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EDUCATION OF UZBEKISTAN
SAMARKAND STATE INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN
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CHAIR OF GRAMMAR AND HISTORY OF ENGLISH

COURSE PAPER

**THEME: CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF
ENGLISH SLANG**

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SAMARKAND - 2016

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INTRODUCTION

National program of personnel training of Uzbekistan¹ provides achieving of a high educational level of the people, the growth of its intellectual and moral capacities, complex humanization of the whole system of public education, its radical renewal on the basis of advanced teaching technologies, the development of science in all its directions. The country has a goal of "formation of spiritually and morally rich, harmoniously developed person, with an independent worldview and thinking which is based on the invaluable heritage of our ancestors and universal values»²

The big role in solving the aforementioned problems of Uzbek society is assigned for foreign languages learning. Emphasizing the importance of knowledge of foreign languages, Uzbek President Islam Karimov said: "Nowadays in our country we pay a great attention to learning and teaching of foreign languages. Today it is difficult to overestimate the importance of perfect knowledge of foreign languages for a country wishing to take a worthy place in the international community, because our people see their future in great harmony and co-operation with foreign partners. And further, specifying that task, Islam Karimov said: "We need to prepare a methodology to accelerate the learning of foreign languages, based on our national characteristics"³

The integration of Uzbekistan into the world community, the intense of growth of international, political and cultural relations causes new approach to the development of science education, i.e. the foreign language study and teaching.

Some scholars divide the English language into two different languages: the Standard English language and slang. This fact proves that slang comes to be a very numerous part of English. Ignorance of slang causes a great miscommunication between students and native speakers. The language of the previous centuries contrasts from the modern language. The life does not freeze in the same position. It

¹ Национальная программа по подготовке кадров // Гармонично-развитое поколение – основа прогресса Узбекистана. –Ташкент: «Шарк», 1997. – С.31-61.

² Каримов И.А. Наша высшая цель – независимость и процветание Родины, свобода и благополучие народа // Собр.соч. – Т.8. –Ташкент: «Ўзбекистон», 2000. – С.332.

³ Каримов И.А. Гармонично развитое поколение – основа прогресса Узбекистана // Собр.соч. – Т.6. – Ташкент: «Ўзбекистон», 1998. –С.312.

always develops. And it makes the language develop too. That is why the present work is devoted to this social phenomenon.

Actuality. There is a great importance to understand up-to-date English. English is the chief language of international business and academic conferences, and the leading language of international tourism. Most of the scientific, technological and academic information in the world is expressed in English. A word comes to be a very powerful means of communication but also can be a cause of a great misunderstanding if it is not clearly understood by one of the speakers. The topic of British slang is very actual in terms of sociolinguistics and language interaction development, in racial relations and ethnic cultures. Through understanding linguistic aspects of slang we can observe peculiarities of language development and culture of people, discover the interesting layer of the English language.

The aim of work is to determine the most important groups of the English slang, to show its lexical, phonetic, morphological peculiarities.

The object of study is the wealth of English language, ambiguity of its vocabulary and the most common rules of slang usage in Britain.

The subject of research are various points of view on slang, its history and types and linguistic characteristics common for the English slang.

CHAPTER I THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF SLANG

Every adult speaker has a concept of slang-knowing at the least that some words and expressions transgress generally accepted norms of formality or appropriateness and in some way do not fit the measure of what "good" language is. Despite such recognition by almost all speakers, scholars with formal training in linguistic analysis have almost ignored slang--though they acknowledge having the same intuitions about this type of vocabulary as do all speakers. In truth, most linguists have given no more thought to slang than have people who claim no expertise in language. In the English-speaking world in particular, the description of the form and function of slang has been left largely to lexicographers rather than to others who study language for a living.

Webster's "Third New International Dictionary" gives the following definition of the term slang:

1. Language peculiar to a particular group as:

a) the special and often secret vocabulary used by a class (as thieves, beggars) and usually felt to be vulgar or inferior: argot;

b) the jargon used by or associated with a particular trade, profession, or field of activity.

2. A non-standard vocabulary composed of words and senses characterized primary by connotations of extreme informality and usually a currency not limited to a particular region and composed typically of coinages or arbitrarily changed words, clipped or shortened forms, extravagant, forced or facetious figures of speech, or verbal novelties usually experiencing quick popularity and relatively rapid decline into disuse.

The "New Oxford English Dictionary" defines slang as follows:

a) the special vocabulary used by any set of persons of a low or disreputable character; language of a low and vulgar type;

b) the cant or jargon of a certain class or period;

c) language of a highly colloquial type considered as below the level of standard educated speech, and consisting either of new words or of current words employed in some special sense."

As it is seen from these quotations slang is represented both as a special vocabulary and as a special language. This causes confusion. If this is a certain lexical layer, than why should it be given the rank of language or a dialect of even a patois, and then it should be characterized not only by its peculiar use of words but also by phonetic, morphological and syntactical peculiarities.

In general all linguists agree that slang is nonstandard vocabulary composed of words or senses characterized primarily by connotations of extreme informality and usually by a currency not limited to a particular region. It is composed typically of coinages or arbitrarily changed words, clipped or shortened forms, extravagant, forced, or facetious figures of speech, or verbal novelties. They are identified and distinguished by contrasting them to standard literary vocabulary. They are expressive, mostly ironical words serving to create fresh names for some things that are frequent topics of discourse.¹

Slang consists of the words and expressions that have escaped from the cant, jargon and argot (and to a lesser extent from dialectal, nonstandard, and taboo speech) of specific subgroups of society so that they are known and used by an appreciable percentage of the general population, even though the words and expressions often retain some associations with the subgroups that originally used and popularized them. Thus, slang is a middle ground for words and expressions that have become too popular to be any longer considered as part of the more restricted categories, but that are not yet (and may never become) acceptable or popular enough to be considered informal or standard. (Compare the slang "hooker" and the standard "prostitute.") Slang fills a necessary niche in all languages. It can serve as a bridge or a barrier, either helping both old and new words that have been used as "insiders' "

