

Metaphor in Contemporary American Slang: Sociocultural

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Abstract

Linguistics in recent years increasingly turns to the study of a living spoken language, officially standing outside the accepted, standard literary canons. A special place in the formation of slang expressions is occupied by metaphors, which are often associated with the socio-cultural context. There are a number of slang metaphors that require cultural background information to interpret correctly; one can distinguish slangisms that have a general relevance to a given culture, as well as slangisms reflecting the cultural values of a certain subculture within the dominant culture; it is possible to classify groups of culturally connotated slangisms depending on the area to which they belong. Cultural allusions can be names of popular brands, advertising slogans, etc.

Keywords: Cognitive framework; communicative functions; lexical unit; metaphor; slang; socio-cultural values.

1. Materials and methods

Sociocultural factors in the formation of slang metaphor

American linguists are of the opinion that until recently, slang remained a poorly studied part of the language in American linguistics. For example, Professor K. Aeol in [2] noted in 1998 that slang has not become the subject of deep linguistic research, since there are doubts that its study will expand the general understanding of Americans about their language. One of the few exceptions is E. Cartridge's book *Slang Today and Yesterday*, which contains interesting and sometimes exotic cases of using slang; however, in author in [3] states that a linguistic study of the phenomenon of slang was not undertaken in this work. Nevertheless, in recent decades, the diversity and metaphoricality of American slang has attracted more and more attention from the scientific community. Slangisms are studied in three hypostases of language manifestation: as elements of the language system, as units within the linguistic competence of speakers, and also as functional elements of the text.

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Observations of the language of the press and the lively spoken language transmitted in the direct speech of the characters of modern works of art allow us to make generalizations about the tendencies in the use of slang in speech, about the composition and structure of texts, including slangisms, the conditions of their functioning, and areas of application. The language is investigated in a communicative-pragmatic aspect, active processes in the field of lexical semantics and word formation are studied, in particular, metaphorical transformations of lexical units, attention is paid to the replenishment of American English with new foreign language borrowings as states author in [1]. The work is aimed at the sociolinguistic aspect of the problem under consideration, an attempt to establish a connection between the processes taking place in the language and society, to present slangisms as historical evidence of the era. The theoretical significance of the study lies in the fact that it allows us to deepen the existing ideas about the status of slang in modern American English, its role in the formation of informal colloquial vocabulary, the roots of its origin, the reasons for its spread, social conditions of use, helps to understand the cognitive essence of the metaphorical processes occurring in slang vocabulary. The relevance of the work is determined by the fact that the focus is on the insufficiently developed problem of the interaction of the informal language, to which the common American slang belongs, and national culture, as well as by the fact that the role of a certain linguistic phenomenon, metaphor, in the functioning of slang is being investigated, thus an attempt is made fill in the gap in the American slang section of linguistics. Slang vocabulary is studied in socio-historical terms from the point of view of those events in the life of society that gave impetus to the emergence and spread of a certain type of slang, also in terms of linguistic processes that underlie the formation of slang words and expressions. The work pays special attention to the study of metaphor as the main expressive means of creating an unusual slang effect.

Slang has similar features to other social dialects (kant, jargon, argot), but at the same time it has its own characteristics inherent only to it. The formation of the slang lexicon is closely dependent on socio-historical factors, on the life of society, its culture, and slang reflects the assessment of certain events and phenomena in the life of society, characteristic of a given time. The author in [5] understands that all aspects of culture are relevant in relation to the act of communication, however, the most significant and important for those who study the forms and linguistic content of communication (including slang) are the social structure of the linguistic community, values and attitudes in relation to the language; connection with the structure of society, social roles of participants, knowledge of the culture of the country, cultural and national characteristics of communication participants, understanding of their assessment of cultural events and phenomena in the life of the society to which they belong.

The systemic nature of colloquial speech allows us to talk about the existence of a certain system of norms in it, one of the features of which is the high variability of lexical means. This phenomenon can be observed in the field of slang, where there are whole thematic synonymous nests, as a rule, reflecting the concepts most characteristic of slang. Such synonymous subgroups can be sets, which include slang names of a certain concept, replacing each other over time, and a set of modern slangisms related to concepts popular for slang.

2. Conclusion

Slangisms often produce a vivid, picturesque impression due to the unusual, witty use of the word in an

unexpected context, the original combination with other words, the creation of a spectacular imagery, the main means of which is metaphor. The metaphor, if successful, helps to reproduce the image given in the experience. An intuitive sense of similarity plays a huge role in practical thinking that determines human behavior, and it cannot but be reflected in everyday speech. This is the inevitable and inexhaustible source of the metaphor "in everyday life", which also applies in [4] to the slang metaphor.

Currently, in the language of modern American fiction, in the media, American common slang is actively used, the attractiveness of which is largely due to the presence of bright, catchy expressive metaphors that have their own historical and social background, arise as a reflection of the most significant for native speakers areas of experience, cultural priorities, reflect the assessment of modern social relations, contain cultural allusions of either a universal, general cultural, character, or nationally specific, inherent in modern American culture.

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