

THE OUTLINE OF CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH AND UKRAINIAN COMPUTER SLANG LEXICON

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Abstract

This article addresses computer English and Ukrainian computer slang as a lexical subsystem evoked to provide the Internet community with effective communication means. Slang lexicon fulfills a number of functions depending on the contextual features, level of professionalism of language users and their interest. Although it is argued by some scholars that slang words rarely undergo semantic changes, it has been revealed that in the process of adaptation in the target language lexical and grammatical transformations typically occur in computer slang. In particular, English computer slang words are adapted to the Ukrainian reality through the process of clipping, blending, adding inflections, conceptual metaphor and other figurative transfers of meaning. Interestingly, it is common for new forms to acquire connotations which are not found in the original language. Ridiculous associations help users to quickly connect the form and denotative meaning of a slang lexeme in question. The sources of computer slang formation include calque, telescoping, phonetic mimicry and translation. The knowledge of language community can significantly simplify the identification of hidden senses and related connotations in other similar words. Stratification of slang is a difficult task as well as its software implementation in online dictionary developments. The limitations of this research are related to complexity of establishing concise etymology and trace all relevant contextual features of slang units in the process of quickly evolving computer mediated communication.

Key words: computer slang, chatspeak, Ukrainian slang, online computer slang dictionary, terminological slang.

Introduction

Computer slang is replenishing the vocabularies of many natural languages with hundreds of new words and phrases annually. These lexical units emerge in unique technological contexts and become more frequently used by the speakers in the process

of adaptation into different parts of speech of a target language. As soon as these words undergo lexical and grammatical transformations, their productivity increases. Computer slang words and phrases usually refer to physical activities in the information technologies, are used as easily recognisable terms not only for programmers but for all language users also due to active social networking communication, activation of language creativity and functional exchange.

Linguists and anthropologists are preoccupied with the ways of distribution of slang words which are really challenging to measure with precision. The relation between semantic change and frequency of slang words have been studied by Keidar et al. The researchers have proved that slang words are less likely to undergo semantic changes despite high language use. However, in recipient languages these words can acquire new lexical and grammatical forms and some additional semantic components. The material base of slang units is stored online. Social media networks like Twitter allow accumulating a searchable database for slang units and to study the specific context in which these units appear. This process may require the overview of social, political and economic and technological circumstances. Linguists attempt to identify the origin of slang units, track and quantify the usage the speech patterns functioning in online language communities. Profound investigation of slang semantics and identification of causal relationships enable to gain insight into the underlying language mechanisms and semantic change.

A large proportion of slang datasets are stored in special urban dictionaries with fairly simple interfaces. However, Keidar et al admit that they are crowd-sourced and require improvement in entry representation (Keidar et al, 2022: 1434). Besides, they may obviously lack more specialized tagging for computer slang categorization or have credibility issues when there are several possible definitions. The positive feature of these dictionaries is in providing the interested users with recently popularised slang terms lists and engage sharing concise explanations from personal experience. There are also resources like www.internetslang.com updated on a daily basis and showing trending slang words also known as initialisms. As a rule, full slang lexemes, abbreviations and acronyms are retrieved from social media sites where they are most likely to emerge. The knowledge of the acronymic principle provides the clues to the meaning of newly coined slang units. Green's Dictionary of Slang is a rich collection of slang entries with detailed definitions. The developers of slang dictionary platforms often denote that some words are well-known to contemporary language users while other words can even be offensive.

The research question of this article is to determine the major methods of formation of computer slang words and expressions, describe their semantic and structural peculiarities. The topicality of the issue is predetermined by popularity of slang units in multiple language communities and increased interest of researchers in the semantic mechanisms and derivation peculiarities of slang formations. Ukrainian Internet users have become even more actively using computer slang due to the participation in informational chatbot campaigns against russian social media channels and sites within the last year of occupation.

