

SECRET WORDS: AMERICAN SLANGS

*Toshtemirova Dilobar Botirbek kizi**ADCHTI is a student of the Faculty of English language and literature**E-mail:toshtemirova.dilobar@mail.ru*

Annotation: This article explores slangs which are used in English speaking countries. It begins with common and convenient definition and functions of slangs and somehow cultural significance. This study also includes perspectives in different nations and some difficulties in translating.

Key words: Slang, American English, informal language, research, understanding, dialect, grammar, online community, translation , social groups.

Аннотация:В этой статье рассматриваются сленги, которые используются в англоязычных странах. Она начинается с общепринятого и удобного определения и функций сленгов и, в некоторой степени, культурного значения. Это исследование также включает точки зрения в разных странах и некоторые трудности перевода.

Ключевые слова: сленг, американский английский, неформальный язык, исследование, понимание, диалект, грамматика, интернет-сообщество, перевод, социальные группы.

Nowadays, it is noticeable that, language is a living, expanding entity and without a doubt, nowhere is this more evident than in the sphere of slang. In the United States slang serves as a vibrant role of cultural shift, technological advancements and social dynamics. American slang offers a window into the nation's diverse and ever-changing identity. Actually, fascinating world of American slang has its origins, functions, the most popular expressions used in contemporary speech in 2025.

Before starting with functions, we have to answer the question of “what is slang?”. “Slang is a type of informal language. It includes words and phrases that people use in everyday conversations, especially among friends or people in the same group. Slang is not usually found in formal writing or in school textbooks”. For example, words like “cool” “lit” “hang out” “no cap” or “LOL” are all slang terms. Slang changes all the time. New words appear quickly, especially among young people, and old slang can disappear fast. This is because slang reflects trends, emotions, and how people feel or think in the moment. “Slang is a self-sufficient, subversive, oppositional subset of the English language. It has given a tongue, by no means inarticulate, to the marginal, the criminal and the dispossessed for at least half a millennium”.¹

¹ Green, Jonathon. (2011). “Some Thoughts on Slang.” Alicante Journal of English Studies / Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses, No. 24, pp. 153–171. <https://doi.org/10.14198/raei.2011.24.06>

“Why slang changes over period of time?”

To clarify this question, we have to refer to historical evolution of American slang would be the best example.

In 1920s, the jazz age introduced terms really different from other ones like “bee’s knees” which was **something excellent**. Besides that “cat’s pajamas”(an outstanding person or thing).

In 1960-70s, the counterculture movement popularized expressions with new perspectives. For example, “goovy” was used like “cool” or “far out” meant “amazing”.

After many years, approximately in 1980s, it was the time of hip-hop culture and they came to this century with new slangs as the best trend of ever. They were “dope”(excellent) and “phat” (great) and other past words turned into old-fashioned. Many of these words originated from African American Vernacular English and its abbreviation is “AAVE”.

At present, namely, after 2000s, we have really amazing inventions. The rise of the internet and social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok or Twitter has accelerated the creation of slang and in contemporary world, we try to use easy and modern expressions in our speech to increase our social status. For instance, when we want to say **exciting**, we just use “lit”, “ghosting” means “suddenly cutting off communication”.

Usually, we have a chance to use slangs in everyday communications. Slang is not just for fun — it has real purposes. Here are some important reasons why people use slang:

Firstly, slang helps people feel like they belong. Teenagers, gamers, musicians, or sports fans might all use different slang. When people use the same slang, it shows they are part of the same group or culture. Second one, slang is a good way to express strong feelings. For example, if someone says, “**That movie was fire!**” they mean **it was really great**. Saying “**I’m dead**” after hearing a joke shows that they **laughed a lot**. These words show more emotion than standard words. Third, slang often uses funny or creative language. “Slang enriches language by adding vividness and expressiveness. It often breaks traditional linguistic rules, giving rise to innovation and creativity in everyday speech”.² People like to make up new ways to say things. For example, “**spill the tea**” means **to tell gossip**, and “**ghost someone**” means to **suddenly stop talking to them**. These fun phrases make language interesting. Fourth, slang is often shorter and quicker to say. Instead of saying “**That’s suspicious,**” people might just say “**That’s sus**”. This is very common in texting or online chatting. In today’s fast-paced digital world, people want to communicate quickly and easily, especially when texting or chatting online. That’s one of the biggest reasons why slang has become so popular — it makes communication faster and more efficient. Social media platforms like Twitter (X), TikTok, or Snapchat often have character limits or fast-scrolling content. Slang helps users fit more meaning into less space. For example: “**No cap**” is faster than “**I’m not lying**” or “**I’m being serious**”. “**DM me**” is shorter than “**Send me a direct message**”. In social media bios, captions, or comments, short and catchy slang phrases are more likely to catch people’s attention and be

