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PSYCHOLINGUISTIC FEATURES OF VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract:

This article provides a detailed comparative analysis of written speech from two different historical periods by examining a letter written in the mid-20th century and modern SMS messages. The classical emotional expressiveness, lexical richness, and the synthesis of colloquial and literary styles found in traditional letters are compared with abbreviations, emojis, and informal writing styles typical of contemporary virtual communication tools. Particular attention is paid to linguistic economy, sociocultural references, gender-specific speech characteristics, and the expression of emotions through symbols such as emojis and punctuation marks.

Keywords: Virtual communication, virtual intimacy, psycholinguistics, linguistic communication, online interaction, digital linguistics, speech activity, internet communication, communication strategies, social media discourse

Аннотация:

В данной статье проводится сравнительный анализ письменной речи двух исторических периодов на основе письма, написанного в середине XX века, и современных SMS-сообщений. Классическая эмоциональная экспрессивность, лексическое богатство, а также синтез разговорного и литературного стилей в письме сопоставляются с сокращениями, эмодзи и неформальными стилями письма, характерными для современных виртуальных средств общения. Основное внимание уделяется



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лингвистической экономии, социокультурным отсылкам, гендерным особенностям речи, а также выражению эмоций с помощью знаков, таких как эмодзи и пунктуация.

Ключевые слова: виртуальное общение, психолингвистический анализ, онлайн-коммуникация, язык и мышление, речевая деятельность, цифровая коммуникация, коммуникативные стратегии, социальные сети, языковое поведение, интернет-дискурс

Annotatsiya

Mazkur maqolada XX asr o‘rtalarida yozilgan maktub bilan zamonaviy SMS xabarlarining til xususiyatlarini qiyosiy tahlil qilish orqali 2 davr yozma nutqi haqida bat afsil ma‘lumot beriladi. Maktubdagi klassik emotsional ekspressivlik, lug‘aviy boylik, leksik qatlam so‘zlashuv va adabiy uslub sintezi zamonaviy virtual aloqa vositalaridagi qisqartmalar, emoji va norasmiy yozuv uslublari bilan qiyoslanadi. Asosiy e’tibor matnlardagi lingvistik tejamkorlik, sotsiomadaniy ishoralar, gender nutqi xususiyatlari, belgilar (emoji, punktuatsiya) vositasida hissiyotning ifodalanishi holatlariga qaratiladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Kalit so‘zlar: virtual muloqot, virtual yaqinlik, psixolingvistika, tilda kommunikatsiya, onlayn muloqot, raqamli tilshunoslik, nutq faoliyati, internet kommunikatsiyasi, muloqot strategiyalari, ijtimoiy tarmoqlarda muloqot

Introduction

Living in the fast-paced era often referred to as the age of information technologies, people constantly communicate with others—by texting, talking, making video calls, or sending voice messages. However, a crucial question arises: do these forms of communication truly fill the emotional void within us? Can we still find sincerity among repeatedly sent emojis, GIF stickers, or memes?



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Why do people, despite being in constant contact with one another, experience a decline in meaningful communication and feel increasingly lonely? Such questions deeply concern modern psychologists and linguists.

In essence, *virtual intimacy* is merely the shadow of sincerity. In the past, closeness meant visiting one another, engaging in heartfelt conversations, making eye contact, and expressing emotions through words and gazes. Today, however, intimacy is often reduced to clicking a “like,” sending a “” or “,” or expressing resentment through phrases such as “they were online but didn’t reply.” Let us consider a simple real-life example of a text exchange:

- How are you? Aren’t you bored?
- No, I’m just scrolling through Instagram.
- Shall we talk?
- Later, I’m watching a series...

This everyday conversation conceals a serious problem: members of society are gradually losing the desire for genuine communication, merely passing time instead. Conversation has turned from a means of psychological closeness into a way to occupy a bored mind. The interlocutor struggles to find words and becomes emotionally deprived, replacing meaningful expression with stickers or GIFs. Clearly, silence within the heart cannot be overcome by symbols or images. This situation leads to another issue: although we may have hundreds of friends on social networks, we hide our pain. When asked “How are you?”, we respond “Fine,” while in reality we may be overwhelmed with problems, emotional pain, or even illness. Communication exists, but mutual understanding does not.

