



Slang, Accents, and Dialects: The Ever-Changing Landscape of English

Author: Ibrohimova Farzona Firdavszoda.

ibrohimovafarzona2@gmail.com Uzbekistan State Worlds Languages University

Supervisor: Shamsiddinova Dilafruz

ABSTRACT

The English language is constantly evolving, shaped by cultural shifts, technological advancements, and global influences. Slang, accents, and dialects play a crucial role in this transformation, reflecting regional identities, social trends, and linguistic creativity. This article explores how slang develops and spreads, how accents shape perceptions of identity and communication, and how dialects preserve cultural heritage while adapting to modern influences. Additionally, the impact of digital communication and globalization on these linguistic variations is examined. By understanding these elements, we gain insight into the dynamic and ever-changing nature of the English language.

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Introduction: Language is a living entity, constantly evolving to reflect the societies that use it. English, as one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, has undergone significant transformations over time. One of the key drivers of this change is the dynamic interaction between slang, accents, and dialects. These linguistic elements not only shape how people communicate but also serve as markers of identity, culture, and social belonging. Slang introduces new words and expressions that often originate in specific communities before spreading into mainstream usage. Accents influence how speech is perceived and can even affect social and professional opportunities. Dialects preserve regional heritage while simultaneously adapting to modern influences. The rise of digital communication and globalization has further accelerated these changes, blurring traditional linguistic boundaries and creating new forms of expression.

This article examines how slang, accents, and dialects contribute to the ever-changing landscape of English. By understanding these linguistic variations, we can appreciate the richness of the language and the factors that drive its continuous evolution.

Literature review: According to Tira Nur Fitra (2023), utilizing accents during communication is natural. There are many accents and dialects in the English language, making it impossible to speak with native speakers or in daily life without an accent. She also adds, "Of course, if our students use American or British accents, that is fine, but maybe it's better to learn the accents after we have sufficient mastery of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation because accents might change over time." Based on the data from *English Live* (2025), there are seven types of British accent: Cockney, Estuary English, Yorkshire, Northern Irish, Scottish, Brummie, Scouse, Geordie.

English has three main accents and dialects: British, American, and Australian. There are no major differences between them, only variations in everyday vocabulary, certain vowel sounds, and spelling. They are not considered separate languages but rather three distinct variations of the English dialect. (Khadija, Nasir, 2024). Additionally, Dr. Corrigan said: "The research still suggests that your dialect or accent remains an important

indicator of your social status. But the expanding number of varieties means that people have a greater choice of where to place themselves in society."(*The Guardian*, 2004)

Most people are interested in how slang emerges in society and communication, particularly in textual communication. Researchers have studied surveys to understand how slang becomes popular among students, especially the younger generation. A Chinese student Shiting Huang (2024) from the University of Hong Kong conducted a survey on how and where students learn slang. According to the results, 62.75% of respondents stated that they learn slang from social media. Surprisingly, 60.78% reported learning it from their local friends, such as London slang. Additionally, 81.34% of students use slang on Instagram, which constitutes a significant number.

A study from Layan Suliman Al-Dossari, Taif University (2024) analyses that ignoring slang in education can create a disconnection between academic language skills and everyday communication abilities. Therefore, it is essential for language curricula to incorporate the evolving aspects of slang, helping learners develop cultural awareness and the ability to engage with native speakers. As English continues to evolve, teaching approaches must also adjust to ensure that students are prepared for the diverse and dynamic nature of modern communication. While Layan Suliman state his opinion positively about slangs, Maria Cline Tumbel and her colleagues (2024) argue that English lecturers should introduce their students to slang, especially those in their first semester, to help them understand commonly used informal expressions by native speakers. To prevent awkwardness or confusion when encountering abbreviated words frequently used by foreigners on social media, students and other readers should develop new skills, particularly by learning how to use slang effectively.

