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## SEMANTICS OF SOME SLANGS USED IN EVERYDAY SPEECH IN ENGLISH WITH COGNITION

### ПРО ПІЗНАВАЛЬНІ ЗВ'ЯЗКИ СЕМАНТИКИ ДЕЯКИХ СЛЕНГІВ, ЩО ВЖИВАЮТЬСЯ В ЩОДЕННОМУ МОВЛЕННІ В АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ МОВІ

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This article is devoted to the connection of the semantics of some slang used in everyday speech in English with knowledge. As we know, modern English is a complex language, in which there is a number of slang used in everyday speech. The author, first of all, gives information about slangs, then in context explains the meaning of slangs, their functions in a situation and indicates the ways of forming slangs that are used by various social groups. The article then covers everyday slang, often used in the British dialect of English. The presented examples affect both well-established expressions and re-used in the language. All examples are considered with the cognitive connections of semantics used every day.

**Key words:** slangs, meaning, cognition, metaphoric expression, semantics.

Представлена стаття присвячена зв'язку семантики деяких сленгів, що використовуються в повсякденному мовленні англійською мовою з пізнанням. Як ми знаємо, сучасна англійська мова – це складна мова, у якій є низка сленгів, що використовуються в повсякденному мовленні. Автор насамперед дає інформацію про сленг, потім у контексті пояснює значення сленгів, їх функції в ситуації та наводить шляхи утворення сленгів, які вживаються різними соціальними групами. Також у статті розглядаються повсякденні сленги, які часто використовуються в британській говірці англійської мови. Представлені приклади зачіпають як усталені вирази, так і такі, що знову вживаються в мові. Усі приклади розглядаються з пізнавальними зв'язками семантики, які використовуються кожного дня.

**Ключові слова:** сленг, значення, пізнання, метафоричне вираження, семантика.

Представленная статья посвящена связи семантики некоторых сленгов, используемых в повседневной речи на английском языке с познанием. Как мы знаем, современный английский – это сложный язык, в котором существует ряд сленгов, используемых в повседневной речи. Автор в первую очередь даёт информацию о сленгах, затем в контексте объясняет значение сленгов, их функции в ситуации и указывает пути образования сленгов, которые употребляются разными социальными группами. Также в статье рассматриваются повседневные сленги, часто используемые в британском наречии английского языка. Представленные примеры затрагивают как устоявшиеся выражения, так и вновь употребляемые в языке. Все примеры рассматриваются с познавательными связями семантики, используемыми каждый день.

**Ключевые слова:** сленг, значение, познание, метафорическое выражение, семантика.

**Introduction.** It is known that language is a social phenomenon for its nature and cannot be manifested in all its spheres, it does not function, and it is inevitable that language develops in a way that is relevant to life. The first function of language is to communi-

cate with people, which shows its social feature, and the social function of language cannot effectively influence its structure.

It is not necessary to investigate the relationship between language and society thoroughly, to have a

thorough analysis of language function between different social groups and to be used by different professions. In all cases, each literary language has been formed on the basis of certain dialects, as well as the process of enriching the literary language of certain social groups and occupations is continuing.

**Methods.** Looking at the problem from that point of view, the importance of researching English-language slangs is understandable and we consider the study of the mentioned non-standard lexicon (slangs) can be considered as actual today's demand at a time when the relationship between peoples, nations has expanded, when the English language gains global status, and it seems to us that it is so.

**Results.** In Modern Linguistics there is no exact answer about the origin of the word "slang". The word "slang" first appeared in writing in England in the XVIII century. Its meaning was designated as an "insult".

This term appeared in the dictionary of English sociolect F. Grose in 1785, where he divides it into two parts, calling it either "Kant" or "Slang" [5]. In the XVIII century, the word "slang" was also interchangeable not only with the term "cant", but also with the term "flash" [4, p. 11]. Then its meaning was greatly expanded and used to indicate so called "illegal" colloquial vocabulary. One of the first lexicographical works in which the term "slang" is used is the J. Andrews dictionary [2].

The compilers of dictionaries began to use it as a tag for words that are not recognized as literary units of the language. O. Jespersen believed that "slang is a form of speech that owes its origin to the desire of the human individual to deviate from the usual language imposed on us by society". There is a version that English word "slang" was formed from the verb "to sling" – "to throw", "throw" [9]. E. Partridge adhered to this point of view. This confirmation is justified by the obsolete expression of "to sling one's jaw" – "to speak disapproving/angry/offensive speech".

