines the life of an average teenager as attending entertaining places, drinking alcohol and taking drugs. "Take pot" in youth slang denotes "taking marijuana". And again using these slang words makes the narrator closer to the reader. Although, this contrast in two characters' worldview is definitely explained by gender differences, and perhaps will be perceived differently by female and male audience, which has also large potential for further literary research.

... to post on social media, as I reach Tom's room I hear the thudding beat of hip-hop..."

"...Please picture me giving a dramatic, heartfelt sigh at this point.."

Placing all events in everyday life has become a compulsory habit for almost all youngsters for the recent years. "Prominent visual culture" and demonstration of privacy are what makes our generation different from others. This feature certainly finds its verbal expression in young adult literature. The actions of posting a video, sharing photos will be described in these pieces of work as compulsory elements and symbols. In the second extract "a dramatic, heartfelt sigh" means an emoji, which is used to express feelings in the Internet language. Youngsters spend more and more time in the Internet, doing most communication there. If several decades ago language interference meant using the linguistic rules of one language in another, nowadays we can surely say that we have interference of virtual and real registers. Youngsters mix the rules of Internet and real communication or Internet language and the language of belles lettres style, for instance. We do not normally use emojis in written speech, especially in a literary text. However, it is impossible to insert it into the book, she writes it in a word form in a humorous manner. She knows exactly that peers will surely understand her desire to use an emoji as they probably have the same interference in written speech and everyday spoken communication.

This time, I'm not sighing at my freckles and the way they cover my face like the speckles on a Mini Egg—I can't really see them in the candlelight.

It's bad enough that my hair is red—Elliot insists that it's strawberry blond (it's definitely more strawberry than blond)

Each generation usually has proper names which symbolize their young period. Fashion is a changeable and unstable concept, and due to this, it is a very effective tool to picture the reality of this or that exact period in history

and specific lifetime of the generation. In this case, Mini Egg is fast food, popular in the time of writing the text. It symbolizes the time and definitely attracts youngsters' attention with its truthfulness. Another fashionable item mentioned in the book is a popular strawberry blond hair colour. In ten years it will be one of the brightest signs of the youngsters of the 2010s, similarly, red hair and black clothes of emos have been fixed in the mass memory as symbols of the youth of 2000s.

Of course, symbols emphasize that the book is written for the youth, it aims to catch their eyes and make them interested in the content. It reveals their own world and values, though sometimes totally contradicting the commonly accepted ones.

IV. CONCLUSION

Stylistic features of young adult literature encompass first and second person narrations and techniques of inner monologue and auto-dialogue in order to produce the effect of closeness; lexical expressive means such as metaphoric slang, epithet slang, allusions; carnivalization of sacred notions and common values through verbal teasing, giving nicknames to the characters and using antonomasia; using words and word combinations which act as symbols of youth culture. All these stylistic features describe modern young adult literature as a separate stylistic phenomenon which performs as a hybrid formation including elements of belles-lettres language and youth communicative style in everyday life. The proposed stylistic configuration enables modern philologists to reconsider functional stylistic system in modern literature and think of adding this category to the list of substyles of belles-lettres functional style. Moreover, the facts discovered in the research put forward the age of the reader as an important factor of style formation.

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