**Английские надписи на одежде как средство коммуникации среди подростков**

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**English Inscriptions on Clothes as a Means of Communication among Teenagers**

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**Аннотация**

Одежда в целом и надписи на одежде в частности помогают людям, в том числе и подросткам, выразить себя, показать свою индивидуальность. Благодаря популярности английского языка и большому разнообразию английских надписей на одежде, подростки предпочитают носить одежду с английскими лейблами и слоганами. Существует прямая связь между желанием подростков выразить свою индивидуальность с помощью одежды и пониманием английских надписей на одежде.

**Abstract**

Clothes in general and inscriptions on clothes in particular help people including teenagers express themselves, show their individuality. Due to the popularity of the English language and a great variety of English inscriptions on clothes, teenagers prefer wearing clothes with English labels and slogans. There is a direct connection between teenagers’ desire to express their individuality by means of clothes and the understanding of English inscriptions on their clothes.

**Ключевые слова:** английские надписи на одежде; средство коммуникации между подростками; исследование среди подростков.

**Keywords:** English inscriptions on clothes; a means of communication; a survey among teenagers.

There are types of communication at both verbal and non-verbal levels. Communication at the verbal level takes place with the help of speech. In the process of non-verbal communication the information can be rendered visually, by means of material objects. One of such objects is clothes that carry information about the person’s status, preferences and character. As one English proverb says, “Good clothes open all the doors”. There are also proverbs and sayings in the Russian language that stress how much clothes can tell other people about a person.

Nowadays a lot of companies have the so-called dress-code. At Lyceum 2 where I study the students follow special rules concerning a school uniform. The preference is given to business style clothes. At the same time, teenagers have clothes with English inscriptions in their wardrobes. It is interesting to know why some teenagers wear such clothes. In this research we are going to find the answer to this question.

We suppose that this topic is relevant as there are teenagers who wear clothes with the words of obscene, offensive meaning or that contain grammar or spelling mistakes. The mentioned points can spoil the impression of the person.

**The object** of the research paper is English inscriptions on student’s clothes.

**The subject** is the information that inscriptions render.

**The aim** of the research is to find out if English inscriptions on teenagers’ clothes serve as a means of communication among adolescents.

The inscriptions on clothes appeared many centuries ago in Ancient Greece. There were inscriptions which had the name of the owner. There were embroideries on the belts that told the others about the names of their ancient owners. There were also some names on jewellry. On the portraits of Italian and German painters of 15th and 16th centuries there were labels that were intertwined into the pattern of men's shirts, into corsages of women`s dresses, where Latin mottos of noble families or the names of the owners of these portraits or dresses were written. Very provocative inscriptions were always on female garters. Inscriptions which were part of the ornament were in fashion. For example, at the beginning of the second millennium Gothic prints were used in embroidery. The pelerines of King Otto were very famous, they are in the museum of Bolbergue in Germany. There are amazing things with Gothic or Roman letters as part of the ornament of ancient embroideries in the store of the old cathedral. They date back to 10-11 centuries AD. A lot of ornaments can be found on jewellry, where the letters and phrases are intertwined into the pattern. The history of T-shirts begins in 1941 in America. America had to form a new numerous army, which was necessary to provide with clothes and food. And then a T-shirt was selected as the most comfortable clothes that can be worn when it was warm and when it was cold. A T-shirt is similar to the letter "T", that is why it was called “T-shirt”, which in Russian means «Т-образная рубашка». Later a T-shirt came to the USSR. At first in the Soviet Union T-shirts were part of a football uniform for fans and players. For this reason, the first inscriptions on the Soviet T-shirts were the names of the teams and the names of famous players. The punks and hippy made popular T-shirts with screaming inscriptions in 1970. At that time people could express their feelings and attitudes towards something by means of T-shirts. A T-shirt could tell a lot about its owner. Later there were T-shirts with the slogans of a particular subculture. Emo, punks, goths, hippies, and many other of youth movements wore T-shirts with the inscription. Wearing such T-shirts, people tried to stand out from the crowd and be original.

The analysis of the sources of information shows that inscriptions on clothes can be divided into several categories:

1. Phrases from popular cartoons and games: “Little Spider-Man”,

“Hello! Mickey”, “You're princess!”, “Trolls”, “Honey lover”, “Mini boss”, “Brawl stars”, “Angry birds”, “Gravity Falls”, etc.

Inscriptions on clothes from this category form ideas about the wearer of this thing: age, preferences, etc. Such additional information as bright colours, the size of clothes indicate that such clothes are worn by children. As a rule, more gentle tones and glitter as well as the images of dolls and animals are used for girls. For boys, on the contrary, dark colours, images of robots, toy cars are more common. We suppose that teenagers can express themselves wearing such clothes to demonstrate their unwillingness to grow up.

2. Slogans of famous world brands: “Chanel”, “Nike. Just do it”, “Levi's”, “Gucci”, “Dior”, “Supreme”, “D&G”, “Boss”, “Prada”, “Adidas”, “Lacoste”, “Columbia”, “Louis Vuitton”, etc.

The appearance of clothing manufacturers' company names is a successful marketing move. Such slogans dictate to the customer what and how to wear. The person unconsciously chooses one or another product of a well-known brand, without paying attention to the quality. Nevertheless, this or that brand attracts customers with its uniqueness during the period of its existence. The image or inscription with the brand name is a broadcasting component containing the information about the creator or fashion designer. For customers it is a marker by which they can distinguish one garment from another one. Let us consider a few of the most common logos that can be found on clothing.