¹ Арнольд И.В. Лексикология современного английского языка.: учебник для ин-тов и фак. иностр. языка.- 3-е издание, перераб и доп.- М.: Высшая школа, 1986.- 295с. www.urbandictionary.com. ,

terms by a specific group of people to enter the language of the general public or, on the other hand, preventing them from doing so. Thus, for many words, slang is a testing ground that finally proves them to be generally useful, appealing, and acceptable enough to become standard or informal. For many other words, slang is a testing ground that shows them to be too restricted in use, not as appealing as standard synonyms, or unnecessary, frivolous, faddish, or unacceptable for standard or informal speech. For still a third group of words and expressions, slang becomes not a final testing ground that either accepts or rejects them for general use but becomes a vast limbo, a permanent holding ground, an area of speech that a word never leaves

Slang words cannot be distinguished from other words by sound or meaning. In fact, most slang words are homonyms of standard words, spelled and pronounced just like their standard counterparts, as for example slang words for money such as beans, brass, dibs, dough, chinc, oof, wards; the slang synonyms for word head are attic, brain-pan, hat peg, nut, upper storey; drunk- boozy, cock-eyed, high, soaked, tight, and pot (marijuana). Of course, these words are alike in their ordinary standard use and in their slang use. Each word sounds just as appealing or unappealing, dull or colorful in its standard as in its slang use. Also, the meanings of beans and money, head and attic, pot and marijuana are the same, so it cannot be said that the connotations of slang words are any more colorful or racy than the meanings of standard words.¹

All languages, countries, and periods of history have slang. This is true because they all have had words with varying degrees of social acceptance and popularity.

The same linguistic processes are used to create and popularize slang as are used to create and popularize all other words. That is, all words are created and popularized in the same general ways; they are labeled slang only according to their current social acceptance, long after creation and popularization.

¹ . Арнольд И.В. Лексикология современного английского языка. - М.: Высшая школа, 1986, 295 с. /

To fully understand slang, one must remember that a word's use, popularity, and acceptability can change. Words can change in social level, moving in any direction. Thus, some standard words of William Shakespeare's day are found only in certain modern-day British dialects. Words that are taboo in one era (e.g., stomach, thigh) can become accepted, standard words in a later era. Many prove either useful enough to become accepted as standard or informal words or too faddish for standard use. Blizzard and okay have become standard, while conbobberation ("disturbance") and tomato ("girl") have been discarded. Some words and expressions have a lasting place in slang; for instance, beat it ("go away"), first used in the 16th century, has neither become Standard English nor vanished.

Language is dynamic, and at any given time hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of words and expressions are in the process of changing from one level to another, of becoming more acceptable or less acceptable, of becoming more popular or less popular.

Slang is very informal use of words and phrases for more colorful or peculiar style of expression that is shared by the people in the same social subgroup, for example, computer slang, sports slang, military slang, musicians' slang, students' slang, underworld slang, etc. Slang is not used by the majority of native speakers and many people consider it vulgar, though quite a few slang phrases have already come into standard usage. Slang contains many obscene and offensive words and phrases. It also has many expressions that are acceptable in informal communication. Slang is highly idiomatic. It is flippant, irreverent, indecorous; it may be indecent or obscene. Its colorful metaphors are generally directed at respectability, and it is this succinct, sometimes witty, frequently impertinent social criticism that gives slang its characteristic flavor. Slang, then, includes not just words but words used in a special way in a certain social context. The origin of the word slang itself is obscure; it first appeared in print around 1800, applied to the speech of disreputable and criminal classes in London.

Language is the property of a community of speakers. People rarely speak, or write, with only themselves as the audience. It should not be surprising then that some components and forms of language are socially motivated. Slang is one kind of vocabulary that serves the social nature of language. In an important article in 1978 Bethany Dumas and Jonathan Lighter make the crucial point that slang must be identified by its social consequences, by the effects its use has on the relationship between speaker and audience.

Dumas and Lighter posit four criteria for identifying a word or phrase as slang¹.

1. Its presence will markedly lower, at least for the moment, the dignity of formal or serious speech or writing.

2. Its use implies the user's familiarity either with the referent or with that less statusful or less responsible class of people who have such special familiarity and use the term.

3. It is a tabooed term in ordinary discourse with persons of higher social rank or greater responsibility.

4. It is used in place of the well-known conventional synonym, especially in order (a) to protect the user from the discomfort caused by the conventional item or (b) to protect the user from the discomfort or annoyance of further elaboration.

They conclude that "when something fits at least two of the criteria, a linguistically sensitive audience will react to it in a certain way. This reaction, which cannot be measured, is the ultimate identifying characteristic of true slang". In other words, Dumas and Lighter's formulation requires that the type of lexis called slang be recognized for its power to effect union between speaker and hearer. Whether or not the particulars of their definition are necessary or sufficient, Dumas and Lighter are right. Slang cannot be defined independent of its functions and use.

¹ Dumas, Bethany K. and Jonathan Lighter. 1978. "Is Slang a Word for Linguists?" *American Speech* 53: 5-17.

Thorne Tony. *Dictionary of Contemporary Slang*.-third edition.; A.C.Black, London, 2007.-513p.

Despite the difficulties of defining the term, slang does have some consistent characteristics.¹ Slang is lexical rather than phonological or syntactic, though, in English at least, body language and intonation are often important in signaling that a word or phrase is to be interpreted as slang. Nor is there a peculiarly slang syntax. Slang expressions do not follow idiosyncratic word order, and slang words and phrases typically fit into an appropriate grammatical slot in an established syntactic pattern. Furthermore, the productive morphological processes responsible for slang are the same ones responsible for the general vocabulary, i.e., for English, compounding, affixation, shortening, and functional shift.

