Grammatical, Semantic and Structural Features of English Colloquial Words and Expressions

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Abstract: *The article reveals the features of the transformation of the hidden semantics of English colloquial words and expressions with a reduplicated form and a reverse order of letters. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of new trends in the colloquial layer of the language, taking into account grammatical, etymological and structural features.*

Key words: *Colloquial words, phonetics, morphology, lexis, semantics, syntax, structural features*

Introduction.

One of the colorful ways of forming colloquialisms is reduplication. Reduplication can be carried out by doubling the whole word, word base or some separate syllable in order to aptly, non-standard and expressively characterize some subject, object or property. Repetition provides a fairly effective way of depositing information in memory and the possibility of reproducing it in the future due to the simple structural specifics.

Repetitions are formed due to changes at the level of phonetics, morphology, lexis, semantics or syntax. The deep analyses of examples can help to consider the representation of colloquialisms-replicates in modern English dictionaries. Cp.:

An example of an exact reduplication is: *boo-boo* with the meaning "error". Compare: You call it a boo-boo, but I call it a gross professional misconduct [2, p. 30]. It seems possible to single out words denoting exact repetitions of sound imitation as echo-reduplication: *bla-bla*, *blah-blah* in the meaning of "chatter". No more bla-bla! All you can see is him talking blah-blah on the phone most of the time [1, p. 80]. When forming a colloquialism of the noun *bling-bling* with the meaning "bling-bling (a style of clothing that involves bright jewelry, trinkets), an imitation of the sounds made by jewelry in the process of movements". Compare: Ali G always wears his bling-bling and without it you wouldn't be able to recognize him [1, p. 84].

A fundamental difference is acquired by colloquialisms of such type of variation as *chit-chat* in the meaning "chatter", where the root vowel changes. Such colloquial words are referred to onomatopoeic incomplete reduplication. A similar example is *riff-raff* with the meaning "1. the dregs of society, the poor" (And now we're getting nearer the real reason why there is no crime in Monaco – no riff-raff!) "2. graduates of secondary universities" (I'm not one of those old-fashioned executives who wishes to employ the right sort, and for whom avoiding contact with riff-raff is a priority [1, p. 538]).

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Some colloquial words and expressions formed by this type of reduplication can carry several meanings. Compare: 1) *ding-dong*: 1 meaning: "scandal" (They lived happily with just a little bit of ding-dong), 2 meaning: "stormy pastime" (This offer of apartments is for over 60s only because of fear of all night ding-dongs [1, p. 187]).

Some colloquialisms with a reduplicated form can be a base for the meaning only in this form; separately, such words are often not used as independent words. Compare: *higgledy-piggledy* with the meaning "dirty". (So, who's higgledy-piggledy now and wants to wash his hands and face?), *hoity-toity* – "1. just think! tell me please!" (Hoity-toity! Billywhite), (also *highty-tighty*) – "2. arrogance, snobbery" (Back with the Beeb for a bit of hoity-toity), *hotsy-totsy* – "order!" (No mess, no fuss, all hotsy-totsy! [1, p. 330]), etc.

Rhyming reduplication is carried out by changing, adding or alternating consonants: adding a consonant / whole syllable to the first or second word (*itsy-bitsy* with the *itty-bitty* variant in the meaning "tiny". Cp.: Real shoes tor itsy-bitsy feet! [1, p. 343]), replacing a consonant with *shm / sm / schm* or adding *shm / sm / schm* while keeping the vowel, etc. Consider the *shm / sm / schm* subspecies of rhymed reduplication in more detail below.

A subspecies of rhymed reduplication are reduplicates with the component *shm-* (*shm-*reduplicates), which arose in English due to the borrowing of a structure from Yiddish. The main function of *shm*-reduplicates is to give speaking sarcasm, irony, etc. to speech. Formed according to the model: main word + *sch-* + main word (with clipping of the initial part of the second word). Variants are the addition of *schm-, sm-*.

