

Slang in English Culture and Language

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Abstract

The present article is concerned with the developing of slangs and different approaches to types of slang in English. Furthermore, it deals with the development of active term “slang” in sociolect by young generation. The role and function of Youth slang are given in social layer within comparing world linguistic views on the types of slang. As Youth slang is commonly used and created by young people in Uzbek, it is considered to be a dominant factor inside of Slang itself.

Keywords: Slang, youth speech, subgroup, jargon, argot, cant, social layer, emotionally expressive, age-restricted, phonetic mimicry.

Introduction

Slang often suggests that the person utilizing the words or phrases is familiar with the hearer's group or subgroup-it can be considered a distinguishing factor of in-group identity. Microsoft Encarta states: "slang expressions often embody attitudes and values of group members." In order for an expression to become slang, it must be widely accepted and adopted by members of the subculture or group. Slang has no societal boundaries or limitations as it can exist in all cultures and classes of society as well as in all languages.

Literary Review

In Uzbek linguistics, G.H Rakhimov in his dissertation "Sociolinguistic features of the British and American slang"¹ for the first time drew attention to this issue in a monograph. Words with limited scope of use are analyzed in a peculiar way in the works of linguists such as Sh.Shoabdurahmonov, A.Hojiev, Sh.Shahobiddinova, M.Askarova, H.Jamolxonov, M.Mirtojiev, U.Tursunov, U.Yusupov, R.Sayfullaeva (B.Mengliev, G.Bokieva, G. H. Rakhimov), Sh.Yuldasheva² and others.

¹ Шоабдурахмонов Ш., Асқарова М. ва бошқалар. Ҳозирги ўзбек адабий тили. – Т.: Ўқитувчи, 1980; Ҳожиёв А., Аҳмедов А. Ўзбек тили лексикологияси. – Т.: Фан, 1981; Шаҳобиддинова Ш. Жиноятчилар сленги ҳақида қарашлар // Филологиянинг долзарб муаммолари. “ПЗ-20170926286. Ўзбек суд амалий лингвистикаси тадқиқи” лойиҳаси доирасида ўтказилган республика илмий-амалий анжумани материаллари, – 2019; Асқарова М., Қосимова К., Жамолхонов Ҳ. Ўзбек тили. – Т.: Ўқитувчи, 1989.

² Миртожиев М.М. Ўзбек тили лексикологияси ва лексикографияси. Ўқув қўлланма. – Т.: ЎЗМУ, 2000; Турсунов У., Мухторов А., Раҳматуллаев Ш. Ҳозирги ўзбек адабий тили. –Т.: Ўзбекистон, 1992; Юсупов Ў.Қ., Менглиев Б. Ҳозирги замон ўзбек тили. – Т.: Адабиёт учқунлари, 2017; Сайфуллаева Р., Менглиев Б.

Discussion and Results

The first slang dictionary was published in 1785 and was called "A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar tongue". Since that time the scholars have been collecting and recording slang in order to capture for our descendants the differing elegancies of standard language. In other words, dictionaries contain almost all the slang words that have ever appeared. In the present research we selected slang words according with the social groups and studied the frequency of their appearance in the dictionaries. The base for the present research comes to be 2286 examples which were taken from the following dictionaries:

The results of the investigation are indicated in the table 1.

	Group of slang	Absolute number	Relative number %
1	Narcotics	789	35
2	College students	400	17.5
3	Teenagers	365	16
4	Underworld	522	23
5	Police	210	9

Having analyzed the usage of slang words referring to different social groups in the dictionaries the following results have been obtained: In dictionaries slang words referring to narcotics appear more frequently than slang words referring to other analyzed groups of slang (35%). According to the present data we can conclude that drug addicts' world happens to be the major contributor of slang words than the other subcultures. In other words, this group of slang comes to be the main source of slang.

Here some examples of slang words usage referring to narcotics are represented.

I've had two joints in my hand.. .but I never smoked even one.

In this example the slang word "a join" has the meaning of "marijuana cigarette".

"I don't think anybody knew anyone who had kicked it."

Here the slang word "to kick it" is appeared in the meaning of "to rid oneself of narcotic addiction".

"You've got to get M to get that tingle-tingle".

In the present case the big letter "M" means "morphine".

"You got a hot shot, you are dead".

Here the slang word "hot shot" has the meaning of "a narcotic injection that is fatal because of an impurity or poison."

"My wife was a little grasshopper herself".

In the present sentence the slang word "grasshopper" has the meaning of "a person who smokes marijuana."

"How we s'pose to get off with no water to mix the stuff with".

Here the slang word "get off" is appeared in the meaning of "to get relief and pleasure from a dose".

"He has suggested that some of our recent Presidents were acid freak".

In this case the slang word "acid freak" has the meaning of "a person who uses LSD, esp. one who uses drugs heavily or habitually.

From the present examples it is clearly seen that slang words referring to narcotics are mostly used in order to name the things related with drug addicts. The frequency of appearance of slang words referring to the underworld group of slang is also worth paying attention. It takes the second place (23%) among others. So, underworld can be also considered to be a very important source of slang. Here we can present some interesting examples of usage of slang words referring to underworld that can be met in some dictionaries.