1.1 The formation and sources of slang words

Slang expressions are created by the same processes that affect ordinary speech. Expressions may take form as metaphors, similes, and other figures of speech (*dead as a doornail*). Words may acquire new meanings (*cool, cat*). A narrow meaning may become generalized (*fink*, originally a strikebreaker, later a betrayer or disappointer) or vice-versa (*heap*, a run-down car). Words may be clipped, or abbreviated (*mike*, microphone), and acronyms may gain currency (*VIP, awol, snafu*). A foreign suffix may be added (the Yiddish and Russian *-nik*) and foreign words adopted (*baloney*, from Bologna). A change in meaning may make a vulgar word acceptable (*jazz*) or an acceptable word vulgar (*raspberry*, a sound imitating flatus; from *raspberry tart* in the rhyming slang of Australia and Cockney London; Sometimes words are newly coined (*oomph*, sex appeal, and later, energy or impact).

The vocabulary of Old English differs from the vocabulary of Modern English. Modern English abounds in the words that were absent in Old English. The language is not a dead phenomenon, it is alive, and it is always up-to-date. The development of the language is gained due to the endless appearance of new words.

¹ Eble, C. *Slang and Sociability*. London and Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. Crystal D., *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*.-Cambridge University: Press. 1996-712p.

Slang comes to be a very numerous part of the English language. It is considered to be one of the main representatives of the nation itself. The birth of new words results from the order of the modern society. Slang arises due to our propensity for replacing old denominations by expressive ones. And yet the growing popularity of ever new creation prevents it from remaining fresh and impressive. What was felt as strikingly witty yesterday becomes dull and stale today, since everybody knows it and uses it. So how do the slang words come to life? There are several ways of slang words formation:

1. Various figures of speech participate in slang formation.

For example: upperstorey-head (metaphor)

skirt-girl (metonymy)

killing-astonishing (hyperbole)

some-excellent or bad (understatement)

clear as mud (irony)

Slang items usually arise by the same means in which new words enter the general vocabulary.

2. The slang word can appear thanks to the recycling of the words and parts of words, which are already in the language.

Affixation allows limitless opportunities for open-ended sets.

For example: megabucks, megabeers, megawork (for vast quantities of the item in questions).

Compounding makes one word from two.

For example: airhead-someone out of touch with reality homeboy-a person from the same hometown

3. A currently productive process especially in American English is the addition of a particle like OUT, OFF or ON to a noun, adjective or verb, to form a phrasal verb.

For example: blimp out-to overeat

blow off-to ignore

4. In slang, frequently used words are likely to be abbreviated.

For example: OTL-out to lunch-out of touch with reality

VJ-video jock-an announcer for televised music videos

OBNO-obnoxious

Sup?-What's up?

Pro-professional

5. Unlike the general vocabulary of the language, English slang has not borrowed heavily from foreign languages, although it does borrow from dialects, especially from such ethnic or special interest groups which make an impact on the dominant culture as American Black, or from a second language that is part of the culture.

For example: Yiddish

6. Certain slang words are mere distortions of standard words.

For example: cripes-instead of "Christ!"

7. Sometimes new words are just invented.

For example: shenanigans-tricks, pranks

8. Mock dialect and foreign pronunciation result into the formation of slang.

For example: "my feet are staying" (goodbye)-mock for German "auf wiedersehen".

9. Some sounds appear to give words a slangier flavor.

For example the sound [z]: zazzy from jazzy, scuz from scum, zap from slap

10. Sometimes a new slang word can appear due to the replacement or addition of a vowel with [oo]

For example: cigaroot from cigarette, bazoom from bosom

11. Rhyming is a favorite means or creating slang for many Londoners

For example: trouble and strife-wife mince pies-eyes

12. The transition of slang words within the English language itself comes to be one of the ways of slang words formation .

Our students study Oscar Wilde's, Maugham's, Jack London's works of art. These masterpieces can be good examples of the last way of slang words formation. The language of Maugham is still understood but even priests don't speak this way.

There is a good fairy-tale to demonstrate how the transition of slang words is used in practice.

A frogman liked to take pictures under water but a princess liked to stroll along the shore. The princess lived one hundred and ninety seven years ago but the frogman still lives.

One day he happened to dive in 1997 and to emerge in 1800. He was a bit embarrassed to see the boats and fishing net, which were not few hours ago. But having noticed the strolling girl dressed in unfashionable clothes he smiled: "They make movie". The girl came closer and saw him. "Oh boy!" - exclaimed the boy having looked at the wonderful dress of the princess. "I'm a girl" - she answered. "What a nice joke!" - thought the frogman. "I'm a princess" - she said. "I see, she plays the role of princess" - the frogman thought. "Cool day today, isn't it?" - he told. "Why does he say that it is cool today? It's too warm." - thought the poor girl. "No, the day is good. Who are you?"

"I'm the frogman," - he introduced himself.

"Frogman?!" - exclaimed the princess with fear. The man really liked the frog.

"Yeah, frogman, I shoot submarine world. I see you shoot movie over here as well. Cool."

The princess prowled back. She didn't want to communicate with the strange frog-man.

Suddenly she saw his camera lying on the sand.

"It's my camera. Sometimes I shoot." - he added.

"Oh my God! He shoots under water. He is the killer. He is the water-monster!!!"

The princess yelled and ran away.

“She is so strange” - the frogman thought and took his way.

The same linguistic processes are used to create and popularize slang as are used to create and popularize all other words. Slang expressions often embody attitudes and values of group members. They may thus contribute to a sense of group identity and may convey to the listener information about the speaker's background. Before an apt expression becomes slang, however, it must be widely adopted by members of the subculture. At this point slang and jargon overlap greatly. If the subculture has enough contact with the mainstream culture, its figures of speech become slang expressions known to the whole society. For example, cat (a sport), cool (aloof, stylish), Mr. Charley (a white man), The Man (the law), and Uncle Tom (a meek black) all originated in the predominantly black Harlem district of New York City and have traveled far since their inception. Slang is thus generally not tied to any geographic region within the country. A slang expression may suddenly become widely used and as quickly dated (23-skiddoo). It may become accepted as standard speech, either in its original slang meaning (bus, from omnibus) or with an altered, possibly tamed meaning (jazz, which originally had sexual connotations). Some expressions have persisted for centuries as slang (booze for alcoholic beverage). In the 20th century, mass media and rapid travel have speeded up both the circulation and the demise of slang terms. Television and novels have turned criminal cant into slang (five grand for \$5000). Changing social circumstances may stimulate the spread of slang. Drug-related expressions (such as pot and marijuana) were virtually a secret jargon in the 1940s; in the 1960s they were adopted by rebellious youth; and in the 1970s and '80s they were widely known.