1. The replacement of one or more sounds in a word or the complete preservation of the composition of the word with the addition of the *shm*-component depends on the presence of vowels and consonants at the beginning of the word. Model: *shm* + main word.

a) If the word begins with a vowel, then the *shm-* component is simply added to the word without changing the vowel. Compare: *schmanimal* from *animal*, *shmitalian* from *italian*. Model: *shm-* + (with preservation of the vowel) of the main word: *schm + apple = schmapple*. However, in colloquial speech, cases of replacing one vowel with another are revealed. Compare: *english-Shmenglish* and *english.shminglish*, etc.

b) If the word begins with a consonant followed by a vowel, then the *shm-* component truncates only the consonant. Compare: *shmomment* from *comment*, *shmaby* from *baby*. Model: *shm-* + (with truncation of the consonant) of the main word: *shm + salad = shmalad*. Exceptions are increasingly becoming fragments from site addresses, where the norms for using the *shm*-component are often violated when the consonant is preserved. Compare: *MarketShmarket.com.*

c) If the word begins with two consonants, then the speaker can:

c1) replace the first consonant with the *shm*-component while retaining the second consonant. Model: *shm-* + (with truncation of the first consonant) of the main word: *shm- + brother = shmrother* (Big brother / Big shmrother…[5]).

c2) replace two consecutive consonants with a component: Model: *shm-* + (with truncation of two consonants) of the main word: *shm- + science = shmience*. Cp.: *shmeakfast* from *breakfast*.

However, it should be borne in mind that words that have *shm-* in their original form usually do not undergo *shm-* reduplication.

2. The replacement of part of the first or second word in a two-word phrase depends on:

a) replacement with *shm- / sh-* and other variants in the first word usually occurs in most cases. Model: *Shm- / sm- +word 1 + word 2: Shmuffin Top* by *muffin top* [4].

b) the replacement of *shm-* in the second word usually occurs if the second word has more syllables than the first. Model: word 1 + *shm- / sm- +* word 2: *Led Shmeppelin* by *Led Zeppelin*.

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c) cases of replacement in two words at once were revealed. Model: shm- / sm- + word 1 + shm- / sm- + word 2: *Shmew Shmealand* from *New Zealand*: ("I'm at the airport ... don't want to give too much away but let's just say I'm flying to Shmew Shmealand to make some shmusic with Shmorde" [6]), *shmarak shmobama* by *Barack Obama*.

The analysis of examples from Internet resources allowed us to add to the main phonological properties new trends in replacing part of the first or second word in a phrase consisting of two words, as well as to identify some exclusion examples (see the example *english.shminglish, MarketShmarket.com*), which indicates the presence of an individual-author's approach in the formation of *shm*-reduplication.

Thus, three main groups of reduplicates among colloquialisms should be distinguished: a) exact reduplicates (complete); b) ablaut reduplicates (reduplicates with a change in the root vowel); c) rhyming reduplicates.

There are cases when the formation of words requires deciphering a certain meaning in order to hide information from a certain group of people. This task is carried out by derivational formations using the reverse, in other words, the mirror formation of words, called back slang.

Having studied the etymological side of the issue, it can be revealed that reverse slang was often used in the speech of merchants who tried to hush up some information about the quality of their goods. For example, in some cases, in order to completely conceal the meaning, back slang is formed by using the reverse order of decomposing the total into addend in monetary terms. Compare: *exis - evif - yanneps* with the meaning "eleven pence" [3, p. 1673]. Model: *6 (six → exis) + 5 (five → evif) = 11*. A distinctive feature of the derivational processes of English back slang (reverse slang / kacab genals) comes from the formation of the most accurate reverse sounding of the original words with a violation of some principles of the order of phonemes in the presence of diphthongs. Compare features of reverse slang formation: *trousers → sreswords*.

Dictionary S.V. Semivolkova, based on the principle of selecting the lexis of the living English language, also fixes reverse slang in its composition, although in a rather limited volume. The main part is presented among the names of cardinal numbers, fixed from 1 to 10 inclusive. Cp.: *1 → eno, 2 → owt, 3 → erth, 4 → rouf, 5 → evif, 6 → exis, 7 → nevis (neves)* (also "7 years' imprisonment"), *8 → theg, 9 → enin, 10 → net*. In addition to numerals, a part of lexical units denoting money and the material of their production is also included. Compare: *gold – delog, silver – revlis*, etc.

