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## SLANG TERMS IN IT FIELD

*Computer technologies are inevitably vital in modern and developed society. Without them, we cannot make progress and become competitive in the labor market, not only in Ukraine but also around the globe. Moreover, the communication between employees and even employers is constantly changing. We communicate less formally, use more colloquial phrases. This led to the formation of slang, jargon, and neologisms.*

*IT slang is extremely popular among programmers, developers, web designers, and other IT employees. In the article, we have considered latest studies on slang, especially computer slang, by Ukrainian scholars. It is provided the definition and classifications of computer slang, ways of forming slang terms, and reasons for using it.*

*However, there is no latest research of newly coined IT slang terms, as this field is, to a certain extent, young in our country. As more and more Ukrainian people are interested in IT, linguists should keep track of all new technologies and analyze the latest tendencies of computer slang.*

*Therefore, the purpose of this article is to research the most common and latest slang of the IT field, the reasons for using them, and Ukrainian equivalents for them. The basis for our study is the statistical survey conducted among IT employees in one of the progressive IT companies of Ukraine.*

*Our survey results show that IT slang is widely used in the IT community, and the process of using such words and creating new ones is inevitable. We can come to the conclusion that the age of employees is under 39 years old, their level of English proficiency is high: B2, C1, C2. Most employees use slang frequently and find it difficult to eliminate the usage of slang terms. Most common words in the survey were: мітинг (meeting), лінк (link), баг (bug), дебажити (to debug), дедлайн (deadline), коранпунтуй (corrupted), порівнювати (to review), etc.*

**Key words:** *slang, information technology, IT, IT slang, computer age.*

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## СЛЕНГІЗМИ В ІТ-ГАЛУЗІ

*Комп'ютерні технології надзвичайно важливі для сучасного та розвиненого суспільства. Не володіючи ними, ми не можемо досягнути прогресу та стати конкурентоспроможними на ринку праці не лише в Україні, а й у всьому світі. Окрім того, комунікація між працівниками і навіть роботодавцями постійно зазнає змін. Ми спіл-*

куємося не так офіційно, як раніше, використовуємо більше розмовних фраз, що призвело до формування сленгу, жаргону та неологізмів.

IT-сленг дуже популярний серед програмістів, розробників програмного забезпечення, веб-дизайнерів та інших працівників цієї галузі. У статті ми розглянули останні дослідження українських науковців над сленгом, а саме комп'ютерним сленгом. Подано визначення та класифікації комп'ютерного сленгу, методи формування сленгізмів та причини їхнього вживання.

Проте, немає останніх досліджень щодо новостворених сленгізмів IT-галузі, оскільки ця сфера є відносно молодою в нашій державі. З огляду на те, що все більше українців зацікавлені в IT, мовознавцям слід стежити за технічними новинками та здійснювати аналіз нових тенденцій комп'ютерного сленгу.

Тому метою статті є дослідження найпоширенішого та найактуальнішого IT-сленгу, причин його використання та пошук українських еквівалентів для сленгізмів. Основою для нашого дослідження стало статистичне опитування, проведене серед IT-працівників однієї з найпрогресивніших IT-компаній України.

Результати нашого опитування показують, що IT-сленг широко використовується в IT-спільноті, а процес використання таких слів і створення нових – неминучий. Можемо зробити висновок, що вік опитаних IT-працівників не перевищує 39 років, рівень володіння англійською мовою – високий: B2, C1, C2. Оскільки, більшість співробітників часто використовують сленг, їм важко перестати вживати сленгізми. Найпоширеніші слова згідно з опитуванням: мітинг (зустріч), лінк (посилання), баг (помилка), дебажити (налагодити, шукати помилки в програмі), дедлайн (крайній термін, реченець), корапнутий (пошкоджений), порів'ювати (переглянути, перевірити) тощо.

**Ключові слова:** сленг, інформаційні технології, IT, IT-сленг, комп'ютерна ера.

**Problem formulation.** Slang is an integral part of every language, which always keeps up with the times. It plays a vital social function since it differentiates people of various interests, professions, social status, age, and origins. Slang also serves the emotional and expressive functions by enriching the speech with different connotations, naming the ordinary things from the emotional perspective of the speaker. Slang terms give new life to accustomed words. Some of them are quickly replaced by new expressions or even enter into constant use, and some slang terms are forgotten over time.

