

Issues on Etymology and Various Concepts of Slang

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Annotation: The article deals with the issues based on studying etymology and various concepts on slang, as well as analyses some types of slang and the role of slang in modern society. As it's known that, slang is closely related to the culture, history and other social aspects of the life of the country. That is why, when mastering spoken English, experts recommend not to dwell solely on the development of common and literary vocabulary, but to pay special attention to the study of this field. This lexical layer is very dynamic: new expressions are constantly appearing in it, and old ones - losing popularity and predictably going out of use which are gradually forgotten and disappear.

Keywords: slang, spoken English, etymology, sources of replenishment of slangs, word formation.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most remarkable phenomena in linguistics should be recognized as repeated, often very serious attempts by scientists to approach the solution of the problem of the so-called "slang", the essence and origin of which are unclear and controversial. Even a cursory acquaintance with the literature is enough to understand how acute the issue considered in this study has always been.

Linguists note that the political and socio-economic life of countries is reflected in linguistics, as in a mirror, especially over the past two decades. It is the social problems that are the most acute for society that find a response in the youth language with a rich, stylistically colored vocabulary.

Language is a powerful means of regulating people's activities in various fields. Being a tool of communication, language, like a mirror, reflects the characteristics of its speakers, their culture and history, and reacts to all changes in society. The modern world is dynamically developing and with it the language is in constant development. All events that cover society affect the lively development of colloquial speech, receive a response in the languages of the world and add new phrases and expressions to the lexicon of mankind. Human communication is one of the most important indicators of education and erudition. The perception of a person by society, his authority in social and professional activities depends on how communication will take place. The main element of communication is speech. In order to understand the variety of modern definitions of the phenomenon of "slang", as well as to dwell on one adequate for this study, first of all, one should study its etymology, trace the evolution of this concept.

DISCUSSIONS

The etymology of the term "slang" is one of the most controversial and confusing issues in lexicology. The difficulty of disclosing the origin of the term is exacerbated, as will be shown below, by its ambiguity and different interpretations of slang by the authors of dictionaries and special studies over the past two hundred years.

Slang, being an integral part of the language and, accordingly, of speech, is one of the main and most problematic aspects of lexicology, since it reflects the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the society that uses it. Slang is that layer of vocabulary that does not coincide with the literary

norm. Some researchers perceive slang as something alien to the literary language, not characteristic of the speech of an intelligent person. Nevertheless, today one can observe the "expansion" of slang vocabulary in all spheres of human activity: slang units are used on radio and television, in the press, literature, on the Internet, not to mention the oral communication of people of almost all ages, social groups and classes. The youth language falls under the category of slang, which changes all the time, but which still does not go unnoticed. In addition, the study of youth slang is becoming increasingly relevant in the context of expanding international contacts (internships, tours, teaching a number of subjects by English specialists, watching videos, listening to modern songs in English, informal communication with native speakers, and so on).

The volume of the very concept of "slang" is indicated by its descriptive definitions that appeared later, such as "obscene colloquial speech" or poetic "dithyramb" descriptions of slang as a "mint of the language" (D. Galsworthy); or "slang is a language that rolls up its sleeves, spits in the palm of your hand and gets to work" (K. Sandberg), it is "poetry of a simple person", etc. It is clear that in the scientific sense the value of such definitions is not great, although they still show that slang is considered the language of the common people and the basis for the production of a national dictionary.

Khomyakov V.A. in one of his books he indicated that for the first time the term slang with the meaning "language of low vulgar type" (language of low or vulgar type) was used in 1756; since 1802, this term has been understood as "the jargon of a certain class or period" (The cant or jargon of a certain class or period), and since 1818, slang has been understood as "a language of a high colloquial type, lower than the level of a standard enlightened language, from new words, or words that are used in a certain sense" [19, 43].

