

## THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE EVOLUTION OF ENGLISH VOCABULARY

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**Abstract.** *This article examines the impact of social media on the evolution of English vocabulary. The introduction emphasizes the current relevance of the topic and the position of English as a global language. The methods section details the process of analyzing large text corpora, collecting data from platforms, and employing linguistic tools. The results section illustrates the emergence of new words, semantic shifts in existing terms, the spread of abbreviations, and informal expressions with concrete examples. The discussion explores the positive and negative aspects of these changes, their significance in language learning, and future prospects. The study reveals that social media is rapidly enriching English vocabulary, making it more dynamic and globally oriented. The article offers practical recommendations for understanding and effectively using contemporary English.*

**Keywords:** *social media, English vocabulary, language evolution, neologisms, semantic shifts, slang, corpus analysis.*

**Аннотация.** *Данная статья исследует влияние социальных сетей на развитие словарного запаса английского языка. Во введении подчеркивается актуальность темы и роль английского как глобального языка. В разделе методов подробно описывается процесс анализа больших текстовых корпусов, сбора данных с платформ и использования лингвистических инструментов. В результатах с примерами показывается появление новых слов, семантические сдвиги существующих терминов, распространение сокращений и неформальных выражений. В обсуждении рассматриваются положительные и отрицательные стороны этих изменений, их значение для изучения языка и перспективы на будущее. Исследование показывает, что социальные сети быстро обогащают английский словарь, делая его более динамичным и глобальным. Статья дает практические рекомендации по пониманию и эффективному использованию современного английского языка.*

**Ключевые слова:** *социальные сети, словарный запас английского языка, эволюция языка, неологизмы, семантические сдвиги, сленг, корпусный анализ.*

**Annotatsiya.** Ushbu maqolada ijtimoiy tarmoqlarning ingliz tilining so‘z boyligi rivojlanishiga ko‘rsatayotgan ta‘sirini chuqur o‘rganildi. Kirish qismida mavzuning zamonaviy dolzarbligi va ingliz tilining global til sifatidagi o‘rni ta‘kidlab o‘tiladi. Metodlar bo‘limida katta hajmdagi matn korpuslarini tahlil qilish, platformalardan ma‘lumot yig‘ish va lingvistik vositalardan foydalanish jarayoni batafsil yoritilgan. Natijalar qismida yangi so‘zlarning paydo bo‘lishi, mavjud so‘zlarning ma‘no o‘zgarishi, qisqartmalar va norasmiy iboralarning tarqalishi misollar bilan ko‘rsatilgan. Muhokama bo‘limida bu o‘zgarishlarning ijobiy va salbiy jihatlari, til o‘rganishdagi ahamiyati hamda kelajakdagi istiqbollari muhokama qilinadi. Tadqiqot shuni ko‘rsatadiki, ijtimoiy tarmoqlar ingliz lug‘atini tez sur‘atda boyitib, uni yanada dinamik va global qilmoqda. Maqola o‘quvchilarga zamonaviy ingliz tilini tushunish va undan samarali foydalanish bo‘yicha amaliy maslahatlar beradi.

**Kalit so‘zlar:** ijtimoiy tarmoqlar, ingliz tili lug‘ati, til evolyutsiyasi, neologizmlar, semantik o‘zgarishlar, slang, korpus tahlili.

## INTRODUCTION

In today’s world, social media has deeply penetrated almost every aspect of human life. Every day, millions of people share their thoughts, exchange videos, and create new trends on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and Reddit. This process is transforming not only social relationships but also language itself. English, as the primary medium of the internet and digital communication, is experiencing the strongest impact.

English has always evolved throughout its history. During Shakespeare’s time, many new words emerged; the Industrial Revolution introduced technical terms; and globalization brought in borrowings from other languages. However, social media has accelerated this evolution to an unprecedented pace. Hundreds of new words and phrases appear each year, and most of them spread across the globe within months, eventually finding their way into prestigious dictionaries. For instance, words like “selfie,” “hashtag,” and “viral” have now become part of everyday conversation. [1]

Today, social media does more than just create new words - it also changes the meanings of existing ones, popularizes abbreviations, and elevates informal expressions to a global level. While these changes make the language more vibrant and expressive, they also bring certain challenges. The main aim of this article is to analyze scientifically the influence of social media on the evolution of English vocabulary. The research is particularly relevant in Uzbekistan, where young people often learn English through social media, and this process calls for updating teaching methods. [2]

## METHODS

The study is based on the linguistic corpus analysis method. This approach allows for the systematic examination of large collections of texts and provides a clearer picture of language changes. Data were collected from the platforms X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and Reddit, covering the period from 2020 to 2025. The total corpus consists of approximately 2.8 million words, with roughly equal amounts of posts, comments, and trending topics taken from each platform.