According to another version, the word "slang" refers to slanguage, which is an abbreviation of thieves' language [1, p. 3–4]. We can also talk about a different version – the combination of phrases rouges' language or beggars' language [4, p. 11]. The word "slang" is often confused with such words as "lingo" and "argot". The first term is mainly used in the lower strata of society, and argot is the language of communication in a certain closed social group, where the common vocabulary is completely replaced. For example, argo is often used among the African American population [3, p. 3–4].

It should be noted that there is no general concept of slang. The above definition of slang is far from the only one. There are many definitions of the

term "slang", and they differ significantly from each other. It is safe to say that there is no single view on this concept, while the terms "jargon" or "standard vocabulary", on which the definitions of slang are often built, are described quite clearly.

At the same time, as M. Adams notes, any recipient will instantly and accurately subtract the slang from the text [1, p. 9].

Looking through the existing literatures, it can be observed that the slangs are closely linked to the ideas of mainly small social groups, not majority of population.

Let's try to explain the above mentioned through texts, such as dialogue between a person (client) and a coachman in the XIX century. For example: *My son, who had just borrowed what he called "half a skid" of (sic) me promptly took up the cudgels, or, in other words, the coarse language of the streets, and metaphorically smote that cabman hip and thigh. "Were we such a brace of fools" he asked with indignant fervour, "as to pay showful prices for riding in a blessed growler? Did the driver think to "flummox" us by his lip, because he through we weren't fly to him? He, the driver, must get up earlier and go to bed without getting buffy, which he had not done for a week of Sundays, before he found that little game would draw in the dibs. No more tight than we were, wasn't he (with great depth of meaning this) – then what made him so precious fishy about the gills, if he hadn't been out on the batter the night before?*

In this text, the underlined slangs were used at that time and respectively mean as follows within the norms of literary language. With the help of dictionaries, we explain them comprehensively: *skid* – prefiguring, *squid* – a pound – *half a skid of me* – slide a half pound to me, *showful* – take, dishonest, *blessed-damned*, *growler* – a four wheeled cab, *flummox* – to confuse; to trick.

According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology, this word means *confound*, *bewilder* as a slang, *confuse* in terms of dialectic origin in the XIX century (*bewilder* – to confuse or befuddle, *confound* – to cause to become confused or perplexed, *confuse* – to cause to be unable to think with clarity or act with intelligence or understanding).

"Lip" – "impertinence" – this slang was preferred because of natural pronunciation; "fly" (*sl*) – sharp, wide – awake (XIX) – "knowing" [7, p. 176] – Understandability of this slang at the required level is closely linked to the cognition because as this word means "sharp", "widely awaken", it allows a person to be known immediately within the context. Let's pay attention to that sentence again.

*Did he driver think to “flummox” us by his lip, because he thought we weren't fly to him?*

“Get up early” – this expression has a semantic meaning like “to arise from bed early”, but in this text it means “to be alert” as a slang. This is because we can see that the sentence, in which this expression is used, is followed by another slang and therefore, “get up early” has been used in the meaning of “to be alert” like: *He the driver, must get up early and go to bed without getting buffy.* – The cognition says that if that person is a driver, he must not drink alcohol before going to bed because a client can need him. That's why “get up early” has been used as “to be alert” (slang).

The next word is “game” – “amusement” OE., “full of spirit”, but, it means “a plan” as a slang in the context. If the driver, in the previous sentence, must always be alert and not drink even on Sundays according to the previous sentence, in the next sentence, he must have any “plan-game” too earn money. Therefore, the sentence in that text ends with <...> *which he hadn't done for a week of Sundays, before he found that little game (plan) would draw in the dibs (money).* And the slang “tight” in the sentence after that sentence has been used in the semantics of “drunk”, “fishy” – in the semantics of “seedy”, “hung” – “over”, “the gills” – “the neck”, “the cheek”, “the bather” – “a spree” and we can understand it through cognition.

Another point is that slangs don't remain unchanged. The language belongs to a society and as the society develops the social groups in the society use slangs depending on their intellects, professions and labor activity. Sometimes, a word whenever used as a slang can be used as a slang in the speech of a new group after a while or depending on the context, the same concept can be expressed with a different slang and we can understand it with the help of cognition in anyway. We can show illustratively what we said with two slangs used in the texts above. If we change the places of “buffy-drink”, “tight-drunk”, they won't give the same effect because the person using these slangs gave the semantics to them according to the context. A question may raise that why is it so? We must note that when a person gives the semantics to any word or expression within the context, he/she sees at least one semantic component more distinctly, takes it into account while transferring the information and cognition fulfils its function because background knowledge of those receiving information allows them to understand the semantic shade. Otherwise, the conversation can fail and required reception of the information may be under suspicion.

