INTERNET TERMINOLOGY IN DIGITAL

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Abstract: The rapid development of the Internet and digital technologies has considerably influenced contemporary English vocabulary and communication. Internet terminology represents one of the most dynamic lexical domains because new technologies, digital platforms, online services, and forms of communication continuously generate new words and meanings. This study examines Internet terminology in digital media from media-linguistic and linguopragmatic perspectives. Particular attention is given to the semantic, structural, functional, and pragmatic characteristics of Internet-related terms used in online newspapers, social media, websites, blogs, digital advertising, and other forms of digital communication. The analysis demonstrates that terms such as website, browser, hyperlink, hashtag, follower, influencer, livestream, streaming, upload, download, platform, algorithm, chatbot, and cybersecurity have moved beyond specialized technological discourse and become widely used in public communication. The study also identifies productive word-formation processes, including compounding, abbreviation, clipping, borrowing, and semantic extension. The findings show that Internet terminology performs not only a nominative function but also informative, persuasive, evaluative, expressive, and attention-attracting functions in digital media. The research confirms that digital media plays an important role in the popularization, semantic adaptation, and conventionalization of Internet terminology.

Keywords: Internet terminology, digital media, digital discourse, media linguistics, linguopragmatics, Internet vocabulary.

Introduction

The Internet has become an essential part of contemporary social, professional, educational, and cultural life. The rapid development of digital technologies has resulted in significant changes not only in communication practices but also in language. New digital objects, services, platforms, and communicative practices require new linguistic forms for their designation. Consequently, Internet terminology has become one of the most rapidly developing areas of contemporary English vocabulary.

Internet terminology includes lexical units referring to online technologies, digital communication, social networking, electronic services,

cybersecurity, digital content, and Internet-based activities. Examples include website, browser, hyperlink, domain, server, hashtag, post, follower, influencer, livestream, streaming, cloud, platform, algorithm, chatbot, and cybersecurity.

Initially, many of these terms were restricted to specialized IT and computer-science discourse. However, the expansion of digital media has considerably increased their frequency and communicative scope. Today, Internet terms are regularly used in online journalism, social media, blogs, advertising, entertainment, education, and everyday conversation.

Digital media is particularly important in this process because it functions not only as a channel for communication but also as an environment in which new terminology is created, reproduced, modified, and popularized. From the perspective of **media linguistics**, Internet terminology can be examined in relation to digital genres, media platforms, audiences, and communication practices. From a **linguopragmatic perspective**, attention should be paid to how Internet terms acquire particular meanings and communicative functions depending on context, speaker intention, audience, and discourse situation.

The aim of this study is to examine the linguistic and pragmatic characteristics of Internet terminology in contemporary digital media.

Methodology

The study employs several complementary linguistic methods.

The **descriptive method** is used to identify and classify Internet terminology according to semantic fields and communicative functions.

The **structural-semantic method** is applied to analyze the formation and meaning of Internet-related lexical units. Particular attention is given to compounds, abbreviations, clipped forms, and semantically extended words.

The **contextual method** is used to determine how the meanings of Internet terms are influenced by the context in which they occur.

The **media-linguistic approach** examines the use of terminology in online newspapers, social media, blogs, websites, and digital advertising.

The **linguopragmatic approach** focuses on communicative intentions and the functions performed by Internet terminology in digital discourse.

The analyzed lexical units can be divided into several major groups:

Semantic group	**Examples**
Web technologies	website, browser, webpage, hyperlink, domain
Online communication	email, chat, message, DM, video call
Social media	follower, hashtag, post, like, share
Digital content	livestream, streaming, podcast, blog, meme

Cybersecurity	phishing, malware, password, firewall
Digital services	cloud, e-commerce, online banking
Artificial intelligence	AI, chatbot, algorithm, machine learning
Digital marketing	SEO, engagement, traffic, targeting

Results And Discussion

3.1. Structural Characteristics of Internet Terminology

The analysis demonstrates that Internet terminology is characterized by high word-formation productivity.

Compounding is one of the most common processes:

- website
- webpage
- livestream
- cybersecurity
- search engine
- cloud computing

Abbreviations and acronyms are also highly productive in digital communication:

- AI – Artificial Intelligence
- URL – Uniform Resource Locator
- VPN – Virtual Private Network
- DM – Direct Message
- SEO – Search Engine Optimization
- FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

The frequent use of shortened forms reflects the principle of linguistic economy, which is particularly important in fast digital communication.

