

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE SEMANTIC SHIFT: SOCIAL MEDIA NEOLOGISMS

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<https://doi.org/10.53885/edinres.2024.03.1.010>*

*ANNOTATION. Since its inception, English has undergone a slow transformation. Semantic change stands out clearly from other alterations. This essay examines how linguistic contact has changed the meaning of the English language and emphasizes the part that CMC plays in these changes. The study highlights a number of terms and their definitions as used in CMC, with a focus on neologisms employed in social media. Popular social media and chat messengers like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, and others have all contributed to the creation of new meanings for traditional English words. Three platforms were chosen as a sample: Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter for the examination of the neologisms inside CMC. The most widely used terms on these social media platforms were examined using the purposive sample technique to determine whether and to what extent neologisms are created by CMC. The study discloses that so many meanings of the words of English language have changed, or used in slightly different sense.*

*Key words: semantic change, neologisms, CMC (computer-mediated communication), sociolinguistic factors, psycholinguistic factors, technology and digitalization, social media platforms (Facebook, YouTube, twitter), netspeak, English for specific purposes (ESP), language evolution.*

## СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЕ ИЗМЕНЕНИЯ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА: НЕОЛОГИЗМЫ СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ МЕДИА

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*Аннотация. С момента своего создания английский язык претерпел медленные изменения. Семантическое изменение четко выделяется среди других изменений. В этой статье рассматривается, как языковой контакт изменил значение английского языка, и подчеркивается роль СМС в этих изменениях. В исследовании выделен ряд терминов и их определений, используемых в СМС, с акцентом на неологизмы, используемые в социальных сетях. Популярные социальные сети и мессенджеры, такие как Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube и другие, внесли свой вклад в создание новых значений традиционных английских слов. В качестве образца были выбраны три платформы: Facebook, YouTube и Twitter для проверки неологизмов внутри СМС. Наиболее широко используемые термины на этих платформах социальных сетей были исследованы с использованием метода целевой выборки, чтобы определить, создаются ли СМС неологизмы и если да, то в какой степени. Исследование показывает, что многие значения слов английского языка изменились или используются в несколько ином смысле.*

*Ключевые слова: семантические изменения, неологизмы, СМС (компьютерное общение), социолингвистические факторы, психолингвистические факторы, технологии и цифровизация, платформы социальных сетей (Facebook, YouTube, twitter), нетспик, английский для специальных целей (ESP), эволюция языка.*

## INGLIZ TILINING SEMANTIK O'ZGARISHI: IJTIMOIIY TARMOQ NEOLOGIZMLARI

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*Annotatsiya. Yaratilganidan beri ingliz tili asta-sekin o'zgardi. Semantik o'zgarish boshqa o'zgarishlardan yaqqol ajralib turadi. Ushbu insho lingvistik aloqa ingliz tilining ma'nosini qanday o'zgartirganini ko'rib chiqadi va bu o'zgarishlarda CMC rolini ta'kidlaydi. Tadqiqot ijtimoiy tarmoqlarda ishlatiladigan neologizmlarga e'tibor qaratgan holda, CMCda qo'llaniladigan bir qator atamalar va ularning ta'riflarini ta'kidlaydi. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube va boshqalar kabi*

*mashhur ijtimoiy tarmoqlar va chat messenjerlari an'anaviy inglizcha so'zlarning yangi ma'nolarini yaratishga hissa qo'shdi. Namuna sifatida uchta platforma tanlandi: CMC ichidagi neologizmlarni tekshirish uchun Facebook, YouTube va Twitter. Ushbu ijtimoiy media platformalarida eng ko'p qo'llaniladigan atamalar CMC tomonidan neologizmlar yaratilganmi va qay darajada ekanligini aniqlash uchun maqsadli namuna texnikasi yordamida ko'rib chiqildi. Tadqiqot shuni ko'rsatadiki, ingliz tilidagi so'zlarning juda ko'p ma'nolari o'zgargan yoki biroz boshqacha ma'noda ishlatilgan.*