² Norova, M. F. (2023). Linguistic Properties of Slang. Web of Scientist: International Scientific Research Journal, 4(11), 175–182.

shared. Sometimes, people use slang to sound different from adults or to break away from formal rules. It can be a way to show freedom or to challenge old traditions, especially among youth or creative communities. Young people often use slang as a way to separate themselves from older generations. They create their own way of speaking that adults often don't understand. This creates a sense of independence and power.

For example, a teenager might feel more confident and modern saying,

“She ate that up!” (meaning: **she did a great job**) than using a typical phrase like **“She performed very well”**.

In this way, slang becomes a symbol of youth culture, energy, and the right to be different.

As slang has evolution, every person who came from another nation has challenges in understanding and translating. Because apart from its formal meaning, some words have different concepts. For example, we have a word “GOAT” which is an animal and “GOAT” as a slang (meaning: GREATEST OF ALL TIME). We encounter this word in social media for Ronaldo or Messi and someone who doesn't understand might think that: **“Are they animals?”**

Top ten English slangs which are used in speech.

1. Cap – something that's not true or a lie

Example: Don't listen to him, that's pure cap.

2. Drip – a cool or stylish way of dressing, especially with expensive clothes

Example: Check out his drip — those sneakers are fire!

3. Mood – something that perfectly matches how you feel or your vibe

Example: That sleepy cat is a whole mood.

4. Ship – to support or wish for two people to be in a romantic relationship

Example: I ship them, they'd be such a cute couple.

5. Simp – someone who does too much for someone they like, often overly kind or obsessed

Example: He bought her five gifts in one day — what a simp!

6. Bussin – really delicious or amazing (especially used for food)

Example: This pizza is bussin, for real!

7. Snack – someone who looks attractive or good-looking

Example: Wow, she's looking like a snack today!

8. Stan – a superfan; someone who strongly supports a celebrity or idea

Example: I stan that singer — she's amazing live!

9. GOAT – acronym for "Greatest Of All Time"; the best in a field

Example: Ronaldo is the GOAT of football.

10. Sus – short for suspicious; something strange or untrustworthy

Example: He came late with a strange excuse — kinda sus, right?

References:

1. Green, J. (2011). Some Thoughts on Slang. *Alicante Journal of English Studies*.
2. Norova, M. F. (2023). Linguistic Properties of Slang. *Web of Scientist: International Scientific Research Journal*.
3. Slotta, J. (2016). Slang and the Semantic Sense of Identity. *Texas Linguistics Forum*.
4. Kulkarni, V., & Wang, W. Y. (2017). TFW, DamnGina, Juvie, and Hotsie-Totsie: On the Linguistic and Social Aspects of Internet Slang. *arXiv preprint*.
5. Keidar, D., Opedal, A., Jin, Z., & Sachan, M. (2022). Slangvolution: A Causal Analysis of Semantic Change and Frequency Dynamics in Slang. *arXiv preprint*.
6. Tran, T. V. D. (2023). A Semantic Analysis of Slang in Students' Group Discussions. *HUFLIT Journal of Science*.
7. Tambovtseva, K. D. (2014). Lexico-Semantic Field of American Youth Slang. *RUDN Journal of Language Studies, Semiotics and Semantics*.
8. Zhang, J. (2023). A Sociolinguistics Analysis of Slang in America. *Lecture Notes on Language and Literature*.