

## SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF IT TERMINOLOGY IN INFORMAL ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS IN UKRAINIAN

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### Summary

The article studies the penetration of IT terminology into informal online communication in Ukrainian. The main mechanisms of adaptation of terms, such as transcription, calquing, hybridisation and abbreviation, are analysed, which facilitate the integration of specialised vocabulary into everyday speech. Special attention is paid to the functions of IT terms, including time saving, social identification and stylistic play. The study also covers sociolinguistic aspects that influence the use of IT vocabulary in different age and professional groups.

The research methodology involves a combined approach that includes quantitative, qualitative and comparative analysis. The data sources were social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Telegram), forums and chats, which allowed us to trace current language trends. Quantitative analysis provided a measure of the frequency of use of IT terms, while qualitative analysis allowed us to explore their semantic variations in different contexts. The comparative approach helped to identify the peculiarities of using IT vocabulary among representatives of different social and age groups.

The results of the study showed that IT terms in online communication are divided into three main groups: unchanged borrowings ('лайк (laik)', Eng. 'like', 'чат (chat)', Eng. 'chat', 'логін (lohin)', Eng. 'login'), adapted hybrids ('зашерити (zasharyty)', Eng. 'to share', 'апгрейднути (apgreidnuty)', Eng. 'to upgrade', 'забанити (zabanyty)', Eng. 'to ban') and abbreviations (LOL, DM, BRB). It has been found that young people and representatives of the IT sphere are the most active in using IT vocabulary, while in bilingual environments it is possible to use English and Ukrainianised versions of terms in parallel. The functionality of IT vocabulary covers not only the communicative but also the socio-cultural aspect, reflecting the change of language norms in the digital space.

The study emphasises the importance of IT terminology in the formation of modern linguistic culture and outlines the prospects for its further development in connection with the dynamic changes in the digital environment.

**Key words:** IT terminology, online communication, digital transformation, sociolinguistics, linguistic culture, language borrowing, adaptation of terms.

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### 1. Introduction

The modern world is undergoing rapid changes due to digital transformation, which affects not only the technical aspects of life but also the linguistic culture of society. The growing influence of IT terminology on everyday speech has become one of the key signs of these changes. Technical terms that used to be used exclusively in professional contexts are being actively integrated into informal online communications – in social networks, messengers, forums and other platforms. This integration poses new challenges for sociolinguistics, which

has to investigate the mechanisms and consequences of these linguistic changes. The problem lies in the need to identify the causes and functions of the penetration of IT terms into everyday communication, as well as their impact on linguistic culture.

The issue of the impact of digitalisation on language is the subject of numerous studies that examine aspects of borrowing, adaptation and transformation of vocabulary in different languages. In particular, the study by Artysh O., Levun O. and Petrova S. analyses the impact of modern technologies on the development of English vocabulary, in particular IT terminology (Artysh, O., Levun, O., Petrova, S., 2024).

In addition, the article 'The Evolution of the Language of Social Media: A Sociolinguistic Analysis' emphasises the importance of digital literacy in social media and provides a practical understanding of the development of online communication (Chyrvonyi, O. S., 2024).

However, research on IT terminology in informal online communications remains fragmented. Most of them focus on the analysis of the English-speaking environment, while the processes typical for other languages require more attention.

The aim of this study is to analyse the penetration of IT terms into informal online communications in Ukrainian, to determine their functions and impact on linguistic culture. The objectives include:

1. investigating the reasons for the spread of IT terms in everyday communication;
2. identifying the main functions of IT vocabulary in the digital environment;
3. analysing the impact of the use of technical terminology on the linguistic culture and communication practices of online communication participants.

Thus, the study is aimed at revealing the mechanisms and consequences of the integration of IT terminology into everyday speech, which is important for understanding linguistic changes in the modern digital society.

## 2. Origins and development of IT terminology

In today's digital environment, the integration of IT terminology into informal online communications is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that requires careful sociolinguistic analysis. The study of this process is based on the fundamental concepts of sociolinguistics and digital communication.