The fundamental meaning of slang is to save the efforts of language users and to make communication more effective. In this connection, Zabolotnova concluded that Internet communication with "chatspeak" has touched upon every level of society and the peculiarities of using abbreviations and acronyms is interesting to study from the viewpoint of comparison of their English and Ukrainian counterparts (Zabolotnova, 2017: 27). In its turn, our article has practical significance as it implies providing the definition

of certain algorithms forming vocabulary of limited use, namely computer slang necessary for the development of software tools. Introducing the translation of main words and expressions will not only enrich the lexicon of regular users of such vocabulary, but will also provide a broader understanding of computer slang to individuals new to the field. The aim of this study is to consolidate the main ways and methods of word formation of computer slang units and single out the most interesting computer slang words and expressions with the explanations of their semantic peculiarities. Despite that researchers offer a great variety of these ways, they all are confined to adapting the English word to the domestic reality and making it suitable for constant use. Slang enables to compress huge amount of information with preservation of the denotative meaning. The emergence of connotative meanings testifies to the popularity of the slang unit, its productive potential. It is impossible to predict which word can become an overnight sensation.

The research of contemporary computer slang is a part of a wider informational technology paradigm. In particular, chatbots as the computer programs simulating conversations with human users can rely heavily on slang lexicon including abbreviations (Adamopoulou & Moussiades, 2022). The use of meta-language in this type of software solutions is commonplace and slang can make the process more engaging and effective for users as well as eliminate misunderstanding in communication. The improvement of communicative functions of chat-bots presupposes human intervention for better integration. Therefore, the knowledge of working professional language should include substantial terminology and slang subsets.

The history of the Internet and computer slang analysis

As a linguistic spotlight, slang became a contentious issue as soon with the development of systems of Internet communication, appearance of applications and important situational tasks. The origins of internet slang as such have to be found in its communicatory predecessors. The coding systems based on digits, alphabetic and other types of symbols has been in use in the army and communications agencies since the beginning of the 20th century. Mass media have also contributed to the active popularisation of slang and addition of new contextual meanings to received expressions. The shrugs and smiles have been used from 1980 to render emotions. The word “LOL” in its current meaning of laughing out loud was added to Oxford dictionary in 2011 while in the 1960s it literally meant “little old lady” (Brown, 2011). With every new generation of the Internet users, other ways of online talking were devised in interest based communities and forums. The categorisation of slang units despite their quick semantic development is a process based on regular assumptions. It enables to match similar types of expressions according to the observed shared features. Of all types, acronyms are considered to be the oldest and the most representative slang form. They usually express actions indicative of emotions. There are also new words inspired by technological advancements such as *tweet*, *selfie*, *meme*. Clippings or combinations of existing forms of words are as popular as short phrases. It is predictable that further development of slang will be considerably shaped by advancements in technology and communication methods. There are contradictory attitudes towards the role of slang in contemporary English: it is either dulling down the language or making it more vibrant. The users choose slang to compensate the lack of a word in the recipient language.

The methods

Slang as an object of linguistic research is traditionally based on a list of sociological, descriptive, qualitative and interpretative textual and contextual analysis. The theory of speech acts is also helpful to reconstruct implicit meanings of slang in textual fragments from online communication. The structural methods of analysis presuppose determining word-building models, productive stems and learning the allomorph characteristics of slang words. Content analysis is applied to collect the textual fragments containing slang units pertaining to certain area of interest. The semantic analysis is based on matching the definitions and identification of divergence of meaning. It is necessary to stress in the process of linguistic assimilation, slang lexemes undergo adjustment to the word-building patterns of the recipient language and can acquire significative shades of meaning not found in the donor language. Sentiment analysis presupposes understanding emotional loading of slang expressions in actual contexts (Adamopoulou & Moussiades, 2020). Compiling dictionary entries should be carried out with awareness of possible shifts in meanings, ambiguity and error handling, explanation of cases with polysemy and homonymy which can influence the acquisition of slang expressions and their use.

The sources of slang formation should be treated with structural considerations. Thus, in this research, the main and most expedient sources of slang formation are the following:

- 1) calque (complete borrowing),
- 2) partial calque (stem borrowing, telescoping),
- 3) phonetic mimicry,
- 4) translation: a) by use of standard vocabulary with special sense; b) using the slang of other professional groups.