In today's world, many countries are banning the use of slang, especially in schools. They believe that the rise of slang may affect language and communication. Following to *The Guardian*, a secondary school in London is attempting to prevent its students from starting sentences with "basically" and using expressions like "oh my days" as part of a strict policy against fillers and slang in the classroom. The school also provided some list of words which are banned to use. **Here some Banned words and phrases at Ark All Saints academy:**

Fillers

The following words must not be used at the beginning of sentences:

- Ermmm ...
- Because ...
- No ...
- Like ...
- Say ...
- You see ...
- You know ...
- Basically ...

Slang and Idioms

These expressions must not be used:

- He cut his eyes at me (he shot me a withering sidelong glance)
- Oh my days (my goodness)
- Oh my God
- That's a neck (you need a slap for that)
- Wow
- That's long (that's boring, tough or tedious)
- Bare (very, extremely)

The report, *The Sound of Britain in 2066*, was commissioned by HSBC Bank to commemorate the introduction of their voice biometrics security technology. Also, they compared the current words with which are predicted to be in 2066 in four countries:

London:

Think - Fink

Mother - Muvver

Beauty - Booty

Red – Wed

Newcastle:

Mee-uhk (make) - Mehk

Boo'ttah (butter) - buhtuh

Toast - terst

Birmingham:

Yow (you) - yoo

Sin-guh (singer) - singuh

Proice (price) - praayce

Glasgow:

Stane - stone

Gless - glass

Fit - foot

METHOD AND METHODOLOGY:

To explore the role of slang in modern communication, a survey was conducted among students to gather insights into their usage and perception of slang. Participants were asked a series of questions regarding how they learn slang, how frequently they use it, and in which contexts they find it most relevant. The survey was designed to identify key sources of slang acquisition, such as social media, peer interactions, and academic settings.

Students were also given the opportunity to vote on the most common platforms where they encounter slang and the most frequently used slang expressions. The collected responses were analyzed to determine trends in slang adoption and its influence on communication. The findings provide valuable data on how slang evolves and integrates into students' everyday language.

To understand how social media affects English language usage, a survey was conducted among students. The poll asked: **“How has the way you speak English changed over time due to social media and online communication?”** A total of **77 students participated**, and the results reveal interesting trends.

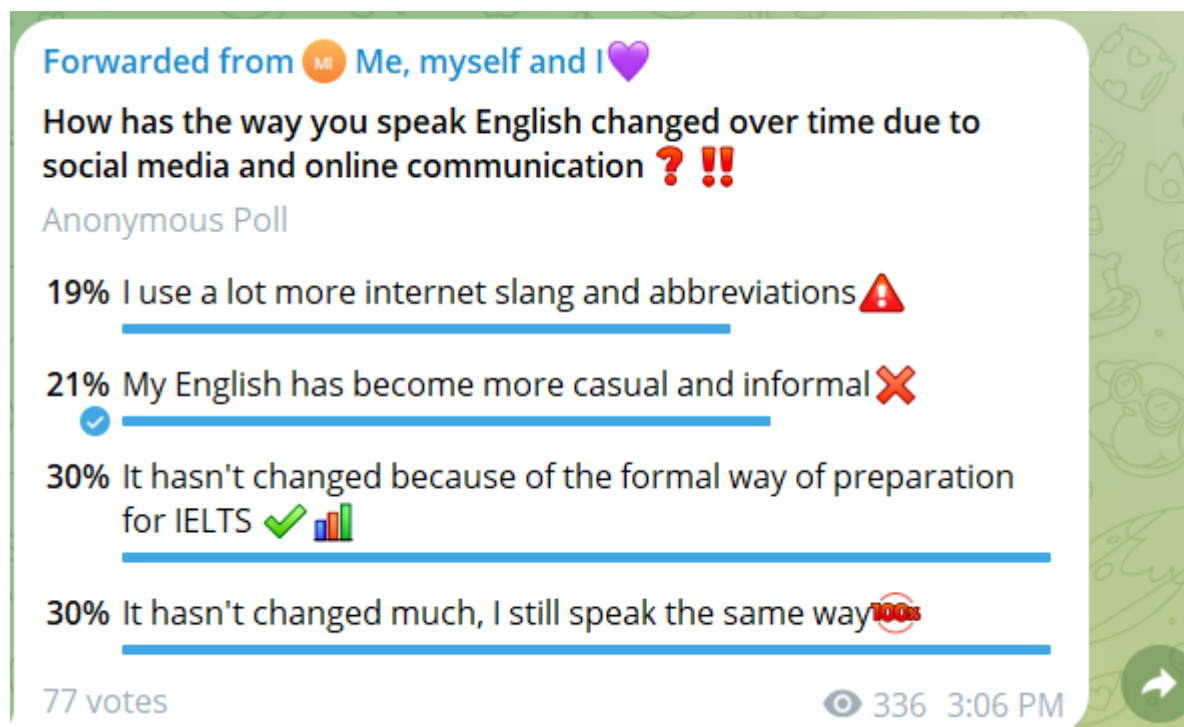
~19% of respondents stated that they now use **more internet slang and abbreviations**, showing how digital communication has shaped their vocabulary.