Sociolinguistics explores the relationship between language and society, looking at how social factors shape language practices. With the appearance of the Internet and social media, there is a need to analyse new forms of interaction. Online discourse, as one of the most modern forms of communication, is marked by specific linguistic features that significantly distinguish it from traditional ways of communication (Koltsova, Y. (2019).

The Internet language, which has emerged in the digital environment, is a unique set of linguistic means that combines the features of spoken and written language. It is distinguished by its dynamism and stylistic features, adapting to the rapidly changing conditions of online communication. Studies show that digital communication demonstrates significant differences from traditional communication, in particular in the use of slang and new terms (Koltsova, Y. (2019).

IT terms play an important role in digital communication, performing a number of significant functions. First of all, they have a nominative function, allowing us to name new objects, phenomena and processes that emerge in the digital sphere. Words such as 'фреймворк (freim-vork), Eng. 'framework', 'апликація (aplikatsiia), Eng. 'application' or 'баг (bah), Eng. 'bug' are indispensable in technical communication, giving precision and specificity to speech.

In addition, terms serve an integrative function, fostering a sense of belonging to a community that actively uses digital technologies. The use of specialised technical vocabulary unites people with common interests and professional activities (*Kompantseva, L., 2015*).

Equally important is the expressive function of IT vocabulary, which adds expressiveness and dynamism to online communication. For example, terms such as ‘лагати (lahaty)’, Eng. ‘to lag’ or ‘залагати (zalahaty)’, Eng. ‘to start lagging’ are used not only to describe problems technically, but also to add emotional colour to speech, reflecting users' reactions to certain situations.

One of the characteristic features of IT terminology is its ability to adapt to the phonetic, grammatical and stylistic norms of a particular language. A study of this process shows that common strategies include transcription, for example, when English ‘coder’ becomes ‘кодер (koder)’, as well as calquing, which allows forming expressions such as “хмарне сховище (khmarne skhovyshche)” from the English ‘cloud storage’. We should also highlight hybridisation, which combines borrowed words with native elements to form such informal forms as ‘девайсик (devaisyk)’ from English ‘device’ or ‘аплікуха (aplikukha)’ from English ‘application’.

At the same time, IT terms have a significant impact on language culture, changing it in several ways. They enrich the lexical composition of the language, although they can sometimes lead to the displacement of authentic vocabulary. In addition, such terms bring in elements of the culture of the donor country, creating a globalised linguistic space. However, this process can also blur the boundaries between professional and everyday language, which affects linguistic identity (*Brooks, D., 2024*).

### 3. Research methodology

The research methodology includes a thorough analysis of data sources and the use of combined methods to gain a deeper understanding of the integration of IT terminology into online communication. The data sources were modern digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Telegram, which are constantly updated and provide a large amount of textual information. In addition, discussions on forums were used, in particular in thematic groups related to gaming or the professional activities of IT specialists, which allows us to study language practices in highly specialised communities. We also collected messages in chats and comments to publications, which provide access to real language material.

Various methods were used for the study, which allowed for a comprehensive examination of linguistic phenomena. Quantitative analysis measured the frequency of use of individual IT terms in the sample of texts, which helped to identify the most popular terms and trends in their use. Qualitative analysis complemented this data by focusing on the contexts in which the terms were used and their semantic variation. This approach allowed us to trace changes in the meaning of terms depending on the situation or platform.

Comparative analysis made it possible to study the peculiarities of using IT terms in different age and social groups. This made it possible to identify specific language practices typical for certain categories of users and to understand how social factors influence their speech. A comprehensive approach combining quantitative, qualitative and comparative methods allowed us to build a holistic picture of the linguistic use of IT terms in the digital environment.

