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METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL<http://mentaljournal-jspu.uz/index.php/mesmj/index>PECULIARITIES OF SLANG IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK
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ABOUT ARTICLE

Key words: slang, jargon, argot, functional style, informal vocabulary, social language, youth language, colloquial speech, linguistic identity, expressive means, language variation, sociolect.

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Abstract: This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the distinctive features of slang expressions in the English and Uzbek languages. It explores their unique linguistic characteristics and examines the socio-linguistic functions that slang fulfills within different speech communities. Special attention is given to the role of slang in everyday communication, emphasizing its stylistic versatility and expressive power. The study also highlights how slang serves as a marker of social group identity, personal individuality, and emotional expressiveness. By comparing the use of slang in both languages, the article sheds light on cultural and communicative nuances, offering valuable insights into the informal layers of language use.

Introduction

Language is a social phenomenon that performs a communicative function in receiving and transmitting information. It serves not only as a means of communication but also as a tool that reveals human nature. Each language has a common vocabulary, forms, syntactic structures, and both free and fixed expressions that are shared across its various functional styles. These elements unify all style types into a single national literary language. From this perspective, slang represents an active part of informal vocabulary that directly emerges within social strata of language, particularly among youth and professional groups.

Materials and methods

This study employs a comparative descriptive method to analyze the distinctive features of slang in the English and Uzbek languages. The research materials include a wide range of authentic sources such as contemporary English and Uzbek films, television shows, social media content, online forums, music lyrics, and literary works where slang is frequently used. In addition, explanatory and bilingual dictionaries of slang and jargon in both languages were consulted to ensure accurate interpretation and classification of slang expressions.

The analysis focuses on the lexical, semantic, and stylistic aspects of slang, with special attention to its socio-linguistic functions and emotional expressiveness. Data was categorized according to thematic domains such as youth slang, professional jargon, and social group slang. A functional approach was applied to evaluate how slang is used to convey identity, solidarity, informality, and emotional nuance within specific speech communities. The contrastive analysis method was used to highlight similarities and differences in slang usage between the two languages. Qualitative observations were supported by quantitative examples to illustrate patterns in usage, frequency, and context. This methodology allows for a deeper understanding of slang as a dynamic component of informal communication in English and Uzbek.

Slang (the term "slang" is borrowed from English and refers to words characteristic of jargon and everyday oral vocabulary) is a phenomenon related to general slang, jargon, and vulgarisms (coarse words). To form the relevant content of spoken language, it is necessary to appropriately use the stylistic phonetic, lexical, and grammatical norms. Spoken language is an informal, free speech spoken directly by interlocutors in a dialogic form.

Language is a social phenomenon that performs a communicative function in receiving and transmitting information. Language is not only a means of communication but also a tool that reveals human nature. Slang ("slang" – borrowed from English, meaning jargon and words characteristic of simple, oral vocabulary) relates to general slang and vulgarisms (coarse words). Over the past period, great efforts have been made to expand the scope of the state language, strengthen its role and influence in our life, and to turn it into a genuine national value—an achievement that was once unimaginable. During the years of independence, the practical scope of the Uzbek language has finally expanded. Research aimed at its scientific development, popular scientific books dedicated to the unique features of our language, educational manuals, and numerous newly published dictionaries have contributed to elevating societal consciousness.

Each language has a common vocabulary fund, forms, and syntactic structures, as well as free and fixed expressions that are common for all its stylistic varieties. This unifies all stylistic types into a single national literary language. To form the relevant content of spoken language, it is necessary to appropriately use stylistic phonetic, lexical, and grammatical norms. Spoken language is informal, free speech spoken directly by interlocutors in a dialogic form.

Result and discussion

The specific social, psychological, cultural, and economic characteristics of youth generate the need to create a special language that operates in all communicative interaction areas important to young people. It performs functions such as expressing individuality, imitating friends, distinguishing themselves from the world of adults and children, and conforming to the speech behavior norms of peers.

Although the Uzbek national literary language developed from the general people's language, it differs from the dialects, regional accents, jargon, and everyday spoken language — in fact, from the entire folk language — in some respects. This is because the general people's language includes all elements found in Uzbek and exists in an unprocessed form. The literary language, however, selects variants that are understandable and convenient for use by the Uzbek nation and recommends them as norms for the members of the nation.

