



**TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
APPLYING SLANG AND METAPHORS IN THE PROCESS OF
TEACHING**

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A B S T R A C T	K E Y W O R D S
<p>The article focuses on teaching slang and metaphors, an integral part of any language, on the analysis of language learners' beliefs and attitudes. The interpretations of "slang" and "metaphor" are given; the functions which they have in a language are examined and illustrated by examples representing the way they are used in speech by native speakers. The most common and effective techniques applied for teaching students slang and metaphors are analyzed.</p>	<p>cognitive framework; communicative functions; language learners' beliefs; lexical unit; metaphor; metaphor-based tasks; slang; socio-cultural values; teaching technique.</p>

Introduction

Very heterogeneous lexical and stylistic phenomena are often included into the notion "slang". Scientists explain its etymology in different ways. Hotten considered the word "slang" as the one used by gypsies, some linguists thought it had originated from the Scandinavian language (Norwegian slengja kjeften – "to sling the jaw", "to abuse with words", "slengjenamn" – "nickname"). Partridge assumes that this word is the Past Participle form of the verb "to sling" ("Slang is language slung about") and gives such examples as "to sling words", "to sling the bat". So the original meaning of the word was equal to "the abusive language" thus implying its negative effect.

In the most general form, slang is interpreted as a specific lexical unit which is beyond the limits of the literary spoken language as well as beyond the dialects of the national language, including, on the one hand, specific words and phraseological units of the professional language, social jargon and criminal argo and, on the other hand, widespread and comprehensive emotional and expressive words and phraseological units of the non-literary language.

From this point of view slang is a bilateral phenomenon which can be used not only to abuse people but also, and this is the most important thing, to communicate within a professional or a social group, positive feelings and emotions.

Functions of Slang

Paying attention to the opinion of such linguists as Partridge and Homyakov, we have singled out the following functions of slang. 1 It gives speech a novelty effect, for example, the word "sadventure" is interpreted as "a sad adventure or an adventure undertaken by a sad person or sad people". "I thought we'd have a good time but it turned out to be a sadventure".

Here the combination of two words “sad” and “venture” influences the speech indicating something new which must be paid attention to.

It introduces elements of a joke, for example, the slang word “nosecicle” means “frozen snots dangling from noses, created during cold weather”.

“People shoveling snow need to watch out for nose-cicles”.

The word has elements of a joke as it is derived from the word “icicle”.

Instead of the root “ice” the root “nose” is used.

It makes speech emotional: emotions can cover a wide range from good to bad ones and very often even one word helps to express a person’s feelings.

For example, the word “sadghetti” is used when “one eats spaghetti all alone, while also being sad and depressed”. “How was dinner last night?”

“I had sadghetti...”.

It possesses expressiveness and evaluation, for example, the word “alpha” is used to name “the head animal in a pack, and by extension, an unofficial leader. Often used sarcastically of someone who wants to lead a group”. So initially the word implies a negative attitude to some person.

“George wants to be alpha, but no one takes him seriously”.

Although there are some military groups in different countries which fulfill special tasks and are called “Alpha” and they are considered to be rather well- prepared and professional. So in this case the word has a positive evaluation.

It names things and phenomena (a nominative function), for example, nowadays it is very popular to take photos of yourself and they are called “selfie” There have appeared various combinations with this word such as “morning selfie” that means that “someone posts a selfie to any social media in the morning, but puts on makeup and takes a shower before doing so, they then take the selfie and say whatever hipster crap they use”.

It makes speech familiar, for example, the expression “Grandma fooler” implies “a gift from someone that isn't name-brand or quite what you were expecting. The name is due to the fact that usually, grandmas are not up to speed on what is popular. This is usually not good, but sometimes, it turns out ok”. “Friend: Did you get an iPod for Christmas?

You: I got an MP3 player, but it was a Grandma fooler”.

If people use words, phrases and expressions with a specific meaning and understand each other, they are quite familiar with each other and can do it.

It implies some sense, for example, there is an expression “to drink things through” which means “a time-honored tradition of thinking things through while drinking a beverage”. “You're psycho so there's no point in us meeting to drink things through”.

The phrase is formed on the analogy of the phrasal verb “to think through” used in the literary language meaning “to consider the facts about something in an organized and thorough way” [8]. So the slang expression “to drink things through” implies doing several things: drinking, thinking, discussing and making conclusions. 8 It adds elements of a language game, for example, the expression “hate watching” is interpreted in the following way “When the pleasure you get watching something on TV comes from your hatred of it”. “So I was hate watching this liberal/conservative talk show the other day, and the host wouldn't stop talking about healthcare!”.

This example demonstrates the ability of native speakers to use words and word combinations which have a negative evaluation in the literary language “hate” – “to dislike someone or something very

much” [8], with the positive implication in slang. Thus speakers play with words and create something new.

