

Research on the Impact of Internet Language on Communication

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Abstract: In the modern period social media has tremendously affected linguistic norms with the prevalent usage of Internet language, which has become an integral part of our digital interactions. From its modest beginnings in early chat rooms to its current ubiquitous presence across social media platforms, comprehending a new Internet term and delighting in its usage can open up an entirely new world of connections and expressions. This article explores the impact of internet language on daily communication. It analyses the main types of internet slang, highlighting the emergence of new linguistics strategies, including symbol graphics, emojis, numerical codes and abbreviated words. It also discusses the characteristics of internet slang and its impact on communication, emphasizing the numerous merits of internet languages, while acknowledging the challenges posed by their informal nature, such as the barriers to information dissemination. Additionally, the article underscores the need to adopt measures to improve the effectiveness of internet terminology in communication and manage its impact consciously and positively.

Keywords: digital age, internet slang, communication, language creativity, nonstandard terms.

1. Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of online communication, internet slang has become an integral part of our digital interactions. With the emergence of social media platforms, the rise of instant messaging apps and online forums and their profound impact on language usage, language has adapted to the brevity and informality of social media, bringing new language strategies [1], for instance symbol graphics, numerical codes and abbreviated words. Users of social media platforms are co-creating new words and idioms, turning them into a hub for lexical innovation and language invention. With both benefits and drawbacks, these significant shifts in linguistic conventions have fundamentally changed how we interact and communicate with one another. The simplicity and vividness of current communication practices have streamlined the information transfer process and enriched the variety of interactions, while the obstacles in information dissemination arise from a lack of standards and norms. Eventually, by fully embracing and taking advantage of the merits and addressing the demerits of innovative language usage, we can build an inclusive and positive environment for interactions in this ever-developing field of communication. The following article unfolds in five parts, including the four main types of Internet slang, the characteristics of this kind of language and their impact on communication, as well as the approaches we can adopt to improve the effectiveness of communication.

2. Main Types of Internet Terms

New forms of communication have emerged on social media platforms that are distinct from more conventional ones. As technology evolves and our digital interactions continue to shape how we communicate, it is inevitable that internet slang will also continue to evolve. It reflects our ever-changing culture by capturing current trends and societal shifts in real time.

2.1. Symbol Graphics and Emoji

Symbol graphics (are mainly made up of special non-word symbols and are partly combined with words to express human emotions) and emojis play a crucial role in enhancing online expression. These pictorial representations cross cultural barriers and provide an additional layer of meaning to textual communication.

For example, from connecting the colon and the right bracket “:)” expressing joy and pleasure to grouping the letter T and underlining “*T-T*” representing a crying face, signifying sadness and sorrow.

2.2. Numerical Code

On platforms like Twitter, where character limits are imposed, users have developed innovative ways to express complex ideas concisely. This has led to the popularization of practices such as omitting vowels (“gr8” for “great”) or using symbols and numbers in place of letters (“2” for “to” or “too”; “4U” means “For you”) [2].

2.3. Abbreviated Word

Online communication platforms have also given birth to abbreviated words. One of the most iconic examples of internet lingo is “LOL,” which is used to express amusement or humor. This abbreviation has transcended its virtual origins and has become a part of mainstream vocabulary. Besides, *OMG* represents *Oh My God*; *BFF* symbolizes *Best Friends Forever*; *Bday* equals *Birthday* [3].

2.4. Lexical Innovation

Social media platforms have provided a prolific place for users to create innovative words and expressions that quickly disseminate across the Internet.

For instance, in Chinese, “*XiaoBai*” refers to a person who often browses other people's comments but seldom responds to them; “*Niuren*” refers to the person who has outstanding ability in a certain area; “*ShangLouXiaLou*” refers to the articles connected above or below.

3. Characteristics of Internet Slang and impact on communication

Due to the simplicity, vividness and interestingness of the vast majority of Internet terms, communication and interaction between people from all over the world have been enhanced, and connectivity has been boosted. On the downside, however, the emergence and dissemination of countless Internet slang and their informal nature, which are quickly taking root as the conventional meaning of words and language become ever distorted, resulting in a large amount of controversies and challenges that surround the usage of Internet slang.

3.1. Simplicity

Internet slang originated as a means to streamline conversations and text messages in chat rooms. The brevity and speed of social media communication, often constrained by character limits or time restrictions, have necessitated the development of new linguistic strategies [4]. Striving for simplicity

is a fundamental aspect of internet language and the phenomenon of omission has become commonplace in online conversation.

Symbol graphics, numerical codes and abbreviations have become prevailing in social media platforms, significantly streamlining the information transfer process, improving the efficiency of communication as well as allowing users to convey messages, emotions, reactions, and ideas quickly and succinctly.