In recent years, the youth language phenomenon has increasingly influenced language and culture acquisition: jargons actively penetrate spoken language and are widely used in the media, becoming a leading style of modern literature. Accordingly, several pressing issues exist in the culture of language and speech.

Examples among youth include expressions like, "Takoy kiyingan, slang words like "paxan," "Vozdux stipendiya," "sindiring" among youth, and between girls and boys words like "g'isht" and others.

Slang is widely used in English as well as in other languages. For example, the phrase "it eats like a pig" means to eat messily or greedily. You have probably heard such words and expressions at least once in everyday conversations, right? Now, how would you say "takoy" in Uzbek? What could its meaning be? Expressions like these have become so ingrained in our lexicon today that there is no need to search for their Uzbek equivalents—they are already widely understood by everyone.

At this point, the question arises: "How did these expressions enter our language, and what purposes do they serve?"

Slang is an integral part of the spoken style and is manifested in connection with general slang, jargon, and vulgarisms. The expressive power of spoken language is revealed through its informality and expressiveness (O'rinboev, 2001).

Youth language serves as a means that simplifies communication among young people, ensures sincerity, and strengthens unity within groups. In studying this phenomenon, the sociolinguistic approach plays an important role (Abdusaidov, 2006).

Slang reflects the dynamic development of language and the influence of modern culture and technology. For example, expressions like "pig out" (meaning to eat excessively) in English contribute to the expressiveness characteristic of contemporary American English (Dixon, 1990).

Slang also reveals cultural differences. Partridge (1933) called it the "oppositional language of subcultures." Crystal (2003) evaluates slang as a means that strengthens solidarity within social groups.

This informal speech form corresponds to the English term “slang” or the Uzbek terms “jargon”. These are understood among teenagers, young people, and representatives of specific groups or professions. Thus, slang consists of living words in modern language but is considered unsuitable for use in literary language. Additionally, many slang words and phrases remain unintelligible to the general public because most slang is used metaphorically and often borrowed from foreign languages, their dialects, and jargons.

Some critics believe that if slang spreads widely, it will destroy the “correct” use of language. However, academic (descriptive) linguists view language as constantly evolving rather than fixed, and consider slang words to be genuine words within the lexical system of the language. Prescriptivists promote studying socially preferred or “correct” ways of speaking according to normative grammar and syntax, while descriptivists focus on studying the language as it is used, which helps people better understand implicit rules about how to speak. In this understanding, slang plays an important role.

Erik Partridge’s classic work “Slang: To-day and Yesterday” is one of the earliest and most comprehensive studies on English slang. He defines slang as the “oppositional language of subcultures” and emphasizes its characteristics of humor, rebelliousness, and dynamism. Partridge categorizes slang into types such as social slang, military slang, criminal slang, and student slang.

Paul Dickson’s book “Slang!: The Topical Dictionary of Americanisms” culturally analyzes American slang words. According to him, slang is not only a means of communication but also a tool for intergroup solidarity and differentiation within society. Dickson views slang as a form of language that expresses individuality and reinforces social identity.

Toni Thorn’s “Shoot the Puppy: A Survival Guide to the Curious Jargon of Modern Life” analyzes how modern life jargons and slang are shaped under the influence of modern technologies and mass media. Thorn regards slang as a reflection of social values and changes.

The renowned linguist David Crystal, in “The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language,” analyzes slang from sociopsychological perspectives. He considers slang a means of

strengthening solidarity among group members and an informal communication tool in society. Crystal sees slang as a natural and essential component of language development.

Regarding the distinctive features of slang and the spoken style, fundamental ideas are first presented in B. Urinboev's "The Spoken Style of Modern Uzbek" (1991). The author emphasizes that "spoken speech is the direct, dialogic form of free speech between interlocutors" (p. 10). This style reflects the expressiveness and freedom of modern speech. Furthermore, Urinboev highlights the variability of language in mass communication and the dynamics of youth vocabulary as important factors (p. 25).

The book "Functional Styles of the Uzbek Language" (1984) by Qungirov R., Karimov S., and Qurbonov T. stresses that each style type has its own phonetic, lexical, and grammatical features. The authors state: "For each style type in any language, there is a common lexical fund, forms, and syntactic constructions of that language," thereby distinguishing the commonalities and differences among styles (p. 7).