#### 4. Analysis of the results

The analysis of the research results shows that IT terms in informal online communication are divided into several types, each of which has its own characteristics and peculiarities. One of the most common is borrowings that come from the English language without changes. Examples of words such as 'лайк (laik)', Eng. 'like'; 'чат (chat)', Eng. 'chat'; 'логін (lohin)', Eng. 'login'; 'фолловер (followver)', Eng. 'follower'; 'хештег (kheshteh)', Eng. 'hashtag'; 'бекенд (bekend)', Eng. 'backend' or 'фронтенд (front-end)', Eng. 'frontend' illustrate their rapid adoption by speakers without adaptation to phonetic or grammatical norms. Such terms are found on almost every platform, such as Facebook, Instagram or Telegram, where they are key elements of communication.

Another type of IT terms is hybrid forms, where borrowings are adapted to the morphological norms of the language. For example, the words 'зашерити (zasheryty)', Eng. 'to share'; 'забанити (zabanity)', Eng. 'to ban'; 'апгрейднути (apgreidnuty)', Eng. 'to upgrade'; 'проскролити (proskrolyty)', Eng. 'to scroll through' combine a foreign language base with word-shifting elements of the native language. Such forms appear both in informal communication and in professional settings, especially among youth groups and IT professionals.

Creative abbreviations form a separate group, which are particularly popular on social media and messengers. Abbreviations such as LOL (laugh out loud), DM (direct message), BRB (be right back) or ASAP (as soon as possible) not only save time, but also serve as a means of stylistic expression. They are often used in informal conversations to convey messages quickly or to create a humorous effect.

The functions of IT terminology cover several important aspects. Firstly, it saves time: the use of abbreviations and shortened terms can significantly speed up the exchange of information. For example, the phrase 'Drop a DM' is used instead of the full sentence 'Send me a private message'. Secondly, terms serve as an identification tool, allowing users to demonstrate their membership in a particular group. Gamers, for example, use the terms 'геймплей (heimplei)', Eng. 'gameplay'; 'рейд (reid)', Eng. 'raid'; 'спавн (spavn)', Eng. 'spawn', which are specific to their community. Thirdly, IT vocabulary is often used for stylistic play, for example, humorous paraphrasing, such as 'залагав мозок (zalahav mozok)', Eng. 'brain lagged' or 'запостити думку (zapostyty dumku)', Eng. 'to post a thought', adds irony or humour to statements.

Sociolinguistic factors show that young people are the fastest to integrate IT terms into their speech due to their constant use of digital platforms. In bilingual environments such as Ukraine, it is common to find parallel use of Anglicisms and local equivalents, such as 'лайкнути (laiknuty)', Eng. 'to like' and 'уподобати (upodobaty)', Eng. 'to like (formal)'. In professional contexts, IT terms are usually used exactly as they are meant, while in everyday communication, their meaning may vary depending on the situation or humorous context. These observations emphasise the versatility of the use of IT terminology and its influence on modern language culture (Koltsova, Y., 2019).

#### 5. Peculiarities of youth use of IT terminology

Young people, who are active participants in the digital environment, are one of the main carriers of IT vocabulary. This is due to their constant use of various digital platforms, which facilitates the integration of new terms into everyday communication. In particular, IT-related words and expressions are often transformed into slang forms that acquire new meanings in

informal communication. For example, the word 'забанити (zabanity)', Eng. 'to ban', originally used in the context of online communities to mean the temporary or permanent blocking of a user, can now be used to mean 'exclude' or 'disable' in any context, even offline. Thus, young people might say, 'He was banned from the party because he broke the rules.'

Another striking example is the word 'апгрейднути (apgreidnuty)', which originated from the English word 'upgrade', meaning to update or improve something. Among young people, this word is often used to mean 'improve' or 'modernise' not only technical devices, but also social or personal situations, for example: 'Я вирішив апгрейднути свою рутину і почати тренуватися зранку (Ya vyryshyv apgreidnuty svoiu rutynu i pochaty trenuvatysia zranku)', Eng. 'I decided to upgrade my routine and start working out in the morning'. Such transformations of IT terms in the youth environment allow us to better understand how new words and expressions become part of the language culture and how they adapt to changes in social interactions.

