

DESCRIPTION OF AMERICAN SLANG FOUND IN
SOME BOOKS, NOVELS, AND FILMS

By

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, the United States of America has exerted great influence on other nations in many fields of daily affairs, including the usages and vocabulary of American English, and slang. Slang is words, phrases, or meanings that are new, freshy, and popular, usually for only a short time. Slang is often very vivid, and expressive and is used in familiar talk between friends but is not accepted in formal English when speaking or writing formal English (Clarence & Robert Barnhart, 1988:1961)

This thesis investigated the functions and usages of American slang commonly used by Americans. To obtain the objectives, I conducted a survey where I collected suitable data from written sources (scientific books on language, novels, drama script) and from oral production of language, in the form of films shown in television. After obtaining the data,

I analyzed them in terms of their formations, meanings, functions, and usages. Because this thesis is descriptive in nature, the conclusion is more or less a summary of the whole discussion.

There is no limitation or rule which controls the users and the situations where people may use slang. Reasons of using slang are various, such as the intention to be thought clever/witty and different from others, the pleasure of being in fashion or ease of social intercourse. Some people use slang to impose the air of solidity or concreteness on the abstract, to enrich the language, or merely to be secret and brief. Slang can be created through abbreviation, blends, affixes, picking word/s related to certain objects/actions, through place names, idioms; coinage or onomatopoeia.

It is important for English teachers to introduce slang to advanced students because our understanding of American slang will eliminate the possibilities of misunderstanding in communicating with Americans. It might be just a brief explanation and few examples, and its teaching can be included in the suitable materials that the teachers have.