Abdusaidov A., in "Speech Mastery" (2015), notes the role of language tools, including informal layers like jargon and slang, in enhancing communicative effectiveness. The development of speech culture and stylistic awareness demands the analysis of contemporary lexical layers (p. 92).

Additionally, in Volume 2 of the "Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language," Mirmuhsin describes the national and social diversity of language through the character Temur Malik. The dictionary also provides explanations for modern slang and everyday spoken elements (p. 332). This highlights the necessity of modern approaches in describing and analyzing today's language.

The specific social, psychological, cultural, and economic characteristics of youth create a need for a special language that functions actively in all areas of communicative interaction important to them. This need is closely linked to young people's desire to find their place in society, express their identity, freely convey personal opinions, and gain a unique status among peers.

At the same time, this special language — which includes slang, jargon, and other informal lexical units — serves as a means to simplify communication among young people, ensuring sincerity and closeness. Young people often deviate from formal language structures and rules, striving instead to use language that is convenient and suited to their real-life needs. This makes their interactions freer, more consistent, and clearer in expression.

The creation of this special language arises from the need to express individuality — that is, each young person's unique worldview, as well as the understanding and expression of their social status within society. Through this language, they distinguish themselves from others and mark their belonging to a particular social circle. Additionally, imitation of friends and using the same language structure strengthens solidarity and a friendly atmosphere within the group.

This process naturally leads to the continual renewal of youth language — slang and jargon — because young people constantly interact, creating new words, phrases, and forms of expression. This ensures the language remains creative and dynamic. The desire to distinguish themselves from the worlds of adults and children is one of the key motivations driving youth to create their own language. Young people want to see themselves as a unique, independent, and progressive generation.

As a result, they move away from formal language and use speech styles and expressive means characteristic of their social groups. The widespread use of slang and jargon also reflects young people's desire to conform to the speech behavior norms of their peers. Every social group has its own unique speech rules and styles; adherence to these marks belonging and facilitates communication.

Although the Uzbek national literary language developed from the common national language, it differs in some respects from the dialects, regional accents, jargons, and everyday spoken language present within the wider community. The common national language includes all elements found in Uzbek and exists in an unrefined form. The literary language, however, selects variants that are comprehensible and convenient for the Uzbek nation, recommending them as norms for speakers.

B. O'rinboev particularly emphasizes the expressive potential of the free, emotional speech used in the spoken style (1991, pp. 10, 25). A. Abdusaidov acknowledges the enrichment of speech through figurative expressions found in informal language (2015, p. 92).

In recent years, youth language as a phenomenon has had a strong impact on both language and culture. This language is not only entering spoken communication but is also widely used in mass media, advertising, television programs, and even modern literature. Thus, slang, jargon, and argot terms create new and distinct forms of social language expression. This language, in turn, shapes not only the personal modes of expression of young people but also the social relationships among them.

For example, let's analyze some slang terms popular among youth:

"Takoy kiyingan"

This phrase is used by young people to describe a modern, trendy style of dressing that suits them. The term "takoy" comes from the Russian word "takoi" (meaning "such" or "this kind of") and is used to evaluate a person's clothing. This phrase not only expresses style but also reflects the social status and personal image typical of youth.

"Paxan"

This term often means "someone who strives to appear influential or strong in front of others." In Uzbek slang, it refers more specifically to a key or important figure in difficult or various social situations. Among young people, "paxan" is used to create mutual respect or even fear, as it describes a powerful or influential person.

"Vozdux" (stipendiya / scholarship)

This word originates from the Russian "vozdukh" meaning "air," but among youth, it is used to mean "stipend" or "scholarship." This reflects how elements borrowed from one language can be reinterpreted and transformed in youth speech. The term is widespread and contributes to creating a distinctive style of communication and social interaction.

"Sindiring"

This term, commonly used among young people, literally means "to break" or "to smash." However, in youth slang, it more often means "to defeat others" or "to be superior." It conveys

competitive relationships among peers, indicating situations like “who is stronger” or “who has made a significant change.”

"G'isht"

One more common slang word used in communication among youth is “g’isht” (literally “brick”), which describes boys or girls. This term can be used to evaluate a person’s appearance but in a broader sense also reflects individual characteristics or social status.

Slang and jargon in youth language are seen as reflections of social processes. Young people adapt language to satisfy their social and psychological needs, leading to the emergence of new words, phrases, and grammatical forms. These forms become the most immediate and unique tools for communication.