Data collection was carried out in several stages. First, specialized scripts were used to gather publicly available posts and hashtags. Then, the texts were cleaned: emojis, links, and personal information were removed, while spelling variations and abbreviations were standardized. For analysis, tools such as AntConc and similar linguistic software were employed. These helped identify word frequency, collocations (how words appear together), and semantic context. To evaluate semantic changes, the following criteria were applied: the appearance of new words (neologisms), expansion or narrowing of meanings of existing words, shifts in connotations (additional emotional coloring), and metaphorical or metonymic extensions. Additionally, English-language posts by users from Uzbekistan were examined separately, as slang usage in the local context has its own distinctive features. These methods ensure that the research findings are reliable and can be replicated by other scholars. [3]

## RESULTS

The analysis reveals that social media influences English vocabulary in three main directions: the creation of new words, changes in the meanings of existing words, and the rapid spread of abbreviations and informal expressions.

First, neologisms - newly coined words - are appearing at a remarkable rate. On TikTok and Instagram, terms like “rizz” (short for charisma, especially in romantic contexts) have gained widespread popularity. This word describes a person’s ability to attract others and was named Oxford’s Word of the Year in 2023. Similarly, “delulu” (short for delusional) is commonly used in a humorous way to refer to someone holding unrealistic beliefs. “Brain rot” refers to the supposed deterioration of mental or intellectual state caused by consuming too much low-quality, trivial online content. This term was chosen as Oxford’s Word of the Year for 2024, highlighting concerns about the effects of social media overuse. [4]

“Doomscrolling” describes the habit of endlessly scrolling through negative news. On the X platform, expressions such as “subtweet” (indirectly criticizing someone) and “thread” (a series of connected posts on one topic) have become common. On Reddit, abbreviations like “AMA” (Ask Me Anything) and “ELI5” (Explain Like I’m 5) are now part of daily usage. Most of these new words enter major dictionaries within one or two years. Furthermore, in 2025, Oxford named “rage bait” - online content deliberately created to provoke anger or

outrage in order to boost engagement - as its Word of the Year, once again demonstrating social media’s powerful influence on language. [5]

The second direction involves semantic shifts. Many words have broadened or narrowed in meaning due to platform usage. For example, “ghosting” once simply meant “like a ghost,” but now it commonly refers to suddenly cutting off all communication in a relationship without explanation. “Lit” has moved from its literal sense of “burning” to mean “extremely exciting or enjoyable.” “Viral” has shifted from describing a biological virus to content that spreads rapidly online. “Friend” now includes not only real-life acquaintances but also online connections. “Tweet” has evolved from a bird’s sound to a post on the X platform. Such changes are making the language more flexible and adaptable. [6]

The third direction is the popularization of abbreviations and slang. Terms like “LOL” (Laugh Out Loud), “BRB” (Be Right Back), “FOMO” (Fear Of Missing Out), and “GOAT” (Greatest Of All Time) are now understood worldwide. Emojis and GIFs are creating an additional “visual language.” Among users in Uzbekistan, expressions such as “no cap” meaning “no lie” or “for real” and “slay” are spreading quickly. Overall, social media is expanding English vocabulary by tens of percent each year — far faster than traditional language change.

#### DISCUSSION

Social media has democratized English vocabulary, giving every user the opportunity to create and spread new words. This process makes the language more creative and inclusive, especially for younger generations. In Uzbekistan, students and young people are naturally acquiring new vocabulary through TikTok and Instagram, which increases their motivation and makes language learning more engaging. [7]

However, these changes also have downsides. In formal documents or academic writing, grammar and spelling errors are becoming more noticeable. Generational language gaps are emerging - older adults may struggle to understand certain slang terms. Moreover, many new expressions are short-lived and quickly fade, making them difficult to master fully. Through globalization, new English words are also entering other languages, including Uzbek. Terms like “selfie,” “hashtag,” and “viral” are now commonly used in everyday Uzbek speech. In education, it is important to take these developments into account. Teachers can incorporate social media into vocabulary lessons to make them more relevant, while still preserving the standards of formal English. In the future, artificial intelligence and new virtual platforms, such as the metaverse, are likely to accelerate vocabulary changes even further. [8]

#### CONCLUSION

Social media has taken the evolution of English vocabulary into a new, faster, and more user-driven stage. It not only generates fresh words but also turns the language into a powerful

tool for global cultural exchange. The findings of this study suggest that by managing this process positively, we can make language learning more effective. In countries like Uzbekistan, integrating social media with English instruction can significantly enhance young people’s international competitiveness.

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