

**MSC 2020**  
**International Scientific and Practical Conference «MAN. SOCIETY.**  
**COMMUNICATION»**

**MILLENNIALS AS A LINGUOCULTURAL TYPE OF THE EPOCH**

Elena Zinovieva (a), Alexey Aleshin (b), Vladlen Makarov (c)\*

\*Corresponding author

(a) Saint Petersburg State University, Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, E.i.zinovieva@spbu.ru

(b) The Bonch-Bruевич Saint-Petersburg State University of Telecommunications, Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, Alexis001@mail.ru

(c) Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University, Veliky Novgorod, Russian Federation, Vladlen.makarov@novsu.ru

**Abstract**

A linguocultural type is a recognizable image of representatives of a certain culture, it is a linguistic personality typified in the cultural aspect, a generalized idea of a person on the basis of relevant objective socially significant ethno and socio-specific characteristics of the behavior of such people. Millennials as a linguocultural type in general are distinguished by the features of communicative and speech behavior, a system of values and priorities. This makes it relevant to consider millennials as a linguocultural type of the modern epoch. Based on the study of the semantics and contexts of the use of the word "millennial", the prevailing notion that this generation is represented by individualists, skeptics, pragmatist is revealed. Raised on modern means of communication, such people appreciate the digital world, deny authority, and are able to grasp information on the fly. To identify the stereotypical perception of millennials in the linguistic consciousness of Russian speakers, a survey was conducted among representatives of different age groups. It was found out that the linguocultural type of "millennials" is dispersed, because it is not associated with a specific person or a narrow circle of personalities. In addition, the differentiating feature of this concept is that it is organized on the basis of an age criterion, therefore it is characterized by a certain blurriness and diffusion. The conceptual component of this linguocultural type is a generation born at the turn of the millennium and characterized by often contradictory features.

2357-1330 © 2021 Published by European Publisher.

*Keywords:* Linguocultural type, meme, millennials, speech portrait, stereotypical representation



## 1. Introduction

Currently, scientists are paying attention to the formation of a kind of universal scientific paradigm that combines different directions and angles of view in the study of language (Dubrovskaya, 2019). This study was carried out within the framework of this paradigm, since combines different approaches to the study of the material, with the linguo-socio-cultural aspect being the leading one.

In the early 90s, American sociologists Neil Howe and William Strauss analyzed history and described several groups of people born at the same time. Howe and Strauss came up with a name for every generation. Those who were born in the period 1982-2004. (and in Russia - 1985-1995) are called Generation Y or Millennials. There are more than 30 million such people in our country (Kto takie millenialy i pochemu oni svobodnee svoih roditeley, 2020). It seems appropriate to analyze the communicative and verbal behavior, distinctive features, mentality of this group of people in the linguistic-socio-cultural aspect.

The term "linguocultural type" was substantiated and introduced into scientific circulation by Karasik and Dmitrieva in 2005. A linguocultural type is a recognizable image of representatives of a certain culture (Karasik & Dmitrieva, 2005), it is a linguistic personality typified in the cultural aspect, a generalized idea of a person on the basis of relevant objective socially significant ethno and socio-specific characteristics of the behavior of such people (Yarmakhova, 2005). As noted by Dubrovskaya (2016), the direction of the study of linguocultural types has become relevant, and for more than 10 years about 100 different linguocultural types have been described/ For example, one of the latest works in this area is the study of the linguocultural type "bureaucrat" (Anokhina & Pozdnyakova, 2020). The term "linguocultural type" is in the same terminological paradigm with such related units as "linguistic personality", "concept", "stereotype", "image", "social role", "role". The relationship between these terms is discussed in detail by Lutovinova (2009) and Reznik (2013). Linguocultural type, being an abstract mental formation, in the research relation, according to the fair opinion of scientists, is a kind of concept. When describing concepts of this type, attention is focused "firstly, on the cultural and diagnostic significance of the typified person for understanding the corresponding culture, and, secondly, on studying this person from the standpoint of linguistics (taking into account the designation, expression and description of the corresponding concept embodied in language)" (Karasik & Dmitrieva, 2005, p. 22).