So, on the whole slang has communicative functions making our speech emotional and expressive. Methods of teaching slang Having analyzed the main functions of slang, we came to the conclusion that it is impossible to teach students English without paying any proper attention to those lexical layers which form the language on the whole, and slang, in particular. Certainly teachers cannot cover all those spheres where slang is used and there is no need to do it. Students may not come across such words at all. So, first of all, some survey should be carried out to find out in what spheres students can have problems with understanding slang words while listening or reading English and then concentrate on them. Secondly, giving some material teachers can single out slang words and teach them.

What methods can be used in this case?

1 Underlining slang words in texts and asking students to guess their meaning according to the context. If it is quite difficult, some more examples can be given which will illustrate the use of the words in different situations. This will also help students to remember the words better and use them

2 Matching tasks narrow down possible meanings of the slang words and encourage students to choose the most suitable variant.

3 Mind maps are a good way to learn the words by heart as well as different forms of charts. The graphic presentation of the material helps to structure the knowledge that students have and to add more information to it.

4 Using games and performance activities can turn the process of learning into fun, and as known, people remember everything much better in this way.

For example, students can be divided into groups and asked to draw pictures illustrating separate slang words or expressions. Groups exchange their drawings and guess what word or phrase is basic for pictures. It is also possible to write slang words and expressions on cards, ask students to choose some card one by one and act out the slang word.

5 Using authentic and real-life materials to introduce slang words and practice them. These can include songs, TV advertisements, films, video clips etc.

6 Practising the use of slang words and expressions in speech. For example, there can be role games, meetings, conferences, shops and so on, where it is possible to imagine yourself to be a native speaker and play your role

7 Retelling the stories where slang words and expressions are used is also considered to be a good strategy to know how much students have learned and to increase their comprehension. Older students can benefit from retelling stories because it allows students to learn to organize and describe events, which enhances reading comprehension.

Techniques for Teaching Metaphor

Today teachers pay more attention to teaching of strategies for comprehending and producing metaphors in ESL acquisition.

Metaphor can be a helpful tool for improving reading skills, as it may develop learners’ critical evaluation of the text, encourage them to express their opinions or foster debate on some problems, enrich problem-solving tasks and make them more interesting for the students. To overcome these difficulties, it is necessary to provide the classroom foreign language with authentic texts containing metaphors from modern books, magazines and newspapers. We should encourage our students to use

all the available contextual clues when working out the meaning of new and unfamiliar metaphoric vocabulary. The study and comparison of the topics covered in the home and foreign media at the same time can serve as a source of study of national values, patterns of everyday life, and it will contribute to breaking the stereotypes and creating a more holistic view of the world as a cultural space. Our experience shows the efficiency of active involvement of students in pair and group work, project work, etc., including working with proverbs and sayings. At the same time it does not prevent the work with dictionaries of idioms, slang and phraseology.

The adopted teaching strategy is closely connected with students' level. For elementary learners the acquaintance with metaphor can begin with common conceptual metaphors which represent the same meaning in both foreign and native language, e.g. the rat race, to digest the info, etc.

The teaching techniques at the first stage may include matching the definition with the metaphor or two halves of the sentence, or filling the gaps. Grouping is seemed to be an important factor that helps students to organize and memorize vocabulary in a more effective way. The metaphors should be also practiced in speech in the form of dialogues or some group work activities, or while doing some writing productive work.

At a more advanced level students may be asked to paraphrase some statements using metaphors which help them expand their vocabulary and practise speaking skills. Another effective technique promoting metaphorical Metaphors can also be used for vocabulary building. The research has shown that raising metaphoric awareness in this way improves vocabulary retention. Students can be presented with a central, conceptual metaphor (such as "the science is a moving vehicle") and asked to come up with as many possible manifestations of the metaphor as possible, e.g. the science is a high- speed train. They might then be asked to think of meanings for expression such as "a rocket scientist", "ideas hamster", "cash cow", which are used in the appropriate context.

Another way of introducing and practising metaphor usage is advertising products which may be helpful for developing both language communicative skills. Students can be asked to prepare a colorful presentation about some product using imagery devices and other students should discuss it, give some recommendations and opinions. Or the teacher can take any advertisement (from the Internet, a newspaper, etc.) and introduce it to the students for discussion (e.g. What does the author of the advertisement want to say by using this/that image/phrase/slogan/logo?). Doing such activities learners expand their metaphoric vocabulary and train their critical thinking. The process of teaching a foreign language is rather complicated as teachers must pay attention not only to developing students' main skills in such types of the communicative activity as Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, but also to providing knowledge about extralinguistic factors including the use of slang and metaphor without which it is impossible to understand the culture represented by a foreign language. Special teaching techniques help to do that.

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