

Internet Communication And The Transformation Of Written Language

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Abstract

The article examines the transformation of written language in the context of internet communication and digital technologies. It analyzes how traditional spelling and punctuation norms change under the influence of online interaction, social media, and mobile communication. Drawing on the works of D. Crystal and S. Herring, the study identifies key factors such as technological impact, typing speed, and emotional expressiveness. Examples from Russian and Uzbek online discourse illustrate the replacement of letters with numbers, the mixing of alphabets, and the use of emojis as punctuation substitutes. These phenomena are viewed as part of the adaptive evolution of written language, reflecting new communicative needs of digital society.

Keywords: digital linguistics; internet discourse; spelling; punctuation; online communication; linguistic norm; emojis; Russian language; Uzbek language.

The development of digital technologies and social networks has radically changed the linguistic environment of modern society. Virtual communication, which has become part of everyday life, has given rise to new forms of written language, where traditional spelling and punctuation rules are undergoing transformation. What was previously perceived as a deviation from the linguistic norm has now become a natural part of online culture. Internet communication shapes a specific type of speech behavior characterized by conciseness, viscosity, and emotional expressiveness.

This article analyzes the reasons for these changes, their consequences, and their impact on contemporary linguistic culture. The relevance of the topic is due to the fact that the Internet has become the leading platform for communication, where the standards of written language and the spontaneity of spoken language collide. These processes are shaping new spelling and punctuation practices that reflect the thinking patterns of digital environment users.

The aim of this work is to identify the main spelling and punctuation features of Internet

communication, determine the factors that influenced their formation, and assess their impact on the linguistic culture of modern society.

The growing popularity of online communication makes it necessary to study how Internet users construct text, which norms are violated, and why. New spelling models are becoming a means of self-expression, conveying emotions, and saving time, while forming a special online style.

Contemporary Internet discourse represents a unique space for interaction, where spoken and written forms of speech intertwine, creating a hybrid type of communication. The Internet can be viewed as an advanced language system with a variety of multimedia tools – text, sound, images, and video – that allow users to convey their thoughts and emotions as expressively as possible. However, along with the expansion of expressive possibilities comes a weakening of spelling and punctuation norms. The web is overflowing with abbreviations, non-standard symbols, alternative punctuation marks, and deviations from the literary standard.

As David Crystal notes in his work *Language and the Internet*, internet linguistics is designed not only to record these changes, but also to explain the reasons for their emergence. Among the main tasks, the researcher highlights the description of spelling techniques characteristic of the online environment, the identification of typical errors, and the determination of factors influencing their spread [1]. However, the implementation of these tasks is complicated by the fact that the boundaries between error and conscious language play on the Internet are often blurred.

Non-standard graphic and orthographic phenomena in online communication are closely interrelated. The use of abbreviated words, numbers instead of letters, emojis, and non-standard punctuation marks has become a distinctive feature of online style. These features are shaped by several factors.

Modern devices – smartphones, tablets, computers – with auto-correct, predictive text, and built-in emojis significantly influence how users write texts. On the one hand, technology simplifies the communication process, but on the other, it leads to the emergence of persistent errors, atypical abbreviations, and the replacement of words with symbols.

As S. Herring notes in *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, there is a «blurring of orthographic norms» in Internet communication. The author points out that phonetic spelling that imitates pronunciation or dialect, the use of non-standard letters and graphemes, as well as doubling and stretching of letters are not errors, but manifestations of the creative nature of online speech [2].

Emotional expressiveness on the Internet is often achieved by deliberately violating spelling rules. For example, letter repetition is used to convey intonational stretching:

– «it's sooo cute»,

– «well, I don't know»,

– «I really like it».

Similar phenomena are observed with the repetition of consonants:

– «come on»,

– «mmmm, how delicious».

In traditional written norms, such effects are conveyed through hyphens («come on»), but in the digital environment, users often do without them, reflecting the colloquial nature of Internet speech.

Another reason for deviations is the high speed of communication. The desire to send a message as quickly as possible often leads to typos, missing letters, and intentional abbreviations. Users write «I'll be there in a sec» instead of «I'll be there now», «Maybe someone found her wallet?» instead of «Maybe someone found her wallet?»

Similar processes are observed in Uzbek-language chats:

– «Nma gapla sinfdoshla?» (instead of Nima gaplar, sinfdoshlar?),

– «Unda saharlik qlizla hozr og'iz yopadigan vaqt bulib qoladi» (instead of Unda saharlik qilingizlar, hozir og'iz yopadigan vaqt bo'lib qoladi) [3].

In Uzbek internet communication, it is common to use numbers to replace letters or abbreviated writing:

– «Nima u4n kecha darsga kelmading?» (uchun),

– «Hozr biza bn birga bozorga borasanmi?» (hozir, biz, bilan),

– «Shanba kuni 6tirish bor» (o'tirish) [3].

Such techniques are explained by the desire to save time and space, as well as the desire for informal communication.

A distinctive feature of the Uzbek language on the internet is the mixing of graphic norms. Users often ignore the difference between the letters x/x and y/ŷ, choosing the most convenient option:

– «Hozr har hil til kurslari bor-ku?!» (instead of xil),

– «Ortogim» (instead of o'rtoq'im),

- «Xa qoydim» (instead of Xa qo'ydim),
- «Ha ungacha qaytaman» (instead of Ha o'ngacha qaytaman) [3].

