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GRAPHIC AND ORTHOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF ENGLISH AND GEORGIAN-LANGUAGE INTERNET DISCOURSE (BASED ON YOUTUBE VIDEO COMMENTS)

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ABSTRACT

The present paper is devoted to the investigation of the linguistic (mainly graphic and orthographic) features of Internet Discourse, as a new type of language. Graphic and orthographic features of Internet Discourse are investigated on the basis of English and Georgian YouTube video comments. The analysis showed that Internet Discourse is characterized by specific graphic and orthographic features: the usage of emoticons, unusual usage of punctuation marks, multiple punctuation, unconventional spelling, capitalization, etc.

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Introduction.

Technologies are often thought to influence language, and as access to the internet and its myriad communicative application has surged over the past two decades, public discourse about its influence has become commonplace in networked society. In many contexts, metalinguistics terms like netspeak and chatspeak circulate as names for a perceived language variety originating in internet discourse.

This article investigates internet-specific language, more clearly it studies graphic and orthographic features of the internet language based on YouTube video comments. Our aim is to study graphic and orthographic features of internet communication, to classify graphic and orthographic peculiarities into main types (emoticons, multiple punctuation, unconventional spelling, capitalization, etc.).

Statement of the problem.

The modern internet consists of a huge range of texts - hypertexts, topics, keywords. Internet texts are characterized by interactivity, communicability, individual approach, consumer-oriented discourse, etc. Besides, they have special lexical, grammatical, stylistic, orthographic and graphic peculiarities. Because of the abovementioned peculiarities internet communication has become the main form of interaction between people and has developed a new type of language – The internet language. As Internet communication is a special and separate language and characterized by special features, it needs thorough study.

Researchers have been interested in Internet communication since the beginning of the 20th century. British linguist David Crystal carried out many studies on Internet language. According to D. Crystal “The Internet is, indeed a revolutionary communication technology” (Crystal, 2004:62). It produces a radical shift from old, long-established language conventions, modes, and styles by making its language differ in fundamental aspects from traditional conversational speech and from writing.

Language has hitherto been viewed and described in terms of two mediums of manifestation: speech and writing.

Language on the internet contains distinctive linguistic features, such as emoticons and graphics which can neither be spoken nor written (Crystal, 2011:2). Consequently, British linguist D. Crystal put forward and pioneered a new field of linguistics and named it as “Internet Linguistics.”

D. Barton devoted several works to the description of new types of digital texts. Linguists of Slavic origin (M. Melnik, M. Pavlov, I. Tanabaeva, S. Subota) devoted a number of scientific articles to the study of Internet communication. Arabian Linguist Abusa’aleek (2013) conducted a study to categorize the linguistic features of (Initialism) that used in the language of e-mails, chats, web-based discussions and instant messages and focuses on how the e-discourse has distinctive linguistic dimension.

Baron (2010) examined discourse structures in instant messaging communication among American college students. Tagliamonte and Denis (2008) also examined the language of instant messaging. Plester et al (2009) investigated children’s familiarity of ‘textisms’. Sun, Hong – Mei (2010) investigated characteristics on Internet English. Lyddy et al. (2014) conducted a study to analyze 13 characteristics of e-discourse. Lyddy found out that the most frequently occurring features of e-discourse are unconventional spellings, word combinations and less frequent occurring features are emoticons, word-letter replacement and word -digits replacement.

Purpose of the article.

The purpose of this article is to consider modern approaches to Internet language studies, to describe the graphic and orthographic characteristics of internet communication.

Presentation of the main research material.

This study is based on the analysis of YouTube video comments. We aim at studying graphic and orthographic features of Internet discourse of two different languages (English and Georgian), so the empirical material is taken from internet sources of two unrelated languages.

Discussion.

During the research, our special attention was drawn to the graphic elements characteristic to the Internet language. Our analysis showed that one of the graphic peculiarities of YouTube video comments is the usage of emoticons.