These types are used to divide the bulk of slang units selected from the Internet texts. The Sage Encyclopedia of the Internet comprises slang units of different types (Warf, 2018). It addresses topics related to cyberspace, social media and the Internet as the global network. Acronyms are the trendiest slang type. They are most often discussed in informal online spaces for web-based technologies, online chatting, mobile and instant messaging. Internet culture is developing with its unique slang culture.

Two major reasons of using the Internet slang can be distinguished. The first reason is connected to the alleviation of emotional expression through acronymic or shortened phrases. A whole spectrum of emotions can be rendered. Individuals can stand out by showing the sarcastic state and drawing attention to achievements and interests. The second major reason why slang lexicon is so popular is in providing velocity for communication, replacing verbal expressions with snappy forms which are quite easy to decode. Thus, getting complicated messages across becomes a more attainable task. The online slang dictionary compilers denote that many words tend to be wrong spelled alternatives of forms rendered according to their pronunciation. This tendency explicates illiteracy of young generation who can omit certain letters, ignore punctuation, capitalisation, proofreading while texting and other aspects.

Thus, the mechanisms of slang formation have pronounced structural peculiarities. With reference to English computer slang, calque can be defined as a method of formation containing borrowings that are not grammatically accepted in the Ukrainian language. At the same time, the word is borrowed entirely with its pronunciation, spelling and meaning. Such borrowings are subject to assimilation and it

is also possible to argue that slang adds to the contamination of the target language. Each sound in the borrowed word is replaced by the corresponding sound in the Ukrainian language (according to phonetic laws). These words sound foreign in pronunciation, but in writing they correspond to all the norms of the English language: *device* → /devais/, *hard drive* → /hard/. In addition, the general tendency among young people to include Anglicisms in their everyday language is also important. Fascination with Anglicisms has become a kind of fashion, it is determined by stereotypes and ideals created in youth society. It is the group with a Ukrainian word, or simply a wrong reading of an English word. Sometimes a mistake is so catchy that it becomes commonplace: *message* → /messah/, /mesedzh/. It is very common to simply transfer a word into Ukrainian with the wrong accent: *label* → /lab?l/. Therefore, certain slang borrowings are variable in writing, several different borrowings of the word can be found: *keyboard*: /keibord/, /kebord/, /kibord/. Since not all slang words can be translated concisely in a word, calque can serve as a facilitating means of language realisation.

It is interesting to trace the routes of certain slang words as they get transformed under the influence of the Ukrainian language flexional by nature. Notably, stylistically neutral words in the English language which have become the programmers' slang acquire an ironic-disparaging or simply colloquial shade. When a term is transferred from English to Ukrainian, the latter subordinates the new word not only to its phonetic norms, as in the previous group, but also adapts spelling and grammar norms (partial calque). In course of grammatical acquisition, the English term comes under the control of the Ukrainian grammar, fulfilling its rules. Nouns, for example, acquire case endings: *application* → /applikuha/ (application programme) → aplikukhy (Genitive case), /aplikukhu/ (Accusative case). Due to the rhyming endings, these new slang words become funny and catchy for speakers. Words belonging to this group were formed in the following way: word-forming models of the Russian language or Ukrainian language are added to the original English stem with the use of certain methods. These include, first of all, the diminutive suffixes of nouns *-ik*, *-k(a)*, *-ok* and other forms: *disk drive* → /dysketnyk/, *User's Manual* → /manualka/, *ROM* → /romka/, *CD-ROM* → /sidiromka/; the suffix *-yuk*, characteristic of a simple language, is also found: *CD* [compact disk] → /sidiyuk/. These suffixes are also found in diminutive words which sound the same (like *dysketnyk* and *beshketnyk* (a naughty small boy)). Due to the fact that the original language is analytical, and the translation language is synthetic, adding inflections to verbs is a very common phenomenon: *to connect* → /konektytsia/ (to connect using computers), *to program* → /programy/ (to do programming). The shortening of long professionalisms, through the use of univerbalisation (reduction of a phrase to one word) also leads to slang: *strategic game* → /strategiia/. Shortening is an explication of the principle of language economy.

