

Abstract:

In the last few years, the language of teenagers has been the focus of attention from different perspectives. One of the features that characterizes this type of language is the particular way adolescents intensify their language. This is precisely the object of study of this paper. For this purpose, we have analyzed data from different corpora: COLT (*The Bergen Corpus of London Teenage Language*), SCoSE (*Saarbrücken Corpus of Spoken English*) and DCPSE (*Diachronic Corpus of Present-Day Spoken English*) together with additional materials from other written and oral sources, including magazines oriented specifically to teenagers, British Library archival sound recordings, websites and web-based glossaries of British teenagers' language. The results obtained show the frequent use of *really* and *so* as intensifiers; taboo words (e.g. *bloody*, *fucking*) are also quite widely attested as intensifying expressions. Negatives are frequently intensified by teenagers in a particular way and expletives in certain types of questions and exclamations are a common reinforcing resource. Finally, a number of lexical devices to strengthen language are considered: prefixes (*super-*, *mega-*, *uber-*), and expressions denoting the very positive qualities (*cool*, *massive*, *wicked*). Comparisons are drawn with adult language to identify those intensification strategies which are typical of teentalk.

Keywords: teenagers' language, intensification, adjective intensification, intensifiers, taboo words, expletives.