"Where would a hot can of corn like Dillinger hide out?"

In the present example the slang word "hot" is used in the meaning of "wanted by police".

"What they call 'the nut', payoffs to the police".

Here the slang word "nut" means "any illegal payoff to a police officer".

"The surprise award was a put-up job".

In the present sentence the slang word "Put-up job" has the meaning of "a prearranged matter".

"There would be a lot of loose quiff we would meet".

Here the slang word "quiff" is used in the meaning of "a promiscuous woman". In the present case the slang word "paperhanger" is appeared in the meaning of "a person who passes counterfeit money".

"The cops had gotten a rumble that gangsters were holed up".

Here the slang word "rumble" has the meaning of "information given to the police".

"People got shoved off for their money".

In this sentence the slang word "shove off" is used in the meaning of "to kill".

It is very interesting to mention that slang words referring to the underworld group of slang mostly name impolite, rude things related with such unpleasant things as prostitutes, murders, misdemeanors, petty offences, etc. In other words this group of slang words contains only the words that have negative meaning.

A social group that contributes the least amount of slang words is police group of slang (9%). Policemen being more educated have no need in creation of slang words. They have their own professional lexicon. In this case we can agree with the statement of most of the scholars that slang is mostly created by uneducated people, which is proved with the results of the present research. Here are some colorful examples of usage of slang words referring to the police group of slang.

"Brick agent, the federal infantry who.. .knocks on the door".

In this example the slang word "brick agent" has the meaning of "an FBI agent of the lowest rank".

"Thompson was catching in the squad room at Manhattan South".

Here the slang word "catch" is used in the meaning of "to do desk duty, answering the telephone and receiving complains".

"The cops cooping in a police car at the corner".

In the present sentence the slang word "coop" is appeared in the meaning of "to sleep while on duty; nap on the job, esp. in the police car".

"He has a gun and might try to gease you".

Here the slang word "gease" is used in the meaning of "to shoot, to kill by shooting".

"The sergeant complained that the patrolmen were not papering enough".

In this example the slang word "to paper" has the meaning of "to write parking and traffic tickets".

"He was a good cop ten years, but never got a see".

Here the slang word "see" is used in the meaning of "recognition".

"He made me the minute he saw me".

In the present sentence the slang word "make" is appeared in the meaning of "to make an identification". From the examples it is clearly seen that the slang words are not very expressive. They are neither negative nor positive. They are not used in order to be code words. They name the thing related with the work of police only. People who do not know the specific of their work cannot create and use slang words referring to police group of slang. And as a result this group of slang is not very numerous.

Such social groups as college students (17.5%) and teenagers (16%) are somewhere in the middle. They contribute almost equal quantity of slang words. There are a lot of young people and they take a half of the society. It does not matter if some of them criminals or drug addicts, all of them come to be teenagers or college students and contribute these groups of slang. The mentioned groups happen to be very numerous but not the major sources of slang words.

Here some interesting examples of usage of slang words referring to the college students group of slang.

"I really hit the eco final".

In the present example the slang word "hit" is used in the meaning of "to pass an examination with good grades".

"They're afraid of getting hosed".

Here the slang word "hose" has the meaning of "to turn down, reject, snub". *"He and LD had been jacking around in practice and LD fell on his leg".*

In the present sentence the slang word "jack around" is appeared in the meaning of "to idle about".

"We went downtown and had a kicking ass".

Here the slang word "kicking ass" has the meaning of "a good time".

"On critical issues of fact and analysis he is out to lunch".

The slang word "out to lunch" is used in this case in the meaning of "insane, crazy".

"The guard popped us as we tried to sneak in the back door".

In this sentence the slang word "pop" means "to catch".

"I hate to punt, but I just don't have time to finish this job".

Here the slang word "to punt" is used in the meaning of "to drop a course in order not to fail it".

The following examples can help to illustrate the usage of the slang words referring to the teenager's group of slang.

"One slurp of gin and he's in orbit".

In this example the slang word "in orbit" is used in the meaning of "having a free and exhilarating experience".

"The bomb cannot be exploded by a single kook".

Here the slang word "kook" has the meaning of "an eccentric person".

"I dug right away what the kicks was, so I said, "Later", and he split".

In the present sentence the slang word "later" is appeared in the meaning of "a parting salutation".

"He swore he wouldn't mark if they caught him".

In this case the slang word "mark" is used in the meaning of "to inform".

"I got mega homework tonight".

Here the slang word "mega" means "much".

"Fold the table down, and generations of crud and mung apper".

In the present example the slang word "mung" has the meaning of "anything nasty".

"I pigged out on a runny Brie".

Here the slang word "pigged out" is used in the meaning of "overeat".

Conclusion

It is very interesting to mention that the slang words referring to the teenagers and college students groups of slang have nothing in common with the real meaning of the words. They come to be very interesting groups because slang words express casual attitude of the young people to the world, they add laughing effect to a sentence where they happen to be used.

The present research proves the statement of professor L. Kuleshova that the major part of slang originates from criminal world of drug addicts, robbers, burglars, criminals, killers, etc.

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