## 2. Problem Statement

As the researchers rightly point out, one of the criteria for the selection of lexical units of the linguistic-socio-cultural plan for intercultural communication, for the formation of background knowledge, is their social significance among native speakers (Grigoryan, 2016). The human personality appears to be the "summit" category of cultural and linguistic processes (Ivanov & Lakerbay, 2019). The generation of "millennials" in the coming decades will determine the socio-political and economic situation in the world. In Russia, this age group has its own specific features, which is associated with the peculiarities of our history. Millennials in Russia have experienced the collapse of the USSR, a change in ideology and political regime. With all the variety of types of linguistic personalities, millennials in general are distinguished by the peculiarities of communicative and speech behavior, a system of values and priorities. In the world in

general, and in Russia, in particular, a certain attitude has been formed towards them. All of the above makes it relevant to consider millennials as a linguocultural type of the modern era.

### 3. Research Questions

The article is the first attempt to isolate and describe such a kind of concept as a linguocultural type based on the age criterion, and not by occupation (for example, "top manager", "hacker", "school teacher"), social class ("merchant", "bourgeois") or by pronounced national habits ("English snob", "English eccentric") and other reasons.

### 4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is to identify the ethnosocial, cultural and linguistic characteristics of the analyzed linguocultural type, making its image recognizable for representatives of Russian culture and native speakers of the Russian language.

### 5. Research Methods

To achieve this goal, the technique of modeling linguocultural types proposed in the works of Karasik (2005) and Dmitrieva (2005) is applied. The first stage of such studies involves the description of the conceptual content of the concept under consideration, the analysis of the concept names in their systemic connections. At the second stage, the associative features of the type under consideration in the individual linguistic consciousness are determined, and at the final stage the evaluative characteristics of this type are identified (Karasik, 2005). Dmitrieva (2005) rightly proposes to supplement this scheme of analysis with a sociocultural reference and concretization of the figurative component. Accordingly, this study uses the following methods: descriptive, distributive, questionnaire method; methods of etymological and derivational analysis, directed sampling of material from the "Russian National Corpus" (hereinafter - the RNC) and Internet sources.

### 6. Findings

The noun *millennial* is formed from the root of the Latin word *mille* - 'thousand', related one-root words are *millennium*, a word that means not only "a thousand years", but also the turn of two millennia (this meaning motivated the analyzed name of the linguocultural type and formed the basis of the conceptual component of the concept), cf. also adjective *millennial*. Millennials are people born at the turn of the millennium. Specific dates in the responses of informants vary: "the generation that entered life in the 2000s", "people born in the 90s of the XX century", "the generation born on the border / at the beginning of the new millennium", etc. This generation is called also "Millennial generation", "Generation Y". This age group is contrasted with the previous generation - Generation X, as well as the next - Generation Z, the generation of Zoomers.

Generation Y are individualists, skeptics, pragmatists Raised on modern means of communication, such people value the digital world, deny authority, and are able to grasp information on the fly. Millennials

put spiritual values, freedom, and believe in themselves above everything else. If generation X was focused on long-term work and the accumulation of knowledge, then generation Y is interested in a quick result, not a process. Millennials easily switch between their pursuits, striving for universal acceptance. This sets them apart from Gen Z - today's teenagers who are more concerned with safety and lacking in vanity (Kto takie millennialy i pochemu oni svobodnee svoih roditeley, 2020). Both in America and in Russia, people of generation Y are in no hurry to grow up - they postpone marriage and the birth of children. They do not tend to work hard and much like their ancestors, but they strive for high salaries and career growth. At the same time, they are difficult to stimulate, because they do not hold on to a place and easily exchange "stability" with cash bonuses for interest and personal convenience. As for money, millennials do not save for the distant future, but willingly save up for impressions here and now - travel, shopping delight, etc. Both Western and Russian millennials are passionate about healthy lifestyles. They work out, or at least have a gym membership, ride bicycles, choose healthy food. There are much fewer smokers among them. And they are by and large indifferent to alcohol, even if they are far from teetotalers (Likhova, 2019).

