

**MEMES, SLANG AND ABBREVIATIONS: THE PROCESS OF POPULARIZATION OF
NEW WORDS**

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Introduction

Modern linguistics requires a deep study of the process of formation and popularization of new lexical units. In particular, as a result of the development of the Internet and digital means of communication, memes, slang and abbreviations are rapidly becoming popular. This process is significant not only linguistically, but also sociolinguistically and culturally. The concept of meme, put forward by Richard Dawkins (1976), was initially interpreted as a cultural phenomenon, but today Internet memes have become an integral part of linguistic innovations. Slang represents a dynamic layer of informal communication and is widely used in the communicative process among young people and social groups. Abbreviations, on the other hand, are associated with the need for concise and fast communication and are widely used in social networks, SMS and official correspondence. This article aims to analyze the formation, popularization and linguistic status of memes, slang and abbreviations from a scientific point of view.

Methodology

This study is based on a linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis of the process of popularization of new words. The study was conducted using the following methods:

1. Corpus linguistics method - the frequency and context of use of new words popular on the Internet were studied based on data from Google Trends, Twitter and Reddit platforms.
2. Semantic analysis - how memes, slang and abbreviations change in meaning and how they are used in new contexts was analyzed.
3. Sociolinguistic approach - how new lexical units spread among age groups and social groups was studied.
4. Historical-linguistic method - how previously formed lexical units are related to modern forms was analyzed.

When analyzing the data, online dictionaries, scientific articles and real communication samples of Internet users were used.

Results

The results of the study showed that the popularization of new words occurs in stages:

1. Linguistic spread of memes

- Internet memes first appear in narrow circles, and then spread to a wide audience.
- Due to their semantic variability, one phrase can take on different meanings in different contexts.
- For example, the phrase “OK, boomer” was originally used ironically, but today it has become a common expression expressing the gap between generations.

2. Slang and its popularization

- Slang is first formed among young people and is often updated.
- Popular culture, films and music have a great influence on the popularization of new slang expressions.
- For example, the English words “lit” and “flex” were previously used in narrow circles, but today they are becoming part of general speech.

3. Abbreviations and their functional significance

- Abbreviations serve to make communication concise and fast.
- Among the most common abbreviations on social networks are units such as “LOL” (laughing out loud), “BRB” (be right back).
- Some abbreviations are also becoming part of the official language (for example, “NASA”, “UNESCO”).

These results show that the popularity of new lexical units is closely related not only to linguistic, but also to social and cultural processes.

Discussion

The results of the study confirm that the emergence and popularization of new lexical units are associated with the natural evolution of language. Memes, slang, and abbreviations first appear in a narrow circle and then spread widely through popular culture and social media. Linguists describe this process as “linguistic innovation,” since such units serve to make communication more lively and effective.

Some lexical units become popular for a short time and then disappear, while others enter formal speech.

For example, abbreviations and slang are often recorded in modern dictionaries and can become part of the literary language over time. In addition, memes are an important source for linguistic research, as they are semantically flexible and take on different meanings in different contexts.

From a sociolinguistic point of view, these processes also reflect linguistic differences between age groups and social classes. Young people are often the adopters of new lexical units, which have a retroactive effect and contribute to the development of the language.

Conclusion

Memes, slang, and abbreviations are an important part of the modern linguistic system. Their formation and popularization are accelerating under the influence of the Internet and social media, leading to global language changes. The results of this study show that new lexical units are first

adopted by a narrow audience, then spread among the general public and sometimes even become part of the official language.

Future research can be focused on such areas as a deeper study of the processes of popularization of new lexical units, determining their long-term stability, and tracking linguistic innovations using artificial intelligence.

References:

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