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LEXICAL FEATURES OF BLENDED AND CLIPPED SLANG WORDS

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Annotation: This article deals with the problems of lexical analysis of blended and clipped slang words in English. It is obvious that clipping and blending are important processes in a new word production of English lexicology. There are a lot of types of blended and clipped English slang words. So, lexical and semantic features of blended and clipped slang words are discussed in the article.

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Another most widespread types of shortening in English lexicology is **clipping (truncation).** It is a method of forming a new word by reducing the word to one of its parts without changing the meaning of its prototype.

According to Raevska N.M., it seems practical to make distinction between two types of shortening:

1. Apheresis (initial clipping, fore-clipping) is to cut down the initial letter(s) or syllable(s) of a word. For example, *phone* from *telephone*, *van* from *caravan.*

2. Apocope (back-clipping, final clipping) is the loss (synchronic or diachronic) of the final vowel(s), consonant(s) or syllable(s) of a word, for instance, *cap* from *captain, tick* from *ticket* [1].

In addition to the double subgroups above mentioned, there are also two types of clipping:

3. Syncope (medial clipping) is the loss of the sound(s) or syllable(s) within a word. For example, *maths* from *mathematics, ma'am* from *madam, laboratory* – in British English *[lə'bɒrətri]* [2].

4. Mixed clipping is the parallel loss of the sound(s) or syllable(s) from the beginning and end of a word as *flu* from *influenza, tec* from *detective* [3].

During our investigation, we confronted a lot of clipped slang words in the realm of shortening and analysed them both structurally and semantically.

Initially, let us start analysing apheresis. As to the structural peculiarity, apheresis can be divided into the following groups:

1. Apheresis cut off by apostrophe (’): *’abdabs (n British) – a state of mental agitation bordering on hysteria, a condition of anxiety, nervousness;* **’ampsteads (n British)** *– teeth. Cockney rhyming slang referring to the London beauty spot Hampsted Heath;* **’andsome (adj British)** *– excellent, impressive;* **’erb (n)** *– marihuana, herbal cannabis;* **’erbert (n British)** *– a foolish person, a cheeky, unwashed child;* **’Nam (n American)** *– Vietnam;* **’roo (n)** *– a kangaroo;* **’vette (n British)** *– a Chevrolet Corvette (the archetypal American sports car) (T.Thorne);* **’ere (American)** *– said when passing a marihuana cigarette;* **’ner (n American)** *– dinner;* **’n’ (conjunction)** *– and, as in “Rock ’n’ Roll”;* **’rooms (n American)** *– mushrooms (T. Dalzell, T. Victor).*

2. Apheresis cut off without apostrophe (’): *droid (n American) – a robot-like person (stupid, slow and completely unimaginative);* **poo (n British)** *– champagne. From a shortening of slang “shampoo (champagne)” (R.Spears);* **tache (n British)** *– a moustache;* **za (n American)** *– a pizza (T.Thorne);* **Viet (n)** *– a Vietnamese person;* **vig (n)** *– interest owed on an illegal loan. A shortened form of the slang “vigorish” (T. Dalzell);* **nana (n American)** *– a nursery use of banana;* **base (n)** *– freebase (cocaine), basic cocaine from which the hydrochloride has been removed;* **coon (n)** *– a black person. An offensive term is from* **raccoon** *(a black-faced rural pest);* **groid (n)** *– a black person. A shortened “negroid”;* **kraut (n)** *– a German. From the German dish “sauerkraut” (T. Dalzell, T. Victor).*

According to the semantic feature, apheresis can be classified as followings:

1. Apheresis characterizing a human being: **’erbert** *– a foolish person, a cheeky, unwashed child;* **droid** *– a robot-like person (stupid, slow and completely unimaginative).*

2. Apheresis representing one's nationality: *Viet* – *a Vietnamese person;* *kraut* – *a German.*

3. Apheresis utilized for racism: *coon* – *a black person;* *groid* – *a black person.*

4. Apheresis expressing a part of a human being: *'ampsteads* – *teeth;* *tache* – *a moustache.*

5. Apheresis related to drug addiction: *'erb* – *marihuana, herbal cannabis;* *base* – *freebase (cocaine), basic cocaine from which the hydrochloride has been removed.*

6. Apheresis expressing mental excitement: *'abdabs* **–** *a state of mental agitation bordering on hysteria, a condition of anxiety, nervousness.*