In fact, most slang words are homonyms of standard words, spelled and pronounced just like their standard counterparts, as for example (American slang), cabbage (money), cool (relaxed), and pot (marijuana). Of course, the words cabbage, cool, and pot sound alike in their ordinary standard use and in their slang

use. Each word sounds just as appealing or unappealing, dull or colorful in its standard as in its slang use. Also, the meanings of cabbage and money, cool and relaxed, pot and marijuana are the same, so it cannot be said that the connotations of slang words are any more colorful or racy than the meanings of standard words.

“Cool” is a very meaningful word. In the Standard English language it is translated as something between warm and cold. But in the everyday conversations it is used in the meaning of something “great”, “wonderful”, “good”. The word “cool” can be both the noun and the attribute.

Compare: cool cat = great fellow

It's cool = it's good.

The meaning depends on the person uses it. So the expression “cool weather” can have two translations depending on the content.

These are the slang meaning of the word “cool”.

Cool:

1. To postpone, await developments in; let's cool this whole business for week or so.

2. To kill; who knew what he wanted to it look like when he cooled her.

3. In control of one's feeling; learn to be cool under fire.

4. He lost his cool and bolted like a rabbit.

5. Aloof and uninvolved, disengaged; He's cool; don't give a shit for nothing.

6. Cool musician Jazz marked by soft tones, improvisation based on advanced chord extensions, and revision of certain classical jazz idioms.

7. Pleasant, desirable; you enjoying it? Is everything cool?

The verb “to get” is worth mentioning in order to give the sufficient information about the slang meaning of the ordinary word “to get”. The ordinary meanings are not enough for the decent conversation. Meanwhile “to get” substitutes a great number of verbs. This verb can be used instead of the verbs: to have, to understand, to find and so forth. “To get” is a very popular verb. But when it is used in relation to the human beings it has another meaning.

For instance: The sheriff got the criminal-The sheriff killed (shot) the criminal.

The robber got the hostess-The robber raped the hostess.

The boy tells the girl: "I love you since the first day I got you."-"I love you since I met you for the first time."

He got the government to declare it a wildness area.-He made the government to declare it a wildness area.

To get closer-to reach

It's getting dark - The night comes.

It's getting better - It becomes better.

To get somebody to do something - to make somebody to do something.

These are the slang meaning of the verb "to get":

TO GET:

1. to seize mentally; grasp; understand; Do you get me?
2. to take note of, pay attention to; Get him, acting like such like a big shot.
3. to kill or capture, retaliate destructively against; He can't say that. I'll get him.
4. offspring, progeny.
5. the route taken by criminals in fleeing the scene of their efforts; to get or getaway route.
6. to get the punishment one deserves; Don't worry, he'll get his before this is all over.
7. to become rich, get one's large share of worldly goods; she went into this business determined to get hers by the time she was thirty.

Slang was the main reason for the development of prescriptive language in an attempt to slow down the rate of change in both spoken and written language. Latin and French were the only two languages that maintained the use of prescriptive

language in the 14th century. It was not until the early 15th century that scholars began pushing for a Standard English language.

During the Middle Ages, certain writers such as Chaucer, William Caxton, and William of Malmesbury represented the regional differences in pronunciations and dialects. The different dialects and the different pronunciations represented the first meaning for the term "slang."

However, our present-day meaning for slang did not begin forming until the 16th or 17th century. The English Criminal Cant developed in the 16th century. The English Criminal Cant was a new kind of speech used by criminals and cheats, meaning it developed mostly in saloons and gambling houses. The English Criminal Cant was at first believed to be foreign, meaning scholars thought that it had either originated in Romania or had a relationship to French. The English Criminal Cant was slow developing. In fact, out of the four million people who spoke English, only about ten thousand spoke the English Criminal Cant. By the end of the 16th century this new style of speaking was considered to be a language "without reason or order". During the 18th century schoolmasters taught pupils to believe that the English Criminal Cant (which by this time had developed into slang) was not the correct usage of English and slang was considered to be taboo ¹.

Because most people are individuals who desire uniqueness, it stands to reason that slang has been in existence for as long as language has been in existence.

A slang expression may suddenly become widely used and as quickly die (23-skiddoo). It may become accepted as standard speech, either in its original slang meaning (bus from omnibus, taxi, piano, phone, pub mob, dandy) or with an altered, possibly tamed meaning (jazz, which originally had sexual connotations). Some expressions have persisted for centuries as slang (booze for alcoholic beverage). In the 20th century, mass media and rapid travel have speeded up both the circulation and the demise of slang terms. Television and novels have turned criminal cant into slang (five grand for 5000). Changing social circumstances may stimulate the spread

¹ www.ask.com/questions-about/British-slang

of slang. Drug-related expressions (such as pot and marijuana) were virtually a secret jargon in the 1940s; in the 1960s they were adopted by rebellious youth; and in the 1970s and '80s they were widely known. But this must be done by those whose mother tongue is English. They and only they, being native speakers of the English language, are its masters and lawgivers. It is for them to place slang in its proper category by specifying its characteristic features.

Many words formerly labeled as slang have now become legitimate units of the Standard English. Thus, the word "kid" (=child), which was considered low slang in the 19th century, is now a legitimate colloquial unit of the English literary language.

It sounds unbelievable but not so long ago the words: of course, to take care, to get up, lunch were considered to be slang. "Lunch" entered the language after World War I is not used in some books that prefer "dinner" to "lunch".

