***Romanov Danila Dmitrievich***
student
***Cherviakova Angelina Viktorovna***
student
***Berkutov Artem Egorovich***
student
***Kaimakov Alexander Nikolaevich***
student
*Scientific adviser*
***Ioffe Nina Evgenyevna***
senior lecturer

MIREA – Russian Technological University
Moscow

# THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON MODERN ENGLISH VOCABULARY: WORD FORMATION AND SEMANTIC CHANGE

***Abstract:*** *this article analyzes eight English words associated with social media through qualitative morphological and semantic analysis. The findings illustrate compounding, derivation, abbreviation, and semantic extension. Digital platforms offer contexts for lexical diffusion, while the underlying linguistic mechanisms remain conventional. The study is exploratory and makes no claims about word frequency.*

***Keywords:*** *social media, English vocabulary, lexical innovation, word formation, semantic change, internet linguistics.*

***Романов Данила Дмитриевич***
студент
***Червякова Ангелина Викторовна***
студентка
***Беркутов Артем Егорович***
студент



Content is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license (CC-BY 4.0)

***Каймаков Александр Николаевич***
студент
*Научный руководитель*
***Иоффе Нина Евгеньевна***
старший преподаватель

ФГБОУ ВО «МИРЭА – Российский технологический университет»
г. Москва

# ВЛИЯНИЕ СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ СЕТЕЙ НА СОВРЕМЕННУЮ АНГЛИЙСКУЮ ЛЕКСИКУ: СЛОВООБРАЗОВАНИЕ И СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЕ ИЗМЕНЕНИЯ

***Аннотация:*** *в статье на материале восьми английских слов, связанных с социальными сетями, рассматриваются словообразование и семантические изменения. Качественный анализ выявляет словосложение, деривацию, аббревиацию и расширение значения. Показано, что цифровая коммуникация способствует распространению лексики, но использует традиционные механизмы языка. Исследование не оценивает частотность слов.*

***Ключевые слова:*** *социальные сети, английская лексика, лексические инновации, словообразование, семантические изменения, интернет-лингвистика.*

*Introduction.*

Online communication influences how English speakers encounter and reinterpret vocabulary. Social media makes brief exchanges visible to wide audiences and connects communities that may never meet offline.

Studies of digitally mediated discourse emphasize context, audience, and community in online language practices [5; 6]. The visibility of a term does not mean a platform originally created it: many expressions associated with social media predate particular applications.

The aim of the present paper is to identify major mechanisms through which selected English expressions associated with social media are formed or acquire new


Содержимое доступно по лицензии Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license (CC-BY 4.0)

meanings. The objectives are to classify the selected items, describe their communicative functions and identify the study's limitations. The object of analysis is English vocabulary used to describe online communication and platform-related behavior; the subject is the structure and meaning of representative lexical items.

*Theoretical Background.*

Internet linguistics examines the relationship between language and technological environments, including the ways particular media shape the circumstances of communication. Crystal treats digital communication as linguistically heterogeneous: differences in interface, audience, purpose, and interactional timing are important [2; 3]. The same word may appear in a private message, a public comment, and a news report while acquiring different implications in each setting.

Word formation creates lexical expressions from existing linguistic elements. Compounding combines lexical bases; abbreviation reduces a multiword expression, while an acronym is pronounced as a word. Semantic extension assigns an established form a related or metaphorical meaning. Digital language practices also depend on technological settings [4]. These categories describe dominant processes, not definitive etymologies: more than one process may operate in a single word.

*Materials and Methods.*

The research design is a qualitative, exploratory lexical analysis. The material consists of eight illustrative English items: doomscrolling, ghosting, hashtag, livestream, unfollow, FOMO, selfie, and influencer. They were selected purposively because they represent different mechanisms and communicative activities, not because they form a statistically representative sample. The primary checks for lexical meaning use the Cambridge Dictionary [1] and the broader discussion of internet language in the scholarly works cited below [1–6].

The analysis had three stages. First, each item was segmented into recognizable components where possible. Second, its online meaning was compared with more general meanings of its elements or related forms. Third, the item was classified by its dominant mechanism and interpreted in the context of online communication. This



Content is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license (CC-BY 4.0)

is a descriptive classification, not a complete etymology. No posts or survey responses were collected, and no frequency or platform-specific claims are made.

