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THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE EVOLUTION OF MODERN LANGUAGE

The modern world is experiencing rapid development in digital technologies and means of communication, which have become an integral part of everyday life. One of the most influential aspects of the digital revolution is social media, which connects millions of users around the world. In academic circles, there is growing discussion about the significant impact of the Internet on the field of education. In particular, researchers note that compared to traditional methods of disseminating information (books, newspapers, radio, television), social media offer greater flexibility in conveying any message.

In light of these changes, the approach to learning English is also evolving, accompanied by the emergence of innovative teaching methods.

Research in the fields of digital pedagogy and linguistics (in particular, the works of D. Crystal, G. McCulloch, and Y. V. Bondaruk) emphasizes the importance of using social media, online services, and blogs in the process of learning modern English [4]. In particular, it is noted that interactivity, access to authentic language materials, and opportunities for intercultural communication contribute to the more effective development of language skills.

English remains the dominant language in the digital environment: according to data from Internet World Stats and Statista, its share of the Internet is approximately 50–60% depending on the study period, and the total number of speakers exceeds 1 billion people (including those who use it as a second language). This determines its leading role in global online communication and underscores the relevance of studying it in the context of digitalization [1].

The internet has made social interactions with large numbers of people faster and more convenient, regardless of geographical distance. By analyzing user interactions in online communities, researchers can gain insights into data that would otherwise be difficult or even impossible to access.

First, this allows researchers to study a larger and more diverse population than would be possible using other methods. Second, online data is often more accurate and detailed than data collected by other means.

The development of social media has had a significant impact on contemporary linguistic processes, particularly on the formation of new vocabulary. One of the most noticeable manifestations of this influence is the emergence of a large number of neologisms. Such linguistic units arise in response to new social practices, technological phenomena, and forms of communication characteristic of the digital environment. In the modern English-speaking world, words such as “*selfie*” (a photo taken by a person of themselves), “*influencer*” (a person who influences an audience through social media), “*meme*” (an image or phrase conveying a specific idea or humorous content), “*unfriend*” (to remove a user from one’s friends list), and “*ghosting*” (to abruptly cease communication without explanation) have become

commonplace. The emergence of these lexical units is linked to new communicative practices that have emerged in the digital environment.

In linguistic studies, neologisms are traditionally classified according to the nature of their origin [2]. The first group includes words that denote fundamentally new phenomena and realities that were previously absent from society's sociocultural experience. An example is the term "*cyberterrorism*," which refers to deliberate, politically motivated attacks on information resources, computer systems, or networks. The second group includes lexical units that denote phenomena that existed previously but did not have a separate linguistic designation. For example, "*wild cycling*" is used to describe cycling in rural areas on small roads and trails. The third group includes words describing potential or predicted phenomena related to the further development of science and technology. For example, the term "*cultured meat*" is used to refer to meat grown from cells under controlled laboratory conditions. The fourth group consists of neological synonyms that function alongside existing lexical units and differ only in stylistic or expressive nuances of meaning, such as the word "*yucky*," which is a colloquial equivalent of the adjective "disgusting".

Another criteria for classification is the relationship between the form and meaning of a linguistic unit. In this context, several types of lexical innovations are distinguished. The first type consists of neologisms, in which a new form is combined with a new meaning. For example, the word "*troll*" in digital discourse refers to a user who posts provocative or offensive messages with the aim of provoking conflict or a negative reaction in online communities. The second type involves transnomination — cases where a new linguistic form is used to convey a meaning previously expressed by other words. An example is the lexeme "*rainbowlicious*," which describes the brightness and variety of colors. The third type consists of semantic innovations, or reinterpretations, where an existing word takes on a new meaning. In particular, the expression "*on point*" is used in modern language to describe something done flawlessly or exceptionally well.

In addition to the emergence of new words, an important characteristic of digital communication is the active use of abbreviations and acronyms. In the context of rapid messaging on social media, there arose a need for the most concise and effective way to convey information. That is why abbreviations such as LOL (laughing out loud), OMG (oh my God), BRB (be right back), IDK (I don't know), GTG (got to go), and NP (no problem) are widely used in online communication. These linguistic units allow users to quickly convey emotions, reactions, and information, significantly reducing the time spent writing messages [3].

The spread of such abbreviations is driven not only by a desire to conserve linguistic resources but also by the unique characteristics of communication in the digital environment, where speed, informality, and convenience are of paramount importance. Many of these abbreviations are gradually moving beyond online communication and becoming understandable to a wide range of language users in various cultural contexts. Thus, social media acts as a powerful catalyst for linguistic change, contributing to the emergence of new vocabulary, the transformation of word meanings, and the formation of new communication patterns.

Social networks have a significant impact on the modern English lexicon, contributing to its constant expansion through the emergence of new lexical items, idiomatic expressions, abbreviations, and stylistic conventions. This process fosters the

formation of new communication norms in which the immediacy of information exchange and visual presentation play a central role. Due to the dynamic nature of digital platforms, which actively promote the spread of neologisms, memes, and other innovative linguistic forms, language is becoming increasingly adaptive, heterogeneous, and functionally multifaceted. New lexical units reflect specific social, cultural, and technological transformations that are part of broader processes of globalization, digitalization, and the intensification of online interactions.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, neologisms can also be viewed as markers of group identity, as they are often used by communities that are actively engaged in digital communication. Consequently, linguistic innovations can spread rapidly among language communities, encountering relatively few obstacles. Thus, neologisms, abbreviations, memes, and acronyms should be viewed as evidence that digital culture not only transforms communicative practices but is also a significant factor in the ongoing evolution of language.

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