Today's marketers are targeting millennials, research is being conducted on which brands millennials choose, which housing they prefer, what they spend their money on, how they react to advertising, psychologists are developing interview strategies when hiring millennials.

The noun *millennials* is a frequent occurrence in the mass media, in Internet sources. The contexts of its use confirm the features of the generation identified by sociologists. For example: "A poll by Deloitte identified a major source of concern for Russian *millennials*: Russian *millennials* are more concerned about corruption (38 percent) than political instability and war or terrorism (a third and a quarter of those surveyed, respectively), according to the Global Millennial Survey 2019. from the consulting agency Deloitte, which published the RBC edition on May 21, 2019 9:10 "; "The top five worries of Russian *millennials* also included the stratification of society in terms of income, which were reported by 36 percent, and health and disease prevention problems - 26 percent. At the same time, participants in the global study are most worried about climate change and natural disasters (29 percent), income differences (22 percent) and unemployment (21 percent). Every fifth respondent is worried about the fight against crime and personal safety, as well as corruption, a little less about terrorism and wars. The life goals of millennials in Russia differ from the views of this generation in the world. Three quarters of Russians surveyed against 57 percent of respondents in a global survey want to travel, 66 percent would like to receive a high salary (52 percent in the world), more than half said they would like to buy real estate (49 percent). Another 48 percent of Russian millennials are going to start a family and have children (39 percent). Compared to the global indicator (46 percent), a smaller proportion (41 percent) of Russians named their own business as one of their main goals. What else is known: A year ago, a consulting agency found that, in general, millennials prefer to change jobs frequently. 43 percent of them were going to retire within two years, a little less than a third - to work in the same company for more than five years. At the same time, 62 percent of millennials said that freelancing is a real alternative to full-time employment. Deloitte has been conducting annual Millennial Survey for eight years. In 2019, the authors surveyed 13.4 thousand people of this generation from 42 countries. At the same time, they decided to include people without a permanent job and higher education in the study. As the authors of the report note, the main difference between research participants from Russia and the world is in the degree of satisfaction with life. Only 18 percent

of Russians of this generation rate this indicator highly. Globally, the share of those satisfied with life reaches 29 percent” (Morozova, 2019). “We have erroneously characterized the millennial generation as more socially and politically motivated than older people,” said study author Jean Twenge, a professor of psychology at San Diego State University. It turned out that "millennials" are less likely to focus on the community, and concentrate mainly on personal goals - image, money and fame. Although the desire to preserve the environment has always been considered an area of particular interest to young people, the results of a study spanning a 40-year period indicate that there are three times more Gen Y who have never made an effort to help the environment than Baby Boomers at the same age. The proportion of American students seeking wealth was 45% for Baby Boomers, 70% for Gen X, and 75% for Gen Y [Irina Yuzbekova. Youth is focused on money, image and fame // RBK Daily, 2012.03.20 - RNC]. "You could call it body positivity or the buzzword diversity, but this is the merit of the Internet." The fashion industry has not been left out: Millennials are the desired luxury target group. Gucci and Vetements produce socks, Balenciaga - hotel-style lighters and slippers - but with a large logo, and people are really queueing for them in the Colette concept boutique." [Ksenia Goshchitskaya. Meet Lena Sheidlina, an artist from St. Petersburg with an audience larger than that of Channel One” (2017.09.04) - RNC]; “On Lena: dress Elizabeth and James (Babochka), pearls and earrings “Mary Truffle” (“Mary Truffle”). Zhenya is wearing: Alexander McQueen jacket (DLT), Calvin Klein Jeans turtleneck (Calvin Klein Jeans), Armani trousers (Babochka). At 22, she managed to create her own convincing reality, which many want to get into, especially millennials who seek to linger in infantile fantasies. " [Ksenia Goshchitskaya. Meet Lena Sheidlina, an artist from St. Petersburg with an audience larger than that of the First Channel (2017.09.04) - RNC].

