DOI: 10.17117/na.2016.06.01.282

<http://ucom.ru/doc/na.2016.06.01.282.pdf>

Поступила (Received): 24.06.2016

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Использования сленга в словарях

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The usage of slang in the dictionary

*Статья содержит информацию о разных
сленговых словах в словаре*

Ключевые слова: методы, техника

*The article includes in itself different information
about slang words in English dictionaries*

Key words: approach, method and technique

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There are a great number of slang words in the English language. Almost every-day new slang words are born and die, migrate from slang to the standard language or vise versa. People widely use slang words in every-day conversations, newspapers, magazines, etc. But not all of the existing slang words are used. So, how not to lose the words that are not in great use.

Dictionaries come to existence in order to keep every slang word that has ever appeared. In linguistic any corpus or body of vocabulary is worth recording. Linguistics, lexicography is like a science in that its values have to do with accuracy, completeness, and demonstrability rather than with moral or social good. "Dictionaries are popularly thought to have strong influence. They are thought to give validity and authority to their entries, and therefore to have social and moral impact".

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:

1. "American Slang", by Robert L. Chapman, Ph.D.

2. "New Dictionary of American Slang", by Robert Chapman L.
 3. "The Oxford Dictionary of Modern Slang", by John Simpson.
- The results of the investigation are indicated in the table 1.

Table 1. Frequency of slang words usage in dictionary

№	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
Total		2286	100

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".

"The FBI's suspect was a master paperhanger, the last of a breed".

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 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.

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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