An emoticon short for „emotion icon“ is a pictorial representation of a facial expression on using characters – usually punctuation marks, numbers and letters to express person’s feelings, mood, or reaction without needing to describe it in detail. Its appearance is associated with the name of Scott Fahlman, who created the first patterns in 1982: :-) symbol, which denoted a smile, and :-(sadness). (Harald, 2018:1).

There are many types of emoticons. They are divided into: positive and negative, horizontal and vertical ones. The difference between them is reflected not only in the form, but also in the area of their usage and distribution.

Online communication is unimaginable without emoticons, often, instead of words, graphic sketches express the user's opinion, attitude and mood towards the issue. Despite the variety of "smileys", Anglo-American and Georgian YouTube video comments revealed the abundance of emotional figures expressing: happiness, sadness, confusion, laughter and anger.

Through horizontal emoticons, users express the emotion of love:

uh the music going through my heart (˘ω˘)

I love to play this song in Piano Tiles. ♡_♡

To favor a musician or music:

- I miss you Yiruma ㅠ-ㅠ It's been a longgggg timeee Listening to you wonderful music makes me better than before Luv you ^-^
- i always enjoyed this kind of music ^_^
- Nickelback are just so awesome ^_^ I love their music, Wish I had Chads guitar skills
- Rogor mikvars am jgufis simgerebi ^_^
- Orive dzaan magaria, egre ganagrdzet ^_^
- Sakaifo veshia, ^_____^ sagool dagdagan^_^

- Meramdened vusmen ^_ ^

Boredom or anger:

• Like as usual, Yiruma did a great job! Who have melancholic feeling like me when listening ? \((^o^)/

- It's like to look in Lucifer's eyes -_-
- Mgoni medzina es rom ver vnaxe -_-

In contrast to horizontal emoticons, there is an abundance of vertical emoticons. We divided the samples of vertical emoticons in two groups: positive and negative ones. We have combined the following figures into positive emoticons: -), :-D, XD, <3, :P.

A smiley emoticon such as :-) or :) is used to indicate benevolence, fun and happiness:

• very great !! very beautiful to listen and to look :-) wonderful person or wonderful musical sense. :)

- udzlieresi simgeraa :)

- dzalian sasiarovno :)

Unlike Anglo-American comments, emoticon:* expresses kindness in Georgian video comments

- dzalian, dzalian mikvars.*:*
- dilats ase unda daitskos magrad mevasebit.*
- saaagol sakaifoa :*

The emoticon, :-D or :D shows funny attitude towards something in both languages:

- He has some kind of problem with his mouth? :D
- I don't know why but the dude in the video looks like Chris Jerico :D
- only sexy girls came to see him :D
- Moitsa es kartvelebis simgeraa?: D
- Rokma puri tchama! :DDDDD
- Magari vigadave:D :D
- Biberi rom gajobebs adamians simgerit :D

Emoticon XD means the same thing as LOL, and is used in video comments to share or respond to something very funny.

- when I was 4 I thought my dad was nickelback lolololol! XD
- i liked the centaur guy playing the guitar lol XD
- es rom dikabrios moesmina tviton tchadziravda im gems XD

While researching YouTube video comments, we also encountered the :-P or :P emoticon, which is commonly used to express playfulness, sarcasm, or teasing:

- just wanted to comment **:P**
- This is absolutely hilarious this video and the song. **:P**
- And I thought music videos today were weird: **p**

Among the positive emoticons the vertical (<3) denoting sympathy and love is distinguished by its frequency of use in both Anglo-American and Georgian language comments

- I love so much this song <3
- Love you guys. Thanks a lot for this masterpiece. <3
- Handsome young genius! Thanks for sharing. <3
- Rogor mikvars es jgufi prosta aritsit<3
- Es is simgeraa romlis mosmenats ar mbezrdeba<3
- Shemidzlia gauchereblad vusmino mteli dge da game<3

As for the emoticons expressing negative emotions, the emoticon :(has a double meaning in the comments. It expresses boredom on the one hand, and anger on the other:

- I guess i'm lonely :(
- Freddie please come back!! we need you :(
- Anyone else suddenly obsessed with MJ? I feel so sad I never got to see him perform I was born in the wrong generation:(
- Ar imsakhurebt aset mtsire msmenelta raodenobas, araaaaa :(
- Ar mesmis ase zustad rogor unda agtseros chemi tskhovreba musikam :((((
- Fuu ra amazrzeni khar :(((