For example, the “Gucci” brand was originally associated with quality and elitism. Now the concept of these clothes has changed, the design is based on bright colours and luxurious fabrics.

The brands like “Levi's” or “Supreme” follow the idea of comfort and present casual looks. Loose-fitting jeans, T-shirts, hoodies and sneakers are their most common models.

“Adidas”, “Puma”, “Kappa” and other companies produce sports accessories and clothing. Their aim is the organicity of materials as well as quality. The idea is that clothing should be comfortable for sports and heavy physical activity.

1. The names of music bands: “AC/DC’”, “Kiss”, “Nirvana”,

“Queen”, “The Rolling Stones”, “Maroon 5”, “BTS”, etc.

In the 70s-80s of the 20th century, clothes with images of favourite bands, performers and other stars gained popularity. This tradition has survived to this day. People could express their views and tastes at the non-verbal level of communication. For PR managers and agents it became an opportunity to spread particular music among the public. This category of such inscriptions indicates that in society people can be divided into subgroups according to their preferences in certain genres of music or musicians. For example, the fans of the rock band “AC/DC’” look quite brutal in their clothes, imitating the idols themselves. The fans of Nirvana, on the contrary, are more restrained in their images, but at the same time, their clothes are of depressive colours. This is a peculiar way of conveying the mood of the listeners. BTS fans are representatives of the younger generation, who always wear very bright clothes and stand out among the crowd.

In this case, it can be concluded that their clothing is a social marker. People can identify themselves as representatives of a certain music style.

4. Slogans calling for action: “All your dreams can come true”, “Give this world good energy”, “Be your own muse”, “Whatever you want”, “Smile more worry less”, “Stay true”, “Take it easy!”, “Just chill out”, “Run wild, dream big” – “Let your imagination run wild”.

The sentences mentioned above are mostly used in the imperative mood, the narrative sentences can be also found in such slogans. It is worth stressing that there is a positive evaluative character of the statements.

5. Mood, emotions and inner feelings: “That view was awesome!”, “Feeling good”, “No drama lama”, “Today is a good day”, “You make me smile”, “Positive vibes only”.

The special code of such inscriptions conveys a certain psychological message. The aim is creating optimistic attitudes.

6. Slogans emphasising the individuality of a person: “Actually, I can!”, “I have a lovely little dream”, “You know my name, not my story”, “Leader”, “Beautiful”, “Stylish”, “Black is my happy colour”.

Taking into consideration the classification, we can come to the conclusion that the process of individualization plays an important role among people in general and among teenagers in particular. The latter want to express themselves showing their individuality. Clothes and inscriptions on them function as a source of visual information.

We carried out a survey among 29 teenagers of 14 – 16 years old in order to find out their attitude to the inscriptions on clothes. We made up a questionnaire on docs.google.com and sent it to the interviewees. The respondents were offered to answer the following questions:

1. Do you have any clothes with inscriptions in English?
2. Do you know the translation of the English inscriptions on your clothes?
3. Why do you wear clothes with English inscriptions?
4. Do you think about the fact that English inscriptions on your clothes can have

indecent content, grammar or spelling mistakes?

According to our survey, only 1 respondent does not have any inscriptions in English on the clothes. 25 interviewees know the translation of the English inscriptions on their clothes. The majority of the respondents (12 people) wear clothes with English inscriptions to show their individuality, 9 teenagers do it because they like such clothes, 5 people think that their clothes with English inscriptions look trendy. The minority of the respondents (2 people) wear such clothes because their mothers bought the clothes for them.

It should be stressed that the results of the survey prove the fact that wearing clothes with English inscriptions by teenagers is one of the means to express themselves, reveal what they feel in a non-verbal way.

As the survey shows, there are teenagers who do not know the meaning of the English inscriptions on their clothes (4 respondents). More than that, 8 interviewees do not care about the kind of content and mistakes on the labels. Taking the points mentioned above into consideration, we decided to pay the teenagers’ attention to the fact that they should be responsible for what they wear. For this reason, we decided to make recommendations on choosing clothes with English inscriptions.

After analysing the results of the survey among the teenagers we made some recommendations on choosing clothes with English inscriptions. They are the following:

1. Translate English inscriptions before you buy clothes. Clothes with

indecent labels or slogans can discredit you in the eyes of public.

1. Do not put on clothes containing grammar or spelling mistakes in

the inscriptions. You can look ridiculous. as there are always people around us who understand what is written on clothes.

1. Follow the dress code to visit different public places. Your clothes

with certain inscriptions can be unsuitable for such places.

1. You had better not wear clothes with advertisement unless it is not

part of your work. Otherwise, you can look like an advertising banner.

Inscriptions on clothes have been existing for a long time. Nowadays such clothes can be classified into several categories, according to their functions.

It is worth mentioning that clothes in general and inscriptions on clothes in particular help people including teenagers express themselves, show their individuality. In this case inscriptions on clothes function as a non-verbal means of communication in society. Due to the popularity of the English language and a great variety of English inscriptions on clothes, teenagers prefer wearing clothes with English labels and slogans.

According to the survey we have conducted, the majority of the respondents wear clothes with English inscriptions to stand out of the crowd, to look fashionable and to feel comfortable as they put on clothes with the inscriptions that appeal to them.

As there are a few interviewees who do not care about what is written on their clothes, some recommendations on choosing clothes with inscriptions were made up for them.

The analysis of the material under consideration has shown that there is a direct connection between teenagers’ desire to express their individuality by means of clothes and the understanding of English inscriptions on their clothes. Thus, our hypothesis has been proved. The aim of the research has been achieved, the tasks have been accomplished.

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