The third method of word-building, phonetic mimicry, is the most interesting from lexicological standpoint. It is based on the phonetic coincidence of semantically dissimilar common words and English computer terms: *error* → Yegor; *jumper* → /dzhemper/; *button* → /baton/; *shareware* → /sharowary/. A word that becomes slang acquires a completely new meaning, without being connected to the one commonly used. For example, *laser printer* → /lazar/ – a word meaning the male name Lazar in common language has acquired a completely new meaning in computer slang. Both cases based on the phonetic coincidence of complete words and cases based on the coincidence of part of the words are possible. In this case, the slang word is supplemented with the remaining part of the word by calque method borrowed from the English original: *break point* → /briakpoint/; *ARJ archived* → /arzhevanyi/;

Windows → /windowoz/. There are words in which one part is a phonetic imitation and the other a translation. This group of words contains numerous names of various programs. These names that are most often vague in use and perception for Ukrainian computer users: Corel Draw → /korol drov/; Aldus PageMaker → /aldus pidzhamker/; AutoCAD → /autogad/. Ridiculous associations make slang expressions recognizable and exciting to use in the spoken and written language situations. A shift in denotative meanings is the basic mechanism of language change for this type of slang units. Onomatopoeic spellings are very popular means of slang creation and they are always language specific. Another widespread method of shortening words is clipping which does not influence the denotative meaning. Leetspeak, or 1337 which originated from computer hacking, is replacement of Latinate letters with similar looking numbers.

Computer slang does not always include words borrowed from the English language. Very often, slang vocabulary is formed by translating an English professional term, adding elements or reducing the original form. There are two possible ways of translation at this higher level of conceptualisation. The first method includes the translation of the word using neutral words existing in the Ukrainian language, which simultaneously acquire a new meaning with decreased stylistic colouring: *Windows* → /kvatyrky/; *virus* → /zhyvnyst/; *user's manual* → /bukvar/. In the process of translation, the mechanism of associative thinking is activated. The resulting associations (or metaphors) can be diverse: according to the shape of the object or device: (*disk* → /mlynets/; adapter card → /plytka/), according to the principle of operation: (*matrix printer* → /vzhykalka/; patch file → /zapatka/). Verbal metaphors are also numerous: to delete → /znosyty/; to read from disk → /pyliaty dysk/; to seek smth on disk → /sharudity/. It should be noted that this group includes only those words that previously did not have any slang meanings. Therefore, the figurative potential of slang words is revealed in the process of adaptation of their translated versions in a new language by means of association and analogy.

The second group is comprised by terms that acquired their slang translation by using the vocabulary of other professional groups in which it is quite common to find colloquial and argotic elements. As a result, the meaning of the word changes slightly, acquiring a meaning specific to computer slang. The most common words and expressions from youth slang are: *incorrect programm* → /hliukalo/; *streamer* → /mofon/. The neutral gender in the first case with -o ending marker makes the slang word sound more foolish than in the original. There are also numerous transitions of words from driving, penal and other slang types: *microassembler programmer* → /makrushnyk/; *to connect two computers* → /shlanhuvaty/. It is interesting that this formation of slang words creates some vagueness in meaning, which is not characteristic of professional English terms. In most cases, only the nature of the action or phenomenon is indicated and its without determining its specificity: *LED* → LED → /likhtar/. When a person first hears the slang term “lamp”, it is unlikely that its meaning will be understood, because this word only indicates that the subject of conversation emits light. The word probably came into slang due to its tendency to exaggerate, creating inconsistency. However, the word LED is more specialised in comparison with /likhtar/ which can be a simple *torch*. Stylistic approaches in word-building of these slang units testify to the developed creativity of programmers and their unique sense of humour.