Although slang usage is documented in all countries of the world, there is no sufficient research in this field. Slang varies from society to society. It is used to express irritation and anger, as well as to punish, humiliate, and abuse people. Interpretation of the slang meaning depends on personal values and beliefs of the society to which a person belongs. Accordingly, a person can have both a good and bad attitude to slang. (Kar SK., Arafat SMY, Menon V., 2020)

However, as socio-psychological conditions change, slang terms may change in meaning and distribution, evolving into what is commonly called mainstream or standard language, or may even continue to exist as slang in certain strata of society. Some slang expressions gradually become more neutral and respectable when they lose their brightness and intensity (Amari J.(F), 2010).

In Ukraine, we can observe a dramatic increase in the development of computer technologies and the interest in high-technology only since the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Therefore, a special language, i.e., computer jargon, used by computer users appeared during this time.

However, there is a lack of studies on Ukrainian IT slang up to this time because this field is, to some extent, new to our country. Also, the relevance of IT slang can be explained by the relatively young age of employees who are prone to use slang words, jargon, and neologisms.

**Research analysis.** In the late 1980s, it became possible to exchange email and other files via the Internet in various institutions around the world. The cost of personal computers was becoming affordable for the mass market. The World Wide Web was developed as an instrument for communicating on the Internet in the early 1990s, and the famous newspapers began to talk about the influence of computers on the English language, noting that the use of slang, as well as newly coined terms, borrowed from hackers, operated in universities (Coleman J., 2012).

Such terms were initially used as professional computer slang. Still, now some of them are acceptable in formal written speech, offering a powerful demonstration of the spread and impact of online communication (Coleman J., 2012).

IT slang plays a significant role in communication among IT specialists. Such Ukrainian scholar carried out research into computer slang and jargon: Iryna Shchur (Shchur I., 2001) Roman Berest (Berest R.V., 2017), Larysa Yaroshchuk (Yaroshchuk L., 2012), Oksana Yasinska (Yasinska O., 2009), and others. Ukrainian scholar Iryna Shchur defines computer slang as a dialect, jargon, set of phrases, and expressions with a narrow (computer) application and are not grammatically correct words in the language. Most are words and derivatives of English words (Shchur I., 2001: 10).

Also, she states: 'One of the reasons for the emergence of such a "language" is its exceptional capac-

ity when three or four specific words can convey a large paragraph of literary, technical text. After all, computer jargon expresses even certain emotions that are almost impossible to reproduce on the dry and laconic real Web. Computer jargon is a virtuoso game for people who are close to normalized literary language. However, no matter how much the speakers of slang strive for the original brightness of speech and its difference from the standard Ukrainian language, innovations occur within the language system and are built according to the laws of the Ukrainian language' (Shchur I., 2001: 10).

Since there is relatively little research on IT slang, there is no precise classification of such type of slang. For example, Larysa Yaroshchuk classifies computer slang by thematic feature:

- 1) words to denote computer hardware and software;
- 2) the names of companies that manufacture hardware and software;
- 3) names of anti-virus programs;
- 4) words to denote people who work in the IT field;
- 5) words to denote actions;
- 6) words that accompany the process of a user's work with a computer;
- 7) words of evaluative meaning (Yaroshchuk L., 2012: 156-164).

On the contrary, Iryna Shchur defines the following ways of forming slang terms as follows:

- 1) borrowed from English, often reworked or intentionally distorted;
- 2) truncated words;
- 3) rethinking commonly used words and creating on their basis lexical units with double meaning (Shchur I., 2001).

However, all the studies of IT slang are outdated because new slang words appear on a regular basis along with new technologies. Moreover, there has been no recent attempt to study IT slang from a statistical point of view. Therefore, the novelty of this article is to collect the most popular slang terms used by IT employees.

**The purpose of this article** is to research the slang of the IT field, especially analyse the outcomes of the statistical survey conducted among the IT employees, since it is one of the most popular, perspective, and advanced industries in Ukraine. Moreover, with the rapid development of computer technologies, new slang terms coin and enter the language each year. Therefore, the Ukrainian IT market is bursting with brand-new words that are hardly understandable for people who don't speak the English language.

**Main material presentation.** The purpose of the work is to conduct and analyse a statistical sur-

vey among specialists working in the field of information technologies. In the research, we have used general scientific methods, particularly descriptive and statistical. Methods of observation and comparison were also applied to compare the Ukrainian slang word with the original English word and provide the Ukrainian equivalent to the slang term.

