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Course paper
in English Language Theory

**SLANG IN MODERN INTERNET COMMUNICATION (BASED
ON TWITTER)**

presented by the student of the 4th Year of
studying,

Course: 6.020303. Philology. English
Language and Literature

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Grade _____

Examination board _____

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INTRODUCTION

The most important condition for the existence of language is its continuous development, which is expressed in the emergence of new words. The process of learning about the world, the emergence of new concepts, changes in public life, progress in science and technology are constantly developing, which requires the language to provide speakers with the necessary number of new lexical items. The large number of new words that appear in English each year requires researchers not only to record but also to analyze them.

This work is devoted to the study of the conversational style in modern English on the material of users of social networks. Slang – is relatively stable for a certain period, a widespread and generally understandable layer of vocabulary and phraseology in the environment of lively colloquial speech (sometimes with phonetic, morphological and syntactic features), very heterogeneous in its genetic composition and degree of approximation to the literary language, which has a particular emotionally-expressive, evaluative character, often representing a mock protest against social, ethical, aesthetic, linguistic and other conventions and authorities.

The Internet as a new communicative environment is developing rapidly, respectively, there is a need to study and describe the phenomena, processes and patterns of its existence and functioning. With this in mind, linguistic works have appeared in recent years, in which much attention is paid to virtual discourse. The past decade has seen a renewed importance in investigating communicative-pragmatic and functional features of the Internet (O.M. Halychkina, O.I. Goroshko, S.S. Danyliuk, P.E. Kondrashov, L.Yu. Shchipitsyna, T.V. Yakhontova, G. Barbatsis, S. Herring, R. Holt, A. Iskold, K. Ryan), the influence of computer and information technology on language (M.B. Bergelson, A.E. Voiskunsky, L.Yu. Ivanov, N.S. Baron, D. Crystal, C. Thurlow), the interaction of oral and written speech in Internet communication (S.O. Lysenko, G.M. Trofimova and others).

This topic is **relevant** because the conversational style, being an integral part of the language, is one of the most pressing and controversial problems of modern

lexicology. Also, the relevance of the study is determined by the fact that the systemic and semantic features of the general slang of the English language have not yet been sufficiently studied. Different aspects of slang have been studied by Russian and foreign linguists: I.V. Arnold, A. Barrere, I.R. Halperin, T.Ye. Zakharchenko, Mencken H., Partridge E, T.A. Solovyova, S.B. Flexner, W. Friman and many others. Due to the development of information technology there is a partial transition from traditional ways of communication to new and progressive social networks, which replace the usual practices of communication.

The **object** of our research is the conversational style of English.

The **subject** of the study is English slang and its features based on Twitter material.

The **purpose** of the study is to identify and describe the conversational style in social networks on the Internet.

The objectives of the research follow from the designated main goal and boil down to the following:

- to research the scientific and theoretical literature sources concerning the topic 'slang';
- to select elements of colloquial style from social networks using a continuous sampling method;
- to analyze the colloquial units at graphic, phonetic, lexical and semantic levels;
- to determine the status of lexical items on social networks Twitter;
- to develop a classification of ways of formation of slang for further analysis of newly created lexical units of social networks Twitter.

The **theoretical significance** of the work lies in the fact that the classes of slang have been identified and described, a methodology for their analysis has been developed, which can be widely used in lexicographic research.

The results obtained determine the **practical value** of the work, which lies in the fact that the glossary collected and analyzed during the research, can be used in the preparation of textbooks on the practice of the English language, as well as in

the creation of new and editing of existing specialized dictionaries and glossaries of colloquial phrases. The material presented in the thesis can be the basis for further promising research in the field of spoken English.

The structure of the work constitutes the introduction, two chapters, conclusions and bibliography (26 items). The total volume is 33 pages.

CHAPTER I. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF SLANG IN INTERNET COMMUNICATION

1.1. The concept of Internet communication: its linguacultural peculiarities

Modern linguistics pays a lot of attention to the study of the linguistic features of communication on the Internet. A new style of language is being formed, the style of Internet communication, which not only acts as a specific uniqueness of the Internet community but also affects the speech behavior of the entire society as a whole. For a large number of users, virtual communication is becoming a part of their lifestyle. The Internet activates the attention of communicators to the language tools they use. In the era of the Internet, linguistic personalities invent new ways and forms of interpersonal communication for themselves. These changes in the linguistic personality occur together with the formation of a virtual picture of the world, including a linguistic one, which demonstrates life in the Internet space with its characteristic features. The Internet language is an acceptable vector of innovative communication. It combines the features of oral and written speech and therefore is considered to be one of the styles of the modern English language in the virtual space.

Modern society is often called the “*information*” or “*information civilization*” society. This is understood as a procedure for the transition from an industrial society to a post-industrial society, where the primary results of production are knowledge and information, and the rapid filling of society with technical means of mass communication is a distinctive feature. Innovative computer technological processes made it possible to form the concept of completely new original communicative relationships, which led to the globalization of communication, as well as the development of the global computer network, social and cultural spheres.

Internet communication has certain characteristic features:

- the possibility of realizing public, intrapersonal, and collective communication;
- may have spoken and written forms;
- by means of contact, communication and interaction presupposes a type of mediated communication;
- emphasizes important virtual data through the channel of transmission and perception [2;p.50].

