



SLANG OR WHAT THEY DON'T WRITE ABOUT IN TEXTBOOKS

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Abstract: This article delves into the often overlooked yet vibrant world of slang, highlighting its significance in everyday communication and cultural expression. While textbooks frequently present formal language structures, they tend to neglect the dynamic, evolving nature of slang, which reflects societal changes and the identity of its speakers. Through an exploration of various slang terms and their contexts, the article examines how slang fosters community, facilitates informal interactions, and serves as a marker of generational and regional identity. Additionally, it discusses the implications of slang on language education, advocating for a more inclusive curriculum that embraces colloquial expressions. By bringing attention to these linguistic nuances, the article aims to encourage a deeper understanding of language as a living entity, shaped by the voices of its users.

Key words: informal language, communication, colloquialism, authentic language use, slang, textbook limitations, regional dialects, language barriers.

Some authors believe that slang in English makes up about a third of all spoken language! Whether this is true or not, we do not know, but the fact is that there are a great many cultural and not so slang expressions in English. In this article, of course, we will not cover the entire diversity of English slang, but we will try to outline frequently used colloquial English slang expressions.

So, what is slang and how do you use it? How figuratively and succinctly do J.B.Greenough and J.L.Kittridge describe slang in their work "Words and Their Way into English Speech": "Slang is a vagabond language that hangs around the neighborhood of literary speech and constantly tries to force its way into the most refined society". A more scientific and less artistic definition of slang can be given as follows: "Expressive and emotionally colored vocabulary of colloquial speech that deviates from the accepted literary language norm".

Therefore, slang is part of colloquial speech. Of course, if you need to write a business letter or report in English, slang expressions should be avoided. But it is very difficult to fully communicate without it.

Let's not dally off and get started with getting to know the world of English slang:

Ace – 1. Buddy, pal, dude. 2. Great, awesome.

In its literal meaning, this word means "ace in cards." Of course, the card is good, respected, and it is also great to have it in your hands. So if you were called this in America, know that it is very good.

Hey, ace, let's go out tonight! – Dude, let's go out somewhere tonight!

Acid head – Drug addict.

Imagine an acid head. There is clearly something wrong with it, it is simply poisoned by something. This is the peculiar comparison that Americans use to describe a drug addict.

Do you know that her new boyfriend is an acid head? - Do you know that her new boyfriend is a drug addict?

Airhead – Stupid man.

Another expression with a head, or rather, based on its meaning, without it. It is somewhat similar to the Russian: “ветер в голове”, but with a slightly different connotation. If someone called another person this, he clearly does not have a very high opinion of the latter’s intellectual abilities.

Although he is rather clever, sometimes he behaves like an airhead. - Although he is quite intelligent, sometimes he acts like a fool.

All wet – Incorrect, erroneous.

Is it good to be completely wet? Of course it is not correct, so Americans use this expression to mean something completely wrong, untrue:

Your impression from their conversation is all wet. - Your impression of their conversation is completely wrong.

Ass, asshead, asshole – Booty, buttocks; donkey; goat.

Even trying with all our might to stay within the bounds of censorship, it is impossible to talk about American slang without going over this word and its derivatives. It only remains to note that the more literary versions are the words buttocks, backside.

There are only assholes around me. - I am surrounded by only goats.

Awesome – Wonderful, great.

After so many negative expressions, I would like to give a positive one, denoting something very good, amazing.

What an awesome day we had last week! - What a wonderful day we had last week!

Bananas, go bananas – wack, madman, go crazy.

Such a wonderful fruit, but for some reason it stands for a completely unwonted word. So, if someone said: to go bananas, he is unlikely to send his opponent to the store.

I can’t imagine why he went bananas then. - I can’t imagine why he went crazy then.

Barf – to suffer from vomiting, nausea, to feel sick.

In English, there is a more cultured version of this word - vomit, but the one given above is more rude and colloquial.

Be careful! He barfed on the carpet. – Be careful! He vomited on the carpet.

Beemer – BMW, “Boomer”.

Exactly the same slang word that has already appeared in the Uzbek language.

He has just bought a new beemer. It was his dream. – He just bought a new Boomer, it was his dream.

Big daddy – “Big shot”, big boss (chief).

While we use the spruce fruit to refer to a person in a high position, Americans use the word «daddy».

When did you see him last time? He has become such a big daddy.

Bigmouth – Braggart, chatterbox, blabbermouth.

The meaning of this expression can essentially be understood even from a literal translation. To have a big mouth compared to the Russian equivalent: иметь длинный язык.

Don’t tell her any secrets! Don’t you know what a bigmouth she is!

Betcha! – Let’s bet! For a bet!

This expression comes from the verb to bet – to argue, to place a bet, to which a youthful, slang ending is simply added.

You will never win the competition! Betcha!

Bloody – Cursed, damned, damn it, god damn it.

The more direct meaning of this word, “bloody,” also has a negative connotation.

I hate this bloody country! He cried in despair.

Booze – Drinking, alcohol, binge drinking.

There are also a significant number of slang expressions in Uzbek that refer to alcohol and related things. Of course, you shouldn’t drink it, but it wouldn’t hurt to know what to call evil.

I can’t stand booze any more.

Bush (weed) – “Weed”, marijuana.

It’s quite funny that the surname of the former US president in the slang world means a soft drug.

Where did you get that bush?

Cheesy – Vulgar

It's hard to explain why "cheesy" means tasteless, since cheese is such a tasty product, in fact, but slang is slang.

Although she is very nice, she wears such cheesy clothes.

Chick – Chicklet, chicklette, pipperoo.

In fact, we use a similar bird, or rather a chick, to denote a girl. As a sexual object. Therefore, it is not difficult to remember this expression.

Yesterday I was drunk with some chicks in night club. (Song by Riva Starr).

Crap – Nonsense, rubbish.

Such a capacious, short word that can be heard literally on every corner in English-speaking countries.

Stop talking all this crap!

Dude (pal) – Bimbo, bro, gay.

A very informal, familiar expression, can have both a negative and a neutral connotation. So, do not rush to be offended if you are called this, it may mean that your relationship with the interlocutor has become much less formal.

Wow, dude, are you serious?

Fag, faggot, faggy – representative of a sexual minority, "gay". Male homosexual, queer.

In the Russian language there are a countless number of words denoting this category of people; in English too, in order not to get into trouble, it is better to become familiar with such words.

Most of my friends are fags.

Of course, this article only introduces the reader to the world of slang; in order to fully and freely use living, not always cultural and literary English slang, it is worth studying it more deeply, watching modern films, communicating with native speakers.

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