E. Partridge points out that since about half of the last century, the term slang has become a generally accepted designation for "illegitimate" colloquial speech "illegitimate" colloquial speech, while until 1850 all varieties of vulgar language except cant were called this term [4, 3]. It should be noted that along with the term slang, such synonyms of slang as lingo, argot, jargon, cant were non-terminologically used. At first, slang was used as a synonym for the term kent, later - for the term slang.

It was F. Grose who in 1785 introduced the term "slang" as a synonym for "kent" in his famous dictionary of "low" language: slang - cant language. Having explained slang through Kent, F. Grouse in the preface to the dictionary divides the "low" language into two parts, calling the first part Kent or slang. Probably, it was precisely due to the authority of the work of F. Grose (the dictionary was very popular and considered the standard) that subsequent authors of the dictionaries of the "low" language began to associate slang with Kent, as words from one source - the secret language of wandering beggars - gypsies, especially since in gypsy lingo was the word slang. The gypsy etymology of the term slang lasted almost until the end of the last century; it is also given in the well-known dictionary of J. Hotten, which provides synonyms for slang in gibberish (gypsy jargon). J. Hotten, unlike F. Grose, shares the concepts of slang and kent, emphasizing, however, that it is almost impossible to distinguish them completely [7, 30].

At the end of the 90th century, slang began to be seen as a borrowing from the Scandinavian languages. For example, G. Wilde and E. Weekley believe that it has a common origin with the Norwegian slenja-ord - "a new slang word", slenja-namm "nickname" and slenja-kjeften in the meaning of "scold, insult someone". There is also a similar idiom in English with the same meaning "to sling the jaw", which is now obsolete. Starting with the well-known etymological dictionary by

Skeet, such an interpretation of the origin of the term has penetrated into some authoritative dictionaries of the English language [7, 30].

At the end of the last century, interest in the question of etymology did not disappear - new hypotheses arise, more or less reasoned, but also not received general recognition. So, for example, in German linguistics, O. Ritter and K. Westendorp believe that the word "slang" arose as a result of agglutination of the first part of the word "language" with the suffix "-s" in the expressions "thieves' language", "gypsies' language ". It can also be assumed that the English word "slang" arose as a result of contamination of several roots. First of all, it goes back to I.-e. root *length. Wed Greek elegho "I scold, insult"; eleghos "reproach, abuse"; Latvian langat "to scold, call names"; dvn. lahan "to offend". The movable formative s- is presented in the English word [3, 9].

Thus, slang is considered as a conscious, deliberate use of elements of a literary standard in colloquial speech for purely stylistic purposes: to create the effect of novelty, unusualness, difference from generally accepted samples, to reflect a certain mood of the speaker, to give the statement concreteness, liveliness, expressiveness, brevity, imagery. Means such as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, euphemism, litotes help to achieve these goals [3, 10]. This point of view is shared by most of the researchers. These included J. Hotten, who defined slang as a street language saturated with humor; Fowler called the slang "the diction that results from playing with words and renaming things"; J.B. Greenough and J.B. Kittridge wittily defines slang as "a vagabond language that roams the neighborhood of literary speech and is constantly trying to make its way into the most refined society."

I.R. Galperin, in turn, sharply criticizes this definition, arguing that the need for the authors to resort to a metaphor when creating it was caused by the inability to adequately express the thought using logical definitions, and this in turn leads to the foggy and ambiguity of the thought itself [7, 107] .

At the same time, G.B. Antrushin, who in her work, as a confirmation of the statement of the famous English writer J.K. Chesterton, writes that slang is nothing but a kind of metaphor, lexical-semantic units full of metonymic and humorous meaning ("all slang is metaphor") [1, 17]. Alexander X. also emphasizes such a characteristic as humorousness in slang: "slang...may defined as unorthodox, informal use of language, generally with a humorous or would-be-humorous intention" [2, 146]. Freeze also points to this: "what is important ... is their connotations rather than their denotations. Flippant humor marks the expressions we call slang" [19, 36]. The pronounced burlesque nature of slang is highlighted by J. Nosek "slang is very variable vocabulary and phraseology of colloquial speech and has ... vogue and burlesque character ...". Yu.M. Skrebnev also emphasizes the humorous nature of slang as a lexical layer: "Slang is a set of commonly understood and widely used words and expressions of a humorous nature - consciously used substitutes for ordinary literary words" [6, 51].