To identify the stereotypical perception of millennials in the linguistic consciousness of Russian speakers, a survey was conducted among representatives of different age groups. Sixty people took part in the survey, mostly teachers and students of St. Petersburg and Novgorod State Universities. The older age group consisted of respondents aged 44 to 65 years (25 people), the youngest - students 19-20 years old (25 people), and 10 respondents were in the age group of interest to us, that of "millennials" (30-33 years old). Informants of older generations, in their answers, concretized the perceptual-shaped components of millennials. Since this linguocultural type includes up to 12 different varieties, according to sociologists, the appearance of millennials in the answers of respondents of older age groups was characterized in the range from “everyone has different”, “usual”, “freedom and variety of tastes” to “thinness, delicate facial features , androgynous ", hipster or do not pay attention to the appearance. " The mindset received such characteristics as “absurdity, capriciousness, self-confidence combined with extreme naivety”, “independence”, “digital thinking”. Millennial behavior has been described as “independent, self-reliant,” “independent, focused on their own individual personality and life,” “focus on gadgets,” “love to ride a bike / scooter, go to coffee shops and other fashionable places, show their awareness in all spheres”, “libertarians and oppositionists”. The Zoomers generation noted the following features of millennials: “sneakers, shapeless pants and jacket, down jacket”, “look older than their age”, “trying to look younger”, “loose style of clothing”, “loose clothes, less makeup for girls”, "They choose more comfortable clothes compared to other generations." Millennials are considered by younger generations to be "smart and practical", "heavily reliant on digital technology," "individualists and skeptics." Representatives of generation Z have identified such distinctive features of millennials as "the desire to create a better version

of themselves", "isolation in live communication, the preference to communicate on social networks or messengers", "introversion", "the desire to build a career", "infantilism." These are "people who delay the moment of entering adulthood", "proud, consider their generation to be the best", "fixated on healthy lifestyle and sports", "hardworking enough", "infantile", they are characterized by an "intensive way of learning about the world." According to the younger generation, most millennials are not religious, "trying not to be like a mass, to live for themselves and be honest with themselves." It should be noted that millennials themselves assess themselves as a very heterogeneous group, of different mindsets, do not consider themselves too ambitious, but agree with the younger generation that they are introverts, liberated in behavior, live for themselves and "do not trust the state". In our opinion, it is natural that the distinctive features of the linguocultural type "millennials" are better formulated by representatives of other generations, because own mentality, picture of the world, worldview are difficult to describe "from the inside".

To characterize a linguocultural type, its speech portrait is very important. Many works in modern linguistics in recent years have been devoted to the study of the speech portrait of different types of personalities (for example, (Arapova, 2019; Aytenova & Balobanova, 2016; Ivantsova, 2019). Representatives of all age groups noted, first of all, the presence of a large number of borrowings in their speech, as well as slangisms and computer terminology as distinctive features of the speech behavior of millennials.

To characterize the speech portrait of millennials, it should be added that memes on the topic "Millennials invented" are popular in the Internet space. The purpose of such texts is "ridicule of absurd circumstances and a comic demonstration of the negative qualities of people" (Karasik, 2019, p. 65). The meme about "inventions" of millennials reached the peak of popularity in May-June 2019. For "Millennials Invented," hundreds of ironic posts can be found on Twitter. Memes ridicule the tendency of millennials to reject old values, invent things that have long been known and give them new names, often borrowed from the English language. "I noticed that millennials call "tube interiors" the interiors we grew up in in the last century - with carpets, sideboards with crystal, books on the shelves, capes on TVs and pillows, old radios" (<https://twitter.com/glavenergo/status/1163794598868787200>); "For six months, a whole list of what generation Y has re-invented has accumulated in social networks: collective farms have become "art centers", hostels have become "co-living", and the forest has become an "eco-trail"; "A line in the menu of a fashionable cafe: potato cream soup. It seems millennials came up with mashed potatoes." The mesh "shopping bag" invented by millennials is another name for the Soviet string bag (Kuzmin, 2019).