~21% reported that their English has become **more casual and informal**, indicating that online conversations influence speech patterns.

~30% of students said their English **remained unchanged due to IELTS preparation**, suggesting that formal education still plays a major role in maintaining language structure.

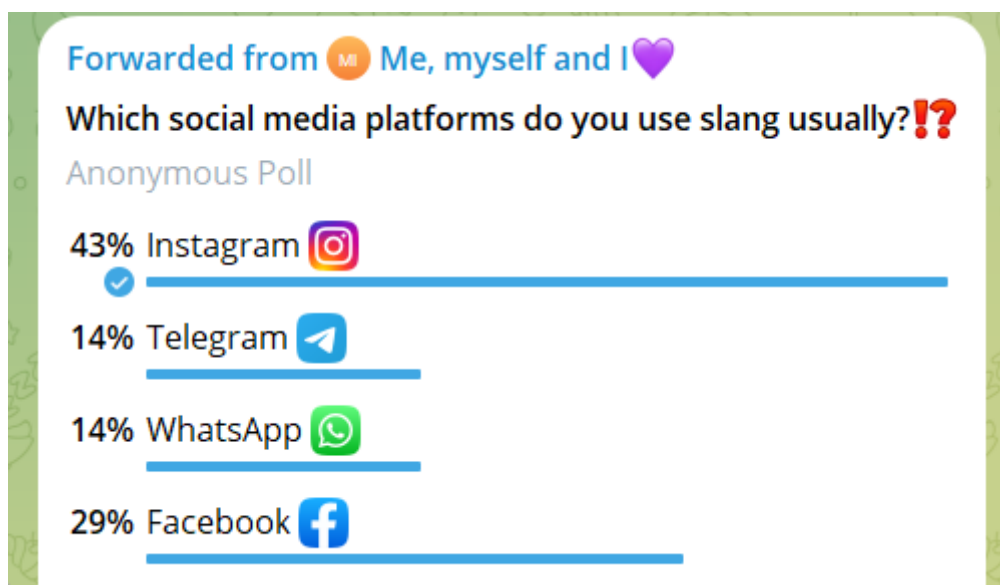
~Another 30% noted that their English **has not changed much**, meaning that while social media is impactful, it does not affect everyone equally.

These findings highlight the **growing influence of digital communication** on language. While some students embrace internet slang and casual expressions, others maintain a formal style due to academic requirements.



