

SUBJECT-CONCEPTUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CRIMINAL SLANG

Criminal slang is spoken by those who are dealing with criminal activities. The vocabulary they use reflects not only the types of crimes. There are many expressions denoting the criminal actions of lawbreakers; their victims; weapons and instruments of crime; actions to detect, catch and punish culprits; locations where offenders are kept, etc. We shall make an attempt to classify the nominations selected from the "Gang Slang: a Dictionary of Criminal and Sexual Slang: by James Morton" by dividing them into groups.

Group 1. Names of actions related to types of a trial, punishment, prisons (73 slang nominations), for example: *to have an accident* 'to be arrested'; *to go over the Alps* "to be sent to Dartmoor prison"; *to swallow the anchor* 'to give oneself up to the police', etc. Several synonymous series can be distinguished in this group. Expressions regarding jailbreak: *to go over the wall*; *to hang it on the limb*; *to have it on one's toes*; *to cop a heel*; *to cop a moke*; *to make one*; *to be on the lam*. Another series of "being arrested": *to have one's collar felt*; *to have an accident*; *to cop a knocker*; *to gaffle up*; *to go off*; *to be jugged*; *to be in the lavender*; *to be a ready-eye*; *to take a fall*; *to be tumbled*. The synonyms of being put in prison for a long term are: *to dish out the porridge*; *to dish out the gravy*; *to do the book*; *to kiss the baby*; *to throw the book at*; *to throw the key away*; *to be weighted off*. Here is a number of verbal slang expressions which mean "to surrender to the police": *to swallow the anchor*; *to sing like a canary*; *to come his cocoa*; *to cop a plea*; *to put one's hands up*.

Group 2. Names of different types of offences and felonies, for example: *to bang a hanger* 'to steal a purse'; *to be on the arm* 'to eat and drink without payment'; *to catch a stack* 'to rob someone', etc. In this group one can find synonymous expressions to killing: *to lay him down*; *to take someone for an airing*; *to blow away*; *to blow one down*; *to bump off*; *to do the business*; *to catch cold*; *to give him the big picture*; *to give him the bus ticket home*.

Group 3. Names of misdemeanors caused by drugs and alcohol abuse: *to chase the dragon* 'to take heroin'; *to lay on the hip* 'to smoke opium'; *to be on the clouds* 'to be high on drugs'; *to kick the habit* 'to break the drug addiction'; *to be on one* 'to take drugs'; *to take a trip* 'to experience the effect of LSD'; *to go on a bat* 'to go on a spree drinking'; *to be on the bottle* 'to be an alcoholic'.

Group 4. Designations of neutral actions that do not have purely criminal connotations, e.g.: *to give it a spin* 'to attempt or to search'; *to flake out* 'to go to sleep'; *to give it the big one* 'to boast or brag'; *to be in fat city* 'to be in the money'; *to kiss off* 'to get rid of unwelcoming company'; *to be stook* 'to be in difficulties'; *to be on the one* 'to be honest'; *to be pinged* 'to be stopped by a speed camera'; *to be on the fly* 'to be in a hurry'.

Further work to group the vocabulary and identify their specific subject-conceptual characteristics is still in progress.