From quantitative perspective, the contemporary computer slang vocabulary includes a sheer number of words. This cohort is actively replenished and certain social and political events entice speakers to use slang realia more often. Therefore, computer

slang often contains words with identical or close meanings, that is synonyms. The following synonymous series can be distinguished: *Computer* – *comp* – *compukhter* – *tsamputer* – *tachka* – *aparata* – *mashyna*; to hack – *khaknuty* – *khriaknuty* – *lomanuty* – *prolomty*; *hard drive* – *vynt* – *khard* – *berdan*. In addition to the verbal way of expressing thoughts and marking certain phenomena in the computer world, there is a system of non-verbal computer vocabulary that is used both in Internet chats and in mobile phone SMS text messages. Since typing takes some time, a special sign system was invented to be used in text messages, that is, in ordinary language. These signs enable depicting the expression of one's personality or mood. When mentally turned at 90 degrees these signs form a face when. Such "faces" are called smailyky "smileys", from the English *smile* – *laugh*, *smile*. Such "terms" do not require translation and are understood in any language: :) for *I am glad*; :(for *I am dissatisfied*; :-(for *sad*; :-| for *I do not care*; =(= for *kiss*; 9_9 for *I am surprised*; :-< for *very sad*; :-> for *sarcasm*, *mockery*. Computer slang in most cases is English borrowing of phonetic association, cases of translation are less frequent, and all due to the crazy imagination of computer scientists. The inclusion of foreign words in the language should always be treated carefully and even more so because this process is hard to keep track of.

The existence of computer slang allows specialists not only to feel themselves as true members of some closed community, but also allows them to understand each other from half a word; serves as an elementary means of communication. In the absence of slang, they would either have to speak in English or use cumbersome professionalisms in their language. The development of this language phenomenon and its rapid spread among a large number of native speakers is due to the introduction of computer technology into the life of modern society. Thus, computer slang tends to be used not only by professionals in this field, but also by people who have absolutely nothing to do with it. In this matter, language is undoubtedly under the direct influence of extralinguistic factors.

Terminological dictionary of computer slang units

Terminological dictionaries of computer slang are represented by online resources and it is convenient due to the quickly evolving character of slang functioning. It is the best form of slang storage. During this research, a thematic dictionary of the most common units of computer slang with corresponding interpretations of the terms was developed. The main prerequisite for compiling this dictionary is its practical value and facilitated implementation in educational sphere. The compilation should conform to the didactic requirements. The insufficient amount of scientific and reference literature touching on the topic of computer slang causes the ignorance of many users in this area. Society neither knows or nor understands the meaning of certain terms and often mistakenly applies these concepts in everyday speech. Therefore, the value of thematic computer slang dictionary is not only in facilitating understanding all variety of computer slang units, but in enrichment of the lexicon of already experienced Internet users and providing equitable evidence that these units are really in active use. The categorisation principles were employed to make the resource user friendly and functionally appropriate. The presented terms and concepts are divided into 5 thematic groups depending on the purpose or field of use.

1. Words denoting the names of equipment, parts, and the main components of a computer: *vezha* – system block from the English “Tower”; *verstak* – computer; *vidiaha*, *vidiuha* – graphic adapter, video card, graphics card; *vint*, *vinchester* – hard disk drive; *drova* – drivers; *zalizo* – PC hardware (its configuration); *klava* – keyboard; *komp* – computer, PC; *mama*, *mamka*, *materynka* – motherboard; *monik* – monitor; *operatyvka* – computer RAM; *prot*s – processor; *hard* (from English “hard disk drive”) – hard disk, information device; *yashchyk* – system unit or computer in general.

2. Terms denoting the names of software products, programmes and software failures: *Aibolyt* – an antivirus program; *Asya*, *Aska* – ICQ; *banerorizalka* – a programme blocking the display of advertisements at web pages; *warez* (from the English “wares”) – a commercial programme distributed for free without author’s permission; *vikna*, *vinda* – the collective of Windows operating systems; *vohnelys* – Mozilla Firefox web browser; *gliuk* – error, failure; *horshchyk* – “basket”, garbage can (on computer desktop); *zhaba* – Java programming language; *inet* – Internet; *lah*, *lag* (from the English “lag”) – a delay in the operation of a computer application or video game; *lyzhi* – products of the LG company; *linoleum* – Windows Millennium operating system; *os’* – the operating system; *PZ* – software; *prohrama* – programme; *synii zub* – Bluetooth technology; *trabl* (from English “trouble”) – error, problem, bug; *chervyak* – computer virus; *chit* (from the English “cheat”) – software providing advantages in a computer game.