<https://telegram.org/>

And also, students were asked which social media platforms they most commonly use slang on, and the results showed a clear **dominance of Instagram** as the leading space for slang usage:



<https://telegram.org/>

Students were asked which social media platforms they most commonly use slang on, and the results showed a clear **dominance of Instagram** as the leading space for slang usage:

- 43%** – Instagram (the most slang-heavy platform)
- 29%** – Facebook (often a mix of formal and informal language)
- 14%** – Telegram (primarily used for direct messaging and group chats)
- 14%** – WhatsApp (also used for private conversations)

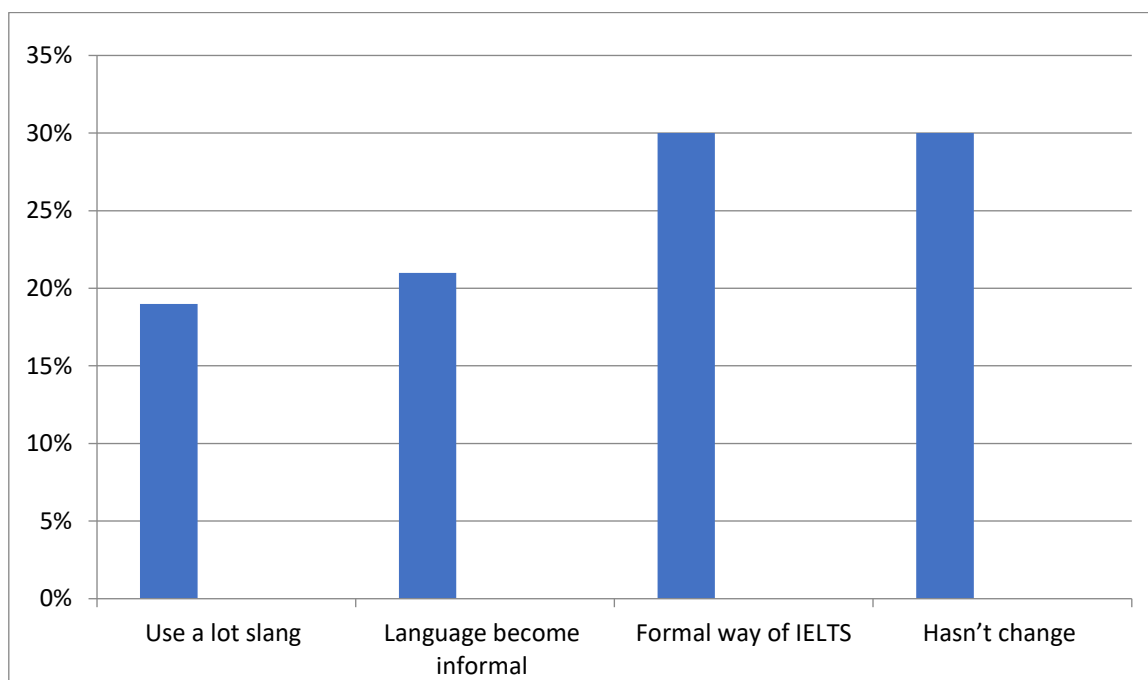
RESULTS:

The survey findings highlight the evolving nature of English due to social media and online communication. A notable **19%** of respondents reported incorporating more internet slang and abbreviations into their language, while **21%** stated that their English had become more casual and informal. However, structured learning environments still play a significant role in maintaining language standards, as **30%** of participants indicated that their language remained unchanged due to the formal approach required for IELTS preparation. Another **30%** believed that social media had little to no effect on their language use, suggesting that not everyone is equally influenced by digital communication trends.

