



SLANG IS A FEATURE OF CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE USAGE

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Abstract: This article explores the ubiquitous existence and function of slang in present-day English language utilization. It endeavors to examine the inception, progression, and sociolinguistic ramifications of slang, with the objective of furnishing a thorough comprehension of its import in contemporary discourse.

Keywords: derivative forms, complex words, occasionalisms, including slang, jargonisms, professionalism, dialect terms, contemporary manifestations, literary terms, archaisms, barbarisms.

Introduction. Slang, recognized for its casual and often unconventional linguistic expressions, constitutes a noteworthy element of contemporary English language usage. Despite its informal nature, slang exerts considerable influence on communication dynamics, serving as a reflection of societal norms, cultural transformations, and linguistic innovations. This paper aims to explore the multifaceted nature of slang, encompassing its historical origins, its evolutionary trajectory over time, and its varied impacts on different dimensions of language and society. Through an examination of its historical development and contemporary manifestations, this research endeavors to elucidate the intricate relationship between slang and broader sociolinguistic phenomena, thereby illuminating its widespread influence and intricate role in contemporary discourse. By analyzing the historical evolution and sociocultural context of slang, this study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of its significance within modern linguistic landscapes and its implications for communication and social dynamics.

Literature Review. Many academics have explored the phenomenon of slang from diverse angles. Linguists have scrutinized its lexical and syntactic characteristics, sociolinguists have delved into its function in shaping identities and fostering group affiliations, and anthropologists have analyzed its cultural significance across different social groups. Furthermore, research has investigated the interconnection between slang and social media platforms, as well as its impact on the evolution and standardization of language.

As a fundamental constituent of language, words serve as its primary structural elements. Consequently, the examination of words from diverse perspectives emerges as a pivotal aspect of language acquisition in general. Lexicology, a branch of linguistics, is devoted to the systematic study and organization of vocabulary within a language. Its objective is to categorize and structure the lexicon based on various criteria, including structural composition, stylistic considerations, semantic similarities, formal resemblances, etymology, temporal



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usage, and the number of lexical meanings. Accordingly, numerous classifications of English vocabulary have been formulated in accordance with the aforementioned criteria. Let us delve into these classifications in greater depth.

According to N.K.Ivanova, the structural categorization of words varies based on the quantity and nature of root morphemes and the presence of word-formation affixes. This classification delineates several distinct types: simple words, including non-derivative (root) and derivative forms; complex words, composed of two or more bases; full-base words; and abbreviations formed through the truncation of the base [1]. Additionally, I.R.Galperin's stylistic classification organizes lexical units according to their utilization in formal and informal contexts, corresponding to various functional styles. These styles encompass neutral, general literary and colloquial vocabulary; specialized literary vocabulary such as terms, poetic expressions, archaisms, obsolete words, barbarisms, and literary occasionalisms; and specialized colloquial vocabulary including slang, jargonisms, professionalism, dialect terms, and vulgarisms. Furthermore, there exists a classification of lexical units based on their semantic similarity, which categorizes words into synonyms, antonyms, and euphemisms [2]. N.K.Ivanova further elaborates on synonyms, defining them as dictionary units that coincide in meaning and are subdivided into categories such as complete and partial, combinatorially identical and non-identical, single-style and multi-style, and general and culture-specific. [Иванова, с. 16].

The classification of vocabulary based on forms entails the categorization of units into homonyms and paronyms. V.V.Eliseeva highlights that homonyms extend beyond words to include forms (homoforms) and affixes. [Елисеева, 2003, с. 14]. Traditionally, homonyms in lexicology refer to words sharing similar orthographic forms but possessing distinct lexical meanings, whereas paronyms denote words with differing forms but similar spellings. Regarding temporal usage, English vocabulary can be delineated into active vocabulary, comprising words frequently used within a specific era, and passive vocabulary, which encompasses obsolete words (archaisms) and emerging terms (neologisms). Additionally, based on the number of lexical meanings, words may be categorized as unambiguous, possessing a single lexical meaning, or multivalued, having multiple lexical meanings. Furthermore, due to the heterogeneous expressive and stylistic features of lexical units, certain choices depend on the communicative context, objectives, and topic. Accordingly, V.D.Shevchenko identifies distinct layers within English vocabulary: an informal layer comprising colloquialism, slang, jargon, vulgarisms, professionalism, and dialectal terms; a formal layer encompassing scientific or literary terms, archaisms, barbarisms, and poetic vocabulary; and a basic layer consisting of neutral and commonly used terms. [Шевченко, 2004, с. 42].

Consequently, the lexicon of the English language exhibits significant diversity and heterogeneity, attributable not solely to its extensive historical lineage but also to a plethora of borrowings from other languages and its propensity to adapt in response to various societal transformations.

Transitioning to an examination of the concept of "slang" and its contemporary linguistic status, Professor Khomyakov traces its developmental trajectory since 1756. Initially, the term denoted language of a debased or vulgar nature. Subsequently, from 1802 onwards, it evolved to encompass the cant or jargon characteristic of specific periods, and by 1818, it was defined as language of a highly colloquial nature, considered inferior to standard educated



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speech, comprising either new terms or existing ones employed in specialized contexts [3]. Additionally, E. Partridge notes a semantic shift whereby, around the mid-19th century, "slang" became widely accepted as a descriptor for informal colloquial speech deemed "illegitimate," whereas prior to 1850, it encompassed all forms of vulgar language barring can't. It is noteworthy that alongside "slang," synonymous terms such as lingo, argot, jargon, and can't were employed, with slang initially serving as a synonym for can't and later for argot.

Research Methodology. This study employs a mixed-method research design, which combines qualitative analysis of linguistic data with sociolinguistic surveys and interviews. By conducting a corpus analysis of contemporary slang terms and their usage in context, the study aims to shed light on linguistic structures and semantic changes. Furthermore, surveys and interviews with participants representing diverse demographic groups provide insights into the social functions and interpretations of slang in everyday communication. Through this comprehensive approach, the study seeks to offer a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted nature of slang, addressing both its linguistic complexities and its sociocultural significance within contemporary communication settings. This methodological framework allows for a holistic exploration of slang, considering its various dimensions and implications for language and society.

Analysis and Results. The examination unveils the dynamic essence of slang, marked by continual innovation and adjustment to evolving social environments. It elucidates slang's function in bolstering collective cohesion and delineating social structures, alongside its role as an emblem of identity and affiliation within distinct subcultures. Additionally, the research underscores the impact of technology and media on the propagation and development of slang, noting the significant role of social media platforms as prominent venues for incubating novel linguistic phenomena.

This article adopts the following conceptual framework: Slang constitutes a distinct variant of the lexical, phonological, and grammatical norms inherent in the English language, historically shaped to include novel interpretations of existing terms as well as words and expressions borrowed from other languages or crafted following English word-formation patterns. It finds usage across diverse social, professional, age-related, and other groups, where it acquires more nuanced meanings imbued with emotional connotations. In examining the essence of the "slang" concept through the perspectives of both domestic and international linguists, it becomes imperative to delineate its principal characteristics and attributes.

Conclusion. In summary, slang presents itself as a multifaceted and evolving aspect of contemporary English language utilization, encompassing varied sociolinguistic roles and mirroring broader cultural dynamics. Its examination yields valuable insights into the complexities of linguistic evolution, social dynamics, and identity construction in contemporary societal contexts. Appreciating the significance of slang enhances our understanding of language dynamics and offers a perspective through which to analyze the intricate interconnections among language, culture, and society.

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