

## ***NETSPEAK AND ITS IMPACT ON THE LANGUAGE***

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The development of IT-technologies has led to emergence of the Internet. Restricted originally to users in the military, government, universities, and businesses, it exploded in popularity after Internet Service Providers enabled people to go online from their homes in the late 1980s and early 1990s [3]. In the nick of time the Internet has turned from a huge data storage to a powerful communication means and triggered off numerous scientific research from the philosophical, educational and linguistic perspective. Nowadays the Internet is gaining more and more popularity as the number of people registered in different social networks, chatgroups, forums etc. is constantly increasing.

With the advent of the Internet such notions as "Internet Discourse" and "Internet Linguistics" appear. Moreover, the peculiarities of the Internet communication give sufficient ground to speak of the third medium, which is given different names in linguistic paradigm: CMC (computer mediated communication), netlingo, written speech, e-language, netspeak etc. Naomi S. Baron uses a metaphor arguing that it can be thought of as a kind of linguistic centaur, incorporating features from both traditional writing and face-to-face discourse but ending up being more than a simple amalgam of the two [1: 23]. In this article we will operate the term "Netspeak" as in our opinion it reflects the nature of the Internet communication and has the broadest meaning.

David Crystal underlines that Netspeak is better seen as written language which has been pulled some way in the direction of speech than as a spoken language which has been written down. The linguist highlights that Netspeak is identical to neither speech nor writing, but selectively and adaptively displays properties of both. It does things that neither of these other medium do, and must be seen as a new species of communication [2: 47-48].

The Internet is regarded as a flagship of global English. According to the Internet World Stats, English by far surpasses the other languages in the Internet. Its only serious rival is Chinese (536.6 to 444.9 millions of users accordingly) [4]. So the **aim** of this article is to investigate how Netspeak influences English.

Naomi Baron remarks that a number of the Internet distinctive linguistic conventions are beginning to seep into traditional spoken and written language. With respect to spoken language, some American adolescents, in face-to-face conversation, use such locutions as "*We were all ROTFLing when the teacher walked in*". Many college students "google" potential professors before a new semester of classes begins to decide if they want to take a course with a particular professor [1: 23-24].

In everyday conversation, terms from the underlying computer technology are given a new application among people who want their talk to have a cool cutting-edge. Professor Crystal gives examples of the overheard conversations: *it's my turn to download* (i.e. I've heard your gossip, now hear mine), *she's multitasking* (someone doing two things at once), *let's go offline for a minute* (i.e. let's talk in private), *he's 404* (i.e. he is not around), *he's living in hypertext* (i.e. he's got a lot to hide) etc. [2: 19].

On the other hand, the ease with which you can communicate by e-mail, the frequency of contacts, as well as the desire to cope with the sheer volume of information the Internet provides, cause changes in the use of language means. Communication has become extremely hasty and simplistic. The language used in the Internet is characterized by simplified syntax, absence of capital letters, punctuation and extensive usage of abbreviations. Colloquial language and mixture or sometimes even complete neglect of formal and informal communication style norms are widely encountered phenomena.

There are two aspects of this problem. On the one hand, the Internet intensifies language development meeting the needs of modern information-oriented society. On the other hand, we should admit its negative impact on the language. First of all it is the inability to distinguish between genre and stylistic appropriateness of language means. Secondly, the ability to express person's thoughts and analyze the interlocutor's utterances

diminishes, especially in young people's speech as the computer technologies allow of compensating the lack of verbal information by visual one. Thirdly, language acquisition on the whole is getting poorer [5].

Summing up the stated above, the logical conclusion we come to is that we shouldn't be categorical in the treatment of the Netspeak. It certainly produces positive impact on the language as it is one of the sources of language enrichment and a powerful medium. What we should do is to be aware of its pitfalls.

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