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What is Slang? The origins of slang are usually found in the desire of those members of a particular group, or subculture, to communicate freely and intelligibly with each other from their common base of shared experience, interests, attitudes, and identity. This is, however, coupled with the desire to differentiate themselves either from another group, or from the larger society as a whole [1].

Slang was the main reason for the development of prescriptive language in an attempt to slow down the rate of change in both spoken and written language. Latin and French were the only two languages that maintained the use of prescriptive language in the 14th century.

During the Middle Ages, certain writers such as Chaucer, William Caxton represented the regional differences in pronunciations and dialects, which represented the first meaning for the term "slang."

However, our present-day meaning for slang did not begin forming until the 16th - 17th century. The English Criminal Cant, which developed in the 16th century, was a new kind of speech used by criminals and cheats, meaning it developed mostly in saloons and gambling houses. Out of the four million people who spoke English, about ten thousand spoke the English Criminal Cant. During the 18th century schoolmasters taught pupils to believe that the English Criminal Cant (which by this time had developed into slang) was not the correct usage of English and slang was considered to be taboo.

Because most people are individuals who desire uniqueness, it stands to reason that slang has been in existence for as long as language has been in existence. Even so, the question of why slang develops within a language has been hotly debated. Most agree that the question is still unanswered, or perhaps it has many answers [2].

British slang is English language slang used in Great Britain. While some slang words and phrases are used throughout all of Britain (e.g. knackered, meaning "exhausted"), others are restricted to smaller regions.

1. *Rhyming slang*, spoken in the East End of London, replaces a word with a phrase which rhymes with the word, for example, plates of meat for "feet", or twist and twirl for "girl". Often only the first word is used, so plates and twist by themselves become the colloquialisms for "feet" and "girl".

2. *Back slang* is simply the practice of using words spelled in reverse, e.g. yob for "boy" or ecilop for "police".

3. *Polari* is a variety of slang used by gay men and lesbians in Britain and the United Kingdom, which has now almost died out.

Within the Internet community, there are numerous subcultures with their own specific set of slang. Leet speak originated with hackers, and later became popular with the online gaming community. Leet uses various combinations of alphanumeric characters to replace letters of words. "E" is commonly replaced by "3," and "S" by "5." Leet commonly has its own sets of colloquialisms and jokes, and exists in a number of languages in addition to English, such as Greek, Russian, and Chinese. Excessive use of leet is often used to ridicule or satirize new members of an internet community, who are often referred to as n00bs (newbies or newcomers) [3].

Why People Use Slang? According to the British lexicographer, Eric Partridge (1894-1979), people use slang for any of following reasons:

- 1) just for the fun of the thing;
 - 2) as an exercise either in wit and ingenuity or in humour;
 - 3) to be 'different', to be novel;
 - 4) to be picturesque;
 - 5) to be unmistakably arresting, even startling;
 - 6) to enrich the language;
 - 7) to reduce the solemnity, the pomposity, the excessive seriousness of a conversation;
 - 8) to soften the tragedy, to lighten or to 'prettify' the inevitability of death or madness;
 - 9) to show that one belongs to a certain school, trade, or profession, artistic or intellectual set, or social class;
 - 10) to be secret - not understood by those around one.
- How to Use British Slang?

Step 1. Greet people. Instead of “Hi, how are you?” go with the quick and easy British “Alright?” No answer is expected, just as none is expected for the American “how are you?”

Step 2. Emphasize greatness. Rather than the American “cool” or “awesome,” go with equivalent words in the British vocabulary. These include “barry,” “ace” and “kewl.” The latter kind of sounds like “cool” but you’ll know the difference in your heart.

Step 3. Insult others. Calling someone an “arseface” or a “pilchard” will be even more the merrier if they have no clue you are insulting them to their face.

Step 4. Throw in the emphatic “bloody” a lot. Bloody this, bloody that and bloody everything. The British are also known to put it in the middle of words for even more emphasis, such as “absobloodylutely.”

Step 5. Describe drunks. Slang is always full of euphemisms for “drunk” in any language. The British versions include “airlocked” and “bevviied up,” as in “full of beverage.”

Step 6. Have fun with scatological references. Slang is also always full of potty mouth phrases, lots of terms for anatomical parts and references to human waste. Some mild British slang terms include “kermit” for toilet and “air biscuit” for a fart.

Tips & Warnings

The most fun with slang comes when a few key people know what the heck you are saying. Have a slang fest with some of your friends to learn a few key phrases and use them when you’re all hanging out. It’ll be a giant inside joke.

Don’t start insult a native Brit with British slang. You may get slapped.

Don’t start talking with a fake British accent. You will sound stupid.

Don’t go overboard and pepper every other sentence with slang. You will be annoying [4].

Literature references

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