

Internet slang and its influence on English language

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Анотація

В цій доповіді розглянуто питання сленгу мережі інтернет та його вплив на щоденну англійську мову. Дана робота присвячена вивченню деяких аспектів мережевого жаргону, його особливостей та проявів. Ця доповідь ставить задачу глибше зрозуміти Інтернет сленг, онлайн абревіатури, мережеві тенденції, і в цілому інтернет етикет.

Ключові слова: Інтернет, жаргон.

Abstract

The article deals with internet slang and its influence on everyday English. The given paper is devoted to the study of some aspects of Internet slang, its peculiarities and manifestations. That is why we feel need for some helpful resources to help people further understand internet slang, online acronyms, net trends, and overall internet etiquette

Keywords: Internet, slang.

Having spent some time in virtual space during the last few years, reading messages, emails as well as commentary and statements made by different social site users, I have observed many changes and irregularities in verbal and non-verbal means of communication. I was especially interested in different types of abbreviations, punctuation marks, spelling changes, grammatical and spelling mistakes, various icons that are mostly used by teenagers and students on the worldwide web. The fact that the Internet has radically changed global communication is beyond controversy. With instant access to messaging and email, the ability to circulate commentary and opinion has significantly changed the way people communicate nowadays. This has had an impact on the spoken and written language. The Internet is now an integral part of contemporary life, and linguists are increasingly studying its influence on language. With the existence of greater computer/Internet mediated communication systems, coupled with the readiness with which people adapt to meet the new demands of a more technologically sophisticated world, it is expected that users will continue to remain under pressure to alter their language use to suit the new dimensions of communication.

As the number of Internet users increases rapidly around the world, the cultural background, linguistic habits and language differences among users are brought into the Web at a much faster pace [1]. These individual differences among the Internet users will significantly impact the future of Internet linguistics, notably in the aspect of the multilingual web. The emergence of a new branch of an academic discipline does not take place very often, but the arrival of the Internet has had such an impact on language that the time is right to recognize and explore the scope of putative Internet linguistics. The latter may be observed as the synchronic analysis of language in all areas of Internet activity including 21 email, the various kinds of chatroom and games interaction, instant messaging, SMS messaging (texting), Web pages and other associated areas of computer-mediated communication (CMC). The speed of change in the past two decades has been such that it is possible to see a diachronic dimension to this subject as well. The internet allows us to follow language change in vocabulary, grammar, spelling and pronunciation [2]. Time-saving online abbreviations like LOL, OMG, and IMHO are now part of the official English language. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) announced the addition of several acronyms to its dictionary, adding some interesting trivia behind the origins of these Internet associated expressions. OED explained that although "initialisms" like OMG (Oh My God), LOL (Laughing Out Loud) and IMHO (In My Humble/Honest Opinion) are strongly associated with the language of electronic communications, their origins are surprisingly predating the Internet era [2].

Types of slang

Internet slang does not constitute a homogeneous language variety. Rather, it differs according to the user and type of Internet situation. Coming straight from SMS language, this is a way of replacing entire words or bits of words by their phonetic equivalent embodied into single letters or figures. Here are some examples: 2: too, or to 4: for 2moro: tomorrow 4u: for you gr8: great 2nite: tonight 10q: thank you da: the u: you 10x: thanks y: why Other common Internet abbreviations and symbols include “.

Letter homophones

This group includes abbreviations and acronyms. An abbreviation is a shortening of a word, for example "CU" or "CYA" for "see you (see ya)". An acronym, on the other hand, is a subset of abbreviations and is formed from the initial components of a word. Examples of common acronyms include "LOL" for "laugh out loud" or "lots of love" and "BTW" for "by the way". There are also combinations of both, like "CUL8R" for "see you later" [2].

Punctuation, capitalizations and other symbols

Such features are commonly used for emphasis or stress. Periods or exclamation marks may be used repeatedly for emphasis, such as "....." or "!!!!!!!!!!". Grammatical punctuation rules are also relaxed on the Internet. "E-mail" may simply be expressed as "email", and apostrophes can be dropped so that "John's book" becomes "johns book". Examples of capitalizations include "STOP IT", which can convey a stronger emotion of annoyance as opposed to "stop it". Bold, underline and italics are also widely used to indicate stress [2]. Onomatopoeic spellings Onomatopoeic spellings have also become popularized on the Internet. One well-known example is "hahaha" to indicate "laughter". Onomatopoeic spellings are very language specific. For instance, in Spanish, laughter will be spelt as "jajaja" instead. Deliberate misspellings, such as "sauce" for "source", are also used.

Leet Leetspeak, or 1337, is an alternative alphabet for the English language which uses various combinations of ASCII characters to replace Latin letters. For example, Wikipedia may be expressed as "w1k1p3d14". It originated from computer hacking, but its use has been extended to online gaming as well.

Clipping, a common means of reducing or shortening words without changing their meaning, is another common linguistic means of word formation found on the computer and telephone mediated communication. Some frequently used examples are: advertisement – ad, examination – exam, telephone – phone, website – site, photograph – photo, statistics – stats, hamburger – burger, graduate – grad, teenager – teen.

Today there is a widespread belief among many linguists that the Internet has a negative influence on the future of language, and that it would lead to a degradation of standard [2]. Some would even attribute any decline of standard formal English to the increase in usage of electronic communication. There was great condemnation of this style by the mass media as well as educationists, who expressed that this showed diminishing literacy or linguistic abilities.

On the other hand, descriptivists have counter-argued that the Internet allows better expressions of a language. Rather than established linguistic conventions, linguistic choices sometimes reflect personal taste. It has also been suggested that, as opposed to intentionally flouting language conventions, Internet slang is a result of a lack of motivation to monitor speech online. Using and spreading Internet slang also adds on to the cultural currency of a language. While the Internet's use of language might further change rapidly over the next few years, educators need to ensure that students maintain an academic understanding of the use and rules of language. One of the most significant things that should happen in relation to the Internet is that both children and adults should be taught to manage it.

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