Today, it can be openly stated that people prefer writing posts over engaging in real conversations. Posts lack facial expressions, tone of voice, and eye contact—that is, they lack sincerity. Instead, they present masks. Among these masks, genuine human relationships are gradually disappearing and becoming artificial.



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Psychological and Linguistic Impact of Artificial Communication

The psychological impact of artificial communication has become increasingly evident. According to specialists, the more a person relies on written communication, the weaker their ability to express emotions becomes. In face-to-face interaction, facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language convey significant meaning. When these elements are absent, individuals may feel misunderstood or even unnecessary.

Historically, the Uzbek language has possessed a rich tradition of emotional expression. Written letters—sent to soldiers, distant relatives, or beloved individuals—served not only to inquire about well-being but also to express love and devotion. Today, however, these letters have largely been replaced by short text messages sent via smartphones (SMS, Telegram, WhatsApp, Facebook, etc.). This shift has led to significant changes in methods of emotional expression, as well as in linguistic forms and units.

To illustrate this transformation more clearly, this study compares past and present written discourse through the example of Kumush's letter to Otabek in the classic Uzbek novel *O'tkan kunlar*.

Linguistic Features of Traditional Literary Letters

An analysis of traditional literary letters reveals the following characteristics:

- **Lexical richness:** metaphorical expressions such as “*countless greetings like the strands of hair on my head*” demonstrate artistic language;
- **Syntactic complexity:** frequent use of compound and complex sentences;
- **Emotional expressiveness:** emotions are conveyed through vivid words and life-based experiences;
- **Speech style:** a blend of written literary and colloquial elements;
- **Gendered speech:** the female author presents herself as humble and devoted, reflecting traditional gender roles;



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- **Text structure:** clear organization with an introduction, elaboration, and conclusion.

Linguistic Features of Modern SMS Communication

In contrast, modern SMS messages demonstrate the following tendencies:

Lexical abbreviations and phonetic reductions:

“s’ni sevaman” (I love you),
“wuna qimasang bo‘midimi?” (Can’t you not do that?),
“man sni sog‘indim” (I missed you);

linguistic economy dominates, with sounds omitted or replaced;

- **Use of emojis and symbols to express emotions:** 😢 ❤️ 😊 replace entire sentences;
- **Punctuation as emotional markers:** “....”, “!!!!”, “:(”;
- **Simplified syntax:** short, fragmented sentences;
- **Neglect of spelling and grammar rules;**
- **Code-switching and multilingual elements:**
“Miss ❤️”, “Ko‘p sog‘indim uje... скучно 🇺🇿”;
- **Borrowed forms of address:** *Honey, Sweetheart, Love, Darling, Boo, Sunshine*;
- **Gender differences:** women tend to use more emojis and soft tones, while men often employ short and emotionally restrained messages.

Comparative Linguistic Analysis

Linguistic Aspect	20th-Century Letters	Modern SMS
Vocabulary	Rich, artistic, expressive	Simplified, abbreviated
Syntax	Complex, extended sentences	Very simple, fragmented
Orthography	Rules strictly observed	Frequent deviations
Emotional Expression	Through words and imagery	Emojis, symbols, GIFs
Speech Style	Literary and colloquial blend	Informal, chat-based
Text Structure	Introduction–body–conclusion	Fragmented
Gender Roles	Woman as loyal, devoted	Woman as independent, expressive



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Conclusion

Modern SMS communication is characterized by emotional expression through graphic symbols, orthographic freedom, and lexical simplification. In contrast, 20th-century written discourse emphasizes artistic depth, completeness, and emotional expression through words. This shift reflects not only technological advancement but also changes in social consciousness, gender roles, aesthetic values, and cultural context.

Gradually, people begin to accept silence as a form of communication. Yet concepts such as truth, love, and sincerity are transmitted from heart to heart, from gaze to gaze. Words emerging from smartphone screens can never fully convey such depth. The growing distance from sincere communication may eventually become one of the most pressing psychological challenges of humanity—being unheard and misunderstood.

Nevertheless, modern rapid communication also holds its own relevance and value. Therefore, regardless of whether communication occurs through technology, it should ultimately be built upon humanity, sincerity, and heartfelt dialogue. After all, words that come from the heart reach the heart—and only such words have the power to change a person.

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