7. Apheresis relevant to eating: *'ner* – *dinner;* *za* – *a pizza.*

8. Descriptive apheresis: *'andsome* – *excellent, impressive.*

9. Apheresis belonging to criminality: *vig* – *interest owed on an illegal loan.*

10. Phytonymic apheresis: *'rooms* – *mushrooms;* *nana* – *a nursery use of banana.*

11. Toponymic apheresis: *'Nam* – *Vietnam.*

12. Zoonymic apheresis: *'roo* – *a kangaroo.*

13. Apheresis is a type of a car: *'vette* – *a Chevrolet Corvette.*

14. Apheresis is a type of a beverage: *poo* – *champagne.*

15. Apheresis used for exclamation: *'ere* – *said when passing a marihuana cigarette.*

Secondly, we are going to demonstrate the results of analysing apocopes. According to analyses, we can infer that apocopes are the most productive way of not only clipping, but also shortening.

As to the structural characteristics, we decided to classify apocopes as follows:

1. Apocopes formed by cutting away only the final element of their prototypes such as **bod (n)** – *body. The short form is usually heard in American speech;* **boob (n)** – *a foolish, empty-headed person. A shortening of the slang "booby" (T.Thorne).*

2. Apocopes cut off by apostrophe ('): bro' (n American) – *a term of address used typically by black Americans to each other. It is a shortening of brother;* **chara' (n British)** – *a motor coach (T.Thorne).*

3. Apocopated slang words which can structurally be homonyms for words in the formal language: amp (slang, *an ampule of a drug***)** – **amp (formal language,** *ampere***); barb (slang,** *a barbiturate***)** – **barb (formal language,** *a remark that is clever but cruel and hurtful***); crack (slang,** *top-notch, first rate***)** – **crack (formal language,** *a very narrow space between parts of something***); demo (slang,** *a political demonstration***)** – **demo (formal language,** *an example of a product, especially a computer program or piece of recorded music, given or shown to someone to try to make them buy it***); flip (slang,** *a shortening of flippant***)** – **flip (formal language,** *when something turns over quickly and repeatedly***); fruit (slang,** *an eccentric person, from the slang "fruitcake"***)** – **fruit (formal language,** *the usually sweet-tasting part of a tree or bush which holds seeds and which can be eaten***); home (slang,** *shortening of the slang "homeboy – a street-gang member ready and old enough to defend his area or turf"***)** – **home (formal language,** *the house or apartment where you live with your family***).**

4. Apocopes formed by cutting away the final syllable (s) of their prototypes: af/aff (n) – *an African;* **brill (adj British)** – *excellent, marvelous. A teen-age shortening of "brilliant";* **cig (n)** – *a cigarette or cigar;* **condo (n American)** – *an owner-occupied flat, a condominium (T. Dalzell, T. Victor);* **to blub (v British)** – *to cry, weep. It is a shortening of the colloquial "blubber";* **Brit (n)** – *a British person. The short form of the word "British";* **Brum (n British)** – *a modern short form of the slang "Brummagem – Birmingham";* **carni (n)** – *a carnival or travelling circus;* **Clyde (n American)** – *an attractive male. It is a shortening of the slang "Clydesdale – an attractive male";* **juve (n)** – *a juvenile offender or delinquent (T.Thorne);* **cop (n)** – a police officer. It is a shortening of the slang "copper – a police officer"; **Jap(adj)** – *Japanese* ; **hash(n)** – *hashish (cannabis resin or pollen);* **klepto (n)** – *a kleptomaniac (a compulsive or habitual thief) (T. Dalzell).*

Semantically, we divided them into the following groups:

1. Apocopes describing a person: a) describing one's character: boob – *a foolish, empty-headed person;* **fruit -** *an eccentric person;* **klepto** – *a kleptomaniac (a*

compulsive or habitual thief); ***b) expressing one's nationality:*** **af/aff** – *an African;* **Jap** – *Japanese*; **Brit** – *a British person;* ***c) describing one's action:*** **to blub** – *to cry, weep.*

2. Somatic apocopes: bod – *body.*

3. Apocopes of the underworld: home – *a street-gang member ready and old enough to defend his area or turf;* **juve** – *a juvenile offender or delinquent;* **cop** – *a police officer.*

4. Apocopes related to smoking: cig – *a cigarette or cigar;* **hash** – *hashish.*

5. Apocopes relevant to drug addiction: amp - *an ampule of a drug;* **barb -** *a barbiturate.*

6. Toponymic apocopes: condo – *a condominium;* **Brum** – *Birmingham.*

7. Apocopes related to politics: demo – *a political demonstration.*

8. Apocopes relevant to entertainment: carni – *a carnival or travelling circus.*

9. Descriptive apocopes: crack – *top-notch, first rate;* **flip** – *a shortening of flippant;* **brill** – *excellent, marvelous.*

10. Apocope is a vehicle: chara' – *a motor coach.*

11. Apocopes used for addressing someone: bro' – *a term of address used typically by black Americans to each other.*

Thirdly, we are going to show the results of analyses of syncopes among slang words.