Separately, considerable care must be taken towards such characteristic features as communication, interactivity, information content, expediency, efficiency, multilingualism. Communication with the help of the “World Wide Web” shows the emergence of the newest linguistic means of communication, as well as the modification of the old ones, for example, slang and jargon were developed directly by the users themselves [3;p.50].

It is crucial to assert that users do not have the ability to convey logical stress, intonation, pause, tempo and rhythm of speech. The linguistic features of Internet communications carry a significant amount of abbreviations; reflect the formation of non-literary vocabulary, the approximation of the graphic form of the word to the sound one, violation of spelling, grammatical and syntactic norms, the use of capitalization and emoticons. The latter are realized through pictograms depicting emotions, for example, smiles familiar in Internet communication [2].

The most remarkable result of emoticons and acronyms use is generating significant interest. The prevalence of smiles is realized on the basis of the law language means economy, which O.S. Akhmanova substantiates as “inverse proportionality of the amount of effort required to pronounce a given language unit and its frequency” [9; p.156].

The formation and development of emoticons or smiles allow users to select the desired informal contact with interlocutors, convey the emotional mood of a person and endow a message with additional connotations, limit language resources, mark status relationships between interlocutors, and distinguish between a text and graphic.

The language of virtual communication is not regarded as a novel concept. It is densely connected with the style of SMS notifications, which comes from the jargon used by young people. Nevertheless, the method of communication itself is constantly renewing due to drastic social alternations. The style of the presentation depends on the age of a communicant and his / her addressee; it is also believed that the younger the age group, the more their interaction is saturated with various reductions and contractions.

Virtual communication speech is extremely rarely used by communicators over 35 years old. This language is being formed very rapidly since it lacks generally accepted norms and each user can influence its formation by introducing and using a variety of newest phrases and alternatives to abbreviations. On the worldwide network, there are interpreters from the language of virtual communication to spoken language and vice versa, which is quite appropriate for foreigners and for other groups of people who are not used to such communication [11;p.140].

The emergence of a networked language of communication targets to provide a text with maximum information content in the most laconic and simplified way. At present time, the Internet language does not have much influence on users' knowledge of spelling and syntactic rules, but the impact is still present. The basis of Internet communication is spoken language, the language of pictograms, abbreviations and emoticons. In the process of virtual communication, the majority of all the lexical abbreviations is subject to expressions that act as introductory words with the meaning of reflecting the order of thoughts and their connection, remarks on the ways of forming thoughts, sources of messages.

Our findings would appear to indicate that in terms of the degree of impact on human civilization, the development of electronic means of communication is comparable to the emergence of writing and the invention of the printing press. It led to the development of a computer-mediated form of communication, which radically changed the nature of discourse. Recalling history, we observe that any innovation that simplifies and speeds up communication is rapidly expanding and

consolidating everywhere, for example, radio and television. In the same way, there is a new, '*virtual*' form of communication, free, mobile, reliable, and accessible to almost everyone. Besides, virtual personalities become creators of new verbal and non-verbal means of expression and communication, broadening not only the virtual space itself but also the language in which this society communicates.

Communication of people in the Internet environment is carried out quickly and in the most simplified form, users select the most convenient means of language, which meet the important needs of the modern information society. Illiteracy in the modern information society should still be recognized as a vice, whereas awareness is merit.

1.2. Slang in modern Internet communication

Due to the increased volume of information, there is a tendency to save language effort and time. Vocabulary as the most mobile layer of the language undergoes significant changes. The enrichment of the vocabulary of the language occurs due to word formation, a section of lexicology responsible for the appearance of new words. Modern English has a relatively new and highly productive way of word formation — abbreviation. Being a regular way of forming morphological neologisms in recent decades, abbreviations reflect the very tendency towards rationalization of the language.

There is evidence to suggest that the vocabulary of the English language is being replenished with a new generation of acronyms, which arose as a result of the emergence of a universal form of communication — the slang language. The introduction of the slang, formed on the basis of abbreviations, was facilitated by the widespread use of high technologies. Today we communicate a lot via the Internet, and therefore one should not be surprised at the appearance of a separate Internet slang, which is even plainer than the language of our everyday communication. Although, the most conspicuous observation to emerge from the

collected data is that Internet slang is not that flawless. The slang appears to be full of swear words and insults or deliberately misspelled or misused words.

Furthermore, a vast majority of lexis is doomed to be uttered in face-to-face communication. Some websites use their own terms, abbreviations, and slang words. *Twitter* and *Reddit*, two major social networks, are great examples of doing that. Many websites and blogs use hash-tags to make it easier to find the desirable content. Hash-tags consist of a symbol preceding keywords, with no spaces in between. An example of a popular hash-tag is *#TBT*, which stands for *Throwback Thursday*. People share their childhood antiques and use this hash-tag. *#TBT* is also used on other social networks, and not only on Thursdays.

