

Semantic Analysis of English Modern Slang

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the consideration of the English modern slang. Authors consider the language as a powerful tool of people's activities regulation, which reflects the culture and history of the speaker. Language and speech are two sides of the same phenomenon. It reacts to all the changes that are taking place in the world and society. The youth language is a complex multicomponent structure that lives its own life. A characteristic feature of the youth language is the use of stylistically neutral and reduced vocabulary, a large number of abbreviations, since it is aimed at saving language resources while maintaining maximum emotional load. The authors analyze the slang as a means of reflecting the changes taking place in modern linguistic culture under the influence of such important factors as computerization, informatization and globalization. The youth language is constantly changing, but which still does not remain without attention.

Keywords: linguistics, English, language, analysis, slang.

Introduction

One of the most meaningful indicators of education and knowledge is human communication. Our communication opportunities are limitless today, there is an increasing need to use slang words to make our speech bright, emotional and noticeable, there is a need to use new forms of verbal expression of emotions. Slang words are now used much more often than it was before. They have changed, and some are in the process of changing. All those slang words that we hear in movies or on television very often end up in our speech, some of them may linger. The slang of young people is replenished thanks to various professional groups, jargons, argo and cant, and now serves as a source of borrowing for these same social dialects (Orlov, 2001).

Nowadays we can observe the "growth" of slang vocabulary in all spheres of human activity: slang units are used on radio and television, in the press, literature, on the Internet, oral communication of people of almost all ages, social groups and classes.

Some say that the English word slang comes from the word sling (to throw), for example, to sling one's jaw (say something offensive). Another point of view is that "slang" goes back to slanguage, with the initial letter s allegedly added to language because of the disappearance of the word thieves; that is, it was originally about the thieves' cant (Partridge, 1989).

To the above concepts of slang, we can also add the equally diverse definitions of various linguists. The word "slang", as noted by the famous American linguist Ch.Fries, has increased its own meaning of slang to such an extent that it is very difficult to find a distinction between what is still slang and what is not (Fries, 1990).

The Internet is an ideal place for the “existence” of slang. One of the most popular ways of using Internet slang is to use abbreviations. “IMHO” – in my humble opinion; TTYL – talk to you later, LOL – laughing out loud. Webforums also can become platforms for the Internet slang (Aliya Albertovna Abdrakhmanova, 2020).

The slang of young people borrowed its vocabulary from various professional groups, jargons, argo and kant, and now serves as a source of borrowings for these social dialects (Orlov, 2001). For example, the metaphorical expression jump on the grenade is sparkling or throw the grenade means to entertain an ugly girl, let your friend have fun with his beautiful girlfriend; the expression walk of shame is formed by analogy with walk of fame which implies returning home alone in front of all the neighbors after a night of dating; false messiah – something or someone who is perceived as not meeting expectations, etc (Goldenkov, 2007).

Methods

The theoretical and methodological basis of the research is represented by the works of the following authors: G. A. Orlov (2001), M. Goldenkov (2012), V. A. Khomyakov (2001), V. G. Vilman (1990), E. M. Beregovskaya (2002); M. M. Makovsky (1992), Ch.Fries (1990), Adrakhmanova A.A., Mubarakshina A.M (2020). The article also uses the works of scientists whose works reflect the general issues of lexical semantics Makhmutova A.N., Lutfullina G.F. (2017) and translation studies.

The research material is 180 slang words of the English language, selected by a continuous sampling method from articles of such newspapers as The Guardian, The Telegraph, the BBC News.

Methods of our research are: the method of continuous sampling, the method of structural and semantic analysis.

Results and Discussion

As we all know, our vocabulary is constantly updated with new lexical units, this process will not change, since many new technologies have recently appeared, and as they appear, new vocabulary immediately penetrates our language. The process of slang forming and seeping it into various languages is an unchangeable process that gives us the opportunity for its further study.

During the study, 180 slang words of the English language were selected using a continuous sample method from articles of such newspapers as The Guardian, The Telegraph, the BBC NEWS.