*Kalit so'zlar: semantik o'zgarish, neologizmlar, CMC (kompyuter vositachiligidagi aloqa), sotsiolingvistik omillar, psixolingvistik omillar, texnologiya va raqamlashtirish, ijtimoiy media platformalari (Facebook, YouTube, twitter), netspeak, maxsus maqsadlar uchun ingliz tili (ESP), til evolyutsiyasi.*

INTRODUCTION. We frequently observe that our behaviors, interests, and conversational topics shift at various stages of our lives. Much like any living entity, change or evolution is an inherent process. Similarly, our primary means of communication, language, follows the same pattern. All living languages share the characteristic of undergoing change. While we may not be consciously attentive to this phenomenon, we encounter new words, expressions, and terminologies regularly. These innovative terms, consistently adopted by speakers and recognized as distinct lexemes, are referred to as neologisms (Pavol, 2002). Malec & Rusinek (2015) argue that language change gives rise to neologisms, and Jean Aitchison categorizes them into two groups:

Initially, the external elements primarily encompass sociolinguistic factors, which are societal influences external to the language system. Subsequently, the internal factors pertain to psycholinguistic aspects, namely psychological and linguistic factors residing in the minds of the speakers and within the structure of the language itself.

Katamba (2005) asserts that technology and digitalization constitute external sociolinguistic factors contributing to language change. Over the past few decades, technology has undergone rapid development, impacting various societal domains, particularly language. The presence of technology, manifested in social media, has experienced significant growth. Social media is pervasive, encompassing numerous websites and mobile applications. Users of social media predominantly employ the English language worldwide, leading to innovative language developments. Given the widespread use of social media globally, newly coined terms and words have substantial potential for extensive dissemination beyond the confines of the original speech community. This underscores the reality that the expansion of vocabulary is not exclusive to the English language alone; other languages also benefit from these newly coined terms as valuable additions to their lexicon.

With the advancements in technology and the ongoing evolution of language in the contemporary era, Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) has become pervasive. Linguistic changes occur rapidly and abundantly, a phenomenon distinct from the past. There is a potential for CMC to exert a massive influence on language in a short period. Crystal (2005) has expressed the belief that 21st-century English will be significantly shaped by CMC. The internet's widespread usage has unquestionably transformed the way we communicate, giving rise to unique features in online discourse. These features, referred to as 'Netspeak' or 'Cyberspeak' by Crystal (2006), are prevalent in the present era. This study specifically focuses on social media and examines the impact of 'Netspeak' in generating neologisms within the English vocabulary.

Fowler (1983) states that a proficient language group relies on both the ability to speak and possessing a rich vocabulary. The English vocabulary exhibits a dynamic landscape marked by remarkable flexibility, range, and adaptability. This linguistic dynamism is attributed to language contact with foreign languages and the English language's inclination to coin new words (McCarthy & Dell, 1994). In the 17th and 18th centuries, a group of scholars advocated for fixed language rules, opposing any change. However, this approach was misguided, as change is an inherent and essential aspect of any living language. The ongoing transformation extends not only to the language's structure but also encompasses every facet of language. English registers have expanded significantly since the inception of the English language, with many words being created or used in different senses. The contextual use of multiple meanings for a word varies across different settings (Lyons, 1995). Algeo (1993), in the book «Among the New Words,» explores the origin and initial usage of various expressions and the changes they undergo in the

social climate. Pranjic (2016) asserts in his research that neologisms, newly coined words, emerge for diverse reasons and in various contexts. Neologisms are pervasive and utilized across different contexts. Furthermore, with the widespread use of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), the proliferation of neologisms is on the rise. Social media neologisms have become integrated into our language, enhancing our communication in a continuously evolving linguistic landscape.