1.2 Types of slang

Slang users tend to invent many more synonyms or near-synonyms than might be thought strictly necessary: for example, criminals may have a dozen different nicknames (gat, crone, iron, chrome) for their guns, or for informers (canary, grass, snout, stoolie); drinkers can choose from hundreds of competing descriptions of a state of intoxication (hammered, hamstered, langered, mullered) ¹

It is convenient to group slang words according to their place in the vocabulary system and more precisely in the semantic system of the vocabulary. If they denote a new and necessary notion they may prove an enrichment of the vocabulary and be accepted into Standard English. If on the other hand they make just another addition to a cluster of synonyms and have nothing but novelty to back them, they die out very quickly, constituting the most changeable part of the vocabulary.

¹ . www.slanginsider.com

Another type of classification suggests subdivision according to the sphere of usage, into general slang and special slang. ¹General slang includes words that are not specific for any social or professional group, whereas special slang is peculiar for some such group: teenager slang, university slang, public school slang, Air Force slang, football slang, sea slang and so on.

General slang is language that speakers deliberately use to break with the standard language and to change the level of discourse in the direction of formality. It signals the speakers' intention to refuse conventions² and their need to be fresh and startling in their expression, to ease social exchanges and induce friendliness, to reduce excessive seriousness and avoid clichés, in brief, to enrich the language. General slang words have a wide circulation as they are neither group – nor subject – restricted.³

You'll hear Brits refer to their currency as quid, much in the same way American dollars are "bucks" and Canadian money is called "loonies."

If someone asks to borrow a fag off you, give them a cigarette.

In Britain, a kiss is called a snog. If someone is knackered, that means they are exhausted. If someone is referred to as "a minger", that means that they're unattractive. If someone tells you to "Bugger off!" well, it is suggested that you go away.

Instead of "Hi, how are you?" go with the quick and easy British "Alright?" No answer is expected.

Emphasize greatness. These include "barry," "ace" and "kewl." The latter kind of sounds like "cool" but you'll know the difference in your heart.

¹ Арнольд И.В. *Лексикология современного английского языка*.: учебник для ин-тов и фак. иностр. языка.- 3-е издание, перераб и доп.- М.: Высшая школа, 1986.- 295с. www.English.language.ru/slang/

² Dumas, Bethany K. and Jonathan Lighter. 1978. "Is Slang a Word for Linguists?" *American Speech* 53: 5-17.

³ Mattiello Elisa. The Pervasiveness of Slang in Standard and Non- Standard English.- *Mots Palabras Words*-6/2005.-41p.

Insult others. Calling someone an "arseface" or a "pilchard" will be even more the merrier if they have no clue you are insulting them to their face.

Throw in the emphatic "bloody" a lot. Bloody this, bloody that and bloody everything. The British are also known to put it in the middle of words for even more emphasis, such as "absobloodlylutely."

Describe drunks. Slang is always full of euphemisms for "drunk" in any language. The British versions include "airlocked" and "bevved up," as in "full of beverage."

Special slang is language that speakers use to show their belonging to a group and establish solidarity or intimacy with the other group members.¹ It is often used by speakers to create their own identity, including aspects such as social status and geographical belonging, or even age, education, occupation, lifestyle, and special interests. It is largely used by people of a common age and experience to strengthen the bonds within their own peer group, keeping the older generation at a distance.² It is also used by people sharing the same occupation to increase efficiency in communication; or by those sharing the same living conditions to hide secret information from people in authority. It is finally used by people sharing an attitude or a life style to reinforce their group cohesiveness, keeping insiders together and outsiders out.

Special slang tends to originate in subcultures within a society. Occupational groups (for example, loggers, police, medical professionals, and computer specialists) are prominent originators of both jargon and slang; other groups creating slang include the armed forces, teenagers, racial minorities, citizens-band radiobroadcasters, sports groups, drug addicts, criminals, and even religious denominations. Slang expressions often embody attitudes and values of group members. They may thus contribute to a sense of group identity and may convey to the listener information about the speaker's background.

¹Mattiello Elisa. The Pervasiveness of Slang in Standard and Non- Standard English.- Mots Palabras Words-6/2005.-41p. www.ask.com/questions-about/British-slang

² Eble, C. Slang and Sociability. London and Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996

While some slang words and phrases are used throughout all of Britain (e.g. knackered, meaning "exhausted"), others are restricted to smaller regions¹.

a) Cockney rhyming slang

Cockney Rhyming Slang originated in the East End of London.

Rhyming slang is a form of slang in which a word is replaced by a rhyming word, typically the second word of a two-word phrase (so stairs becomes "apples and pears"). The second word is then often dropped entirely ("I'm going up the apples"), meaning that the association of the original word to the rhyming phrase is not obvious to the uninitiated.

Rhyming Slang phrases are derived from taking an expression which rhymes with a word and then using that expression instead of the word. For example the word "look" rhymes with "butcher's hook". In many cases the rhyming word is omitted - so you won't find too many Londoners having a "bucher's hook" , but you might find a few having a "butcher's".

The rhyming word is not always omitted so Cockney expressions can vary in their construction, and it is simply a matter of convention which version is used.

The proliferation of rhyming slang allowed many of its traditional expressions to pass into common usage. Some substitutions have become relatively widespread in Britain, for example "scarper", meaning to run away is derived from "Scapa Flow" meaning "to go". "To have a butcher's", which means to have a look, from "butcher's hook. For example "use your loaf" is an everyday phrase for the British, but not too many people realize it is Cockney Rhyming Slang ("loaf of bread: head"). There are many more examples of this unwitting use of Cockney Rhyming Slang. ²

Television has raised awareness of Cockney Rhyming Slang to far greater heights. Classic TV shows such as "Steptoe and Son", "Minder", "Porridge" and

¹ Арнольд И. В. Лексикология современного английского языка. М; 1959;

² www.cockneyrhymingslang.co.uk.

"Only Fools and Horses" have done much to spread the slang throughout Britain and to the rest of the world.

