

LANGUAGE FUNCTIONING ASPECTS ON THE INTERNET: A MODERN VIEW

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The article deals with some linguistic and cultural aspects of language functioning on the Internet. The author emphasizes the importance of language research due to a lot of outstanding issues that concern the Internet. The comparison of the Slavic, Germanic and Romance languages can be a significant and important factor in basic findings and further research in modern linguistics.

Internet, language functioning, communication, cultural linguistics.

The modern development of society has been characterized by the rapid growth of various means of communication. At the present time, under conditions of expanding of international ties (economical, cultural, educational, scientific etc.) it is difficult to imagine our modern life without the Internet. There is no need to enumerate all branches of sciences, in which the Internet is a subject of research, and modern linguistics is no exception.

Active development of the Internet, as a communicative and informative space, is an important factor of economic, cultural, political and social life. The rapid spread of the Internet culture, its penetration into all areas of life requires study and understanding of this phenomenon in its various manifestations. In today's society there are a lot of ways and forms of communication, most of which are connected with the latest technical features, which primarily are represented by a new phenomenon – the Internet. This is because in the past, humanity performed a great scientific and technical step to a new area of human activity.

The study the Internet, in our opinion, is more than relevant. This is, first of all, because of wide use of the Internet by a modern man; secondly, the Internet is becoming more interesting and contains a large amount of meaningful material, including for research in linguistics, psychology, philosophy and so on.

The Internet research is also interesting for various reasons, such as: communication in this new environment endowed with features that had not been investigated previously (eg relations in opposition recipient – sender, distance in space and time, etc.); a participant of communication is transformed, and becomes a new type of linguistic personality – a virtual linguistic personality that creates new texts and extralinguistic conditions – in the world of virtual interaction.

Analysis of the latest research studies and publications. In recent years the Internet has transformed from purely informational environment in communicative informative one, thus providing virtually unlimited possibilities in this area for interpersonal, intercultural research, and opening some extra dimensions of human communication in general. Everyone knows the importance of the Internet in modern life. A number of users of the global network is growing, as the latest sociological research showed. Today, a significant percentage of scientific papers devoted to the history of the Internet, highlights the question: where, when there was a global network of more. But, despite the fact that all these factors are known, scientists continue to study the infinite space of the Internet.

In prospect of the research there are a lot of unsolved issues: language interaction, language transformation and evolution, the impact of different factors on language development, etc.

Methodology of this research needs the application of different linguistic methods: a comparative method, a descriptive method, a heuristic approach, a statistical approach and many others.

As experience shows, nowadays linguists are around and rapidly develop different questions in the area of linguoculture. S. Vorkachev notes that, «this scientific discipline includes studying and description of language and culture interrelations, language and ethnicity, language and peoples' mentality, it is created, as predicted by E. Benvenist, «on the ground of a trine – language, culture, a human person and represents linguoculture as a lens, through which a researcher can see the material and spiritual identity of the ethnic group ...» [1, p. 3].

According to Ye. Selivanova, «one of the basic sciences for Cultural Linguistics has become Cultural Studies. Cultural Studies investigates elements, types, functions, forms, ways of culture existence, singularity of cultural worlds of different ages, nations, societies and so on. One of the problems of Cultural Studies has always been the linking of a language and culture as two semiotic systems that are in relation of the structural homomorphism» [2, p. 304].

The core of Cultural Linguistics is a person, who is considered as a native speaker and a culture bear, his or her background knowledge, national and specific behavioral norms that make this person a representative of this culture. The Internet as a new, modern (at the same time, disputing) subject of linguistic research makes it possible to examine language functioning in all its aspects. This is due to the fact that the Internet performs a variety of functions, including the most important – communicative one.

The aim of the research. Because of the importance of the Internet study, a lot of scholars have dedicated their research to this issue. In spite of great achievements in the Internet research, there are a lot of unresolved questions and problems that still attract scholars' attention. On this account we've described some linguistic and cultural aspects of language functioning on the Internet.

Presentation of basic material of the research. The Ukrainian language and its existence on the Internet requires a detailed study not only on the part of all humanities aspects, but also in the aspect of linguoculture. «The status of the Ukrainian language largely depends on the globalization that are being taken place in the society, especially through an active introduction of the modern Ukrainian culture in computer technologies, and, especially, the Internet. A global network has impacted positively on the society, giving an opportunity to come to a level of communication, but at the same time, it has opened an access of various negative phenomena to Ukrainian communication» [3]. The rapid development of the Internet communication environment creates new phenomenon in the written and spoken language. There is a permanent modification of the modern language, its development and transformation.

Nowadays there is a lack of attention in the functioning of the Ukrainian language. The language systems in the Internet, its social species, communicative aspects are underinvestigated. It is most likely, that the main reason is that the Internet is a new phenomenon, with different nature. In this connection it is necessary to define the

parameters in which one has to describe and to know its nature; and a researcher also has to know a new phenomenon from within [6].

There is another situation with the English language, which plays an important role not only in the Internet, but in most areas of our modern lives. A high tendency of using foreign lexical items are explained by the process of the world cultural globalization that has been intensified recently.