The emoticon : / expresses negative emotion The user turns to it when something is unclear:

- i dont understant the meaning of the lyrics and the video :/
- anu teksti gasagebia mara klipi tekstan ra shushia: /
- vin rogor gaigo mokled tkvit ? :/

Another peculiarity of YouTube video comments is reflected in the variety of expressions of laughter. we have already discussed the cases where laughter was conveyed by emoticons, however, we should mention another fairly common form, which involves the textual representation of laughter sounds.

In both Anglo-American and Georgian language comments, laughter has the following textual forms: haha and hehe, sometimes they are represented by repeating letters - **hahahaha** or by shortening the letters - hah, he.

- Crazy! yea **haha** tell me about it!
- **hahahah** bad trip that baby
- that is Steven Tyler no face swap **hahahahaha**
- **hehe** Freddie mercury eoooooo
- **haha** esets tu simgeraa :D
- **hehe** verts tsarmovidgendi tu imgerebda

In this regard, we see a slightly different picture in the Georgian Internet space. If in Anglo-American comments laughter is represented "hahaha", in Georgian comments it is represented by both "hahaha" and "ahahahaha":

- ahahahah, martlats sasatsiloa es

Orthography.

The most common linguistic feature of the Internet language is unconventional spelling, Observation shows that it partially or completely ignores the traditional norms of spelling, which is indicated by the omission of punctuation marks, incorrect phonetic arrangement of words, eccentric forms of writing, frequent use of capital and small letters.

It is difficult to name the exact cause of the spelling error, but we suppose the errors may have been caused by three factors 1) improper knowledge of the language, 2) technology malfunction or 3) time factor. The following examples are proof of this:

- 'So **Beautyful**'
- 'Music is so **simpel**, yet so complicated.'
- 'Nothing really matters, **mai** strong friend.
- 'Who's here **becuz** if the vine Which is this part
- Dzalian **momtsons**
- Kidev gamovides tsota msgavsi **magarua**
- **Mikuarkhart <3**

Eccentric orthography.

Eccentric orthography is one of the inseparable features of the Internet language, it is a written form of the word where the multiplication of both vowels and consonants is observed.

- Ra bandzobaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa
- Akhlakhans rom gavige tkven shesaxeb vtsukhvar.
Gaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaamaogneblebi khart!
- Bravooooooooooooo ra am gogos
- Auuuuuuuuuuuu ramdddddddeniiiiiiii motsooooooooooneba akvs am simgerasssss
- I love this song soooooooooooooooooooooo much
- I love itttttttttttt soooooooooo much
- Ooooh yeaaaahhhh
- My fav part. The "lonely" sounds so **goooooooooddddddd**'
- Don't care how much hate these guys get!!! Nickelback fucking roooooooooocks!!!!!!!

The analysis revealed that eccentric orthography is used by users when they want to emphasize their attitude and express positive or negative emotions.

Electronic discourse is a very interesting and at the same time complex linguistic phenomenon. The growing interest in the issue daily poses new challenges to Internet users, causes language changes and creates new linguistic forms.

1. Analysis showed that emoticons are frequently used in video comments. There are two types of emoticons: vertical and horizontal, which are subdivided into positive and negative ones. It is also worth noting that not only emoticons are used in video comments to express a positive emotion, but also text options such as: haha and hehe.
2. During the research, we noticed spelling mistakes in the video comments, which means disregarding the traditional norms of spelling: eccentric writing forms, one of the widespread features involves the multiplication of vowels and consonants, it turned out that users use them when they want to emphasize their positive or negative attitude.
3. The main purpose of capitalization is to draw attention to a specific issue, subject and to show its importance. Opposed to capitalization, internet language uses lowercase letters when capitalization is required from a grammatical point of view.
4. Internet language is characterized by excessive use of punctuation marks, as well as their complete neglect by the user. The key punctuation marks identified in e-disc are: exclamation mark, question mark and colon.

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