The adaptation of IT vocabulary in informal communication contributes to the emergence of new forms of speech, which in turn affects communication practices. Studies show that this phenomenon allows young people to communicate more effectively in the digital space, use modern terms and quickly adapt to changes in language and technological practices.

## 6. Impact on language culture

The influence of IT terminology on language culture is multifaceted and has both positive and negative aspects that should be considered in the context of the modern digital environment.

Among the positive effects, one of the most obvious advantages is the enrichment of vocabulary. The integration of new terms allows the language to evolve, adapting to changes in society and technology. For example, the words 'стрім (strim)', Eng. 'stream'; 'подкаст (podkast)', Eng. 'podcast' or 'домен (domen)', Eng. 'domain' create new linguistic resources that help to accurately describe modern phenomena. This enrichment helps to expand the linguistic possibilities for expressing thoughts in the context of digital technologies. In addition, the use of common IT vocabulary, such as 'апгрейд (apgreid)', Eng. 'upgrade'; 'баг (bah)', Eng. 'bug'; 'фолловер (followver)', Eng. 'follower', facilitates integration into the global language community. Such a unified vocabulary allows people from different countries to communicate and collaborate easily, which is especially important in the context of globalisation.

At the same time, the use of IT terms can also have negative consequences for the language culture. One of the risks is the oversaturation of the language with Anglicisms, which can lead to a gradual loss of the authenticity of the native language. For example, in Ukrainian, the words 'апдейт (apdeit)', Eng. 'update'; 'логін (lohin)', Eng. 'login' or 'фреймворк (freimvork)', Eng. 'framework' are often used without attempts to find or create an authentic analogue. This raises concerns about the displacement of original words and grammatical forms.

Another problem is the creation of a language barrier between generations or social groups. Young people who actively use terms such as 'задонатити (zadonatyty)', Eng. 'to donate (online)' or 'зашерити (zasheryty)', Eng. 'to share' may not be understood by the older generation who have no experience of using digital platforms. Similarly, highly specialised IT terms such as 'бекенд (bekend)', Eng. 'backend'; 'дебагінг (debahinh)', Eng. 'debugging' or 'контейнеризація (konteineryzatsiia)', Eng. 'containerization' can be difficult to understand even among native speakers who do not belong to the technical community.

Thus, the impact of IT terms on language culture is controversial. On the one hand, they contribute to the development of the language and its adaptation to modernity, and on the

other hand, they can cause the loss of linguistic identity and create barriers to communication between different groups of speakers.

## 7. Conclusions

The findings of the study emphasise that IT terminology has become an integral part of informal online communication today. Words such as 'чат (chat), Eng. 'chat', 'стрім (strim), Eng. 'stream', 'логін (lohin), Eng. 'login' or 'апгрейд (apgreid), Eng. 'upgrade' are not only widely used in communication, but also reflect current linguistic trends. This vocabulary is a tool that helps to adapt the language to the challenges of the digital age. In addition, the social and age characteristics of speakers have a significant impact on the style and frequency of use of terms. For example, young people actively adopt terms such as 'лайкнути (laiknuty), Eng. 'to like', 'зашерити (zasheryty), Eng. 'to share' or забанити (zabanity), Eng. 'to ban', while older generations may use them in a limited way or replace them with authentic expressions.

Prospects for further research in this area offer considerable scope for analysis. One of the key areas is to extend the study of IT vocabulary to other languages or cultural communities. For example, comparing the impact of digital technologies on Ukrainian, Polish, or Spanish could provide interesting results.

The recommendations based on the results of the study are of practical value. Firstly, the data obtained can be used to compile dictionaries of modern vocabulary that take into account the trends of linguistic development in the digital age. Secondly, the analysis of IT terms will help to improve English language teaching methods, in particular by adapting materials to the modern language environment. For example, teachers can include words and phrases that are most commonly used in digital contexts in the curriculum. Finally, the data collected can be used in the field of automatic translation, improving the accuracy and relevance of translation systems. This is especially relevant for creating adaptive algorithms that take into account the context of IT terminology.

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