Sometimes this is due to insufficient literacy, but more often it is due to the simplification of text input on mobile devices.

In addition, deliberate distortions can be observed – a conscious play on language, where spelling deviations serve to convey emotions:

- «Я умир» (instead of Я умер – expresses tenderness, joy),
- «Я щас» (instead of Я сейчас – demonstrates haste) [3].

The Latin alphabet, Turkish letters, and English letters are actively used in the Uzbek segment of the Internet. Often, «w» is used instead of «sh», and in some cases, symbols from the Turkish alphabet are used:

- «Wuni u4n boriw kk bu tadbirga» (Shuning uchun borish kerak bu tadbirga),
- «Çaqmoq çaqdi-ku!» (Chaqmoq chaqdi-ku!) [3].

There is also a tendency to ignore hyphens when writing particles and postpositions, which traditionally should be written separately:

- «Бу байрамга бориш кераккы?!» (instead of керак-кы),
- «Biz nimadir qilishimiz mumkin mi?» (often written together in writing) [3].

In online communication, traditional punctuation is gradually losing ground. Most users either reduce their use of punctuation marks or replace them with visual symbols, emojis, or intonation. This trend can be explained by the fact that online, the main focus is not on grammatical correctness, but on the meaning and emotional tone of the message.

This is largely due to the fact that in virtual space, familiar punctuation marks perform different functions. A period at the end of a sentence, for example, is perceived not as a neutral sign of completion, but as a signal

of coldness, irritation, or distance. Therefore, users often avoid it so as not to distort the mood of the text.

Similarly, question marks and exclamation marks are no longer mandatory. Questions are formulated intonationally – based on the structure of the sentence and the context, rather than on the punctuation mark at the end. Thus, on social networks, one may encounter comments such as:

- «layza_doram» What is the name of this movie?
- «suga_army» Can you give me the name of the song?
- «danny» How are you?
- «.....» Ahvollar yaxshimi [3].

Such examples show that users rely on visual and contextual cues instead of punctuation. This makes the text intuitive, «colloquial», and brings written speech closer to spoken speech.

Some researchers (D. Crystal, S. Herring, et al.) emphasize that in digital communication, punctuation is often replaced by emojis and repeated punctuation marks («!!!», «...», «??»). These elements function as intonation markers, conveying emotion and rhythm rather than syntactic connections [1; 2]. Thus, punctuation on the internet becomes part of expressive rather than normative writing.

The absence of strict rules in internet language creates ample opportunities for self-expression. Spelling and punctuation errors become tools for conveying emotions and interpersonal relationships. For example, ellipses express thoughtfulness or understatement, exclamation marks express enthusiasm, and emojis replace facial expressions and gestures.

In this sense, as S. Herring [2] notes, digital communication compensates for the lack of nonverbal means of communication characteristic of spoken language. The combination of letters, symbols, and images

allows one to convey a tone that was impossible in traditional writing.

An important feature of modern internet discourse is the emergence of so-called «grammar police» – users who actively point out mistakes to others and defend language norms. They often get into arguments, correcting spelling or punctuation in comments under Instagram and Facebook posts.

Sometimes these corrections escalate into conflicts: discussion of the topic is replaced by discussion of literacy. On the one hand, this phenomenon can be considered positive – attention to norms promotes linguistic self-reflection. On the other hand, excessive criticism hinders free self-expression and increases social tension between participants in communication.

Nevertheless, the trend toward correctness is gradually gaining ground: users are beginning to consciously monitor their writing and try to avoid gross errors so as not to fall under the scrutiny of the «grammar police». Thus, the digital space is becoming an arena for new forms of linguistic responsibility.

In recent years, there has been an interesting reversal in the perception of literacy. Whereas previously flawless writing was considered the norm and a sign of respect, now excessive correctness in instant messaging can be perceived as coldness or distance.

The absence of errors and strict adherence to punctuation is sometimes interpreted as a sign of arrogance or unwillingness to establish close contact. On the contrary, slight carelessness, the use of colloquial forms and simplified spelling are perceived as a «friendly tone». This indicates that the norms of speech etiquette are adapting to digital realities: politeness is expressed not through impeccable grammar, but through emotional accessibility and informality.

As David Crystal [1] notes, the main thing in online communication is not correctness,

but appropriateness. Users should choose the form of communication based on the context, audience, and goals. Literacy ceases to be an absolute category and becomes part of a communication strategy. Thus, internet communication is a dynamic space where linguistic norms are not destroyed but adapted to new conditions of communication. Spelling and punctuation deviations serve as a means of expressing emotions, saving time, and expressing individual style.

The Russian and Uzbek segments of the network show similar trends: word reduction, use of numbers and symbols, mixing of graphic systems, replacement of punctuation marks with emojis and visual elements. These phenomena cannot be viewed solely as errors – they reflect the natural evolution of written language in the digital age.

Nevertheless, the balance between freedom of expression and linguistic culture remains important. Mastery of the norms of written language is still an indicator of education and respect for one's interlocutor. Conscious use of new forms, along with preservation of basic rules, will allow us to maintain harmony between innovation and tradition in online communication.

Literature

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