DM is Twitter's term for private messages that users send to each other directly. All users of this social network have access to the "Messages" section, where they are able to read and write private messages to other users. A Twitter *retweet* is sharing a tweet with other followers. Retweeting is used to express agreement with other users or commenting on statements. For example: *Oh my gosh! Beyoncé just retweeted my tweet!! I can't believe it!*

The term "*AMA*" has gained popularity thanks to Reddit users. The acronym for "*Ask Me Anything*" is used when someone, usually famous or notable, goes online to answer questions from members of a community. For instance: *Even President Obama has done an AMA!*

Internet *trolls* are people who take a special pleasure in inflaming controversy and provoking their interlocutors. Their primary aim is to evoke the most violent reaction of other users. There is an online saying "*Don't feed the trolls*", which means the Internet users are better to avoid trolls to preclude further trolling.

Actually, the word "*meme*" appeared before the Internet, and outside the Internet context it denotes a part of the culture that has developed through transmission from one person to another, usually through imitation. A meme can be an idea, a melody, and an image – anything that can be conveyed and changed. On the Internet, memes are images, texts or videos that have been copied and

changed many times. Typically, people try to change the text or picture to make it more appealing to the audience.

Some striking examples of memes are the following:

The phrase “*epic fail*” denotes making a mistake over a trifle. The word “*epic*” itself refers to the epics and tales of antiquity, which describe the long and exciting adventures of legendary heroes. Today the word “*epic*” is used in relation to everything huge or important, such as in the following: “*An epic sandwich we ate last night.*”

Another bright example is the phrase coming from a blog post *Hyperbole and a Half*, where the author provided logical evidence for not being able to grow up. One of the pictures showed a jubilant, a very happy and proud girl saying “*Clean all the things!*” Now this phrase is used as hyperbole (exaggeration), and usually follows the scheme “X all the Y”: *Eat all the pizzas, catch all the Pokemon, pass all the tests.* For example: “*When I get rich I’m going to buy all the houses. All of them*”

In response to a very clever and witty commentary, it is ordinary to find the phrase “*well played*”. In everyday communication, the analogue of this phrase is the word “*touche*”. “*Well played*” can also be used when demonstrating proof for someone being obviously mistaken.

1.3. Common methods of slang formation

When shaping the vocabulary of the English slang, special attention is paid to such a phenomenon as **contamination**, i.e. the emergence of a new word by combining words and expressions that are different in meaning and content, as a result of which the middle of the word is truncated at the junction of two words, which ultimately leads to the emergence of a new word-formation structure. As an example, we give the word *dumbfound*, which was formed using the lexical units *dumb* and *confound*. The word *dumbfound* is used to mean ‘to daze, to embarrass’. Another word *flabbergast* was also formed with the two words *flably* and *aghast*.

This word with the meaning ‘to amaze, to amaze’ has become a slang, thus presenting a new word-formation model of slang vocabulary.

Another way of forming slang in English is done through **concatenation**, i.e. acquiring a word of concomitant meaning and expanding the semantic chain of the word. This method is also productive, since the word retains its word-formation structure in an unchanged state, but at the same time the semantic link of a word is replenished with a new meaning. For the sake of illustration, the following examples are provided:

The modern word ‘yarn’ comes from the Old English word *gearn*, which originally meant ‘yarn, wool, linen, silk, cotton’. The word was commonly used in the phrase ‘*spin a yarn*’. Another example is related to the word ‘warm’, which comes from the Old English word ‘*wearm*’. Its original and basic meaning is ‘*heat-emitting heat*’.

One more characteristic technique for the formation of the English slang is presented in the form of **metaphorization and metonymization**, which are based on the so-called semantic (stylistic) rethinking of words attributed to slang. “The interaction of slang and the vocabulary of the literary language are accompanied by noticeable semantic shifts in its lexical units, due to the influence of various processes of secondary nomination. Technically, dictionaries total approximately four thousand words formed by means of metaphors and metonymies, which certifies these phenomena to be major considerations for expressiveness in slang. For example: *to hold on to your socks; to put a blow-torch; to stay kind (be healthy); to peak career-wise; to shake a bit*. [5;p. 45].

In the formation of the English slang, **borrowing** plays an important role, which is “the transition of elements of one language into another as a result of the interaction of languages” [8].

Many words in English have been borrowed from other languages such as French, Latin, Indian, Spanish, etc. The most numerous are the ones taken from Scandinavian languages [23].

Many borrowed words in the English language have undergone significant semantic changes over time. Among them, one can distinguish the German verb *kiebitzen* meaning ‘to peep at cards’, which has acquired a specific meaning in American slang ‘to distract from work with jokes or inappropriate remarks’. The New Hebrew word *schmaltz* ‘chicken fat’ has acquired the meaning of ‘sweet-sentimental style used in art for commercial purposes’ in American slang, as well as the adjective *schmaltzy* ‘too sentimental’, etc. As it is known, the English language is a “living language” that enriches its vocabulary by borrowing new foreign words and changes over time, acquires new features. The English language is quite fluctuant since it is apt to constant modifications. These changes are not destructive, though, since they contribute to the language development and popularization in society.

1.4. The features of the social network ‘Twitter’

Due to the Internet, new channels and forms of communication have emerged. It is clear that the transformation of the communicative space has changed the most important means of human communication – the language, because "every communicative situation requires a certain language behavior, the implementation of tools that determine such a situation" [7, p.17].