3.2. Vividness and Interestingness

Traditionally, language is divided into oral language and written language. Written language pays attention to logical norms and rhetorical techniques, and has formed a variety of patterns in the process of long-term development. However, adhering to a certain norm implies being constrained by it. Since these norms are unable to fully capture the additional information provided by the sender, the receiver may not achieve a complete and comprehensive understanding of the message. Although internet language is expressed in written form, its content is closer to verbal language, which is casual, lively, vivid, and as much as possible instantly conveys emotional factors such as expression, tone and posture. Internet users leverage their rich imagination and creativity to humanize abstract content, making it more figurative and emotionally evocative. Not only the vividness and interestingness of internet slang is a testament to the creativity and adaptability of language in the digital era, but it also makes the information receiver better recognize the attitude and deepen the understanding of the content of the received information.

3.3. Community and Collectivity

The impact of internet slang extends beyond mere words; it has influenced cultures, facilitated connections, and offered platforms for self-expression in an increasingly interconnected world. As online communities grew larger and more diverse, virtual gatherings fostered the exchange of language and expressions, giving rise to shared vernaculars that transcend traditional regional dialects. Specialized internet language bridges gaps between generations and continents, allowing people from different backgrounds to communicate effectively through shared understanding, breaking down linguistic barriers.

Social media platforms provide fertile ground for the creation of niche communities in that each platform develops its own unique slang lexicons, language mode, and linguistic norm [5], thus the usage and familiarity of the specific Internet language can help newcomers to obtain a sense of identity in the virtual community more quickly. The inclusive nature of social networks has democratized communication and given people the opportunity to express themselves.

3.4. Informality

While Internet language has brought about numerous advantages, it also presents obstacles and problems for communication and information dissemination. The constant exposure to different language styles has contributed to the acceptance and integration of non-standard languages. Slang, local dialects and even online jargon have entered mainstream communication, confusing the definition of formal and official language.

Since the Internet is an open virtual world, the identity, occupation and cultural level of Internet users are diverse. As a carrier of ideas, Internet language is undoubtedly a mixed bag. The methods of expression are flexible and varied, with an abundance of vulgarity and misspelled words. Additionally, Internet slang often relies on context or shared knowledge making it inaccessible to those unfamiliar with specific online communities or trends. This exclusionary aspect can create communication gaps and hinder effective understanding between different groups. The brevity and

informality of social media communication can result in misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and the spread of misinformation [6].

Furthermore, Internet terms do not follow conventional linguistic norms [7]. Abbreviations and informal expressions are prominently featured in online conversations, posing a risk that users may become disconnected from formal writing skills or overlook traditional language conventions. Rapidly changing trends in internet slang can leave some feeling out-of-touch or disconnected from evolving linguistic landscapes, resulting in generational gaps where different age groups struggle to relate effectively through language choices.

4. Measures to Improve the Effectiveness of Internet Terminology in Communication

Internet language makes up for the shortcomings of other forms of language to a certain extent. It features rapid transmission of information, instant transmission of feelings, and regionalization of virtual communities which are all in line with the development trend of network information exchange and dissemination. However, it should be noted that Internet language also has certain limitations, which will bring obstacles to information dissemination. As communication technologies continue to advance and information spreads at lightning speed across various online platforms, we should not simply take a positive or negative attitude towards the Internet language, but should create conditions to maximize its effectiveness.

From the point of view of information exchange, firstly, we should strengthen the research on Internet terminology, analyze the current situation, rules and development trend of its use, and explore its effect and efficiency in information dissemination and exchange.

Additionally, Internet terms should be standardized and appropriate ways of expression should be chosen on different occasions. Firstly, we should determine the standard of regulation. Secondly, we should standardize the way of use, so as to promote the healthy development of Internet terms.

Moreover, we should fully respect the characteristics of network language users, and actively guide them by strengthening the propaganda network etiquette, advocating language civilization, and improving the taste of Internet language. Language is a reflection of thought, standardized and beautiful language is a sign of a person's cultural cultivation, which in turn will affect a person's thoughts and behavior. Therefore, one of the ways to regulate network language is to improve the cultivation of network language behavior.

Last, it is necessary to improve the relevant tools continuously. In order to solve the problem of forming information barriers and overcoming communication obstacles, we can prepare a dictionary of Internet terms or establish related search tools for more people to understand, learn and utilize.

5. Conclusion

Internet language undeniably has had a deep influence on communication. It has revolutionized communication practices, transcended geographical boundaries, permeated languages and cultures worldwide, simplified the advent of new linguistic patterns, and remodeled the way we relate with others.

While internet slang has undoubtedly enriched our digital communication, it is not without its challenges and controversies. Its informal nature may lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations and relates to the erosion of linguistic norms and proper grammar usage.

It is essential to navigate the challenges that come with this new language landscape. Being mindful of potential misunderstandings or harmful uses is essential as we engage in digital conversations, while also staying curious about emerging trends and expressions, respecting linguistic diversity, and promoting respectful communication. The direction of further research is to expand the content of “the evolution of Internet language” with its continuous development. Additionally, there

is a need to analyze the effectiveness of the existing measures of Internet language regulations and proposing more efficient and more applicable ways to enhance the role of regulations, so that Internet language can be developed more popularly, comprehensively and positively.

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