It is important to take into account grammatical features in the process of forming words through back slang. For example, *-s* comes to the first position in reverse order in the plural form: *nuts → stun, coals → slaoc, carrots → storrac* [3, p. 1161]. In a relative number of cases certain reservations arise regarding the location of *s* (plural) in reverse slang. Compare: *greens → neergs*. In this example *-s* takes the last position in reversed order, which reveals exceptions to the principles underlying the formation of the plural form. Although in some short glossaries on reverse slang, we can find the form: *sneerg*. Duplication of the plural indicator at the beginning and at the end becomes possible in the words *boots → stoobs, balls → slabs*.

Deciphering reverse slang becomes a difficult task if the expression contains a word formed by abbreviation. In this case, only an appeal to the lexicographic source can clarify the meaning of the word. Compare: *eno-gen* in the meaning "one shilling" [4]. According to one version, *gen* is formed by a two-sided clipping from argent in the meaning of "silver". According to another, by a final clipping from *generalize*. When establishing the true meaning of a word, it is important to distinguish between homonymous words that are not related to reverse slang. Compare: *yes* – "as affirmative response" → *say / see*, no "as a negative response" → *on*, etc.

Consider some features in the formation of reverse slang. Here are the models for the formation of the initial slang: W1 – the first word and W2 – the second word, depending on the order

of the words in the phrase, i.o. – initial order, r.o. - reverse order, i.w. – the initial (original) word (without reordering).

a) different variants of word spellings appear: *dab / deb*, *woman → namoh / nammo / namow*.

b) a preservation or an omission of service parts of speech:

1) verbs change with the preposition: *come in → emok nye*, *look out → kool tour / kool toul,* etc..

2) service parts of speech are not always taken into account:

- prepositions (i.o.: W1 + preposition + W2; r.o.: W1 (preposition is omitted) + W2): *look at him → cool him*.

- articles (i.o.: article + W1 + W2; r.o.: (article is omitted) W1 + W2: *a bad sort → dab tros*.

c) in some phrases, the order of the letters of one of the words does not change (see the example in paragraph "b" *look at him → cool him*). W1 (r.o.) + W2 (i.w.).

d) the saving or changing the original word order in the expression:

1) while maintaining the initial word order in the expression. Compare: *noun delo nammow = old woman* – "old woman, wife". I knocked, but the dev lo nammow wouldn't let me in! [1, p. 181].

2) with a change of the original word order in the expression. Compare: *one good hit → doogheno hit* [3, p. 1506]. In this example, *one* changes place and stands on the second position in the word.

e) some sounds like *th / sh* cannot be pronounced in back order, therefore they are preserved in their initial form, etc. Compare: *three → earth, thirteen → neetrith,* etc.

f) if the word has two consecutive letters in its composition, one of them is omitted in the process of writing the word in reverse slang. Compare: *cabbage → edgabac*.

g) hyphenated / separated / fused back slang: *mackerel → ler-ac-am*.

Thus, the main function of reverse slang is a conspiratorial function designed to hide the true meaning from a certain group of people.

Colloquialisms formed by reduplication can be classified into three main groups: exact reduplicates (complete reduplicates), ablaut reduplicates (reduplicates with a change in the root vowel) and rhyming reduplicates.

Consideration of word formation through *shm*-replication is carried out not only on the basis of lexicographic sources, oral speech, but also among a number of examples from electronic accounts of people using various social networks such as facebook, twitter, mail, vk.com, Instagram, etc.

Changing or observing the norms for the formation of *shm*-replication on the example of accounts shows the high productivity of using this derivation method to create colloquial words among young people.

The formation of reverse slang by means of a mirror permutation of the letters and sounds of words that are not related to the emotional-expressive vocabulary serves to hide the obvious meaning. The formation of back slang in some examples by decomposing the total into addends in monetary terms is carried out to more completely hide the meaning.

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