For linguists, the Internet provides an inexhaustible space for research, because in this so-called special environment of communication, oral and written versions of language closely coexist [25]. The language of the modern Internet is still poorly studied: some scholars consider it "pseudo-gender", others – one that is under the creative influence of the youth subculture [6, p. 99]. Observing the outbreak of popular language, which is fully realized in the vocabulary of cyberspace, we aim to analyze the language of social boundaries and characterize certain features. Personal data of users of social networks (photos, biographical data and preferences) become the basis for the interpretation of their communicative acts [16, p. 352]. Written text and images are typical for

communication on social networks. Written text is much more common, because this is the way users present 95% of the information [19].

During its existence, Twitter as one of the brightest examples of micro-blogging developed its own language *twitspeak*, that functions by its own laws and etiquette – *twitti-quette*, has its own unique structure [18, p. 285].

The main characteristic features of social networks follow the rules of colloquialism, namely spontaneity, informality, dialogue, situational consolidation, brevity and expressiveness and, consequently, the use of linguistic elements of informal communication [15]. The dialogical nature of electronic messages determines their informal organization, which imitates spoken spontaneous language [26, p. 208]. To compensate for the lack of verbal means of expressing emotions, emoticons and various animation effects proposed by the developers of the interface are used [4, p. 398].

Social networks create a space in which a person can fully realize their needs in a way that is required by modern society. The Internet has made it possible to provide stability to interpersonal, often accidental, contacts. In social networks, several types of communication are realized: interpersonal, intergroup, inter-social, communication between oneself and a group, between a group and a society, between a person and a society [18, p. 285].

In the communicative situation of network there are the following forms of speech: monologue, dialogue and polylogue, which in terms of communication in the Internet environment acquire new specific features. A monologue is actualized in the form of articles or posts, where a user deploys a variety of rhetorical questions in order to appeal to potential interlocutors. Dialog messages may be sent privately, remain on a personal page or be created for a specific recipient. In polylogical communication all participants are equal, everyone has the right to express their opinion and be heard [14, p. 43].

For the sake of engaging other people into the process of communication, users tend to upload new content such as photos or videos. Social networks are a space of virtual communication and a mechanism of network data transmission.

However, the duration of information storage is indefinite, as its owner or group moderator is authorized to delete it at any time. Such online platforms aim at blurring the boundaries between the type of utterances and happen to be an effective mechanism for converting such utterances into common Internet memes. Besides, a widespread way of social interaction on networks is exchanging links.

As for the language design of Twitter, a study conducted by S. Herring and K. Honeikat showed that English-language tweets account for up to 70% of total tweet correspondence, followed by tweets in Japan (about 27%) and Spain (about 18%) [20].

Regarding the content of tweets, a study conducted by the online agency Pew Analytics 2000 English-language tweets in 2009 showed that secular conversations account for about 41% of messages, discussions of life issues – 38% of messages, self-promotion – 6%; news stories as well as spam make up 4% of the total content; and 9% are recurring messages (retweets). Now the service has become so popular and necessary for people that in English there is even a gerund "twitching", which means a way of communicating on the Internet [4, p. 165].

Social network as a genre of Internet communication has a certain topic, communicative goals, stylistic features, and the expression of oral speech in writing is manifested at all levels of structural organization of the genre: phonetic, grammatical, lexical, syntactic and graphic.

A characteristic feature of the syntax is the tendency to deviate from the syntactic and punctuation rules of literary language by the producer of the text. Due to the lack of direct contact and the impossibility of using non-verbal means, we observe an excessive number of unnecessary punctuation marks (*why ????* *777*, *wow !!!!!!!*, *where ru ??????*, *well... u know... I want... to ask in...*) [13]. This tendency is most often manifested in insufficient or incorrect arrangement of punctuation marks or their absence, violation of formal-syntactic connection between parts of speech, word order in the sentence, lack of inversion in questions, omission of words, violation of coordination between members of the sentence; incorrect use of capital letters. As the illustration, the following examples are

provided: *i fine; me is 31; you feeling better now?; take yo shoes off when yu walk in the house ..!; deny deny deny !!; i don't know; how ya doin; i got enuf; thN = then; nEd = need* [13].

As for the syntactic features of communication on Twitter, it should be noted that the message until recently could contain no more than 140 characters. Therefore, simple, elliptical (often exclamatory) sentences are most often used in conversation. This gives the communication dynamism, a sense of real conversation. Limiting the number of characters forces to express thoughts succinctly, which has a positive effect on the content of the news feed. In the light of recent events, the limit of personal messages has reached the size of 10,000 characters, which contributes to the appearance of long sentences, making the language intricate to perceive and comprehend [15].

CONCLUSIONS TO THE CHAPTER I

One of the varieties of the conversational style is Internet communication or virtual communication. The Internet today is a whole world through which one can exchange information with all the inhabitants of our small planet. There are many ways to receive, transmit and exchange information.

Today Internet slang has become an independent lexical group of jargon. Users of the global network make it easier to spell words for faster typing and pronunciation, and some even compose dictionaries of English abbreviations. It is noteworthy that slang is often used in real life, and not only on the Internet.

