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**USE OF SLANG AND ABBREVIATIONS IN EVERYDAY  
COMMUNICATION**

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*Abstract.* The article discusses the reasons for the active use of slang and graphical abbreviations in modern English-language communication. It analyzes the main types of informal vocabulary: text abbreviations, phonetic abbreviations, and slang adjectives and nouns. Special attention is paid to the differences between generations (Millennials, Generation Z, and Generation Alpha) and professional environments. The article provides practical recommendations for English learners. It concludes that slang and abbreviations are an integral part of everyday speech, but their use requires a sense of appropriateness.

*Keywords:* English, slang, abbreviations, internet communication, generation Z, informal communication, abbreviations.

Modern English, especially in its spoken and informal written forms, is undergoing significant changes under the influence of digital technologies, social media, and the need to save time. Today, it is impossible to imagine messaging in instant messengers, commenting on TikTok, or communicating in gaming chat rooms without slang and numerous abbreviations. Traditional English textbooks often struggle to keep up with the spoken language of native speakers. English learners find themselves in situations where they can form sentences grammatically correctly, but they do not understand the abbreviation “wyd” in a friend’s message or feel uncomfortable when they hear “bet” or “no cap” in a real conversation. On the other hand, excessive or inappropriate use of slang can give the impression of a lack of seriousness or education.

The purpose of this article is to explore the use of slang and abbreviations in modern English.

According to the purpose of our research, we consider it appropriate to solve the following tasks:

- 1) to define the terms “slang” and “abbreviations”;
- 2) to describe the causes of the spread of these phenomena and the types of informal vocabulary;
- 3) to examine the use of these phenomena in everyday communication among representatives of different age groups;
- 4) to offer practical recommendations for the use of slang and abbreviations.

In this work, slang is understood as a set of words and expressions that are used in informal speech, often limited to certain social or age groups, and are not part of the literary language norm. Abbreviations are graphic or phonetic trunca-

tions of words and phrases, used mainly in written language to save time and space [1, p. 45].

The main reason for the widespread use of abbreviations and slang is the need for speed in communication. Historically, SMS services with a 160-character limit, followed by Twitter (now X) with a 140-character limit, and later a 280-character limit, forced users to condense their thoughts as much as possible. Phrases like “be right back” evolved into “brb”, while “laughing out loud” became “lol”, which lost its literal meaning and now functions as a marker of a polite chuckle or even irony. As D. Crystal, one of the leading researchers in Internet linguistics, notes, “Network communication has given rise to a new language register that lies somewhere between written and spoken” [2, p. 87].

The second important factor is emotional expressiveness. Slang words often convey shades of meaning that are absent in neutral vocabulary. For example, the adjective “lit” means not just “good,” but “awesome, energetic, and full of fun”. The word “sus” (short for “suspicious”) carries a connotation of distrust and playful paranoia, popularized by the computer game AmongUs. Additionally, slang serves an important social function by marking one’s affiliation with a particular group. The use of words like “rizz” (charisma or flirtatiousness) or “slay” (excelling or looking flawless) instantly conveys that the speaker belongs to or interacts with Generation Z.

The diverse range of informal vocabulary can be categorized into several main types.

The first and most numerous type is text abbreviations. These include “LOL” (laughing out loud), “BRB” (be right back), “IDK” (I don’t know), “SMH” (shaking my head – shaking my head to express disappointment), “TTYL” (talk to you later), as well as “OMG” (oh my god), “TBH” (to be honest), “IMO/IMHO” (in my opinion / in my humble opinion).

The second type is phonetic abbreviations that mimic the pronunciation of words in fast speech: “wanna” (want to), “gonna” (going to), “gotta” (got to), “kinda” (kind of), “sorta” (sort of), and “outta” (out of). These forms have already become full-fledged words and can even be found in songs and movies.

The third type is slang adjectives and nouns that often come from the African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) or subcultures. Examples include “cap / no cap” (lie / truth), “bet” (agreed, sounds like a confident agreement), “GOAT” (greatest of all time – the best in history), “FOMO” (fear of missing out – the fear of missing out), “YOLO” (you only live once – we only live once), as well as the newer “mid” (mediocre, bad), “extra” (excessive, theatrical), and “shade” (hidden insult) [3].

It is important to understand that the use of slang varies greatly depending on the age and environment of communication. Millennials (people aged 30-45) are more likely to use words such as “epic fail”, “awkward”, “creepy”, “adulating” (engaging in adult activities). Generation Z (age 15-30) actively uses the vocabulary of “nocap”, “mid”, “slay”, “period” (point, the end of the discussion), “rizz” and “sus”. The younger Alpha generation (children under 15) is already starting to

generate their own words: “skibidi” (a reference to a viral web series), “gyat” (an expression of surprise at seeing an attractive person), and “sigma” (a loner or leader outside of the social hierarchy). This vocabulary is often misunderstood even by older Zomers, creating a generational language gap. In the professional environment, there are also abbreviations: in IT and business, “ASAP” (as soon as possible), “EOD” (end of day), “WFH” (work from home), “FYI” (for your information), and in the gaming community, “GG” (good game), “noob” (newbie), “AFK” (away from key board), and “pwned” (to defeat).