Table 1

Illustrative lexical items and dominant linguistic mechanisms

| Item | Mechanism | Meaning / role |
|---|---|---|
| doomscrolling | Compounding + -ing | Repeated reading of negative news online |
| ghosting | Semantic extension + -ing | Suddenly ending contact without explanation |
| hashtag | Compound | Tag beginning with # that groups content |
| livestream | Compound / conversion | Real-time broadcast; to broadcast live |
| unfollow | Prefixation | Stop receiving an account's updates |
| FOMO | Acronym | Fear of missing out on events or experiences |
| selfie | Suffixation / colloquial formation | Self-taken photograph, often shared online |
| influencer | Derivation / semantic specialization | Person able to affect an audience's choices |

*Results and Discussion.*

Compounding is particularly visible in terms denoting recognizable digital practices. Doomscrolling joins the semantically negative component doom with scrolling, an activity associated with moving through a feed. The result names a specific pattern of consuming distressing information rather than simply operating a screen. The Cambridge Dictionary records the expression with this general meaning [1]. Its interpretive force arises partly from the contrast between the ordinary physical action of scrolling and the emotional evaluation contributed by doom. An illustrative sentence is: «I intended to check the headlines, but I spent an hour doomscrolling."

Affixation appears in unfollow, where un- reverses the social-media action follow. Although following a person is older than online networks, a platform interface gives the verb a specialized meaning: choosing to receive another account's updates. Unfollow creates an economical lexical counterpart for ending that choice. Influencer is another derived form, created through an established agentive pattern but now frequently interpreted with reference to online audience relationships. Its meaning illustrates semantic specialization: a general capacity to influence may become associated with a recognizable occupational or commercial role.

Ghosting is most revealing when viewed through semantic extension. The ordinary noun ghost suggests a figure that is absent, difficult to locate, or not fully


Содержимое доступно по лицензии Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license (CC-BY 4.0)

present. In interpersonal communication, ghosting refers to abruptly ending contact without explanation. The Cambridge Dictionary explicitly records this relationship-related meaning alongside other senses of the same form [1]. The item shows that social-media-associated vocabulary does not always require the invention of a new structure; a recognizable form can instead acquire a socially salient interpretation.

The remaining examples illustrate other uses of familiar resources. Hashtag compounds hash and tag to name a marker used for organizing posts. Livestream combines live and stream and functions as a noun or a verb referring to real-time internet broadcasting. FOMO is an acronym of fear of missing out, pronounced as a word; it expresses anxiety about missing experiences, sometimes prompted by social media. Selfie uses a colloquial -ie ending with self to name a self-taken photograph often shared online [1]. These patterns are not exclusive to digital environments: English has long used compounding, derivation, abbreviation, and metaphor. Context and social relations influence how forms are interpreted [5; 6]. The examples therefore support a limited conclusion: social media helps circulate expressions through conventional mechanisms of English word formation.

The sample is small and purposive; dictionary descriptions cannot establish frequency, distribution across platforms, or rates of diffusion. Future studies should analyze dated, ethically collected corpora to test these questions.

*Conclusion.*

The analysis of eight illustrative lexical items indicates that vocabulary associated with social media can be described through established mechanisms of English word formation and semantic change. Compounding names recognizable activities, affixation and derivation create related roles or actions, acronyms condense socially meaningful phrases, and semantic extension assigns new interpersonal meanings to familiar forms.

***References***

1. Cambridge Dictionary / Cambridge University Press. – URL: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/ (date of access: 31.10.2026).



Content is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license (CC-BY 4.0)

2. Crystal, D. Internet Linguistics: A Student Guide / D. Crystal. – London : Routledge, 2011.

3. Crystal, D. Language and the Internet / D. Crystal. – 2nd ed. – Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2006.

4. McCulloch, G. Because Internet: Understanding the New Rules of Language / G. McCulloch. – New York : Riverhead Books, 2019.

5. The Language of Social Media: Identity and Community on the Internet / ed. by P. Seargeant, C. Tagg. – Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

6. Varis, P. The Internet, Language, and Virtual Interactions / P. Varis, T. van Nuenen // The Oxford Handbook of Language and Society / ed. by O. García, N. Flores, M. Spotti. – Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2017. – P. 473–488.


Содержимое доступно по лицензии Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license (CC-BY 4.0)