

**THE USE OF THE CONCEPT OF SLANG AND MEMES IN DIGITAL MEDIA IN  
LINGUISTICS**

**Parpiyeva Durdonakhon Bakhtiyarovna**

Independent researcher of the Department of Uzbek Language, Literature and Languages of the  
Andijan State Medical Institute

Scientific supervisor: **Matkarimova Ashurkhon Ismailovna**

Associate Professor of the Department of English Language Practice of the Andijan State Institute  
of Foreign Languages, Doctor of Philosophy in Philology.

Specialization code: 10.00.11 - Language Theory. Applied and Computer Linguistics

Modern linguistics is changing under the influence of various factors and is enriched with new lexical units. Digital media and Internet communication are one of the most powerful factors that directly affect the language system. Social networks, forums, blogs, gaming platforms and messengers play an important role in the formation, popularization and use of modern slang and memes. These phenomena are studied in linguistics, sociolinguistics and is being studied from the point of view of semiotics. This article analyzes the linguistic features of slang and memes that have entered the digital media, their communicative significance, and the processes of their assimilation into the official language.

The concept of slang in digital media and its linguistic features

Slang is one of the most dynamic parts of the informal speech layer, which is used by representatives of a particular social group, culture, or generation. Slang words and expressions are often short, figurative, and emotional in content, often deviating from the norms of the official language (Eble, 1996). With the development of the Internet and digital media, slang has expanded further and new forms have emerged.

Slang popular in digital media has the following main characteristics:

- Brevity and conciseness – Due to the need for quick and effective communication in Internet communication, abbreviations are widely used. For example, in English, abbreviations such as “LOL” (laughing out loud), “BRB” (be right back), “OMG” (oh my God), and in Uzbek, expressions such as “Zo’r”, “Gap yo’q”, “Jonga tegdi” are popular.
- Phonetic and graphic changes – In slang, words can be used phonetically distorted or letters can be replaced in writing. For example, in English, abbreviations such as “u” (you), “4ever” (forever), “gonna” (going to) are widely used.
- Metaphorical and emotional expressiveness – Slang is often emotional and uses various metaphors and expressive expressions. For example, words like “lit” (great, interesting), “flex” (bragging) or “toxic” (negative, harmful) are widely used in different contexts.

The Uzbek language also has new slang that came from the Internet or appeared in Uzbek form. For example, expressions like “gap yo’q” (No words) indicating something excellent or impressive, “qotib qoldim” (literally “I froze”) used to express shock or amazement, they are widespread among young people.

Linguistic and communicative properties of memes

Memes are cultural units that spread rapidly, incorporating visual or linguistic elements. The concept of “meme” was first proposed by Richard Dawkins (1976), who used it to explain the spread of cultural information in the same way as genetic information. Today, internet memes are popularized mainly through social media, and they are a short, effective and fast means of communication.

The linguistic properties of memes include the following:

- Contextual adaptability – Memes are processed according to different situations and acquire new meanings. For example, the phrase “OK Boomer” originally expressed the difference between generations, but later became a common expression used as a sarcastic response.
- Semantic variability – Memes can develop new connotations over time. For example, the meme “This is fine” originally appeared as a funny picture, but later became an expression expressing a stressful situation that was perceived with carelessness.
- Intertextuality – Memes are connected to other cultural codes, enriching their meaning. For example, the “Distracted Boyfriend” meme has a common visual narrative form that can be used in different contexts.

Memes are not only visually, but also linguistically unique, sometimes leading to the formation of new words. For example, the phrase “sus” (suspicious) became widespread through the game “Among Us” and is used today as slang.

The impact of slang and memes on the language system through digital media

Slang and memes introduced through Internet culture directly affect the development of the language:

1. Enrich the informal layers of the language – New expressions and metaphors are formed, increasing the informal vocabulary of the language.
2. Makes the language dynamic – The formation and change of new lexical units is accelerated through digital communication.
3. It stimulates linguistic innovation – Through memes and slang, new stylistic devices emerge, which can also be absorbed into the literary language.
4. It affects the linguistic identification of social groups – The use of certain slang and memes determines belonging to certain social groups.

These phenomena are important not only from the point of view of linguistics, but also from the point of view of sociolinguistics and cultural studies.

Slang and memes introduced through digital media are one of the important research objects of modern linguistics. Due to the specificity of Internet communication, these phenomena develop rapidly, change and become popular among a wide audience. The analysis of the role of slang and memes in the language system, their impact on popular culture and the processes of their integration into the official language is one of the relevant directions of modern linguistics research.

Future research can be focused on a deeper study of how digital communication tools affect language change, how long new slang and memes survive, and the processes of their integration into the official language.

# INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

**SJIF 2019: 5.222 2020: 5.552 2021: 5.637 2022:5.479 2023:6.563 2024: 7,805**  
**eISSN :2394-6334** <https://www.ijmrd.in/index.php/imjrd> **Volume 12, issue 03 (2025)**

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