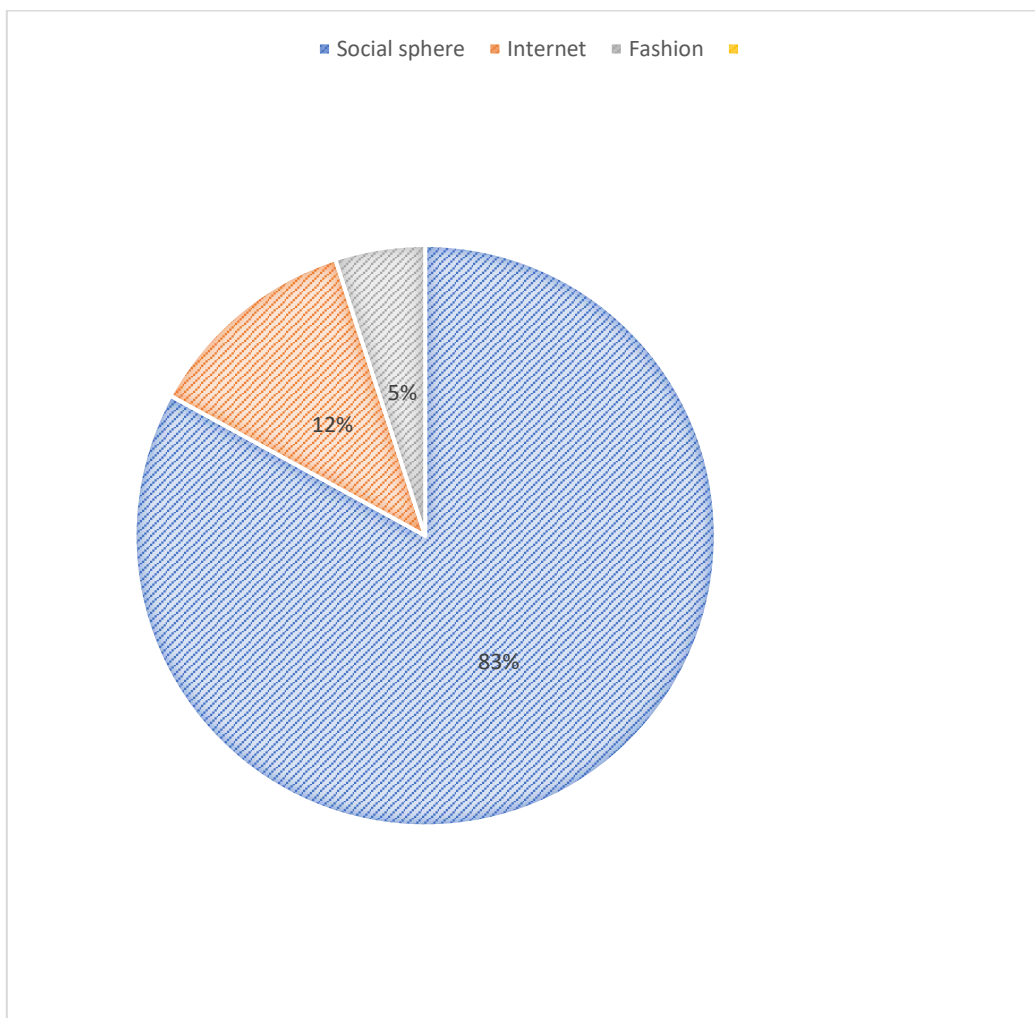
In order to understand slang better, we can examine the areas of public activity it occurs most often.

A considerable amount of slang is associated with the fashion industry. Now young people are trying to be in the “trend” and keep up with fashion. In this regard, there is a large number of slang words in this area.

For example, such words as cheesy (tasteless, vulgar, banal, not very good, unoriginal); swag (fashionable, cool) is an abbreviated version of the word swagger, which means both a good style in clothing and behavior; OOTD (an outfit that corresponds to a certain mood, theme or occasion) is an abbreviation of the word “Outfit of the day”; Sock boots (shoes – socks), when wearing shoes with socks.