Modern Cockney slang that is being developed today tends to only rhyme words with the names of celebrities or famous people. There are very few new Cockney slang expressions that do not follow this trend. The only one that has gained much ground recently that bucks this trend is "Wind and Kite" meaning "Web site".

b) Polari

Polari (or alternatively Parlare, Parlary, Palare, Palarie, Palari, Parlyaree, from Italian parlare, "to talk") was a form of cant slang used in Britain by actors, circus or fairground showmen, criminals, prostitutes etc., and latterly by the gay subculture. It was revived in the 1950s and 1960s by its use by camp characters Julian and Sandy in the popular BBC radio shows *Beyond our Ken* and *Round the Horne*, but its origins can be traced back to at least the 19th century (or, according to at least one source, to the 16th century). There is some debate about how it originated. There is a longstanding connection with Punch and Judy street puppet performers who traditionally used Polari to talk with each other.¹

Polari is a mixture of Romance (Italian or Mediterranean Lingua Franca), Romany, London slang, backslang, rhyming slang, sailor slang, and thieves' cant. Later it expanded to contain words from the Yiddish language of the Jewish subculture which settled in the East End of London, the US forces (present in the UK during World War II) and 1960s drug users. It was a constantly developing form of language, with a small core lexicon of about 20 words (including bona, ajax, eek, cod, naff, lattie, nanti, omi, palone, riah, zhoosh (tjuz), TBH, trade, vada), with over 500 other lesser-known items.

c) Internet slang

Internet slang (Internet language, Internet Short-hand, leet, netspeak or chatspeak) is a type of slang that Internet users have popularized, and in many cases,

¹ . www.rapidsteps.com/en/ru/blogs/tags/London

have coined. Such terms often originate with the purpose of saving keystrokes. Many people use the same abbreviations in texting and instant messaging, and social networking websites. Acronyms, keyboard symbols and shortened words are often used as methods of abbreviation in Internet slang.

In such cases, new dialects of slang, such as leet or Lolspeak, develop as ingroup memes rather than time savers. In leet speak, letters may be replaced by characters of similar appearance. For this reason, leet is often written as l33t or 1337.

The Internet has transformed the way we manipulate our systems of signs and the relationships between producers and consumers of information. Its effect on slang has two aspects. Firstly, online communication has generated its own vocabulary of technical terminology, essentially jargon (spam, blogging, phishing) and informal, abbreviated or humorous terms (addy, noob, barking moonbat etc.) which qualify as slang.¹ The amount of new cyberslang is fairly small, but the Internet has also allowed the collecting, classifying and promoting of slang from other sources in.

Another technical development – text messaging – has triggered changes in the culture of communication, especially among young people, and brought with it, like telegrams, CB-radio or Internet chatrooms, a new form of abbreviated code. It has excited some academic linguists but it hasn't, however, contributed anything meaningful to the evolution of slang.²

¹ Thorne Tony. Dictionary of Contemporary Slang.-third edition.; A.C.Black, London, 2007.-513p.
Crystal D., The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language.-Cambridge University: Press.
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² [www. lexscripta.com/desktop/dictionaries/](http://www.lexscripta.com/desktop/dictionaries/)

CHAPTER II LINGUISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SLANG IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

While many slang words introduce new concepts, some of the most effective slang provides new expressions--fresh, satirical, shocking--for established concepts, often very respectable ones. Sound is sometimes used as a basis for this type of slang, as, for example, in various phonetic distortions (e.g., pig Latin terms). It is also used in rhyming slang, which employs a fortunate combination of both sound and imagery. Thus, gloves are "turtledoves" (the gloved hands suggesting a pair of billing doves), a girl is a "twist and twirl" (the movement suggesting a girl walking), and an insulting imitation of flatus, produced by blowing air between the tip of the protruded tongue and the upper lip, is the "raspberry," cut back from "raspberry tart." Most slang, however, depends upon incongruity of imagery, conveyed by the lively connotations of a novel term applied to an established concept. Slang is not all of equal quality, a considerable body of it reflecting a simple need to find new terms for common ones, such as the hands, feet, head, and other parts of the body. Food, drink, and sex also involve extensive slang vocabulary. Strained or synthetically invented slang lacks verve, as can be seen in the desperate efforts of some sportswriters to avoid mentioning the word baseball--e.g., a batter does not hit a baseball but rather "swats the horsehide," "plasters the pill," "hefts the old apple over the fence," and so on.¹

If we try to characterize rhyming slang in particular, we can find such phonetic features:

1. Monophthongization

This affects the lexical set mouth vowel. Wells believes that it is widely agreed that the "mouth" vowel is a "touchstone for distinguishing between "true Cockney" and popular London" and other more standard accents. Cockney usage would include monophthongization of the word.

Example:

mouth = mauf rather than mouth

¹ www.peevich.co.uk/slang

2. Glottal stop

Wells describes the glottal stop as also particularly characteristic of Cockney and can be manifested in different ways such as "t" glottalling in final position. A 1970s study of schoolchildren living in the East End found /p,t,k/ "almost invariably glottalized" in final position.

Examples:

cat = up = sock =

It can also manifest itself as a bare as the realization of word internal intervocalic /t/

Examples:

Waterloo = Waerloo City = Ciy A drink of water = A drin' a wa'er A little bit of bread with a bit of butter on it = A li'le bi' of breab wiv a bi' of bu'er on i'.

As would be expected, a Cockney speaker uses fewer glottal stops for t or d than a "London" speaker. However, there are some words where the omission of t has become very accepted.

Examples:

Gatwick = Gawick

Scotland = Sco'land

statement = Sta'emen

network = Ne work

3. Dropped h at beginning of words (Voiceless glottal fricative)

In the working-class ("common") accents throughout England, h dropping at the beginning of certain words is heard often, but it's certainly heard more in Cockney, and in accents closer to Cockney. The usage is strongly stigmatized by teachers and many other standard speakers.

Examples:

house = `ouse

hammer = `ammer

4. TH fronting

Another very well known characteristic of Cockney is th fronting which involves the replacement of the dental fricatives, and by labiodentals [f] and [v] respectively.