In the course of the study, we have created a survey with such questions:

1. Which of the following age groups do you belong to?
  - 18-29;
  - 30-39;
  - 40-49;
  - 50-59.
2. Gender.
  - Male
  - Female
3. English Proficiency Level. (we did not mention levels A1-A2, as the minimum for an IT employee starts at level B1).
  - B1
  - B2
  - C1
  - C2
4. At work, you need English for (several possible answers):
  - Reading and studying the necessary information;
  - Writing emails, participation in meetings;
  - Writing documentation;
  - Coding;
  - Creating information content for web pages;
  - All of the above;
  - Other.
5. How often do you need English at work?
  - Every day / almost every day;
  - Several times a week;
  - Several times a month;
  - Other.
6. What slang words/anglicisms (e.g., meeting («мітинг»), fix («пофіксити»), bug («баг, бага»)) do you use most often? List some of them.
7. How often do you use slang / English?
  - Very often;
  - Quite often;
  - Sometimes;
  - I almost do not use;
  - I do not use it.
8. Why do you use slang words/ anglicisms?
9. Is it difficult for you to start using Ukrainian equivalents instead of slang words today?
  - Yes;
  - No;
  - I haven't tried.

The target audience of the survey was technical writers of one of the leading IT companies in Ukraine – SoftServe.

36 respondents aged 18-29 years (72.2%) and 30-39 years old (27.8%) took part in the anonymous survey. Among them, 83.3% were women, and 16.7% were men.

The majority of respondents have the C1 level of English proficiency (66.7%). Also, common answers were: C2 (22.2%) and B2 (11.1%).

The aim of English at work is shown in the figure below:

To the question: ‘*What slang / anglicisms (e.g., митинг (meeting), пофіксити (to fix), баг (bug)) do you use most often? List some of them.*’ respondents most often mentioned the following words:

- митинг (from English *meeting* – зустріч);
- пофіксити (from English *to fix* – виправити);
- баг, бага (from English *bug* – помилка);
- лінк, лінка, ліночка (from English *link* – посилання);
- нотифікашка (from English *notification* – сповіщення);
- дедлайн (from English *deadline* – реченець, крайній термін);
- дебажити (from English *debug* – шукати помилки в програмі);
- конфіги (from English *configuration* – конфігураційний файл програми, в якому записані налаштування самої програми);
- надрафтити (from English *deadline* – зробити чорновий варіант);
- корапнутий (from English *corrupted (file)* – пошкоджений (файл));
- змерджити (from English *merge* – об’єднати);
- фрішний (from English *free* – безкоштовний)

- заскед’юлити (from English *to schedule* – призначити (н-д, зустріч));
- перескед’юлити (from English *to reschedule* – переставити (н-д, зустріч));
- кол / на колі (from English *call* – дзвінок, зустріч);
- таска (from English *task* – завдання);
- синканутись (from English *to sync up* – зустріч, на якій діляться новинами з колегами);
- порів’ювати (from English *to review* – перевірити);
- юзер (from English *user* – користувач);
- тіма, тімка (from English *team* – команда);
- дев (from English *developer* – розробник програмного забезпечення);
- сторити / засторити (from English *to store* – зберегти);
- пейджа (from English *page* – сторінка);
- поінвестігейтити (from English *to investigate* – дослідити, вивчити, дізнаватися), etc.

The next question of the survey showed that 52.8% of respondents use slang very often, 36.1% – quite often, 8.3% – sometimes, 2.8% – practically do not use it.

To the question: ‘*Why do you use slang / English?*’ most respondents answered:

- habit, professional deformation;
- it is faster to communicate with colleagues in this way, as well as easier to explain the problem;
- it is challenging to find a Ukrainian equivalent;
- it is faster because all programs and products are in English;
- it is faster and more precise what page/button we are talking about.

I would like to quote one respondent's answer: ‘I consider this is generally accepted in the working