Language is a living, systematic organism. Undoubtedly, as a plant grows in a garden, new words are also added to the language, their new meanings are constituted (through metaphorization), sometimes new words, including slangs arise via reductions and as we mentioned before they are understood through cognition, information is transferred and received by receiver at the required level.

We think it would be better if we set some examples about slangs constituted as a result of metaphorization as the continuation of above mentioned texts. Therefore, metaphorization is directly linked with cognition and role of context in this situation is undeniable. Because without context no meaning can be given to that word. As for slangs, along with above mentioned characters, the social group using that slang should take into consideration the intellectual level, status of the social group, place, situation, and purpose of slang, reason for giving meaning to it and other features. Otherwise, the speech act cannot fulfill its function. For instance: *I saw Mary after such a long time yesterday! We had a lovely chin wag together, like the good old times.*

In this context the expression “chin wag” is not attractive at a first glance. However, following “*I saw Mary after such a long time yesterday!*” it means that these people had intimacy before. The words “talked” or “had a talk” would not have given effect like “chin wag”. The cognition says that they did not just talk only, they also told stories of years and therefore, the slang “had a chin wag” was used in this sentence. Because the archaic meaning of the word “chin” is “chatter”. Herein the context insistently requires that semantics and we used it as *chin wag*. We think that “chin wag” is a slang in Azerbaijani language too. For example: *I was so busy with my family before the exam, that I only had three days to cram in all revision work!*

The “cram” in this context is a slang and archaic meaning is “memorize, learn by heart”. However, with the help of the context, we understand it through cognition. According to the background knowledge, the person used “cram” depending on the situation that “he was busy before the exam” and “should pass the exam” at the end. Even had the word “memorized” in Azerbaijani language been replaced by “learned”, the information transferring capacity would have been reduced or had the expression “*I had to learn by heart*” been used, it would have given the same effect. This slang was used because the semantic component is based on the “study hastily”.

*The writer says: I published my first book last year, and I've already started working on the sequel!*

*His friend: Nice one! You are doing really well.*

The “*nice one*” in this context means that something made a good impression on someone. Of course, publishing of first book and starting to work on sequel make good impression on anyone, especially friend.

**Discussions.** The slangs formed by combination have different semantics. Human body parts also constitute such slangs. That’s the “*head*” is used as a slang after combining with other words. The word “*head*” can be component of a number of slangs below. For instance, “*piss head*” – a person who regularly overindulges in alcoholic drink. This slang is based on the combination of words “*on the piss*”. The word “*acidhead*” means *a habitual user of LSD*; the “*meathead*” means stupid person.

Sometimes, you hear that “*who eats too much (or any) meat*” he/she is called as “*meat head-stupid person*”. With the help of cognition, we understand that a person tending to eat meat only thinks about to eat meat and this formed that slang. We have repeatedly emphasized that without motivation and metaphorization no any word or expression can have a meaning and be used as slang.

One more word related to eating is used as slang: *I’m going to get some grab for myself from the local take away. Do you want anything?*

The “*grab*” in this sentence has been used in the meaning of lunch. In fact, the meaning of the word “*grab*” is “to take or grasp suddenly”, but the expression of “*from local takeaway*” in the second part of the sentence could change its meaning as a slang. We explain it that the meaning of the word “*takeaway*” in the dictionaries BrE, AmE is a “*restaurant that cooks and sells food that you takeaway and eat somewhere else*”. For example: *We can get something to eat from Chinese takeaway* [6, p. 1327].

Many words may acquire a completely different meaning in modern slang terms and also a professional interpreter can’t understand a man’s speech from Colorado, Texas as in each region the language is different. It’s all about everyday slang.

Let’s take for example the verb “*to get*”, it has many meanings [8, p. 107]. For a sample: *It seems to me that I’ve forgot money. Don’t worry I got it*. In this sentence it means “to have”.

*Do you understand how to drive this boat? – Yes I got it*. Now we can use verb “to get” in a meaning “to understand”.

*I got the vase in the last second before I dropped it*. At the third sentence it means “to catch”.