Clipping can also be observed in forms such as:

- app ← application

- admin ← administrator
- tech ← technology
- info ← information

These forms are particularly frequent in informal online communication.

3.2. Semantic Extension of Internet Terminology

One of the most significant characteristics of Internet terminology is semantic extension. Existing English words may acquire new meanings when they enter the digital environment.

For example:

Lexical unit	Traditional meaning	Internet meaning
follow	move behind someone	subscribe to a user's content
friend	a person one knows	a social-network connection
post	position/place or send	publish digital content
stream	flow continuously	transmit digital media
cloud	atmospheric formation	online storage/service
viral	related to a virus	rapidly spreading online content
platform	raised surface	digital environment/service
footprint	mark left by a foot	information left by a user online

These examples demonstrate that Internet terminology is often based on metaphorical transfer and semantic reinterpretation.

The term viral, for instance, has developed a new digital meaning. In the expression a viral video, it describes content that spreads rapidly among Internet users. Similarly, cloud has become a technological term referring to Internet-based storage and computing services.

3.3. Media-Linguistic Functions

Internet terminology performs several important functions in digital media.

First, it has a **nominative function**, allowing speakers to name new

technological objects and processes.

For example:

The company launched a new chatbot.

Second, Internet terminology has an **informative function**:

The website provides information about cybersecurity risks.

Third, technological terms may perform an **attention-attracting function**, especially in online headlines:

AI Technology Is Changing the Future of Education.

Terms such as AI, digital, smart, online, and cyber frequently attract readers because they are associated with innovation and technological development.

Internet terminology can also have a **persuasive function** in digital advertising:

Download our app for a faster and smarter online experience.

Here, technological vocabulary helps create an image of modernity, efficiency, and innovation.

3.4. Linguopragmatic Characteristics

The meaning of Internet terminology is often dependent on the communicative context.

For example, the word platform may refer to a technical system, a social media service, an online marketplace, or a communication environment.

Similarly, the verb follow may occur in different contexts:

Follow the instructions carefully.

and:

Follow us on Instagram.

In the first example, follow has its general meaning. In the second, it represents a specific digital action.

Therefore, Internet terminology cannot always be interpreted independently of the discourse context. Its pragmatic meaning is influenced by the communication platform, target audience, genre, and communicative intention.

3.5. Internet Terminology and Digital Identity

Internet terminology also reflects changes in social relationships and professional identities.

New terms such as influencer, blogger, streamer, gamer, and content creator describe social and professional roles that have emerged as a result of digital communication.

For example:

She works as a content creator.

The term content creator refers not simply to a person who creates

information but to a recognizable professional identity within digital culture.

Thus, Internet terminology reflects broader social and cultural changes associated with digitalization.

3.6. The Role of Digital Media in Popularizing Internet Terms

Digital media is one of the major mechanisms through which specialized terminology enters general language.

The process can be represented as:

Specialized IT discourse → Digital media → Social media → Everyday language

A term may initially be used mainly by IT professionals. Through online news and social media, however, it can become familiar to a much wider audience.

For example, algorithm was traditionally associated with computer science and mathematics. Today, it is frequently used in discussions about social media, search engines, recommendation systems, and online advertising.

Consequently, digital media contributes to the democratization of technological vocabulary and reduces the linguistic distance between specialists and general users.

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that Internet terminology represents a dynamic and rapidly developing component of contemporary digital media discourse. The expansion of online communication has resulted in the appearance of new terms as well as the semantic transformation of existing vocabulary.

The analysis shows that Internet terminology is characterized by productive word-formation processes such as compounding, abbreviation, clipping, borrowing, and semantic extension. At the same time, many ordinary English words have acquired specialized meanings in the digital environment.

From a media-linguistic perspective, digital media serves as an important environment for the production, dissemination, and popularization of Internet terminology. From a linguopragmatic perspective, Internet terms perform a variety of communicative functions depending on context, audience, genre, and communicative intention.

Therefore, Internet terminology should not be studied only as a technical vocabulary. It should also be regarded as an important linguistic component of contemporary digital communication and media discourse.

Further research may investigate the development of Internet terminology in English and Uzbek, especially processes of borrowing, transliteration, calquing, semantic adaptation, and terminology standardization in Uzbek digital media.

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