

## **THE ROLE OF NEOLOGISMS IN THE MEDIA**

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In a society where people use the Internet all the time it is inevitable that our dictionaries are constantly updated with new words to simplify communication. Over the past few years a large number of new words have been actively used in the speech of Internet users. But many people do not even think where they come from and why they have a certain name. Therefore, some of these new words will be analyzed in this article.

Nowadays social media sites (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc) have appeared and quickly gained their users everywhere and more than half of the world's population is online now which led to many new words and phrases entering our lexicon. According to the Oxford Dictionary 'lexicon' is defined as the vocabulary of a person, language, or branch of knowledge; so the term 'lexicon' means all the words included in all English dictionaries (general and specialized) plus any new words entering the language either through word formation processes [1].

Most frequently all new words are called "neologisms". The term "neologism" originates from Greek when "neos" means "new", "logos" means "word" so it can be said literally "a new word".

According to Henry Hitchings, an American author and reviewer, who specializes in narrative non-fiction with a particular emphasis on language and cultural history, "One reason we deploy neologisms is that existing words are bleached by overuse". This is especially likely to happen with terms of approval or disapproval which are highly susceptible to fashion. To survive language must evolve even if it is resistant to certain forms of change. Most new words sparkle briefly if at all and then fade away but new words are necessary. The world alters and so does our vocabulary. Fresh ideas, values, products and objects of interest require fresh terminology [2].

The survey held among the students of Polessky State University showed that the most common neologisms used in everyday life are avatar, selfie, meme and spam.

Due to some statistics the most widely used word in the Internet is "avatar". Derived from the Sanskrit "avatar", meaning "descent," avatar first appeared in English in 1784 to mean an incarnation or human appearance of a deity. The proliferation of avatar's second meaning can be traced to Second Life, a multiplayer online virtual world, where players fashion their own online personae called avatars. The popularity of the game has shot the term into the mainstream. Philip Rosedale, the creator of Second Life, defines avatar in the gaming sense as "the representation of your chosen embodied appearance to other people in a virtual world" [3].

By the way, the word "avatar" is closely linked with the currently fashionable word—neologism as "selfie". So, in November 2013 the OED (Oxford English Dictionary) declared that for 2013 the word of the year would be "selfie". The word "selfie" was born back in 2002, with Nathan Hope who had a little accident and posted a self-photograph showing the stitches in his lower lip. And he continued writing about that accident and posted his photos. Thus, it became the first written use of the word "selfie" in any medium (paper or electronic). And he apologized for the focus because it was a selfie. That's how the word "selfie" got into the English language. Its use grew slowly at first but then took off [4].

As a matter of fact, an interesting origin has any text or graphic, often funny, images called "memes". The word "meme" was coined on the model of gene by the evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins who defined it as "a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of imitation". "Most of what is unusual about man can be summed up in one word," the evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins wrote in his book 'The Selfish Gene' (1976). But what does culture have to do with evolutionary biology? Like genes, he argues, cultural transmission creates a pathway to evolution. Dawkins needed a noun to describe this concept of the transmission of an idea. He initially toyed with the Greek word "mimeme", meaning imitation, but he wanted something shorter that gestured to the English gene and he landed on "meme". In Dawkins' sense, a meme is simply an idea; it could be anything from fashion and a catchphrase to a method of building arches. [5].

Though the Internet is so useful, not all the information that we come across is necessary for us. "Spam" is used for the purpose of description of the undesirable information we receive. Before "spam" became a word that represented unwanted emails, it was a word that represented the successful repackaging of unwanted meat. Spam means the square can of pork and it was invented as a way to peddle the then-unprofitable pork shoulder, according to the Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America. In an episode of Monty Python's Flying Circus that aired in the 1970s, patrons are seating in a restaurant enquiring about the day's menu items. However, every dish included at least a little Spam (i.e. "spiced ham" from a tin). The more they enquired, the more spam appeared in each dish. By the end of the sketch, a dish that previously featured "egg, bacon, sausage and Spam" at that time only consisted of "Spam, Spam, Spam and Spam". In other words, Spam was taken over the menu, much the same as spam e-mail message can take over an inbox today. Thus, mass mailing of correspondence of an advertising nature to persons who did not express a desire to receive it, was called "spam" [6].

Julie Coleman, the author of "The Life of Slang", admitted that because of social media words are moving around the world within weeks and months, whereas earlier it could take a few years. She also pointed out that it's not necessarily that a language is changing more quickly but technologies have

developed and they allow the transmission of slang terms to pass from one group to another much more quickly [7].

To sum up, there is a huge variety of neologisms in the Internet and every year many new words are added to our language and you might notice how many of these "new" words are just appropriated, pre-existing or given entirely new meanings but this process is inevitable and constant.

### References

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