

LEXICAL ATTRIBUTES OF SLANG

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Abstract:

This scholarly investigation delves into the lexical properties inherent in slang, an omnipresent linguistic phenomenon distinguished by its informal and nontraditional lexicon usage. By scrutinizing diverse linguistic elements, this research endeavors to elucidate the distinctive lexical traits of slang and their ramifications on language dynamics and socio-cultural environments.

Keywords: slang, stylistic essence, original text, conventional language, linguistic categories, criminal vernacular, stylistic enhancement.

Introduction

Slang, characterized as a unique variant of language diversity occupies a notable position within the expansive realm of linguistic investigation. Its lexical characteristics, including the emergence of innovative vocabulary, semantic alterations, and contextual intricacies, play a pivotal role in its extensive utilization across informal conversational contexts. This paper delves deeply into the complexities of slang's lexical elements, aiming to elucidate its impact on shaping linguistic environments and mirroring cultural identities.

The primary aim of such alterations is to achieve the most lexically precise and appropriate translation of a text in the absence of direct linguistic equivalents. However, an accurate translation cannot be achieved without considering the stylistic aspects of the original text, as translation also entails the creation of a stylistic counterpart to the original. The stylistic essence of a text or utterance comprises the stylistic connotations embedded within its units, necessitating transcoding during translation, which occurs through the modification of both the content and expression levels of linguistic units from the source text to the translated text. In the process of lexical substitutions, individual lexical units (words and fixed expressions) from the source language are replaced by lexical units chosen by the translator, which are not their exact dictionary equivalents; hence, they possess different referential meanings when considered in isolation compared to the units from the source language conveyed in translation. Three primary scenarios are commonly encountered in this context: concretization, generalization, and substitution based on causal relationships. Concretization involves replacing a word or phrase from the source language with a more specific referential meaning with a word or phrase from the target language with a narrower scope. This specification can occur either linguistically or contextually. In instances of linguistic concretization, the substitution of a broadly defined word with a narrower one is due to disparities in the linguistic structures of the two languages—either the absence in the target language of a lexical unit possessing the same broad meaning as the conveyed unit from the source language, discrepancies in their stylistic attributes, or the necessity for syntactic adjustments (such as replacing a nominal predicate with a verb). For example, the English noun "thing", which holds a



highly abstract meaning, is frequently translated through concretization into terms such as "object", "case", "fact", "circumstance", "work", or "entity".

Literature Review

Many scholars have scrutinized the lexical aspects of slang, underscoring its dynamic character and manifold linguistic characteristics. Investigations have delved into the semantic progression of slang expressions, the effects of socio-cultural influences on lexical developments, and the intricate relationship between slang and conventional language usage. Furthermore, scholarly inquiry has addressed the implications of technology and media in disseminating slang vocabulary.

In a broader sense, general slang is characterized as a relatively stable layer of vocabulary and phraseology prevalent in informal spoken discourse, often exhibiting phonetic, morphological, and syntactic variations. It encompasses a diverse array of linguistic elements and varies in its proximity to standard language norms, displaying pronounced emotional and evaluative qualities. Frequently serving as a form of social critique and defiance against conventional norms and authorities, general slang manifests itself through expressions of protest and mockery. Therefore, it becomes imperative to distinguish between general slang and other linguistic categories such as slang words, professional jargon, colloquialisms, and figurative language. While some perceive slang negatively as vulgar or criminal vernacular, with an impending demise, others regard it positively as emblematic of vitality, innovation, and linguistic progress.

E.Partridge, a prominent researcher in contemporary English linguistics, posits that slang entails the deliberate and strategic incorporation of elements from the general lexicon into colloquial discourse for stylistic enhancement[1]. This intentional utilization serves various purposes, such as lending concreteness, vividness, brevity, and expressiveness to speech, creating a sense of novelty and distinctiveness, conveying the speaker's mood, and circumventing clichés. Such practices characterize a distinctive feature of slang vocabulary. Additionally, slang frequently employs linguistic devices like onomatopoeia, word composition, word truncation, and borrowing from specialized jargon. Neologisms and occasionalisms further contribute to the lexicon of slang, with some eventually transitioning into standard language usage over time. Notably, slang encompasses both the specialized vocabulary and phraseology of professional dialects, social jargon, and criminal argot, as well as the emotionally charged and widely understood vocabulary of non-literary discourse. It is characterized by its stability within specific temporal contexts, alongside its heterogeneous genetic composition and varying degrees of alignment with literary language norms [2]. Moreover, it often embodies a spirit of protest and mockery directed against societal, aesthetic, and linguistic conventions and authorities.