As the Ukrainian language is in a position of dynamic development and modernization, some new words, including a significant portion, are Anglicism and Americanism. As it has been noted earlier, this can be explained by the fact that in recent years a person has opened a new means of communication – electronic communication (Internet communication, computer communication, virtual communication, etc.), where English is dominated. Thus, each felt the necessity to understand English and to master it.

A specific form of communication, combining practices of oral speech and written discourse with technology restrictions and the alternative possibilities it provides, results in the development of a unique form of language. A new type of depersonalized society favouring linguistic experiments has risen; its values within the communication process include economy of time and place, innovativeness and a sense of humorous parody. Creative processes in the fields of lexicology and morphology are mostly motivated by non-represented meaning values and by non-standard word forms; this attitude results in the development of high numbers of neologisms, most of which are produced by compounding, affixation and conversion. The new words are very active morphologically, and Internet English is very dynamic. In many cases, analogical patterns of word building may be traced in Standard English. Strife for parody allows non-standard interpretation of the morphological laws of the English Language, and the lists of active affixes in the two modes of language do not fully correspond [10].

The Italian language is becoming increasingly popular and fashionable among Internet users, but its functioning in virtual environment, has not been the subject of special linguistic research yet.

Among the European languages, the Neo-Latin languages are also affected. Despite the fact that the main Romance languages played a major role for nearly 1,000 years, in particular French, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian (without forgetting the historic, and literary and lexical mark made by Occitan, Catalan, Norman, Venetian and many other Romance languages), they are today diminished, and the action of languages as vectors of knowledge and international negotiation is reduced. Of course, we understand that concerns about the ground lost by the Romance languages might seem misplaced when 99% of the world's languages have an uncertain future. However, the Romance languages are losing ground in international organizations, scientific and technical expression, international governance, higher education and international negotiations. They are certainly gaining in terms of demography and education as second languages (particular Spanish, Portuguese and French), but their use is above all related to tourism, culture, migration and owing to new populations becoming literate, and less and less to the sectors reserved for knowledge and negotiation [9].

There are special sites in the Internet that provide some information about the use of different types of web technologies and their statistics, for example, a famous World Wide Web Technology Surveys in their recent studies of language use on websites give the

following figures: English – 55.1%, Italian – 1.8 %, Ukrainian – 0.1 %. It is of importance to note that among the 36 listed languages, English ranks first, the second is German, the third is Russian. Italian ranks the ninth, Ukrainian – the thirty-fifth, at last, the thirty-sixth is the Latvian language.

The site <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats7.htm> gives us the following facts: top ten languages in the Internet 2010 – in millions of users: English – 536.6, Chinese – 444.9, Spanish – 153.3, Japanese – 99.1, Portuguese – 82.5, German – 75.2, Arabic – 65.4, French – 59.8, Russia – 59.7, Korean – 39.4, all the rest – 350.6.

Telling the number of speakers of the world's languages is an increasingly complex task, particularly with the push in many countries to teach English in their public schools. How many people can actually use the global language? David Graddol estimated a total of 750 million L1 (first or native language) plus L2 (second or nth language) speakers of English in his Future of English Report for the British Council. Indeed, many people are bilingual or multilingual, but here we assign only one language per person in order to have all the language totals add up to the total world population (zero-sum approach). No adjustments have been made for infants or illiteracy in the Internet penetration rate calculations. Very few countries have 100% literacy. Australia, Denmark, Finland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and Norway are six countries to mention. Regarding children, most are early Internet adopters (when they are given the chance to surf) [<http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats7.htm>].

Conclusions and recommendations for further research. It may be essential to conclude that the linguistic research gains an important meaning, as the study and comparison of the Slavic, Germanic and Romance languages can be a significant and important factor in basic findings and further research in modern linguistics. Research results have proved the necessity for further investigation of the problem mentioned in the article.

Let us conclude by the following words: «Today, the international community is increasingly interested to enable a greater number of people to access and use the Internet in their own scripts and languages. The relationship between languages on the Internet and diversity of language within a country indicates that countries have an important role to play in adopting an appropriate linguistic policy for the Internet. Such a comprehensive linguistic policy requires a specific component to address linguistic diversity in the virtual world, as well as relevant figures based on reliable indicators quantifying the situation» [11].

Thus, the Internet is a new global communication-information environment that provides virtually unlimited opportunities for interpersonal and intercultural communication. The features of the web fundamentally alter the qualitative characteristics of the communication process in general, and, in particular, all its components.

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Розглянуто окремі лінгвістичні та культурологічні аспекти функціонування мови в Інтернеті. Наголошено на важливості дослідження мови у зв'язку з великою кількістю невирішених питань. Порівняння слов'янських, германських і романських мов є важливим чинником у подальших дослідженнях у сучасній лінгвістиці.

Интернет, функціонування мови, комунікація, лінгвокультурологія.

Рассмотрены некоторые лингвистические и культурологические аспекты функционирования языка в Интернете. Отмечена важность исследования языка в связи с большим количеством нерешенных вопросов. Сравнение славянских, германских и романских языков может быть значительным и важным фактором в дальнейших исследованиях в современной лингвистике.

Интернет, функционирование языка, коммуникация, лингвокультурология.