The sphere of social activity that includes the largest number of slang units is the social sphere, it symbolizes what is happening in the world and society. The word chunder (The Guardian) means vomiting, after a large amount of alcohol consumed. But some people think that this word came from the phrase watch under, which was shouted by the passengers of the ship to those people who were on the lower deck, as people were often seasick due to seasickness. There are also a large number of words meaning money, for example, moolah, cash, greeny (The BBC NEWS). This sphere also includes words that describe friendly or love relationship between people. For example, chin wag (The Telegraph) means a pleasant long conversation, a phrase that came from the words chin and to wag (when people nod to each other as a sign of understanding), the expression badmouth came from the words bad and mouth together they mean to speak badly about someone.

As a result of the study of the selected units, we obtained the following spheres of public life:



Slang forms are created by the same expressions that affect ordinary speech. Slang expressions can take the form of comparisons and metaphors, as well as other figures of speech, and acquire new meanings. Also, a word that had a narrower meaning can become generalized (“fink” – an attacker, later a traitor) or vice versa (Antrushina, 2002).

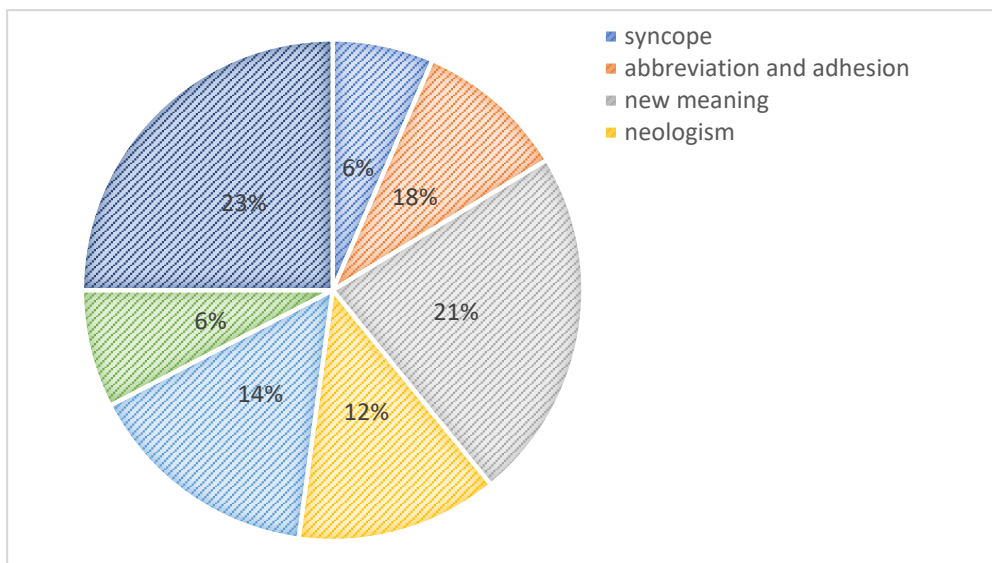
There are several ways to form slang, each of which is created by different processes. Here are some of them:

- 1) rhyming slang includes words that replace other words that rhyme with them (e.g. argy-bargy (stupid argument); party-hearty (great party); fuddy-duddy – старомодный мужчина, loaf of bread (head); boo-boo – деньги, blue flue – полиция, рана.
- 2) foreign language borrowings which are quite widespread (e.g. safari (from the Arabic “journey”) – a trip to a bar or club with the aim of seducing a girl; kaif – (from the Arab.) rest, relaxation, idleness).
- 3) A figure of speech is an expression in which words are used in an unusual way. One of the most frequently used figures of speech can be considered a metaphor, which means the comparison of two different things. For example, the slang metaphor “The Big Apple” which means New York; to live in a birdcage – to live in a student dormitory; hold on to your socks – so hold on; to shake a bit – dance a bit; to tie the knot – get married.
- 4) word composition – in this case the words are connected entirely (e.g. dutch treat – when everyone pays for themselves on a date; hang out – hang out; crack up – make someone laugh a lot; homeboy – close friend, dead-head – stupid, cheesecake – attractive girl и football widow – a woman who loses her husband's attention during football matches.
- 5) Most of the slang words are words that already exist in the language, but which have acquired a new meaning. According to V. G. Vilman, “the reinterpretation of words in connection with their figurative use, narrowing and expanding the meaning plays a major role in the formation of new slang units”: to hmmm (reflect) – think; to shake someone hard – to get a lot of trouble (Vilyuman, 1990).
- 6) Abbreviations and acronyms are words consisting of the first letters or syllables of words in a phrase (LOL – (Laugh out loud) – laugh, very funny; TGIF (Thanks Gog its Friday) – Friday has finally come; IMU (I miss you) – I miss you.