Furthermore, slang is frequently conceptualized from a psychological standpoint as a manifestation of individual creativity among members of specific social and professional cohorts, serving as a manifestation of their distinctive "spirit" or "level of consciousness" within their respective social milieu. The examination of social dialects, particularly slang, is closely intertwined with the notion of linguistic norms, against which its defining characteristics are most saliently contrasted. A linguistic norm encompasses a historically determined repertoire of linguistic resources commonly utilized within a given society during a specific historical epoch, alongside the rules governing their selection and application [3]. Key features of the linguistic



norm include its relative stability, differentiation of linguistic elements, propensity for popularity, and its transcending of dialectal and social boundaries. Nevertheless, it is crucial to recognize that the linguistic norm is not a rigid set of regulations dictating word usage, where deviation invariably results in linguistic "errors." Rather, it undergoes historical variability and is represented as a network of diverse private norms, encompassing oral and written forms, literary, social, and individual norms, among others.

Research Methodology

The research adopts a mixed-method methodology, integrating qualitative examination of slang lexicons with sociolinguistic surveys and interviews. By conducting a corpus analysis of contemporary slang terms and their contextual usage, the study aims to uncover insights into lexical patterns and semantic changes. Additionally, surveys and interviews involving individuals from diverse demographic backgrounds provide viewpoints on the social functions and interpretations of slang vocabulary. This methodological framework facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of slang, encompassing both its linguistic intricacies and its sociocultural implications within contemporary communication contexts.

During the translation of slang, there is often a phenomenon of lexical substitution based on causal relationships between concepts. This involves replacing a word or phrase from the source language with one from the target language that logically signifies the cause of the action or condition indicated by the translated unit. For instance, "I don't blame them" might be translated as "I understand them", where the substitution is justified by the causal relationship between understanding and not blaming. Moreover, euphemistic and dysphemistic translation strategies are commonly employed to render slang expressions. Euphemistic translation involves substituting strong or coarse words from the original text with milder expressions in the translation, while dysphemistic translation entails replacing a word with a less vivid expression in a coarser manner. Furthermore, two prevalent phenomena emerge in slang translation: style softening, where slang terms are replaced by neutral words or expressions, and selective translation, where many slang units are omitted or generalized. In the context of selective translation, omission refers to the extraction of lexically and semantically redundant words from the text, including grammatically redundant elements like articles or possessive pronouns, as well as lexemes. Generalization is the replacement of a unit of the source language with a narrower meaning by a unit of the translating language with a broader meaning.

Analysis and Results

The examination identifies various essential lexical characteristics associated with slang, such as lexical inventiveness, semantic vagueness, and contextual precision. Slang vocabularies demonstrate a tendency toward lexical novelty, frequently integrating loanwords from different languages, linguistic playfulness, and figurative language. Additionally, slang terms often undergo semantic transformations, acquiring fresh interpretations and connotations within particular social circles. Furthermore, the findings underscore the significance of slang in shaping personal identity and fostering social cohesion, as well as its role as an indicator of cultural association and generational belonging.



Drawing from the preceding discussion, it is evident that slang remains a multifaceted and relatively underexplored domain within the framework of translation theory. This circumstance can be attributed, in part, to the complexity and adaptability inherent in the concept of "slang", as well as to the absence of an established tradition of translating this lexicon in Russian translation practices. Consequently, the significance of the translator as an intermediary between a foreign author and a Russian audience cannot be overstated.

Conclusion

In summary, the lexical features inherent in slang augment its dynamic and versatile character, influencing linguistic utilization and mirroring sociocultural dynamics. Through an exploration of slang's lexical dimensions, this investigation furnishes valuable perspectives on its function in contemporary discourse and its importance within overarching linguistic frameworks. Proficiency in discerning the lexical attributes of slang enriches our understanding of linguistic diversity and the intricate interconnections among language, culture, and society.

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