As the examples show, slang terms not only have specific meanings but also serve as tools for group formation, identification, and strengthening communication among young people. For instance, words like “paxan” and “vozdux” carry connotations of social status and dominance among peers. Moreover, slang and jargon play a crucial role in creating the unique language of a new generation and in social communication. Young people use these words among friends, peers, and social groups to connect, improve relations, and better understand each other. This process leads to a constantly changing and dynamic language, which becomes important not only for young people but for other layers of society as well.

Thus, the increase and use of slang and jargon among young people for communicative purposes reflect social, cultural, and linguistic processes. This phenomenon needs to be carefully studied by linguists because it plays an important role not only in spoken language but also in the interactions among various social structures in society.

English slang is widely used not only by young people but also by internet users, business circles, and other social groups. These words and phrases serve various communicative functions: they facilitate interaction, strengthen group cohesion, and create personal and collective identities. Let’s look at some of the most popular slang terms in English.

"Cool"

The widely used English word cool originally means “cold,” but in modern slang, it means “awesome,” “perfect,” or “great.” For example, when someone shows a new outfit or car, they might say, “This is so cool!” The word cool is very popular not only among young people but also among other groups. It helps strengthen social bonds and makes communication simple and friendly.

"Bucks"

The slang term bucks means dollars and is commonly used in the United States. For example, one might say, “It costs 20 bucks.” This word is used not only among young people but also in business circles because it is informal yet quick and convenient. Such words spread widely among people and on social media and have rapidly developed.

"LOL" (Laughing Out Loud)

The abbreviation LOL is one of the most popular acronyms in internet and SMS communication. It is used in response to something funny or amusing. It is frequently used among young people and even in professional correspondence. Initially, it was used only online, but now it is common in spoken language too. For instance, when someone makes a joke or says something funny, responding with LOL has become a norm.

"It eats like a pig"

This phrase is used to describe someone eating in a messy or careless manner. Literally, “He ate like a pig” implies bad or awkward behavior while eating. This phrase is not usually used in formal linguistics but carries a negative connotation in social communication.

English slang not only enriches the language but also reflects social and cultural changes. These expressions widely used among young people serve various social functions: distinguishing groups, facilitating communication, and enhancing mutual understanding. For example, slang terms like LOL, cool, and bucks speed up and simplify interaction among youth. Moreover, English slang reflects cultural traits of social groups. Words like YOLO and bae express young people’s desire for friendship, love, and new experiences. These terms unite people within social circles and establish common understanding and communication among them.

At the same time, slang in English is often not used in formal speech because it does not conform to standard grammatical and lexical norms. However, slang is widespread as a means of communication and plays an important role in ensuring the development and change of language. Thus, slang helps language remain constantly dynamic, adaptable, and responsive to social situations.

Some critics believe that if slang spreads widely, it undermines the "correct" use of language. However, academic linguists acknowledge that language is always evolving and consider slang as legitimate units within the lexicology of the language. While prescriptivists promote "correct" usage based on normative grammar, descriptivists focus on studying actual language use.

Conclusion

Therefore, slang units occupy a special place in linguistics as lively, figurative, and emotionally rich elements of the modern language system. They are not merely tools for oral or informal communication but also play an important role for language users—especially young people, subcultures, professional groups, and social strata—in expressing themselves, establishing closeness, feeling equal among peers, and breaking free from the restrictions of formal language.

Through slang, people express not only their membership in social groups but also their individuality, personal worldview, and attitude toward life. For example, widely used English slang terms like YOLO, vibe, no cap, ghosting, and flex reflect the worldview and values of modern youth, and through these linguistic tools, they demonstrate how they behave in communication and evaluate reality.

Additionally, slang units serve as convenient means for expressing quickness, innovation, humor, irony, social opinion, and critique. They are sensitive to the spirit of the times and cultural changes and are constantly being updated. For this reason, slang is a vivid example of language dynamism, creativity, inventiveness, and adaptability.

Overall, through slang language units, one can deeply understand the complex relations between the individual and society, the socio-psychological mechanisms of modern

communication, cultural identity, and the social nature of language. Therefore, slang is a relevant subject of study not only for linguists but also for sociologists, psychologists, cultural scholars, and educators.

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