3. Names of operations and individual actions: *ban*, *zabanyty* – to expel from the server and prohibit entry for indefinite time or forever; *vysity* – continuation of the action, see to hang; *hamaty* – to play computer games; *huhlyty* (from the English “to google”) – to search for the necessary information in the Google search system; *zavysaty* – action of software or hardware that leads to inactivity of users; *znosyty* – to remove the software; *kicknuty* (from the English “to kick”) – to kick out of the server; *kliknuty*, *klatsnuty* (from the English “to click”) – press the mouse button; *konektytysia* (from the English “to connect”) – to connect; *lohinytysia* (from the English “to login”) – to enter the system by providing the user’s password and nickname; *perekachaty*, *zlyty* – to rewrite information from a certain source; *rebutnuty*, *rebut* (from the English “to reboot”) – reboot, restart the system; *fixyty* (from the English “to fix”) – to correct errors; *shpiliaty* (from the English “spielen”) – to play a computer game; *yuzaty* (from the English “to use”) – to use, implement.

4. Names of persons using computer technologies: *anonim* – anonymous user; *geimer* – a player, virtual games savvy; *lamer* – an inexperienced user; *noob* (from the English “noob”) – a user not understanding something and being able to learn it; *perekachaty*, *zlyty* – to rewrite information from a certain source; *chainyk* – initial user (of a programme); *yuzer* (from English “user”) – a user.

5. Other terms used on the Internet, social networks and Internet forums: *ava*, *avatar* – the user’s main photo on social networks and various sites; *admin* – system administrator; *ak* (from English “account”) – account; *lichka* – a personal appeal; *mylo* – 1) e-mail; 2) an e-mail letter;

nick (from the English “nickname”) – nickname, nickname in conferences or chat; *post* (from the English “post”) – a message on a forum or blog; *sobaka*, *sobachka* – @ symbol; *trolinh* (from English “trolling”) – placing provocative messages on the Internet; *fleim* (from English “flame”) – exchange of messages in Internet forums and chats, is a verbal war that has nothing to do with the original topic; *flad* (from English “flood”) – multiple repetition of identical or almost identical messages. The system of tags is an important supportive function to be implemented for more efficient navigation

throughout the dictionary. The variation of certain slang units was observed implying that speakers can use the informal computer language in the most convenient way.

Computer slang abbreviations and acronyms

Abbreviated words constitute a considerable part of slang formations. An abbreviation is a compound word, a derived word coined as a result of an abbreviation by the formation from the first letters or from other parts of words that are part of a name or concept. Abbreviations are widely used in oral and written communication. Such concepts have acquired a high level of development precisely in the field of computer slang, and their variety is rapidly increasing. These formations can render reactions more vibrantly, marking words, phrases or sentences. Abbreviations from certain words or expressions are an extremely convenient way of conveying information and are not time consuming. People frequently use abbreviations during a computer game, when the rapid development of events does not allow distraction and thoughts need to be instantly conveyed. Today, the use of abbreviations prevails not only among gamers, but also among the whole society. Personal messages on social networks, posts on Internet forums and blogs are rarely complete without such units of computer slang.

Explaining the difference between abbreviations and acronyms is necessary. Acronym is formed by means of writing the first letters of each word in a word combination or a sentence in the exact order while abbreviation refers to the first letters of a word in a shortened form. Sometimes abbreviation is viewed as a general term which includes acronyms and initialisms (Brever, 2022). Initialisms are used to make up a word from the first letters of phrase words, usually a term, which does not necessarily sound as a new word. However, not all initialisms are acronyms. Our analysed cohort of further represented slang units includes acronyms.

