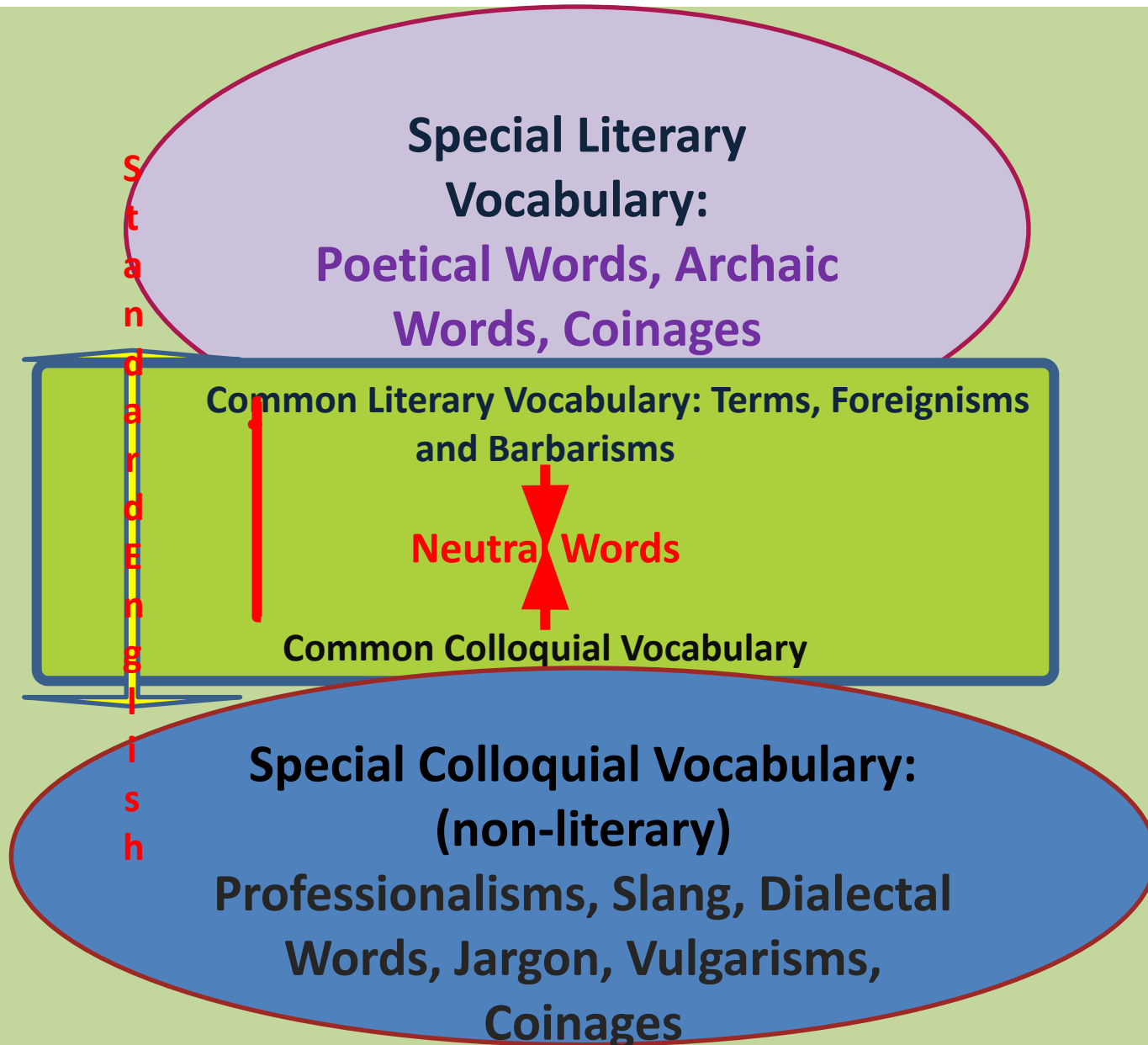


# Three Main Layers of the English Vocabulary



Layer	The common property	Groups of words
<b>The literary layer</b>	The markedly <b>bookish</b> character.	<i>1)Common literary words;</i> <u><i>Special literary vocabulary:</i></u> 2)Terms and learned words; 3)Poetic words; 4)Archaic words; 5)Barbarisms and foreign words; 6)Literary coinages
<b>The neutral layer</b>	The <b>universal</b> character: it is <b>unrestricted in its use</b> , it can be employed in all styles of language and all spheres of human activity, It is the most <b>stable</b> layer of vocabulary.	<u><i>Standard English vocabulary:</i></u> <i>1)Common literary words;</i> 2)Neutral words; <i>3)Common colloquial words</i>
<b>The colloquial layer</b>	The <b>lively spoken</b> character, it is <b>unstable, fleeting</b> . It is often <b>limited</b> to a definite language community or confined to a special locality where it circulates.	<i>1)Common colloquial words;</i> <u><i>Special colloquial (non-literary) words:</i></u> 2)Slangisms; 3)Jargonisms; 4)Professional words; 5)Dialectal words; 6)Vulgar words;

## Neutral, common literary and common colloquial

vocabulary

**Neutral** words form the bulk of the English vocabulary. They are used in both *literary and colloquial language*. Neutral words are the main source of synonymy and polysemy and are prolific in the production of new meanings. They are *not stylistically marked* whereas both literary and colloquial words have a *special stylistic colouring* (*degree of emotiveness, sphere of application or degree of quality denoted, etc.*). E.g. ***to talk- to converse-to chat***. The *lines of demarcation* between common colloquial and neutral on the one hand, and common literary and neutral, on the other hand, are *blurred*. The process of *interpenetration and interdependence* of the stylistic strata becomes here most apparent, because the lower range of literary words and the upper range of the colloquial layer have a markedly obvious *tendency to pass into the neutral layer*. E.g. ***teenager and flapper*** are colloquial words passing into the neutral vocabulary. They are gradually losing their non-standard character and becoming widely recognized.