According to the structural forms, we split syncopes into the following types:

1. Syncopes formed by apostrophe ('): pee'd (adj British) – *a more polite version of the slang "**pissed** – drunk" (T.Thorne).*

2. Syncopes formed without apostrophe ('): bins (n British) – *a pair of spectacles, glasses;* **exes (n British)** – a short form of "expenses"; *(T. Dalzell, T. Victor)*

tranqs (n) – a short form of "Tranquillizers" *(T.Thorne).*

As to their semantic peculiarities, they can be classified into the following groups:

1. Syncope is a piece of equipment: bins – *a pair of spectacles, glasses.*

2. Syncope is an economic term: exes – *expenses.*

3. Descriptive syncope: **pee'd** – *drunk.*

4. Syncope is a drug: tranqs – *tranquillizers.*

Fourthly, we can infer that slang words formed by mixed clipping have a single form in accordance with their structure:

1. Simple (having only one syllable) such as **boo (n American)** – *marihuana. It is possibly a pre-World War II adoption of "jabooby", an African term for fear, or else from the adjectival sense;* **gin (n Australia)** – *an aboriginal woman (T.Thorne).*

According to the semantic features, they can be classified as follows:

1. Mixed clipping is an illegal drug: boo – *marihuana.*

2. Mixed clipping expressing ethnic background: gin – *an aboriginal woman.*

III. Another type of shortening in English lexicology is **blending.** In blending, pieces (sounds or syllables) of two different words are combined, as in smog = smoke + fog; Oxbridge = Oxford + Cambridge [4].

The result of blending bears different names by different authors, for instance, **blends, blend-words, blendings, fusions, telescoped words or portmanteau words.**

From the Marchand's point of view, the result of blending is a moneme, as an unanalysable simple, not a motivated syntagma [5].

Having analysed the blend-words in slang dictionaries, we decided to classify them semantically as follows:

1. Blend words describing a person: a) characterizing one's behavior and appearance: aspro (n) – *a prostitute. It is the combination of **"Ass + prostitute"**;* **dilbert (n British)** – *a foolish person. It is probably a blend of **"Dill (fool, idiot) + Gilbert (comical Christian name)"**;* **twimp (n American)** – *a foolish or insignificant individual. It is the blending of **"Twit/twerp + Wimp"**;* **chocoholic (n)** – *a person with an inordinate fondness for chocolate in all its forms. It is the blending of **"Chocolate + Alcoholic"** (T.Thorne).*

2. General descriptive blend-words: snazzy (adj) – *smart, elegant, stylishly impressive. The word is a blend of* ***"Snappy + Jazzy";*** **ginormous (adj)** – *huge, vast. It is a children's blend of* ***"Giant/gigantic + Enormous";*** **mummerset (n British)** – *the imitation of rustic West Country speech used by actors. It is a blend of* ***"Mumble + Somerset"*** *(T.Thorne).*

3. Blend-words representing an action: to boot (v American) – *to vomit. This preppie expression is a blend of* ***"Barf (to vomit) + Hoot";*** **to trog (v British)** – *to trek, walk energetically or wearingly. It is probably a blend of* ***"Trek + Slog";*** **to widdle (v)** – *to urinate. It is a blend of* ***"Wee (to urinate) + Piddle (urine or an act of urination)";*** **to yatter (v)** – *to talk incessantly, frivolously or inanely. It is a blend of* ***"Yap/yak (idle chatter) + Chatter/natter".***

To sum up, it should be noted that shortening plays one of the great roles in a new word-building process in slang as well as in a formal language. Because, 74 shortened slang words collected from four slang dictionaries in total are analysed in the paper. The final data shows that in the aggregate, the figures of clipped words represented are 53 (Apheresis – 22, apocope – 25, syncope – 4, mixed clipping – 2); the number of blend words are 11. As it is seen in the numbers that abbreviation and clipping are the most productive processes in the shortening; apocopes are the most fruitful subtypes of them. From the evidence, we can infer that shortened words help to enrich the slang vocabulary.

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