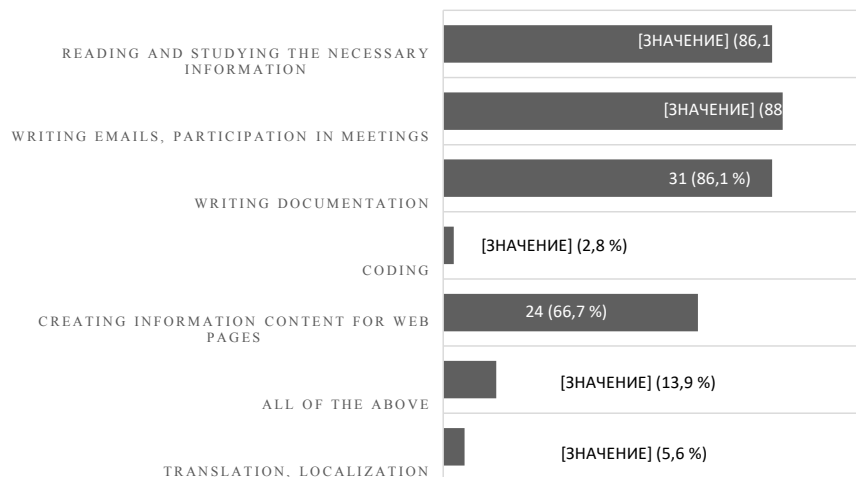


Fig. 1. Question: ‘*At work you need English for...*’

environment. Words such as «нарада» (*meeting*), начальник (*boss*), затвердити (*approve*), etc. seem to me too formal and carry a negative (or at least not neutral) connotation. The English equivalents have already been applied in our lives and have a more neutral meaning among colleagues and friends.'

The results of the last question, 'Is it difficult for you to start using Ukrainian equivalents instead of slang words today?' is shown in the figure below:

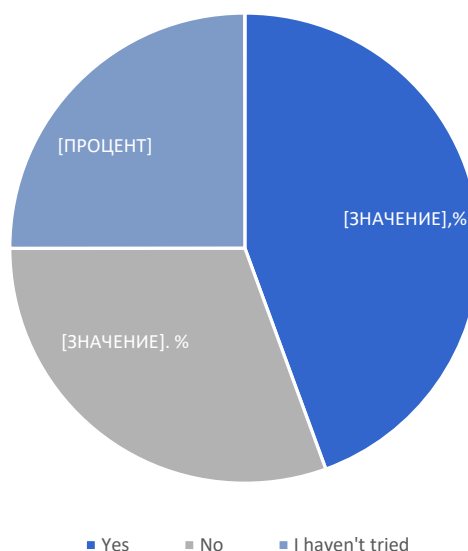
Based on our survey, we have created the IT slang database, which enumerates 200 slang terms. As a result, we can state that, for example, such words as «змерджити» (*to merge*), "лінк" (*link*), «конфіги» (*configuration*) can be classified as jargons and «юзер» (*user*), «тімка» (*team*), «дев» (*developer*), which, in turn, are related to the concept of argot. As Roman Berest points out: «Slang without the mixture of argot or jargon can be distinguished only by its ironic and sometimes vulgar nature, extreme vulnerability to the processes of leveling and word formation, and active use among the young» (Berest R.V., 2017: 34).

Also, to accustom these words to the standards of the Ukrainian language, most of these terms are created through calque (e.g., *баг, лінк, кол, юзер*) and semi-calque (*нотифікашка, пофіксити, дебажити*).

**Conclusions.** In recent years, the popularity of the Ukrainian IT industry has risen significantly. Subsequently, new tech words are entering into the Ukrainian language. However, it causes language degradation since the majority of them are not translated by the equivalent method. These slang terms are created through calque and semi-calque that distort our language and its norms.

We can define IT slang as words and expressions used by IT employees to simplify the communication between each other, speak more informally, show awareness of such language, and sometimes make an impression, for example, on newcomers.

The research results show that IT slang is widely used in the community of information technology,



**Fig. 2. Question: 'Is it difficult for you to start using Ukrainian equivalents instead of slang words today?'**

and the process of using such words and creating new ones is inevitable.

To sum up the statistical data of the survey, we can state:

– As the IT field is relatively new in Ukraine, most employees' ages were under 39 years old: 18-29 years (72.2%) and 30-39 years old (27.8%).

– Most common words are: мітинг (*meeting*), лінк (*link*), баг (*bug*), дебажити (*to debug*), дедлайн (*deadline*), корапнутий (*corrupted*), порів'ювати (*to review*), тіма, тімка (*team*) дев (*developer*), etc.

– Since the survey was conducted among the technical writers, their level of English proficiency is high: B2 (11.1%), C1 (66.7%), C2 (22.2%).

Most employees use slang frequently: very often (52.8%), quite often (36.1%), sometimes (8.3%), practically do not use it (2.8%).

It is complicated for IT specialists to eliminate slang usage: 44,4% of respondents said 'yes,' 30,6% – 'no,' 25% – haven't tried to conduct such an experiment.

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