It will be very attentive how we use “*to get*” with regard to people. For example, “*I got Bobby*” – this phrase means “*I shot Bobby*”. If we use this phrase to a woman it can be understood as an attempt to harass

a woman. As a result the verb “*to get*” replaces other verbs. For instance, “*I’ve loved you since I got you*”. It’s another slang meaning of word “*get*”. Although it applies to a person, it translates as “*I’ve loved you since I found (met) you*”. At the second sentence the verb “to get” has a positive meaning in contrast with the first sentence.

Also the verb “to get” can use in such slang phrases: “*get a load of something*” – “see, look, understand something”. For instance: *Are you getting load of what he saying?* It means “*Do you understand what he saying?*” [10, p. 112].

For example the expression “*get a life*” means “to do business, not to interfere”. For instance: *Just get a life and do not come here*. Here it means “Go to do business” instead of “coming here”.

Changing in culture, politics and economics, new technologies, communication in the Internet – all of these aspects influence to our cognition, mind and language.

As mentioned earlier, the features of regional slang can be observed in the communication of Americans and British. Sometimes even native speakers – the British and Americans – do not quite understand each other. It’s connected with it that the same objects, things and phenomena they used to call quite differently from childhood. Now we look at modern examples of everyday slang of the British and Americans.

“*Taking the Mickey*” means *mock someone, tease*. For instance: *I wouldn’t like to meet Jack because he’s taking the Mickey out of me!*

First of all, this phrase has nothing to do with Mickey Mouse. However, this character can be a good association, as he is also associated with ridicule. In the list of British English slang phrases, the phrase “taking the Mickey” is rhymed cockney slang. This type of slang originated in Ireland and then spread to Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Initially, the phrase sounded like “to take the Mickey Bliss”, and many were wondering who the mysterious man named Mickey Bliss was. The identity of this person has not yet been established.

Another example of British slang is phrases “*Bob’s Your Uncle*”. It means *With Ease! At ease*. The phrase can be used to emphasize how something can be quickly completed or achieved. For example: *Mike, you should read this book and, Bob’s your uncle, you’ll have all necessary details*.

There are several versions of the origin of the phrase, but the most probable one concerns the problem of patronage in British politics. In 1886, Prime Minister Robert Cecil appointed his direct nephew to the crucial position. This led to a huge scandal and this expression appeared.

We must mention that American slang is very important for our investigation. It is distinguished by its humour, brevity and accuracy. Let's look at the most popular words.

"*Spill the beans*" means reveal someone's personal information or secret. For example: *Jacky has already spilt the beans about her sister's boyfriend.*

**Conclusions.** There are several theories of the origin of the phrase. The first fits into the basic idea of slang, but does not fit in time. The first theory relates to the voting process in ancient Greece. At that time, people put white (voice "for") or black (voice "against") beans in a jar to make a decision. Therefore, if someone dropped a jar of beans, a secret ballot lost its meaning. Another theory proves that the phrase first appeared in the XIV and XX centuries as part of the expressions "*spill the blood*" and "*spoil the beans*". However, it is difficult to explain the origin of the word "beans". Even the British slang dictionary, Phrase Finder, does not provide additional information on this subject.

Another example is "Pass the buck" means to shift responsibility to another. For instance: *But hating the media is how many Republicans pass the buck* [11].

*Burke pondered the idea for the briefest of moments then with an equally hearty chuckle passed the buck* [12].

The one of the finest campaigns against the Union. This phrase is one of the most frequently used slang phrases of American English and is often used to describe various political events. The origin of the expression is usually explained in a story about horses. In the past, a goat was brought to the horse to calm it down before the race. Consequently, if someone stole a goat, the horse became disobedient and uncontrollable. Although the story corresponds to the meaning of the expression, there is no evidence of its authenticity.

The phrase comes from poker and the old, no longer used, tradition to pass a knife from the horn of a deer. When a player passed, he passed his horn to the next player. So this expression appeared. In addition, poker spawned another popular slang term – "*poker talk*". For example, the word "*Benjamin*" has nothing to do with a well-known poker player, but refers to a \$ 100 bill. And the phrase "*Dead Man Hand*" has nothing to do with fraud during the game. This is the hand of cards such as black eights or aces.

There is a strong motivation here and the transferred information basing on the cognition is understandable.

At the end, we'd like to emphasize that constitution of any slang is directly linked to motivation, metaphorization and cognition.

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