Regardless of the way in which a slang word is formed, whether everything is grammatically or phonetically correct, it is always characterized by a special ratio of material meaning and emotional color, i.e. a greater proportion of emotional color. Modern English slang is an extremely rich layer of vocabulary. The new nomination, metaphorical, fresh, ironic and expressive, is quickly perceived by young people, which allows to create an informal atmosphere in communication and give a sense of belonging to a prestigious social group, has a high frequency of use, often ironic color and considerable mobility. Slang units often turn into a national language and may lose their expressiveness altogether, or they may be forgotten.

CHAPTER II. THE ANALYSIS OF SLANG IN INTERNET COMMUNICATION (BASED ON SOCIAL NETWORK TWITTER)

2.1. The productivity of Twitter slang formation

The lexical structure of English, like any other language, contains a large number of slang formations that correspond to certain age and professional groups of people. The linguistic modifications intend to simplify oral language and comprehension. Slang is a living and dynamic formation; it is used in various spheres of public life. Many words of slang are characterized by apt humor, grotesque exaltation of the absurd or funny side of objects or phenomena that they denote, for instance: ‘white man's disease’ or ‘like a cow on ice’ – a complete lack of sense of rhythm (“I hope Brent doesn't ask me to dance – he's got white man's disease”) [13, p. 398]

Metaphorical reinterpretation occupies a central place in slang formation. The leading role of metaphor in the formation of semantic slang is explained by the fact that it realizes the specific nominative properties of language: the predication of one object of the signs of another by comparing these objects or their signs. For example: *birdcage* – a student dormitory, a prisoner of war camp; *zombie* – a tired man, a rookie; *ambulance-chaser* – a lawyer who specializes in accidents; *dreamboat* – an attractive person or thing. Metaphors frequently possess humorous interpretations of the signified: *four-eyes* – a man with glasses; *sea gull* – 1. chicken, turkey; 2. a sailor's squad; *bird legs*, *bird man* – pilot; *bisquits* – mattress; *fox-tail* – mustache [10, p. 117].

Another way of slang formation is based on *metonymy*: *suit*, *vest* – a person who is engaged in business; *berries* – wine; *ghettoblaster* – portable stereo radio; *play* – activity; *reptiles* – shoes; *rat* – villain, rat (“Someone here's a rat that's been talkin 'to the cops”); *turkey* – stupid man; *squirrel* – crazy; *chick* – a young woman. Metonymy as a mechanism for the formation of semantic slang is less

common compared to metaphor. Metonymic models are clearly correlated with certain associations [24, p. 63].

The process of slang word formation is characterized by a relatively wide use of **doubling**, which is often combined with noise imitation. For example: *ack-ack* – armed forces; *choo-choo* – train; *buzz-buzz* – noise, tumult; *chop-chop* – immediately, at this moment (“*Do it now! Chop-chop!*”); *buddy-buddy* – very fast, friendly). Sometimes, even tripling may occur such as *blah-blah-blah* – chats, *boom-boom-boom* – one after another.

Other slang neologisms are based on **rhyiming consonance**: *mop-top* – a person with long and / or untidy hair; *space-case* – an eccentric, mad or spaced-out person; *hot-shot* – a person who has succeeded; *artsy-fartsy* – screaming; *gruesome-twosome* – inseparable couple; *ding-a-ling* – a stupid or strange man [17, p. 97].

A characteristic slang pattern of word formation that does not occur in other layers of vocabulary is a deliberate pun phonetic distortion that changes the internal form of the word: *gust* instead of *guest*, *picture-askew* instead of *picturesque*, *drinketite* and *bitetite* instead of *appetite*.

English slang is characterized by a fairly wide use of **conversion**. The conversion model $N \rightarrow V$ is basic: *to buddy* – to act as a buddy to; *to badmouth* – to humiliate, insult (“*Bert badmouths everyone behind their back*”).

A certain part of slang is formed by **reversion**. Here are examples of slang verbs that were ‘reversed’ from nouns: *booker* – *to book*; *ass-licking* – *to ass-lick*; *ass-kissing* – *to ass kiss*; *headhunting* – *to headhunt*; nouns from adjectives: *flacky* – *flake*, *tacky* – *tack*, *wacky* – *wack*. [21; p.148].

The most typical feature of English slang is the conversion of a number of full words into semi-suffixes. For example, the word *monkey* is used as a semi-suffix meaning ‘worker; mechanic’: *air monkey*, *broom monkey*, *company monkey*, *grease monkey*, *powder monkey*, *weed monkey*, *wheel monkey*; and ‘monkey’ means £ 500; *monkey nuts* – nonsense [1, p. 677].

The word ‘happy’ has become a semi-suffix with the meaning ‘enthusiast, amateur’, for instance: *bomb-happy*, *brass-happy*, *buck-happy*, *cab-happy*, *car-happy*, *coin-happy*, *dough-happy*, *footlight-happy*, *gin -happy*, *jive-happy*, *power-happy*, *rock-happy*.