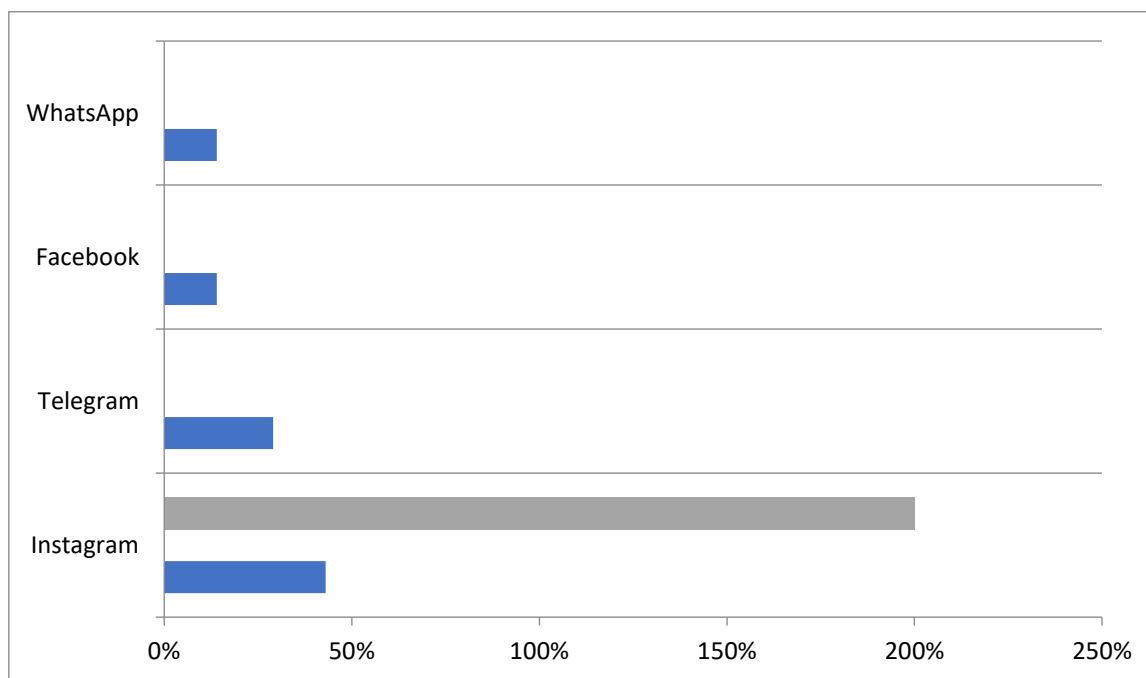
When analyzing which social media platforms contribute most to slang usage, **Instagram (43%)** ranked the highest, reinforcing its role as a hub for informal and trendy language. **Facebook (29%)** followed, showing that slang is still prevalent among its users, albeit to a lesser extent. Meanwhile, **Telegram and WhatsApp (14% each)** had relatively lower slang usage, possibly due to their primary functions as messaging apps where users may prefer clearer, more structured communication.

ANALYSIS:

The surveys highlight the impact of social media on language evolution, particularly slang usage. **19%** of respondents reported using more internet slang, while **21%** noticed a shift toward informal English. However, **30%** stated their language remained unchanged due to formal learning, and another **30%** saw little to no change.



The second survey shows **Instagram (43%)** as the most influential platform for slang, followed by **Facebook (29%)**, while **Telegram and WhatsApp (14% each)** have a lesser impact. These results suggest that slang adoption varies based on social media exposure, educational background, and platform nature, balancing between digital trends and traditional language norms.



Discussion:

The survey results reveal a clear divide between the influence of social media on language and the role of formal education in preserving traditional linguistic structures. While many students embrace slang and informal expressions in digital communication, a significant portion remains unaffected due to academic commitments like IELTS preparation. This suggests that while social media accelerates linguistic change, it does not completely replace formal language learning.

Furthermore, the platform-specific analysis shows that Instagram is the most slang-heavy social media, reflecting its younger and trend-driven user base. In contrast, Telegram and WhatsApp, primarily used for direct messaging, see less slang usage, indicating that users may prioritize clarity in private conversations.

Conclusion

The evolution of English is driven by slang, accents, and dialects, influenced by cultural shifts, globalization, and digital communication. Slang introduces new expressions, while accents and dialects preserve regional identity and shape social perceptions. Social media plays a significant role in spreading slang, with platforms like Instagram leading its usage. However, formal education remains a key factor in maintaining language structure. The findings suggest that while digital communication accelerates linguistic changes, traditional language norms still hold importance. Understanding these dynamics helps us appreciate the continuous transformation of English in a modern, interconnected world.

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