Social media neologisms have significantly contributed to English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The vocabulary originating from social media has become integral to the social media register. Crystal (2006) argues that the internet has profoundly influenced the English language, establishing it as a new register. This transformation is evident as old words take on new meanings. Thorne & State (2003), in their review of Crystal's «Language and Internet,» highlight that cyber communication gives rise to abbreviations, emoticons, and neologisms. Emerging technologies introduce novel features, leading to the reinterpretation of familiar words. Examples from the popular social network Facebook, such as «wall,» «poke,» «tag,» and «share,» illustrate how meanings have evolved. Stern (1975) posits that meanings change due to certain factors, particularly psychological ones. This aligns with the present study, as the psychology of individuals in Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) tends toward creativity, manifesting in the creation of new words or the attribution of new meanings to existing ones. A notable instance of this is the term «tweet» on social media, which has taken on a different meaning from its initial usage. It is accurate to assert that such neologisms often surpass the popularity of their original meanings. This phenomenon is attributed to the English language's inherent capacity for change in various aspects. Changes in the English language, including shifts in social meanings, have been continuous throughout its history (Graddol, Leith, & Swann, 1996). The evolution of social meanings is frequently unconscious and stems from shifts initiated from above. Changes in language, especially in meaning, occur unconsciously to speakers, surpassing their conscious awareness. Speakers modify the meaning of words in response to new trends (Wenz, 2013). Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) itself is generating new trends online, leading to the creation of numerous neologisms. The pace of communication in the present era has reached unprecedented rapidity compared to the past. Millions of individuals engage in online interactions through various social networks, each with its distinct layout and terms. The cyber conversation and the structure of social networks play a crucial role in the emergence of neologisms. Jackson & Amvela (2000), in their investigation of vocabulary, contend that a word's meaning is a combination of various relations, including those with words having opposite or similar meanings. Consequently, words undergo changes in meaning in different contexts and situations, a phenomenon evident in online discourse. This transformation exhibits a diachronic nature, reminiscent of the historical changes in the meanings of many English words under Latin influence (Stehling, 2014). Küpper (2011) supports this perspective in his conference paper, emphasizing the regular changes in meanings throughout the history of the English language. This implies that alterations in meaning are not a novel occurrence. Furthermore, CMC, akin to Latin influence, has contributed significantly to the alteration of meanings in many words. Fischer (1998) introduces the concept of a nonce formation, defining it as a neologism created by a writer or speaker promptly to address an immediate requirement. This stands as a robust argument supporting the creation of neologisms. The conversation in CMC has become exceptionally fast-paced, leading individuals to coin new words and neologisms in their daily online interactions.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS.** This is qualitative and descriptive research. In this study, the researchers have delimited the study to Facebook, Twitter and YouTube in order to collect frequently used neologisms. The data was collected from these 3 websites and is presented in shape of various words and their old and new meanings. Selected neologisms on these social media are also displayed in data analysis to show that the online use of these neologisms has great escalation. These neologisms are used everywhere in spoken and written forms. We find the use of these neologisms in newspapers and TV News as well. Purposive sampling method is used to select these social media websites. These websites may be considered representatives of rest of all the social media networks because they are ubiquitous in Uzbekistan. Most of the online community in Uzbekistan is expected to be active member of these websites. All the celebrities in Uzbekistan (politicians, crickets, singers and actors etc.) use Twitter. All of these have their Facebook accounts as well. Moreover, online business especially amid COVID-19, is carried through Facebook pages. The activities/business activities of all the mentioned people as well

as of the general public is available on YouTube. Hence these social media networks are daily accessed and used. People are also Using Facebook and YouTube for earning money. On a small-scale study, the main pages/home pages of these social media networks were selected which are replete with neologisms. Some on these are entirely new words, some are blends but most of them are old words used in entirely new sense. Hence this study focuses on the neologisms used on three dominant social media networks.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Table 1**  
**Examples of Neologism from Facebook**

Neologisms	Old Use	New Use
Facebook	None	A social media
Facebook Friend	None	Someone added on Fb profile
Like	To regard	To some post good
Tag	To touch or Hit	To ask/signal someone to read your post
Share	To use something with others	To public some post for friends
Wall	A structure of brick or stones	A personal homepage of the user
Check in	To report one's presence	To share your location with maps
Story	A tale	Sharing pictures for others
Follow	To go after	To see the posts first
Post	To publish	To publish pictures or feelings
Profile	To give a brief description	The homepage of the user
DP	None	Display picture
Cover	The outer part of a book	A picture of the user on the wall
Status	Position or rank of someone	Anything you write to express your feelings