The word ‘dog’ as a semi-suffix of the synonymous ‘man’ (usually ‘cunning or lucky’): *bird dog* – direction finder; a detective, whose job is to find something or someone; *barking dogs* – tired or sore feet; *line dog* – a soldier, a sergeant, in a combat unit; *red dog* – a defensive assault in which the linebacker goes directly for the quarterback; *road dog* – a good friend; best friend [22, p. 465]. This word is also included in the following slang words:

- a. an ugly, unpleasant or unattractive woman or girl;
- b. a company that performs badly on the stock exchange, a worthless piece of stock;
- c. dog (and bone) – telephone (an example of rhyming slang);
- d. dog’s breakfast – a mess, an extravagant display;
- e. dog collar – military priest;
- f. dog bisquit – (ration) rusk;
- g. dog face – a private soldier;
- h. dog flight – air combat, hand-to-hand combat;
- i. dog food – canned meat [10, p. 108].

Slang semi-affixes also include borrowing ones from other languages. For instance, a remarkable illustration is the German affix *-fest* (from the German noun *Fest* ‘holiday’). In English, *-fest* is not a stand-alone word. The semi-suffix *-fest* is used in nouns that mean an activity (usually too intense or excessive) that lasts for a certain period of time. For example: *bull-fest* – a casual conversation, conversation; *gab-fest* – a meeting to talk (also talk-fest); *chin-fest* – an empty chat [10, p. 119].

Unlike *-fest*, the semi-suffix *-bug* corresponds to a noun, which in slang means ‘amateur, a person obsessed with something.’ The same meaning can be

traced in words in which *-bug* is used as the second element: *shutter-bug*, *radio-bug*, *jitter-bug*.

As a semi-suffix denoting a person who has certain characteristics, *-pot* is used, for instance: *crack-pot* – crazy or eccentric person; *rum-pot* – drunk; *stink-pot* – an unpleasant person; *sex-pot* – an attractive girl.

The suffix *-er* is also productive for slang formation: *clocker* – a person who engages in clocking; *beezer* – a nose; *ankle-biter* – a child; *boozer* – a pub; *greener* – a novice or a foreigner; *hacker* – a person obsessed with computers; *punter* – someone who makes a bet with a bookmaker. Let us compare the following interesting formations: *goer-to-bedder*, *putter-to bedder*, *readerin-bedder*, etc. [22, p. 121]

The tendency to save language resources is universal and conditioned by the needs of human thinking and communication. Linguistic economy covers various phenomena and processes that lead to the brevity of ways of expressing the content of speech, resulting in the elimination of excessive information slang elements, increases the brevity of utterance, and therefore accelerates the pace of speech. The tendency to save language effort is manifested in the compression of the word with the help of a composite abbreviation: truncation (compaction) of words, initial abbreviations and contraction.

2.2. The major linguistic features of Twitter slang

At this stage of the study, we have classified the obtained examples of slang into 5 categories. This allows us to identify 5 sub-items: graphical features, phonetic fetures, morphological features, semantic features, ideographic features.

2.2.1. Graphical features

In the first place, we have to highlight the main *graphical features* of slang units. Graphical means include punctuation, different types of print (italics, bold type) and a specific arrangement of printed material. Such marks of punctuation as a series of dots, a dash, exclamation, question mark, etc. may be used not only to

show the logical arrangement of speech but also to convey the intonation of the utter speech, to express emphasis, and to show the meaning of the message, which is important to highlight the slang examples in speech.

Considering the marks of punctuation, we can point out that they are used for emphatic purposes which suggest a definite semantic interpretation of the utterance. For example:

- a. STOP!! BEING!! BARBIE!! – the usage of great number of exclamation marks to show irritation;
- b. Wicked!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! – a great number of exclamation marks emphasizes the message;
- c. ??? – 3 question marks pay someone’s attention to something that has been previously said or written;
- d. I thought... you know... maybe... we’d go out to the movies? – the usage of number of dots makes it more ‘real’, especially when discussing a sensitive topic.

It should be noted that there is a great instability in the use of uppercase and lowercase letters in slang. Capitalization is used in cases of personification making the text or the message sound solemn and elevated or ironical in case of parody. It stands for attention marker which makes people emphasize them. Moreover, the capitalization works with abbreviations to shorten the number of signs in a message. For instance:

- a. Help! Help! HELP!!! – attention marker;
- b. ATM (atm) – At The Moment;
- c. BW (bw) – best wishes;
- d. BTW (btw) – by the way or between.

Such variations in spelling do not affect their meanings. In addition, virtual communication requires a compact way of information transmission, which in most cases is realized through phonetic writing based on the identification of graphic designs with sounding. For example:

- a. 2 me – to me;
- b. b4 – before;
- c. 18 – late;
- d. 2 go – to go;
- e. R U? – Are you?
- f. n00b – noob, newb, newbie.

The intensity of speech is transmitted through the multiplication and hyphenation. The illustrations of doubling and even multiplication of the most expressive sounds in words are highly recurring, which show high emotional coloring of words. For example:

- a. pretttyyy – pretty;
- b. trueeee – true;
- c. Alllllll aboarrrrrd – All aboard;
- d. It's maaaaaaagic – It's magic;
- e. I wannaaaa ice-cream! – I want an ice-cream!
- f. Busy-ness – business;
- g. Game-changer – the person who changes the game;
- h. Ha-ha-ha – expression of laugh.

2.2.2. Phonetic features

The compactness, speed and lack of grammatical and spelling rules led to the wide dissemination of non-traditional spelling norms. Therefore, the main method of transferring information has become the phonetic writing. Taking into account the previously mentioned data, it is crucial to determine the major *phonetic features* of slang.

