

LANGUAGE CHANGE IN THE COMMUNICATION OF
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Abstract: *Language is an ever-evolving phenomenon, shaped continuously by cultural, technological, and social shifts. Among the most profound influences on language in recent years is the emergence of Generation Z, a cohort born roughly between the mid-1990s and early 2010s. This generation has come of age in a world saturated with digital technology, social media platforms, and instant communication tools, which has significantly transformed the way they use and perceive language. The communication styles of Generation Z reveal remarkable departures from those of preceding generations, showcasing novel linguistic features, new norms, and changed attitudes toward language that both reflect and influence broader societal transformations.*

Keywords: *digital technologies, language, communication, social media, emoticons, abbreviations, grammar rules, spelling, manipulation.*

One of the most striking aspects of Generation Z's communication is the prevalence and normalization of digital language forms. This generation grew up with smartphones, texting, and social media as integral parts of daily life. Consequently, informal, abbreviated, and multimodal text types—such as emojis, acronyms, memes, and GIFs—have become central components of their linguistic repertoire. While older generations may view this trend as a degradation of language standards, it rather represents an adaptive strategy that enhances expressiveness and efficiency in communication. Emojis, for example, function as emotional markers, adding nuance and context that plain text might lack. Acronyms like “LOL” and “OMG” serve as quick emotional responses that facilitate rapid exchanges. These



elements illustrate how Generation Z's language use balances brevity with expressivity, reflecting the fast-paced nature of digital interactions. Moreover, Generation Z's communication reveals a fluid approach to language norms and conventions. Traditional grammatical rules and spelling standards are often relaxed or deliberately subverted in digital communication spaces. The creative manipulation of spelling and punctuation, such as omitting capitalization, intentional misspellings, or using unconventional sentence structures, operates as a stylistic marker that signals group identity and insider status. This linguistic playfulness does not indicate ignorance but rather signifies an evolving communicative competence suited to new contexts. It fosters solidarity among peers and enables members of Generation Z to craft unique social identities through language.[1]

The impact of social media platforms on language change cannot be overstated. Platforms like TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat are not only arenas for social interaction but also incubators for linguistic innovation. Viral trends and challenges often come with their own catchphrases, hashtags, and stylistic conventions that spread rapidly across user communities. Slang terms emerge, evolve, and sometimes fade with remarkable speed. Words or phrases that originated in niche online subcultures frequently gain mainstream recognition, illustrating a dynamic feedback loop between language and culture. Generation Z speakers thus participate actively in shaping contemporary language usage through their engagement with digital communities.[2]

Generation Z's communication style also demonstrates a strong preference for inclusivity and diversity, which extends to their language choices. They often adopt gender-neutral pronouns and inclusive vocabulary to respect and recognize various identities. This linguistic sensitivity reflects a broader social awareness and ethical stance, where language is viewed as a tool that can either reinforce or challenge societal inequalities. The widespread use of "they/them" pronouns in digital and spoken communication within Generation Z is indicative of a deliberate shift toward more inclusive linguistic practices that prioritize personal identity and respect.[3]



The influence of globalization and intercultural communication is another significant dimension underlying language change in Generation Z. Unlike previous generations, Generation Z grows up in a highly interconnected world where cross-cultural communication is routine. This exposure fosters the borrowing and blending of linguistic elements from diverse languages and dialects. Code-switching—alternating between languages or dialects within a conversation—has become common among multilingual members of this generation and is often seen as a marker of cultural competence rather than confusion. Furthermore, vernacular forms and expressions from different cultures gain popularity globally, often disseminated rapidly via digital media.[4]

It is important also to consider the educational implications of these language changes. Educators face the challenge of balancing respect for new forms of language use with the need to teach standard language conventions crucial for academic and professional contexts. Generation Z frequently navigates between informal digital literacy skills and formal language requirements, necessitating pedagogical approaches that recognize the legitimacy of both. Appreciating the linguistic creativity and communicative effectiveness of digital language forms can help educators connect with students and provide more meaningful language instruction. Language change within Generation Z is not limited to written or digital forms but also manifests in spoken communication. The oral language of Generation Z is influenced by the phonetic and syntactic traits observed in popular digital communication, leading to informal registers even in face-to-face interactions. Slang terms, abbreviated expressions, and newly coined words frequently permeate their speech. This trend can create generational linguistic gaps but also reflects the natural evolution of spoken language adapting to new communicative realities.[5]

Conclusion:

In summary, the communication of Generation Z exemplifies a significant linguistic transformation driven by technological advances, social values, and global interconnectedness. Their language use is characterized by innovation, adaptability, and inclusivity, combining traditional elements with emergent digital ones. Far from



diminishing language, these changes enrich it, offering new ways to express identity, emotion, and social belonging. Understanding these shifts is critical for linguists, educators, and society at large as it offers insight into how language continues to evolve in tandem with human experience and technological progress.

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