**Table 2**  
**Examples of Neologism from Facebook**

Neologisms	Old Use	New Use
You Tube	None	To post some video
Channel	Band of frequencies used in radio or television	A division designed to display the users' videos
Like	To regard	To find some post good
Home	The place where you live	The main page of website
Share	To use something with others	To share your videos with people
Trending	Prevailing tendency	Popular videos
Upload	To move to a larger network	To share your videos online
Story	A structure of brick or stones	Sharing pictures for others
Subscribe	To pay to get publication regularly	
Library	A place from where people can borrow books, music or videos	A collection of online videos
Dashboard	The parts of the inside of the car and has controls on it	Something that provides a high-level overview of recent activity
Community	A group of people that lives in same are	The YouTube users who can watch your videos

**CONCLUSION.** The findings indicate a significant semantic shift in Computer-Mediated

Communication (CMC). The two factors contributing to the generation of new words, as previously discussed, are Sociolinguistic factors (external) and psycholinguistic factors within the internal language system. Stern (1975) states that various factors contribute to this semantic change, with psychological ones being particularly influential. The current study supports this perspective, noting the widespread use of neologisms for various purposes. Neologisms can originate from the general public online or social networks, gaining popularity rapidly due to the swift pace of contemporary communication. Pranjić (2016) recognizes the pivotal role of social media and CMC in the rapid emergence and prevalence of these newly coined words. It's important to note that the data presented here serves as a representation of the numerous neologisms that have emerged in recent years. The evolution of the English language, particularly in terms of meaning, has undergone unprecedented speed. While English, like any living language, has experienced changes since its inception, these changes were traditionally gradual. However, the advent of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) has sparked a lexical revolution, exerting a profound influence on the language. Crystal (2006) contends that CMC has significantly shaped the English language. Numerous examples support this assertion, such as the widespread use of terms like «Selfie» (capturing or drawing one's own picture), which has achieved ubiquitous popularity to the extent that mobile phones now boast improved selfie cameras. This interplay between technology and language suggests a reciprocal relationship where technological advancements contribute to linguistic evolution, and vice versa.

Looking ahead, it appears evident that more words will emerge with the continued prevalence of CMC. Currently, «COVID-19» stands out as a buzzword, showcasing the morphological blending process in its creation, which has become omnipresent. Poh (2017) offers a list of words generated by social media networks, illustrating the ongoing linguistic impact of online platforms:

like: (verb) joining a page on Facebook or appreciating someone's comment or share.

unlike: (verb) withdrawing one's liking from a page on Facebook or a video on YouTube.

GIF: (verb) a file format that supports static and animated pictures

inbox: (verb) sending private messages to someone in his/her virtual mailbox

sext: (verb) indulge in sex chat through internet or mobile

OMG: (exclamation) Oh My God. Used for expressing fear or surprise

LOL: laughing out loud; used to show that you are laughing a lot

hashtag: (noun) a word or phrase followed by a (#) sign, used to stress on a message or specify the message

unfriend: (verb) removing someone from a friend list on social networks.

Oxford online dictionary also accepts and explains a number of internet neologisms which used to be non-existent before the proliferation of CMC. Hence there is a visible change in semantics of English language after the proliferation of CMC. This process will be even quicker in future and many more words will be added in dictionary. The influence of CMC has yet to develop English language in a unique and interesting language. The creation of better technology is coming with novel words. Google, the famous search engine, has been used as a verb. The same word has been a part of many other technological inventions such as Google Plus, Google Home, Google Mini, Google Drive, Google Phones etc. In the coming years, some of these words may become part of English language because of their worldwide proliferation. Hence CMC is contributing in development of new words, terms and phrases which was slow or non-existent before CMC.

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