Millennials who took part in the survey are neutral towards representatives of their generation. Assessment of older age groups varies from "neutral" to "ironic", answers "positive" are rare. The younger generation views millennials mostly neutrally. The ironic assessment of millennials can be traced in the texts of anecdotes and jokes, which at the same time verbalize stereotypical ideas about the generation: "My daughter is looking for a summer job. She is a millennial, so she hopes to find a part-time job as a CEO" (<http://ruanekdot.ru/news/millennialy/2017-06-01-7959>); "- You will never, never understand us - millennials! "Of course, we didn't take the Unified State Exam!"; "Employer: we are ready to pay you 30 thousand. Me: but I was hoping for 50 thousand. Employer: we have free coffee, no dress code. Me: it's cool, but ... Employer: we also have tennis and football tables, treadmills ... Me: yes, but ... Employer: free

nuts, happy hours, a cat in the office! Millennials love this shit!" (<https://www.anekdot.ru/release/anekdot/day/2020-01-19/>); "A true millennial has to do three things in life: close a startup, record a podcast and burn out" (<https://twitter.com/hypnomez13/status/1217503197373390848>).

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, as a result of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn. The linguocultural type of "millennials" is dispersed, according to V.I. Karasik, because not associated with a specific person or a narrow circle of personalities. In addition, the differentiating feature of this concept is that it is organized on the basis of an age criterion, therefore, unlike all other types considered in the scientific literature, it is characterized by a certain blurriness and diffuseness. The conceptual component of this linguocultural type is a generation born at the turn of the millennium and distinguished by the following often contradictory features: they are pragmatic, infantile, striving to get everything at once, digitalized, quickly grasp information, value personal time. The figurative component (according to the survey): they do not attach much importance to their appearance, they prefer a free, comfortable style of clothing, are distinguished by independence and self-confidence in behavior, they emphasize personal preferences, have a different mindset, but often rational. In the lexicon of millennials there are many borrowings from the English language, computer terminology, and there are units of slang. Millennials' creative language skills are manifested in the desire to give new names to long-standing realities. The evaluative component on the part of other generations is within the register "neutral attitude" or "ironic attitude". Millennials themselves are neutral about their generation.

## References

- Anokhina, S. A., & Pozdnyakova, N. V. (2020). Cherty lingvokul'turnogo tipazha „chinovnik“ po rezul'tatam analiza sochetaemosti prilagatel'nogo [Features of Linguistic and Cultural Type "Bureaucrat": Compatibility of Adjective bureaucratic]. *Scientific Dialogue*, 3, 9-23. <https://doi.org/10.24224/2227-1295-2020-3-9-23>
- Arapova, M. A. (2019). Rechevoy portret kak vazhnyy element formirovaniya kinoobraza sovremennogo uchenogo [Speech portrait as an important element in the formation of the film image of a modern scientist]. *Moscow University Bulletin. Series 19. Linguistics and Intercultural Communication*, 1, 156-163.
- Aytenova, I. K., & Balobanova, L. A. (2016). Rechevoy povedenie radiovedushchego v situatsiyakh kommunikativnogo diskomforta (na primere programm informatsionno-razvlekatel'nogo veshchaniya). [Verbal behavior of radio presenters in communicative discomfort situations (entertainment and information radio shows)]. *Tomsk State University Journal of Philology*, 5(43), 5-23.
- Dmitrieva, O. A. (2005). Lingvokul'turnyy tipazh „frantsuzskiy burzhua“ [Linguocultural type "French bourgeois"]. In V. I. Karasik (Ed.), *Aksiologicheskaya lingvistika: lingvokul'turnye tipazhi* [Axiological linguistics: linguocultural types] (pp. 74-88). Paradigma.
- Dubrovskaya, E. M. (2016). Tipologiya lingvokul'turnykh tipazhey: opyt sistematizatsii [Typology of linguocultural types: an attempt to systematize]. *Mir nauki, kul'tury, obrazovaniya* [The world of science, culture and education], 2(57), 364-366.

