

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKS ON THE EMERGENCE
OF NEW ENGLISH WORDS AND THEIR SEMANTIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract: This article analyzes new lexical units emerging in the English language under the influence of social media and their semantic changes. The study explores the formation methods of internet neologisms and their role in modern communication.

Keywords: social media, neologisms, semantic analysis, internet slang, English language, linguistics, digital communication.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada ijtimoiy tarmoqlar ta'sirida ingliz tilida paydo bo'layotgan yangi leksik birliklar va ularning semantik o'zgarishlari tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot jarayonida internet-neologizmlarning hosil bo'lish usullari va zamonaviy muloqotdagi o'rni o'rganilgan.

Kalit so'zlar: ijtimoiy tarmoqlar, neologizmlar, semantik tahlil, internet jargonlari, ingliz tili, lingvistika, raqamli muloqot.

Аннотация: В данной статье анализируются новые лексические единицы, возникающие в английском языке под влиянием социальных сетей, и их семантические изменения. В процессе исследования изучены способы образования интернет-неологизмов и их роль в современной коммуникации.

Ключевые слова: социальные сети, неологизмы, семантический анализ, интернет-сленг, английский язык, лингвистика, цифровая коммуникация.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid evolution of digital technologies and the global expansion of social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, Twitter (X), and LinkedIn have fundamentally transformed the landscape of modern linguistics. In the contemporary era, language is no longer a static system governed solely by traditional academic institutions; instead, it has become a fluid, dynamic entity that reacts instantaneously to socio-cultural shifts occurring in virtual spaces. The emergence of new words, often referred to as neologisms, is particularly evident in the English language, which serves

as the lingua franca of the internet. These linguistic innovations are not merely fleeting slang terms but represent profound shifts in how human beings perceive reality, interact with one another, and categorize new digital phenomena. As noted by researchers, the speed at which a word moves from a niche online community to mainstream dictionaries has increased exponentially in the last decade [1, p. 14]. This process is driven by the democratic nature of social media, where any user can potentially coin a term that goes viral, bypassing traditional gatekeepers of linguistic norms. Consequently, semantic analysis of these terms becomes crucial for understanding the cognitive and sociological aspects of the digital generation.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

The study of internet linguistics was pioneered by scholars like David Crystal, who emphasized that the internet is a medium that encourages "linguistic creativity" on a massive scale [2, p. 45]. Previous research has categorized internet-related words into various groups based on their morphological structure, such as blending, compounding, and acronyms. However, the semantic aspect—how the meanings of existing words shift or how new meanings are assigned to abstract concepts—requires deeper investigation. In this research, we employ a descriptive-analytical method combined with a corpus-based approach to examine the most frequent neologisms found on social media platforms between 2020 and 2024. The methodology involves identifying high-frequency tokens across digital discourses and subjecting them to semantic decomposition to identify shifts in denotative and connotative meanings. Furthermore, we draw upon the works of Thorne, who argues that contemporary slang is increasingly functional rather than merely decorative, serving as a marker of identity within specific digital tribes [3, p. 88]. By synthesizing these theoretical frameworks, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of how social media acts as a catalyst for lexical and semantic evolution in English.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The results of our analysis indicate that social media neologisms are formed through several primary mechanisms: semantic extension, blending, and the creation of entirely new roots related to platform features. One of the most significant trends is "semantic broadening," where words that previously had a limited technical definition have acquired broad social meanings. For instance, the word "follow" or "friend" no longer carries only a physical or deep emotional connotation but represents a formal digital connection.

Table 1: Common social media neologisms and their formation methods

Neologism	Formation Method	Primary Meaning in Social Media Context
Doomscrolling	Blending (Doom + Scrolling)	The act of continuously scrolling through bad news despite it being depressing.
Influencer	Suffixation (Influence + er)	A person with the ability to influence potential buyers by recommending items on social media.
Ghosting	Functional Shift (Noun to Verb)	Breaking off a relationship by stopping all communication without explanation.
Cancel Culture	Compounding	The practice of withdrawing support for public figures after they have done something offensive.
Clout	Semantic Shift	Power, influence, or "likes" gained through social media presence.

In Table 1, we can see how complex social phenomena are compressed into single lexical units. "Doomscrolling," for example, captures a specific psychological state unique to the smartphone era. The semantic analysis reveals that these words often carry a high emotional load, reflecting the anxieties or aspirations of the users. [5, p. 112].

Another interesting aspect is the "repurposing" of existing English words. This is often seen in how platform-specific actions become part of general vocabulary.

Table 2: Semantic shifts in traditional english words

Traditional Word	Original Meaning	New Social Media Meaning	Semantic Change Type
Viral	Relating to a biological virus	Spreading rapidly across the internet	Metaphorical extension
Feed	To give food to an animal/person	A list of newly updated content on a platform	Metonymy
Tag	A physical label	To link a person's profile to a post/photo	Specialization
Cap	A type of hat	(Slang) To lie or exaggerate	Metaphorical shift
Handle	A part of an object to be held	A username or digital identity	Metonymy

As shown in Table 2, the word "viral" has undergone a radical transformation. While it once had a purely negative, pathological connotation, in the context of social media, it is often viewed as a positive achievement for content creators. This shift demonstrates how digital culture can invert the "affective value" of a word [4, p. 22]. Furthermore, the brevity required by platforms like Twitter has led to the proliferation

of acronyms (e.g., IMO, FOMO, YOLO) that have now entered spoken English, further blurring the line between written and oral discourse.

CONCLUSION

The impact of social networks on the English language is profound and irreversible. Through our analysis, we have demonstrated that social media serves as a "linguistic laboratory" where words are tested, modified, and integrated into the global lexicon at unprecedented speeds. The semantic shifts identified—ranging from metaphorical extensions of technical terms to the creation of new blends like "doomscrolling"—reflect the changing psychological and social realities of the 21st century.

Furthermore, it is evident that these neologisms are not merely "corruptions" of the language, as some linguistic purists suggest, but are functional adaptations that allow users to communicate complex digital experiences efficiently. The long-term sustainability of these words depends on the longevity of the platforms that birthed them; however, terms like "google," "tweet," and "influencer" have already secured their places in formal dictionaries, signaling their permanence.

In conclusion, the study of social media linguistics offers valuable insights into the intersection of technology and human cognition. As digital platforms continue to evolve—moving towards the metaverse and AI-driven communication—we can expect even more radical shifts in the English language. Future research should focus on the cross-cultural impact of these English neologisms as they are borrowed into other languages, creating a unified global digital slang. Linguists must remain observant of these changes to ensure that our understanding of the English language remains relevant in an increasingly digitized world

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