Examples:

thin = fin

brother = bruvver

three = free

bath = barf

5. Vowel lowering

Examples:

dinner = dinna

marrow= marra

6. Prosody

The voice quality of Cockney has been described as typically involving "chest tone" rather than "head tone" and being equated with "rough and harsh" sounds versus the velvety smoothness of the Kensington or Mayfair accents spoken by those in other more upscale areas of London.

7. Rhyme

Cockney English is also characterized by its own special vocabulary and usage in the form of "cockney rhyming slang". The way it works is that you take a pair of associated words where the second word rhymes with the word you intend to say, then use the first word of the associated pair to indicate the word you originally intended to say. Some rhymes have been in use for years and are very well recognized, if not used, among speakers of other accents.

Examples:

"apples and pears" -stairs

"plates of meat" -feet

There are others, however, that become established with the changing culture.

Example:

"John Cleese" - cheese

"John Major" - pager

2.1 Morphological characteristics of slang

Slang comes to be a very numerous part of the English language. It is considered to be one of the main representatives of the nation itself. The birth of new words results from the order of the modern society. Slang arises due to our propensity for replacing old denominations by expressive ones. And yet the growing popularity of every new creation prevents it from remaining fresh and impressive. What was felt as strikingly witty yesterday becomes dull and stale today, since everybody knows it and uses it. So how do the slang words come to life? There are several ways of slang words formation:

1. Various figures of speech participate in slang formation.

For example: upperstorey-head (metaphor)

skirt-girl (metonymy)

killing-astonishing (hyperbole)

some-excellent or bad (understatement)

clear as mud (irony)

Slang items usually arise by the same means in which new words enter the general vocabulary.

2. The slang word can appear thanks to the recycling of the words and parts of words, which are already in the language.

Expressions may take form as metaphors, similes, and other figures of speech (dead as a doornail). Some slang formation follow the rules of Standard English. F.e., slang behaves regularly in the forming of denominal adjectives by –y suffixation (e.g. cbordy- moody, cbord-a bad mood, gobby-mouthy, slang gob-mouth) and deverbal adjectives by – able suffixation (shaggable- slang to shag –to fornicate). It uses the suffix –ette to denote female sex as in punkette (a female punk). It uses the verbal

prefix de- to convey a sense of removal or deprivation to the base as in de-bag –to remove trousers.¹

Words may acquire new meanings (cool, cat). A narrow meaning may become generalized (fink, originally a strikebreaker, later a betrayer or disappointer) or vice-versa (heap, a run-down car). Most affixation tend to belong to extragrammatical morphology, though they exhibit a certain regularity and stability.

Slang has some productive suffixes which are either novel (eg. -o/oo, -eroo, -ers) or used differently from Standard English. The slang suffix –o means either ``a stupid unintelligent person``(dumbo, thicko) or a person with a particular habit or characteristic (eg. Saddo, sicko). This suffix seems to be productive in the making of forms of address (kiddo, yobbo)

A cumulation of the suffix – er with –o/oo produces –eroo in slang as in smackeroo, meaning the same as smacker but with a more light – hearted slant.

Another prolific slang cumulation is –ers as in some pair nouns (cobblers, conkers, knackers), plural nouns (choppers-teeth, trousers) and uncountable nouns (ackers-money, uppers- amphetamine). The slang suffix –ers often occurs after abbreviation as in bathers (bathing costumes), brekkers (breakfast), taters (potatoes).

The suffix –s lost its inflectional meaning in slang and conveys new meaning to the base: afters- dessert, flicks- cinema, messages- groceries.

The use of – ed is also noteworthy in slang. It is added to noun to obtain adjectives: boxed, brained, hammered, ratted. –er in slang gives unpredictable sense as in belter- excellent thing or event, bottler-person who easily gives up.

3. Compounding makes one word from two. Initial and final combination have intensifying function: butt naked- fully naked, butt ugly- completely ugly; earache- a talkative person, faceache – a miserable looking person, airhead-someone out of touch with reality, homeboy-a person from the same hometown

¹ . Mattiello Elisa. The Pervasiveness of Slang in Standard and Non- Standard English.- Mots Palabras Words-6/2005.-41p
Crystal D., The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language.-Cambridge University: Press. 1996-712p.

Infixes are unknown in standard English being a peculiarity of slang. Bloody, fucking are used to provide information about speaker`s attitude (as in abso-bloody-lutely, or in fan-fuckin`-tastic).

Conversion is anomalous in slang in case of adjective-noun as in high-pleasantly intoxicated state, massive- a group of people.¹

4. In slang, frequently used words are likely to be abbreviated. For example: OTL-out to lunch-out of touch with reality. VJ-video jock-an announcer for televised music videos

Words may be clipped, or abbreviated (mike, microphone), and acronyms may gain currency (VIP, awol, snafu).

5. A currently productive process is the addition of a particle like OUT, OFF or ON to a noun, adjective or verb, to form a phrasal verb.

For example: blimp out-to overeat

blow off-to ignore

hit on-to make sexual overtures to

6. Unlike the general vocabulary of the language, English slang has not borrowed heavily from foreign languages, although it does borrow from dialects, especially from such ethnic or special interest groups which make an impact on the dominant culture .

7. Sometimes new words are just invented. shenanigans-tricks, pranks

So we can see that slang depart from what is generally regarded as grammatical or predictable and is likely to pioneer original word-formation processes which pave the way for further morphological process.

2.2 Slang in culture and language

¹ Mattiello Elisa. The Pervasiveness of Slang in Standard and Non- Standard English.- Mots Palabras Words-6/2005.-41p.
[www. lexscripta.com/desktop/dictionaries/](http://www.lexscripta.com/desktop/dictionaries/)

Slang often suggests that the person utilizing the words or phrases is familiar with the hearer's group or subgroup-it can be considered a distinguishing factor of in-group identity. Microsoft Encarta states: "slang expressions often embody attitudes and values of group members." In order for an expression to become slang, it must be widely accepted and adopted by members of the subculture or group. Slang has no societal boundaries or limitations as it can exist in all cultures and classes of society as well as in all languages.