Therefore, the variety of acronyms was analysed and the main ones were selected to enrich the vocabulary of users of the World Wide Web unfamiliar in this area. The concept is classified according to the method of formation into two main groups:

1. Formed by adding initial letters with the addition of numbers: 10X (from English “thanks”) – thanks; 14AA41 (from English “one for all and all for one”) – one for all and all for one; ANY1 (from English “anyone”) – anyone; B4 (from English “later”) – before; F9 (from the English “fine”) – okay, fine; L8R (from English “later”) – later; M8 (from English “mate”) – peer.

2. Formed by adding the initial letters of productive words AAMOF (from the English “as a matter of fact”) – in fact; AFK (from English “away from keyboard”) – not in place; AKA (from English “also known as”) – also known as; ASL (from English “age/sex/location”) – age/sex/place of residence; BICBW (from the English “but I could be wrong”) – but I may be wrong; BOT (from the English “back on topic”) – let’s return to the topic; BRB (from the English “be right back”) – I will be back soon; CU (from the English “see you”) – see you; CUL (from English “see you later”) – see you later; CWOT (from English “complete waste of time”) – useless waste of time; CWYL (from English “chat with you later”) – let’s talk later; FAQ (from the English “frequently asked questions”) – a selection of frequently asked questions; FYI (from the English “for your information”) – for your information; GG (from English “good game”) – thanks for a good game; HTH (from the English “hope this helps”) – I hope this helps; IRL (from English “in real life”) – in real life; IMO (from the English “in my opinion”) – in my opinion; LOL (from English “laughing out loud”) – laugh out loud; ROFL (from English “rolling on the floor laughing”) – rolling on the floor laughing.

As soon as the acronym penetrates into the target language it easily acquires new derivational morphemes of the relevant part of speech. Some acronyms need elimination of homonymy because the same letters may stand for different expressions. There are also cases when acronyms are not capitalised which can complicate their interpretation. To these words belong *imho*, *aka*, *lol*, *bot*. In the Ukrainian language, the word lol (LOL) has received additional shade of meaning especially to denote extraordinary and unexpected ending of a situation (Zabotnova 2017, 27). In the process of chatspeak, acronyms can get modified by illiteracy of users when the letters, such as C and S are confused. What is more, the users do not always know all the components of the phrase but the meaning of the whole word. Many Ukrainian acronyms and abbreviations are made from same sounding English forms including numbers, such as in ANY1, M8, B4 and other examples. Structurally, they adhere to the rule of the recipient language, like *нїз* from *please*, *лвл* from *level* so that only certain letters are borrowed. As Zabotnova observes, most often new abbreviated words are formed from the first two letters and less often from certain letters (Zabotnova, 20117: 28). Symbols can also be used to substitute for characteristic words, question marks, exclamation marks, hashtags or asterisks to fill in the gaps in curse words, to avoid being banned at forums, online computer game chatrooms and more. On the other hand, an interesting trend was discovered that some abbreviations and acronyms can be used in both formal and informal styles. These expressions should be as neutral as possible.

Slang units can be classified according to their key functions. For example, communicative function is realised with such lexemes as AFK, ROFL, ASAP in instant messaging exchanges. Expressive function is evident when the words receive strong connotations: *smurfing* (Ukr. *smerfing*) *noob* (Ukr. *noob*), *rogue* (Ukr. *roga*), *heal* (Ukr. *khilyty*). Nominative function of slang helps to connect it to certain software and hardware computer technologies. The function of identification is realised when persons are distinguished by specific actions they are involved in, like *spammer*, *gaslighter*, *nerd*, *geek*, and more. These words coincide in their sound form in the source and the target language. Time saving function is evident in slang formations, usually of the acronymic type, including numbers and symbols. Cognitive function is realised when slang units are rendered metaphorically, such as Easter egg (a hidden software surprise which was not documented). This is by far the most interesting function.

The compilation of online bilingual dictionary computer of slang should be based on the knowledge of fundamental conceptual principles and structural and semantic peculiarities of the English and Ukrainian language use. The navigation throughout the site should be user-friendly and interactive. The cognitive map can show the associations of slang units, point at related fields and other sources. Each entry should contain a highlighted lexeme and all its versions with the list of set expressions and examples. One of the positive features of this dictionary would be tracing the dates and contexts in which specific slang units were used, to define obsolete and brand new terms.