These features of slang are manifested in the following. Many words introduce new concepts, some provide and create expressions that are usually fresh, satirical and even shocking. Sound is sometimes used as the basis for this type of slang, as, for example, in various phonetic distortions. It is also used in

rhyming slang, which uses a combination of sound and image. Thus, ‘gloves’ are ‘turtledoves’ (a pair of gloves is similar to two wild pigeons). However, most slang expressions depend on the incompatibility of images conveyed by the connotations of a new term applied to an established concept.

Dieresis is considered to be a highly frequent peculiarity of Twitter language. It is performed due to the loss of a sound or syllable in a word as a result of assimilation or dissimilation. It can occur at the beginning, in the middle part or at the end of words. Furthermore, the apostrophe is even omitted in many cases. For instance: *'round – around; 'bout – about; 'em – them; 'cause – because; 'til – until; 'fraid – afraid.*

Another essential peculiarity is the violation of the written version of the literary language and its complete substitution with a different norm, creating a system of expressive slang clichés. We have observed a vast number of examples considering a change in traditional spelling. Instead of the grammatically correct version, the words are recorded according to their sounding. For example: *em – them; whar – where; tis – it is; y'ello – hello; zup – what's up; sup – what's up; yo – your; ya – you; ol – old; na – no; howdy – how do you do; hey-a – hey you; gotcha – got you; fella – fellow; den – then; brava – bravo; wiz – with; anyhow – anyhow, anyway, anyways.*

2.2.3. Morphological features

The birth of new words comes from the needs of modern society, hence the growing popularity of new trends in modern society does not allow it to stay fresh and impressive. What was noticeably witty yesterday is becoming boring and outdated today, because everyone knows and uses it. There are several ways to form slang words: the use of different parts of speech to create slang words and expressions, the emergence of a slang word through the reuse of words and their parts; compliance of slang formation with the rules of Standard English; combining several words into one; frequent use of abbreviations and acronyms, etc.

A great amount of **abbreviated words** and **acronyms** are formed by means of initial letters. There is definite rule for the pronunciation of initial abbreviations and acronyms, the first ones are spelled letter-by-letter, the last ones – as a whole word. Given the fact that they are most often used in written speech, the semantic meaning does not change: *OMG* - *Oh my God*; *LOL* – *laughing out loud*; *IMHO* – *In My Humble Opinion*; *GG* – *good game*; *GG* – *good going*; *GG* – *get going*; *GG* – *g guy*; *GO* – *good one*.

A number of Twitter users resort to **truncated words** as well. With this method of reduction, the initial part (*em* – *them*; *bout* – *about*); final part (*perf* – *perfect*; *doc* – *document, doctor*; *rehab* – *rehabilitation*; *brill* – *brilliant*; *bro* – *brother, sis* – *sister*; *champ* – *champion*; *cop* – *copper*; *dam* – *damn*; *gig* – *gigabyte*; *gonna* – *gonorrhoea*; *legit* – *legitimate*; *pec* – *pectoral*; *mani* – *manicure*; *pedi* – *pedicure*), initial + final (*grat* – *congratulation*) or the middle part of the word (*Ry* – *railway*) may disappear. Alongside, some individual elements of the word (mostly vowels) are omitted such as *txt* – *text*; *pls* – *please*; *thx* – *thanks*; *abt* – *about*; *add* – *address*; *bc* – *because*; *fwd* – *forward*; *hw* – *homework*.

Conversion involves the change of a word from one word class to another. For example:

- a. *They are always jetting somewhere.* – (the verb from the noun ‘jet’);
- b. *If you’re not careful, some downloads can damage your computer.* – (the noun from the verb ‘download’);
- c. *All companies have their ups and downs.* – (nouns from prepositions);
- d. *Has anybody seen my Dickens?* (a copy of the book by Dickens).

When using **compounding**, one joins together two or more bases to create a new word. Normally, the first item identifies a key feature of the second word. For example, the two bases *back* and *ache* can combine to form the compound noun *backache*, and the two bases *post* and *card* combine to form the compound noun *postcard*. We have found out lots of examples of slang units created by using such kind of formation: *bad-ass*; *buh-bye*; *clickbait*; *dimwit*; *game-changer*;

godspeed; hard-pass; kiss-up; knee-jerk; leg-cramp; nitwit; rip-off; she-beast; skunk-bag; smoochie-poo; sour-puss; stuck-up; squirrel-friend; sweetcakes; green-light; hate-watch; paydirt; truck-nuts; weirdo; what's-his-name.

We form words with the help of **back-formation** when we remove a part of a word, usually something which we think is a suffix (or occasionally a prefix). We do this commonly when we form verbs from nouns: *She's always enthusing about her new teacher.*

Loan words are words that are borrowed from other languages. When we use loan words, we do not normally change them. We also sometimes pronounce them more like English words, instead of using their original pronunciation: Italian 'bravo' turns into English 'brava'.

The **repetition** of words stands for separate form of word formation. For example, the slang unit 'matchy-matchy' is used to describe an outfit that is too coordinated and consists of too many of the same types of colours, patterns, etc. was created by doubling the ordinary word 'matchy'.

