

MULTICULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN SOCIAL MEDIA: THE PROBLEMS OF EVOLVING SLANG

In the current globalized and predominantly digital world, multicultural communication increasingly takes place on social media platforms such as X (formerly known, and still commonly referred to as Twitter), TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Reddit, etc. In addition to these strictly communicative social media platforms, there are also media sharing platforms which operate as a combination of more standard social media platforms, a replacement for TV, and general entertainment platforms, such as YouTube, Twitch.tv, Kick, and other such streaming and media sharing platforms.

It increasingly difficult to accurately and comprehensively document, verify, and track every new type of slang, short forms, inside joke phrases and references, and the like across every single social media platform. This has led to a rapid increase in the rate of development and separation of cultural slang use between users who prioritize different social media platforms.

A person who primarily browses X would be hard pressed to fully understand the slang used by a person who primarily spends their time online watching streams on Twitch.tv. However, while that is expected, according to a study conducted by the author in 2021, it is apparent that even within the same streaming platform, viewers of different streamers develop their own microcultures with personal inside jokes and slang (Tuziuk, 2021). Therefore, even within a single social medium, it may be impossible to fully understand everyone on it.

This phenomenon is compounded by the fact that all of these social media platforms are globalized, which means that people from different backgrounds, different nationalities and cultures, constantly 'remix' and adapt English in a variety of ways. Whether it is through the creation of common abbreviations such as «LOL», «LMAO», «BRB», or through the adoption of already existing shortform slang which carries inherent meaning and is easy to remember, such as «simp», «sus», «stan», etc.

Video-focused social media platforms like TikTok have also fostered distinct linguistic cultures among the younger generations, with slang such as 'rizz', 'delulu', 'sigma', and many others. This type of slang is often very performance and personality driven, being introduced as ways of expressing praise or derision. It is usually simplified due to being easier to say, which also leads to many non-English speaking people adopting them (Putri, Bahri, 2023). X slang such as 'ratio', 'based', 'mid', and others are shorter and snappier, influenced by the character limit of the messages on the platform. Due to the popularity of X as both a political and personal messaging board, this slang is also widely spread among the younger generations.

These were examples of already widespread and commonly used pieces of slang anyone might hear if they walk outside in an English-speaking nation today. However, even in non-English speaking environments, especially in Western Europe, one may hear any number or variation of such slang, adapted from English, or simply used directly (Languages Unlimited, 2022).

Besides general platform slang, there are also personality-based microculture slang proliferators, like big personality streamers and content creators, which have large followings that then mimic the slang from their favorite creators. This creates in-group languages and slang. Examples of this are the slang words «poggers», «copium», «serve», «slay», «iconic», etc.

As one may note, some of the previous slang terms used were common words which have common meanings that do not align with how they are used in their slang forms. «Based» in its slang form is not «having a specified object or material as its base or foundation or as its primary constituent», as one would expect by its dictionary definition, but something that the speaker agrees with on some level, and respects the opinion of the person the word is directed at.

This leads to misunderstandings across cultural lines, leading to alienation between generations, social media platform users, and even cultures, if the user of the slang does not adapt to other environments linguistically. However, one may also note that, due to the slang entering other

social media platforms naturally through lack of user adaptation between platforms, these slang words spread at a rapid pace throughout the entire internet, leading to an enrichment of English that reflects global diversity at a level never before seen.

Additionally the proliferation of online slang may lead to misunderstandings among students learning English in Ukraine, as what they see online is no longer reflected in what they are taught, which is Received Pronunciation (RP) English. This gap necessitates a deeper involvement and level of knowledge from English teachers in order to adapt their instruction to account for contemporary digital usages of slang while still maintaining the foundations and rules of standard English.

Due to this, a new framework must be made to categorize and document this fast-changing and rapidly evolving linguistic landscape, in order to make sense of the origins of phrases, their meanings, and to record their history. Understanding digital slang is vital for the future of intercultural communication developments, and mapping out standard models of global English as a language.

References

1. Languages Unlimited. (2022, August 3). The power of social media language: How it shapes the current generation. *Languages Unlimited*.

2. Putri, R. E., & Bahri, S. (2023). An analysis of Gen Z's digital slang: Patterns from TikTok comment sections. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 11(2), 279–293. <https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v11i2.5911>

3. Tuziuk, M. O. (2021) Gramatychni osoblyvosti internet-comunicatsii na materialy anglo-movnyh komentariv u socialniy merezhi Twitch. [*Grammatical features of Internet-communication based on the English comments on the social media platform Twitch*]. (Master's thesis, Kyiv National Linguistic University).



**Ministry of Education
and Science of Ukraine**



**National University of Life
and Environmental Sciences of
Ukraine**



**Faculty of Humanities
and Pedagogy**



**Дипломатична
академія
України**



**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LIFE
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES OF UKRAINE**

Faculty of Humanities and Pedagogy

Department of Philosophy and International Communication

**INTERNATIONAL AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION
IN SHAPING UKRAINE'S IMAGE:
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

**MATERIALS
OF THE INTERNATIONAL
SCIENTIFIC AND PRACTICAL CONFERENCE**

May 01, 2025

Kyiv

Міжнародна і міжкультурна комунікація у формуванні іміджу України: стратегії розвитку: зб. матеріалів Міжнародної наук.-практ. конф. Київ, 01 травня, 2025 р. Київ: Міленіум, 2025. 178с.

Збірник укладено за матеріалами Міжнародної науково-практичної конференції «Міжнародна і міжкультурна комунікація у формуванні іміджу України: стратегії розвитку», що її провела кафедра філософії та міжнародної комунікації гуманітарно-педагогічного факультету Національного університету біоресурсів і природокористування України. Наповнення рубрик синхронізовано з основними напрямками роботи конференції.

Видання розраховано на науковців, викладачів, аспірантів, студентів.

The collection is compiled on materials of the International scientific and practice conference «International and intercultural communication in shaping Ukraine's image: development strategies» a held by the Department of Philosophy and International Communication of the Faculty of Humanities and Pedagogy of the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine. All the materials are synchronized with the guidelines of the conference.

Forscientists, lecturers, postgraduates, students.

Редакційна колегія:

Шинкарук В.Д., д-р філ. наук, проф. (голова); Балалаєва О. Ю., канд. пед. наук, доц., Вакулик І.І., канд. філ. наук, доц.; Культенко В.П., канд. філос. наук, доц., Лаута О.Д., канд. філос. наук, доц., Савицька І.М., канд. філос. наук, доц., Христюк С.Б., канд. іст. наук, доц.

Схвалено до друку на засіданні вченої ради
гуманітарно-педагогічного факультету, протокол № 9 від 17.04.2025

Тези подано в авторській редакції.

Автори тез відповідають за достовірність викладеного матеріалу,
за правильне цитування джерел, покликання на них і засвідчують відсутність плагіату.

Передруковувати опубліковані в збірнику матеріали
дозволяється тільки за згодою авторів.

© НУБіП України, 2025

© Автори, 2025