Discussion

The phenomenon of slang speaks for the connection between society and language. Besides, it shows relation between social behavior and speech behavior of communication participants actively using and developing computer lexicon. Computer language as a means of communication should not be confused with language coding

used by the programmers which defines human-machine interaction. Computer slang is a lexical layer which comprises units which have undergone linguistic variation. According to Kirszner and Mandel language style is divided into four categories including slang (Kirszner & Mandel, 2003: 17). The notions of style and register are similar in this case and the knowledge of styles typology can help to establish the most appropriate translation strategies, especially in the process of interlingual translation. By focusing on cultural traditions, presuppositions, national mentality the researcher of slang can get valuable clues as to the choice of equivalents and interpret them according to the specific context. The peculiarity of computer slang is in its capacity to surpass the established professional group. It is typical of slang as a category to include a sheer number of derogative units so the knowledge of social group using this slang is required. The use of slang can influence social interaction, provide additional attitudes, eliminate biases, solemnity, and pompousness of speech, make internet conversations more enjoyable. Qualitative methods are resorted to by researchers to investigate the mechanisms of nomination of slang units and contextual and content analysis can demonstrate the language environment in which the unit emerged. However, documenting the validity of slang meaning and related data may be challenging to due high dispersion of these units and difficulty to trace the language behavior of the Internet users.

Conclusion

English computer slang is specific subsystem of words the popularity of which is explained by the huge role of IT in the life of all speakers, especially belonging to young generation. It is a non-literary and extremely fluid language layer. Investigating stylistic, functional and structural characteristics of computer slang language presupposes looking into the principles of classification, timeline of slang development, language specific restrictions to word-building. The biggest research challenge is that slang is an independent subsystem with specific grammatical, phonetic and lexical standards which are often difficult to categorise. Two spheres of application of computer slang units can be outlined: general and specific. The latter may be unfamiliar to ordinary language users and can be referred to hackers' communities. What distinguishes slang words from other words is that they are always emotionally coloured, with humorous implications. Slang lexicon fulfills such basic functions: communicative, expressive, nominative, cognitive, identification and time saving. investigation of slang emergence as language phenomenon has shown that it started as a layer of professional lexicon and gradually transited into common lexicon layer becoming a universal language for some professionally oriented or interest groups like video game players. However, it is worth mentioning that the speed of this transition depends on a number of situational factors which may be the subject of further research. A distinctive peculiarity of some slang words is the individual manner of reproduction of original words which does not conform to the rules of the source language. The word can be spelled and pronounced in the wrong way which does not pose any difficulties for its users.

Internet slang as a heterogeneous language variety possesses different types of slang lexicon including special computer slang. Language communities often create their own chatspeak which may be even more confusing and establishing etymology of words is possible only if the context is fully realised. It is typical of slang based communication to possess relaxed spelling and punctuation rules. Besides, some

meanings can get semantic distortions. Therefore, it can be argued by educationalists that computer slang is a contaminating form of language use, which negatively influences the integral semantic foundations and grammatical rules of natural languages. On the other hand, with the use of descriptive approaches, it is possible to confront this opinion. The main reason is that slang reflects the mechanisms of linguistic choice, personal taste, peculiarities of communication styles and strategies. English and Ukrainian slang is comparison has shown amazing revelations. Both structural and semantic side of slang formation deserves attention. The major role of computer slang is that it embellishes communication in its own way, makes it more flexible and exciting for the Internet users. Translation of slang units often relies on establishing specific definitions and language rules. Among the most widespread types of slang, acronyms possess the large portion of words. Developing slang dictionary software is a responsible task which requires from compilers scrupulosity to valid language uses of words, inclusion of commentaries in entries and conceptual mapping. The limitations of research may include the absence of reliable etymological sources and fusion of contexts in which slang may function. All in all, inclination to form slang lexemes can be explained by the incentives of altering the language in new dimensions of computer mediated communication.

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