2.2.4. Semantic features

By the same token, semantic features happen to be another key point in terms of Twitter slang analysis. It should be stated that due to the wide use of abbreviations in the English language there are many homonymous slang units, which urges a translator to carefully select the desired meaning. For example: *Btw – by the way, Btw – between.* In such homonymous cases, it is highly recommended to look into the context of the speech act.

Other conspicuous semantic features of slang use are double negation, which amplifies the negative effect (*I don't want to go nowhere - I don't want to go anywhere*) and the use of doubling and inappropriate formation of comparative degrees of adjectives: *a more larger; a more exciting; the most biggest; the most fattest; stupider; wonderfuller.*

Semantically, slang uses the function of language diversification, i.e. giving existing stable and neutral terms new meanings. The adjective ‘dead’ acquires a new meaning, which in the slang version is used not in relation to a living being, but to the low battery of the phone: *“Oh, man, my phone's dead.”*

The commonly used verb ‘to dive’ acquires a new slang meaning as a noun to denote a cafe or restaurant: *“Let's try this place. It looks cute. I've never been inside before. I thought it was a horrible dive.”* Identically, the word ‘dog’, known in the meaning of a pet, acquires a new meaning, which is used in addressing a negative connotation to an outwardly unattractive person. Like the previous examples, the following words acquire new meanings: *to kill* from the meaning ‘to make a person dead’, in slang means ‘to humor greatly’; *to plant* meaning ‘to put in the ground to grow’, in slang – ‘to hide’.

Slang forms diverse lexical and semantic fields, as for instance, the lexical-semantic field to denote a person. This field includes the following lexical and semantic groups – names of a person by age, social status, external data, professional affiliation or belonging to a particular social group, and so on. Human associations are the basis for the development of this area. An idea that appears in the mind of one participant in communication evokes another similar, related or opposite idea. For example:

- a. the slang units for drug traffickers are *bam, blizzard, cop, doob, high, juju, pot, swag, sprack, stoner, turf, zup* (‘high’ – intoxicated from drugs: *“Something's wrong. You said this was about wellness, but I feel high.”*);
- b. medical slang units: *cutsies, hemp, hep-c, medicine, scurvy* (‘cutsies’ - someones who has taken something when they cut in line: *“So the customers will be entering from here, here and here. Our biggest concern is the cutsies.”*);
- c. Italian mafia slang units: *brava, goomar, goombah, mob* (‘mob’ - US mafia: *“You borrowed money from the mob ?! No, no, no, no, no, no.”*

It's all good. I took a one-week loan from Fat Tony for a hundred grand.”).

2.2.5. Ideographic features

Pictograms – are the pictures, which display the content of a word or text. They fall into the given subtypes:

- a. emoticons / emogramms / smileys – signs that are associated either with the content or with the emotional side of a statement;
- b. text emoticons – signs that represent a combination of keyboard characters: *:-D – the person is laughing; :-)* – a happy person; *:-(– an upset one;*
- c. graphics – pictures, drawn by professional designers.

In terms of the research, we have carried out the analysis of the linguistic material, which showed that the most widespread group of slang on Twitter is ideographic signs.

CONCLUSIONS TO THE CHAPTER II

In terms of our research, we have driven to the conclusion that in modern slang, words acquire new nuances of meaning, which are expressed in the transfer of names, while literary language is characterized by a certain restraint and a sense of moderation. Originality and novelty are mandatory attributes of modern slang; as a result, expressiveness is the main feature of a lexical unit.

We have grouped 5 main categories of linguistic features of slang used by users of the social network Twitter; these are linguistic, graphical and phonetic features of slang.

The morphological aspect encompasses diverse ways of forming new slang units. Among them, we have identified the following: changing part of the language to create new slang; the emergence of the slang word due to the reuse of words and their parts; combining several words into one; frequent use of abbreviations (abbreviations and acronyms).

In fact, the semantic properties are expressed in the ability to have a direct standard meaning and its counterpart in slang. Lexical-semantic feature is expressed in the possibility of forming various lexical-semantic fields.

Ideographic features are expressed through graphic symbols and drawings. They are created both with the help of punctuation marks and with the help of graphic designs by artists.

CONCLUSIONS

One of the varieties of the conversational style is Internet communication or virtual communication. The Internet today is a whole world through which one can exchange information with all the inhabitants of our small planet. There are many ways to receive, transmit and exchange information.

Today Internet slang has become an independent lexical group of jargon. Users of the global network make it easier to spell words for faster typing and pronunciation, and some even compile dictionaries of English abbreviations. It is noteworthy that slang is often used in real life, and not only on the Internet.

Social networks are characterized by a high degree of dynamism and openness to innovation. They are a way of organizing interpersonal contacts and are minimally dependent on time and space. Each participant of the social network is a creator of his own discourse and co-author of the general Internet environment.

In social networks, communication is mostly done with the help of written texts, which creates a special way of communication, which in appearance resembles an oral variety of conversational style. In the first chapter we have reflected on the use of signs and symbols that are not typical of traditional written language, the creation of the effect of sound language, the use of certain verbal formulas, etc. which bring the written form of communication closer to its oral version.

The second chapter analyzes the most popular social network among the English-speaking countries – Twitter. During the analysis the lexical, graphic, phonetic, morphological and semantic features of Twitter slang were revealed.

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