According to the British lexicographer, Eric Partridge (1894-1979), people use slang for any of at least 15 reasons :

1) In sheer high spirits, by the young in heart as well as by the young in years; 'just for the fun of the thing'; in playfulness or waggishness.

2) As an exercise either in wit and ingenuity or in humour. (The motive behind this is usually self-display or snobbishness, emulation or responsiveness, delight in virtuosity).

3) To be 'different', to be novel.

4) To be picturesque (either positively or - as in the wish to avoid insipidity - negatively).

5) To be unmistakably arresting, even startling.

6) To escape from cliches, or to be brief and concise. (Actuated by impatience with existing terms.)

7) To enrich the language. (This deliberateness is rare save among the well-educated, Cockneys forming the most notable exception; it is literary rather than spontaneous.)

8) To lend an air of solidity, concreteness, to the abstract; of earthiness to the idealistic; of immediacy and appositeness to the remote. (In the cultured the effort is usually premeditated, while in the uncultured it is almost always unconscious when it is not rather subconscious.)

9) To lessen the sting of, or on the other hand to give additional point to, a refusal, a rejection, a recantation;

10) To reduce, perhaps also to disperse, the solemnity, the pomposity, the excessive seriousness of a conversation (or of a piece of writing);

11) To soften the tragedy, to lighten or to 'prettify' the inevitability of death or madness, or to mask the ugliness or the pity of profound turpitude (e.g. treachery, ingratitude); and/or thus to enable the speaker or his auditor or both to endure, to 'carry on'.

12) To speak or write down to an inferior, or to amuse a superior public; or merely to be on a colloquial level with either one's audience or one's subject matter.

13) For ease of social intercourse. (Not to be confused or merged with the preceding.)

14) To induce either friendliness or intimacy of a deep or a durable kind. (Same remark.)

15) To show that one belongs to a certain school, trade, or profession, artistic or intellectual set, or social class; in brief, to be 'in the swim' or to establish contact.

16) Hence, to show or prove that someone is not 'in the swim'.

17) To be secret - not understood by those around one. (Children, students, lovers, members of political secret societies, and criminals in or out of prison, innocent persons in prison, are the chief exponents.)

There is 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 vice 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.

Here we can present some interesting examples of usage of slang words referring to underworld that can be met in some dictionaries. "Where would a hot can of corn like Dillinger hide out?"

In the present example the slang word "hot" is used in the meaning of "wanted by police".

"What they call "the nut", payoffs to the police".

Here the slang word "nut" means "any illegal payoff to a police officer".

"The surprise award was a put-up job".

In the present sentence the slang word "Put-up job" has the meaning of "a prearranged matter".

"There would be a lot of loose quiff we would meet".

Here the slang word "quiff" is used in the meaning of "a promiscuous woman".

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.

Here some interesting examples of usage of slang words referring to the college students group of slang. "I really hit the eco final".

In the present example the slang word "hit" is used in the meaning of "to pass an examination with good grades". "They're afraid of getting hosed".

Here the slang word "hose" has the meaning of "to turn down, reject, snub". "He and LD had been jacking around in practice and LD fell on his leg". In the present sentence the slang word "jack around" is appeared in the meaning of "to idle about".

"We went downtown and had a kicking ass".

Here the slang word "kicking ass" has the meaning of "a good time".

"On critical issues of fact and analysis he is out to lunch".

The slang word "out to lunch" is used in this case in the meaning of "insane, crazy".

"The guard popped us as we tried to sneak in the back door". In this sentence the slang word "pop" means "to catch". "I hate to punt, but I just don't have time to finish this job".

Here the slang word "to punt" is used in the meaning of "to drop a course in order not to fail it".

The following examples can help to illustrate the usage of the slang words referring to the teenagers group of slang. "One slurp of gin and he's in orbit".

In this example the slang word "in orbit" is used in the meaning of "having a free and exhilarating experience".

"The bomb cannot be exploded by a single kook".

Here the slang word "kook" has the meaning of "an eccentric person".

"I dug right away what the kicks was, so I said, "Later", and he split".

In the present sentence the slang word "later" is appeared in the meaning of "a parting salutation".

"He swore he wouldn't mark if they caught him".

In this case the slang word "mark" is used in the meaning of "to inform".

"I got mega homework tonight".

Here the slang word "mega" means "much".

"Fold the table down, and generations of crud and mung apper".

In the present example the slang word "mung" has the meaning of "anything nasty".

"I pigged out on a runny Brie".

Here the slang word "pigged out" is used in the meaning of "overeat".

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.

CONCLUSION

In this paper we attempted to investigate slang as a complicated linguistic phenomenon. To understand the viewed phenomenon it is necessary to consider the main aspects of slang: the origin of slang, the problem of definition, the ways of slang words formation, different kinds of slang and practical use of slang words.

The problem of definition of slang comes to be one of the main problems for those who study slang. There is a great number of definitions that define slang from different points of view. Summarizing all of them we can conclude that slang is a non-standard vocabulary, an extravagant part of language; it is the spoken form of the language and something, which cannot be met in the books but can be heard on the streets; it is also the instrument to escape the dull familiarity of the every-day life. Slang must be treated very accurately because the life of slang words is not very long. Usually when slang items stay in the general language, they become standard vocabulary. So slang may become "legal", but there is, of course, the reverse side. A lot of standard words find their ways into slang. Sometimes it is difficult to define the precise quality that makes an expression slang. It is often not in the word itself, but in the sense in which it is used. When speaking of soldiers who put down a rebellion, "put down" is proper enough. But it is slang when we speak of a remark, which "puts someone down". Slang is used in all spheres of language: conversations, books, songs, and mass media. But the origin of slang is still uncertain. There are a lot of ideas about the place and reason of its appearance. Some scientists believe that slang originates from the underworld; some sources give the information that slang was created by the traders as the means to deceive the customers. But actually each social group contributed and still contributes slang.

Slang should not be ignored or dismissed, even by those who do not like it. It is impossible to shut our eyes to the prominent part, which it plays in the language. It is the part of the language and cannot be treated a non-existent. We should develop a more objective and scientific attitude towards this gesture of language.

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