## Special literary vocabulary

- Terms** (*social connotation in respect of various strata of a society*);
- Poetic** and **highly literary** words (*social connotation in respect of the accepted literary norm; communicative-functional connotation*);
- Archaic** words (*temporal connotation*);
- Barbarisms** and **foreign** words (*territorial connotation*);
- Literary coinages** (*including nonce-words*).

# Special Colloquial Vocabulary

- **Slangisms** (*social connotation in respect of various strata of society*);
- **Jargonisms** (*social connotation in respect of various strata of society*);
- **Professionalisms** (*social connotation in respect of various strata of society*);
- **Dialectal words** (*territorial connotation*);
- **Vulgar words** (*social connotation in respect of various strata of society*);

Normative stylistic colouring	Norm	Examples
<b><u>Bombastic</u></b> , High-flown, pompous	<b>Out of the norm</b>	
<b><u>Special-literary</u></b> , lofty, elevated, highly literary, poetic, learned words, bookish, formal	<b>Exalted norm</b>	<i>to inter, to precipitate, amplitude, demerit, decorous, espouse, rudiment; steed, charger; welkin; vale; devouring element, etc.</i>
<b><u>Standard English: Common literary</u></b>	<b>Basic norm</b>	<i>To eliminate; to assign, to allocate ;to fabricate, to concoct; to assist; to continue; to initiate, etc.</i>
<b><u>Standard English: Neutral</u></b>	<b>Basic norm</b>	<i>To destroy; to budget, to earmark; to invent, to make up; to help; to proceed; to begin, to start, etc.</i>
<b><u>Standard English: Common colloquial</u></b> , literary-colloquial, informal	<b>Possible norm</b>	<i>To wreck, to dump; to set aside; to trump up; Mummy, dad, dorm, chap, rubbish, doc, monstrosity, rumbustious, to shut up, to pooh-pooh, down and out, to snuff it.</i>
<b><u>Special-colloquial</u></b> , familiar-colloquial, low colloquial	<b>Out of the norm</b>	<i>Girl: bundle, duckling, fluff, plaything, sugar, cookie, etc.</i>
<b><u>Vulgar</u></b> , rude, taboo, four-letter words	<b>Out of the norm</b>	Bastard, son-of-a-bitch, arse (ass), ass-hole, bugger, etc.

# Word building models of word coinage

The word building level of the language can be considered as a special resource of expressiveness. In modern English new words are coined by means of *affixation, word compounding, contraction and conversion*. However, only those means of word coinage which provide **novelty + force** have stylistic marking.

**1) Affixation** is still predominant in coining new words. Suffixes and prefixes of *Latin or Greek origin* (pro-, anti-, super-, quasi-, post-, ex-) traditionally create coinages of *literary-bookish* character, e.g. anti-census campaign; the pro-choice vs pro-life debate permeates politics; quasimilitary, etc.

Suffixes *-y*, *-ie* and *-er* are productive in the *colloquial speech*. E.g., *seedy*, *weepy*, *hairy*, *smelly*, *nervy*; *bookie*, *yuppie*, *veggie*; *belly bomber*; *job-hopper*, *temp-worker*, *freelancer*, etc.

Suffixes and prefixes borrowed from modern foreign languages create *ironical or slighting connotations* (German: *-fest*, *Über-*; French: *-ville*; Russian: *-nik*; Italian: *-azzi*, *-ati*, *-ize*).

E.g., *refusenik*, *all-rightnik*; *dullville*, *dogville*, *disasterville*; *videorazzi*, *paperazzi*, *rumorazzi*; *soccerati*, *ligerati*, *illuminati*; *to picturize*, *to vacationize*, *to cityzenize*; *ubermodel*, *uberchief*, etc.



Besides the effect of compression and economy, some traditional prefixes and suffixes may produce an *effect of surprise, irony* and add an *expressive-emotional colouring* to a word.

E.g. unkissable, laughable, payable, certifiable; fatherless, childless, spineless, ageless, brainless, etc.

**2) Word compounding** let combine different parts of speech to form new compound words with stylistic marking.

E.g. brainwave, thinktank, blueblood Ivy Leaguer, to windowshop, to babysit, to blackmail, to pickpocket, to brainwash, to skyrocket, etc.

**3) Contraction** is realized by clipping and abbreviation.

Clipping appeared in the colloquial speech, the most productive way is **back clipping**, e.g. con (confidence): con-man, con-game, to con; showbiz (show business); glam (glamorous); diff (difference); ad (advertisement), etc.

**Fore-clipping**: in-laws (mother- in-law, father-in-law), mum (chrysanthemum), etc.

**Middle-clipping**: flu (influenza), etc.

**Blend**: stagflation (stagnation+inflation), Amerind (American+Indian), spam (spiced+ham), etc.

**Abbreviation**: initialisms (HIV, FBI, DIY, FAQ, PhD) and achronyms (AIDS, NATO, UNICEF, OPEC).

**4) Conversion** is formation of new words by transferring them from one part of speech to another without any word building means.

Conversion has a great stylistic potential. A new word acquires the paradigm of a new part of speech.

E.g. *a second pair of shoes/ a second in command / to second a motion;*

*local citizens → locals; to monkey sb; to bulldog sb to the ground; to scissor the cloth; to hook the reader; to mirror the opinions of common people, etc.*