- Dubrovskaya, T. V. (2019). Nauchnye paradigmy v sovremennoy otechestvennoy i zarubezhnoy lingvistike: sushchnost', dinamika, filosofskie osnovaniya [Paradigms in Modern Russian and Foreign Linguistics: Nature, Dynamics, and Philosophical Grounds]. *Scientific Dialogue*, 9, 73-87.
- Grigoryan, A. V. (2016). Kriterii vybora leksicheskikh edinit lingvosotsiokul'turnogo plana [Criteria of the selection of linguo-socio-cultural lexical units]. *Moscow University Bulletin. Series 19. Linguistics and Intercultural Communication*, 3, 27-38.
- Ivanov, D. I., & Lakerbay, D. L. (2019). Antropotsentricheskaya paradigma sovremennoy gumanitarnoy znaniya: metadistsiplinarnyy „dom teorii“ [The anthropocentric paradigm of modern liberal arts: a metadisciplinary “house of knowledge”]. *Tomsk State University Journal of Philology*, 58, 168-195.
- Ivantsova, E. V. (2019). Vzaimodeystvie podsistem sovremennoy russkoy yazyka v idiolektnom otrazhenii: rechevoy portret zhitelya poselka gorodskogo tipa [The interaction of subsystems of the modern Russian language in an idiolectal reflection: the speech portrait of a resident of an urban-type village]. *Tomsk State University Journal of Philology*, 62, 104-120.
- Karasik, V. I. (2005). Lingvokul'turnyy tipazh „russkiy intelligent“ [Linguocultural type "Russian intellectual"]. In V. I. Karasik (Ed.), *Aksiologicheskaya lingvistika: lingvokul'turnyye tipazhi* [Axiological linguistics: linguocultural types] (pp. 25-61). Paradigma.
- Karasik, V. I. (2019). Narrativnoe izmerenie lingvokul'turnykh tsennostey [Narrative dimension of linguocultural values]. *Yazyk i kul'tura* [Language and culture], 47, 59-75.
- Karasik, V. I., & Dmitrieva, O. A. (2005). Lingvokul'turnyy tipazh: k opredeleniyu ponyatiya [Linguocultural type: to the definition of the concept]. In V. I. Karasik (Ed.), *Aksiologicheskaya lingvistika: lingvokul'turnyye tipazhi* [Axiological linguistics: linguocultural types] (pp. 5-25). Paradigma.
- Kto takie millenialy i pochemu oni svobodnee svoih roditeley [Who are millennials and why are they freer than their parents?]. (2020, April 10). Retrieved from <https://invlab.ru/zhizn/kto-takie-millenialy/>
- Kuzmin, E. (2019, May 24). Mem: Veshchi, kotoryye izobreli millenialy [Meme: Things Millennials Invented]. <https://tjournal.ru/internet/98709-mem-veshchi-kotorye-izobreli-millenialy>
- Likhova, I. (2019, October 9). Millenialy - kto eto i chto s nimi ne tak? Gody rozhdeniya pokoleniy X, Y i Z [Millennials - who are they and what's wrong with them? Years of birth of generations X, Y and Z]. Retrieved from <https://www.aneews.com/p/118149893-millenialy-kto-eto-i-cto-s-nimi-ne-tak-gody-rozhdeniya-pokolenij-xyiz/>
- Lutovinova, O. V. (2009). „Lingvokul'turnyy tipazh“ v ryadu smezhnykh ponyatij, ispol'zuemykh dlya issledovaniya yazykovoy lichnosti [“Linguocultural type” in a number of related concepts used to study linguistic personality]. *Scholarly Notes of Transbaikalian State University, Series: Philology, History, Oriental Studies*, 3, 225-228.
- Morozova, O. (2019, May 21). Opros Deloitte vyavil glavnyy istochnik trevog rossiyan-millenialov [Deloitte poll reveals the main source of worries for millennial Russians]. Snob. <https://snob.ru/news/177202/>
- Reznik, V. A. (2013). Lingvokul'turnyy tipazh v sisteme smezhnykh ponyatij [Linguocultural type in the system of related concepts]. *Izvestiya Samarskogo nauchnogo tsentra Rossiyskoy akademii nauk* [Bulletin of the Samara Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences], 15(2-2), 481-484.
- Yarmakhova, E. A. (2005). *Lingvokul'turnyy tipazh „angliyskiy chudak“* [Linguocultural type "English eccentric"] (Doctoral dissertation). Volgograd: Volgograd State Pedagogical University. <https://dlib.rsl.ru/rsl01002000000/rsl01002801000/rsl01002801236/rsl01002801236.pdf>