Despite the obvious advantages of slang – speed, expressiveness, and a sense of belonging to a group – it also has serious drawbacks. The main disadvantage is its complete inadequacy in formal settings. Resumes, cover letters, interviews, academic essays, and IELTS/TOEFL exams do not tolerate slang. In these contexts, it sounds unprofessional and even rude. As L. V. Shcherba rightly notes, “the literary language and colloquial speech diverge more and more as the general cultural level of the speakers decreases” [4, p. 56].

In addition, slang is rapidly becoming obsolete. What was fashionable last year may cause a smile or complete misunderstanding today. It is easy for a foreigner to get into an awkward situation. For example, the word “sick” in slang means “cool, awesome”, but in neutral English it means “sick”. The word “dope” also has a double meaning: “drug” and “cool”. Another disadvantage is ambiguity. The phrase “I’m dead” can mean literal death, but in internet slang, it is an expression of excitement about funny content.

The golden rule for using slang and abbreviations is to feel appropriate. In personal messages, social media comments, gaming chats, and conversations with friends, slang is not only acceptable but also desirable for a natural sound. However, when communicating with teachers, elderly native speakers, superiors, or clients, it is better to avoid slang in favor of full, grammatically correct phrases. Here are some practical tips for English learners.

First, you should not memorize slang from lists – it is memorized only in context, through watching videos, reading comments and live correspondence.

Second, it is useful to watch content created for native speakers: streams on Twitch, YouTube bloggers (for example, KurtisConner, Penguinz0, Ludwig), podcasts and reality shows.

Third, when in doubt about the meaning of a word, it is recommended to refer to the UrbanDictionary dictionary, but be sure to check the date of publication of the definition, as the meanings quickly become outdated.

Fourth, it is useful to subscribe to English-speaking bloggers on TikTok or Instagram, where slang is used in a natural environment. Finally, if you are unsure about the correct use of slang, it is safer to write a full word or a neutral phrase. As for the evolution of slang and abbreviations, there are several patterns to follow. TikTok, InstagramReels, YouTube, rap lyrics, memes, and video games are all sources of new words. The life cycle of a slang word usually includes four stages: emergence in a narrow group (teenagers, gamers, or a specific region), spread through social media and memes, peak popularity when the word is heard by all

speakers, and finally, transition to outdated slang or complete disappearance. Examples of outdated slang include “groovy” (1970s), “rad” and “tubular” (1980s), “dabomb” and “all that and a bag of chips” (1990s), and “on fleek” (2010s). On the other hand, some abbreviations have become neutral language norms and are no longer considered slang. These include “ASAP”, “RSVP”, “PIN”, “PS” and “AKA”. This process demonstrates how the boundary between formal and informal language is gradually shifting.

The study also revealed that there are significant regional differences in the use of slang. British English offers words such as “gutted” (very upset), “knackered” (exhausted), and “chuffed” (pleased), while American English uses “stoked” (excited), “bummed” (upset), and “psyched” (excited). Australian English is known for its unique abbreviations: “arvo” (afternoon), “barbie” (barbecue), “footy” (football). It is important for English learners to understand that slang can be not only age-related, but also geographically marked.

Thus, slang and abbreviations are not enemies of the English language. On the contrary, they are a vital and dynamic part of it. They reflect real-life social processes, such as the increasing pace of life, the digitalization of communication, and the desire for emotional expressiveness. The ability to use slang appropriately does not mean that one must completely embrace it or reject it, but rather the ability to choose the appropriate register of speech based on the situation. The same person can write “wyd?” to a friend and “What are you currently working on?” to a colleague, and both options would be perfectly acceptable. For English learners, slang is a bridge to understanding the living culture of native speakers. However, this bridge should be crossed carefully, starting with passive understanding and then moving on to active use in a safe, informal environment.

*Conclusion.* Based on the analysis, the following conclusions can be drawn.

Firstly, slang and abbreviations serve three main functions in modern English: saving time, expressing emotions, and marking group identity.

Secondly, informal vocabulary is divided into text abbreviations, phonetic abbreviations, and slang adjectives/nouns, with the latter group being the most susceptible to temporary changes.

Thirdly, the use of slang is highly dependent on the speaker's age, professional environment, and geographical region.

Fourthly, the key criterion for the appropriateness of slang is the communicative situation: slang is desirable in an informal environment, but it is strongly discouraged in a formal environment.

Finally, in order to successfully master slang, English learners need regular exposure to authentic content and a gradual, cautious incorporation of slang units into their active speech.

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