J.H. McKnight says that slang represents "a form of colloquial speech created in a spirit of defiance and aiming at freshness and novelty"; C. Potter gives the following definition: "slang is a variety of familiar and colloquial speech, often new, picturesque, and striking, but not yet fully recognized and accepted by the community as a permanent part of the common language" [2, 212]. As can be seen from the last three definitions, all authors attribute the phenomenon of slang to the sphere of colloquial speech, attributing rather bright and often positive characteristics to speech and the phenomenon itself.

Until now, we have considered slang as separate words or phrases, as in general, and this phenomenon is perceived by some scientists, for example, A.I. Smirnitsky writes that "genetically

slang is obviously a colloquial or familiar style of speech in a certain special area", thus defining slang as a style, and not a separate vocabulary [7, 201]. Most scientists understand the term "slang" not as a style, but as a lexical layer or layer. So, for example, I.V. Arnold points out that slang refers to purely colloquial words with a rude or comic-emotional coloring [2, 264]. We find more detailed definitions in the works of T.A. Solovieva. She believes that a clear definition of the concept of slang has not yet been given, therefore she offers her own interpretation of this term: "slang is the most mobile layer of colloquial speech in the English language, which includes words and expressions either borrowed from other groups of the English language or from other languages, or created according to the word-formation models that exist in the English language, and used in more specific meanings due to the emotional coloring they acquire" [8, 123].

Thus, it can be stated that, for all its popularity, "slang" currently does not have terminological accuracy. Based on the foregoing, the following conclusions can be justified. The etymology of the phenomenon under study in the course of teaching lexicology allows us to consider "slang" as a sociolinguistic phenomenon, the emergence of which is due to the interaction of certain social and professional groups, as a result of which a layer of non-literary colloquial vocabulary has formed, reflecting the features of the language of various strata of society, characterized by bright emotional and evaluative coloring and expressiveness used in specific communicative situations and moving into the context of generally accepted literary vocabulary.

It should be noted the existing ambiguity in the interpretation of the phenomenon under study in foreign and domestic linguistics, the need for social and linguistic practice in the further study of theoretical and practical problems of slang in the course of teaching lexicology and the prospects for searching for methods and techniques for its translation.

It should also be noted that in this study we do not reject the phenomenon of slang, on the contrary, we consider it a sign of the life and progressive development of the language, a sign of the eternal change of its structure, mainly lexical.

Summing up, it should be noted that among Russian and foreign scientists currently do not have a consensus regarding the very term "slang". Its boundaries are rather blurred. Slang as a means of isolating a social group, of course, should be attributed to social phenomena in the language.

Due to the different interpretations of slang by the authors of dictionaries and special studies over the past two hundred years, the etymology of the word "slang" also remains a rather controversial issue. Despite this fact, the hypothesis of E. Partryj seems to us to be the most adequate, which indicates that the word slang corresponds to the verb to sling - to utter, which confirms the existence of such combinations as sling words, evidenced back in the era of Chaucer, as well as some later slang combinations with the same verb.

This group of slangisms includes the following categories:

- a) the use of such turns as and all (and everything else, and all that) is unacceptable for a literary or business style, which indicates a deviation from the literary norm: *"how they were occupied and all"*, *"they're nice and all"*, *"he loved him and all"*. The synonymous expressions *"and stuff"*, *"and crap"*, *"and all that stuff"*, *"all my crap"* were also used.
- b) the formation and use of evaluative complex epithets such as *"sleep-with-the-sheep-and-nofire order"*, *"to be drop-dead gorgeous"*, *"rushed-off-her-feet waitress"*, *"stick-in-the -mud mood"*;
- c) in a familiar-colloquial style, with its emotional expressiveness and emphaticity, units containing elements like damn and euphemistic phrases are skillfully combined: *goddamn*, *"damn miserable"*

time for them", "damn lonesome ranches". Immediately we note "jouncing a bed", "outhouse", "rubbers", "to fill out in the shoulders and hams", "to hit the hay", "anatomical disconformity", "to drive off the only curve on Dead Horse Road. Within the framework of this group of slangisms, an attempt was made to semantic classification. It should be noted here that the division into classes is rather arbitrary and does not cover the entire number of slang terms, but at the same time it helps to synchronize data.

1. units marked by ethnic discrimination: "smokes", "a dinge", "shine box", "shine killing", "yaller", "yellow", "wop", "wop";
2. prison vocabulary, it should be noted, constitutes a significant layer within this group: "in he caboose", "prowlie", "hot car list", "check bouncer", "copper", "snuck", "heist guys", "to case", "K-car", "finger man", "sneezer", "rapper", "to rap", "high pillow", "to swan", "reader", "blotter", "needle- up punks", "torpedo", "a stick-up", "to run reefers", "to can smb", "cut", "to cop smth off", "coke-hound", "sap", "heap", "to sing", "pay-off", "honkytonk", "to burn up", "heater and iron", "sneeze", "lit", "a bindle punk", "a gun", "to breeze";
3. vocabulary denoting monetary names, drugs and alcoholic beverages: "hooch", "dead soldier", "cleaned up", "juju", "a stick ot tea", "mean", "c-note", "the ice", "hop", "grift", "yellow backs", "coke-hound", "to be like a ferry boat", "a bindle punk", "to get a mild toot on", "spot", "fin", "to be dizzy drunk on all fours";
4. slangisms related to the characteristics of a person: "to shake the fleas outa one's pans", "to crack wise", "to barber", "hoofer", "lug", "fink", "to figure-eight", "damwit", "to dry-gulch", "runt", "a fakeloo artist", "hoopla spreader", "pally", "to have French fits", "to square oneself", "to get a square deal", "swami guy", "wren", "toots", "to clam", "sucker", "to be from home", "scramola umpchay", "deal me out", "slob";
5. vocabulary denoting police officers or areas closely related to it: "john", "dick", "private" - "on a confidential lay", "shamus", "private eye";
6. slangisms that are not included in the above groups. These are mainly exclamations or evaluative remarks and statements: "tank town", "pen" (penitentiary), "hooey", "hoopla", "Land's sake!", "it will be jake", "phooey", "old hat", "burg", "to glom something off", "world-beater", "sink my putt", "nix", "fast wagon", "gag lines", "to brace somebody", "tie-up", "under the hat", "with a lot of snap", "Nuts!, How come?", "competish", "What's your lay?", "rep, info", "to shed the heater", "No little powders?", "to be from home", "deal me out", "to be a lot of birdseed", "to take the air", "keeno", "to pick up a job", "your .30 -.30" (a gun), "to be worn to the quick", "grub" (grub), "to slosh one's face", "his folks died" (his parents), "he had put him on the woolies" (to babysit), "you'll freeze your ass", "i'm not no queer", "one-shot thing", "he's not gona make it" (he'll not recover), "you got a kid", "smokes" (cigarettes), "I about to give up on you", "he hates my guts", "i ain't never goin to be on the bubble".

The emergence of new words and expressions in slang is associated with changes in society, since slang is a "living" part of the language and absorbs new trends, ideas and news of the surrounding world faster than the literary language.

In our opinion, the study of slang is becoming increasingly relevant in the context of expanding international contacts, helping to better understand the national-specific features of the mentality of English youth. Knowledge of slang introduces English learners to the natural language environment, contributes to the development of their communicative competence. Ignorance of slang leads in the implementation of an act of intercultural communication to all sorts of curiosities

and speech errors, communicative "failures", the prevention of which must be given special attention.

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