There are three types of abbreviations:

- front abbreviation – when the initial part of the word is removed, for example “cause” from the word because; “burger” from the word hamburger; “phone” from telephone.
 - back abbreviation – the back part of the word is removed, for example “cap” from the word captain, “lab” from laboratory, “prof” from the word professor.
 - regular abbreviation – when either the beginning or the end of the original word is shortened. This is also one of the popular methods of shortening words, for example “X-mas” – Christmas; flue (influenza) – flu; “jams” – pajamas.
- 7) Neologisms are words and phrases that were invented relatively recently. They are also part of slang, for example “swag” means cool, fashionable; “minger” means ugly, disgusting; “doofer” translates as hickey.

The analysis of the selected 180 slang words showed that the following ways of slang formation exist:



Summary

All social groups use slang, including the most educated speakers and writers. For example, George Washington used the words redcoat (British soldier), Winston Churchill used booze (liquor), and Lyndon Johnson used the word cool it (calm down, shut up).

Sometimes slang is very difficult to understand, not all slang words can be acceptable and popular. Slang words can change on a social level. For example, some words used by William Shakespeare are found only in the dialect of the southern part of the United States and some modern British dialects. Words that are forbidden in a certain period may become common after a while. The language is incredibly dynamic, hundreds, thousands of words and expressions are in the process of moving from one social level to another, becoming more or less acceptable, more or less popular (Antrushina, 2002).

Slang by its nature changes and develops very quickly. In this regard, the words that appear in it are quickly formed and disappear.

People are increasingly giving preference to slang rather than ordinary words, because of its brightness and easy understanding. Slang permeates all social groups, starting from a schoolboy and ending with a drug addict. It originates and begins to develop in any group of society, gradually changing their vocabulary. Due to the fact that slang is slowly beginning to take root in the language, people sometimes do not understand whether this word is slang or not.

The main distinctive features that are inherent in slang are originality, modernity, brevity, the need for self-expression, expressiveness and giving speech more brightness. Slang words help us to treat words with a certain humor. Slang-words that are often considered as a violation of the norms of the standard language, expressive, ironic words that mainly make up the spoken layer of the language.

With the help of slang, languages are constantly updated and are in a changeable state, and the energy and color that it contains expand and enrich our spoken language. It gained its importance and respect in the 20th century, but before that it was often criticized for vulgarity.

Usually slang is created with the help of society, and not by individual people who come up with it alone. This is one of the reasons why the origin of slang terms is still unknown.

Conclusion

So, in conclusion, we can say that as our life and society develop, new words appear in the language. The development of a language is largely due to the development of its word-formation system, the formation of new word-formation models of words, changes in existing ones, an increase or decrease in their productivity, and many other factors.

The creation of new words is conditioned by the fact that we need new words and expressions that constantly appear as our world and society develop.

So, based on the above, we conclude that the replenishment of the slang composition occurs in the same way as the replenishment of the entire vocabulary. Thus, we can distinguish the following ways of forming slang units:

1. word formation;
2. foreign language borrowings;
3. borrowings from the general literary language with a rethinking of the meaning;
4. word formation: affixation, abbreviations, word composition, metaphorization;
5. creating new words;
6. reduplication.

The conducted research has shown that slang expressions are used in colloquial speech, not in official speech, slang serves as an assistant in expressing one's speech in a more vivid and emotionally colored form, it is also familiar to a large number of people. Slang can be characterized by such concepts as widespread use, general recognition and well-known. At the moment, there is no specific concept of slang.

Slang plays a significant role in the life of young people, they no longer see their life without it. It makes it possible not only to communicate with each other, but also slang facilitates the adoption of new vocabulary, expanding the vocabulary of a person. We do not believe that slang is something bad, although it can sometimes be expressed in a rude and vulgar form. We can't determine whether we need slang, or we can safely live without it without it. Slang has always been and will always be in our vocabulary, since slang is an important part of the development of language and social life.

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