This is Lit: The Evolution of Netizen’s Language in Social Media

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The evolution of social media has been changing the way we communicate. It has produced conveniences that transform all sorts of communication. Its development provides people the ability to broadcast moments live, create a sense of urgency through instant feedback and share full stories. Two-thirds of the world’s internet population visits social media, social networking or blogging sites, thus serving as a communication and connection tool. Around two billion people in the world access social networking sites everyday (Statista, 2017).

Furthermore, it is evident that the internet, especially social networking sites, has made a significant effect on the way people communicate with each other. It plays an important role on the creation of new words that are being introduced on a daily basis. The impact of social media to language is a true phenomenon. It has managed to change our vocabulary by altering the meaning of words and introducing new usage to our language. Its ever-changing characteristic leaves our language in an incessant state of modification and redevelopment.

Over the decades, English language experiences huge alterations and deviations due to the influence of the internet. Social media managed to bring English slang words to a new level. Fish (2015) emphasized that the language of today has grown in popularity with the age of computers, smart phones, and social media platforms. Internet slang has been used by many online communities, has changed vernaculars through many of these communities during the years of the information highway’s lifespan and has brought extensive library of terminologies.
More so, Filipino social media community serves as a breeding ground of new forms of communication. In the Philippines, Camus (2018) reported that there were 67 million accounts on Facebook as of 2017, matching the total number of internet users in the country. It was also mentioned in the study that the Philippines is on top in terms of the number of social media users and Filipinos spent an average of three hours and 57 minutes a day on social media sites mainly on Facebook (Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2018).

As this new culture of entertainment satisfies the preferences of Filipinos, it could not be denied that the exposure of this new media to children and young people has already influenced them in many factors such as their attitudes, culture and even their language. Language is constantly evolving and the young adults are mainly its prime movers. There are plenty of coined words that are being used in social media which are so called “internet slang words”.

Internet slang words are new expressions and phrases which are created in the internet and adopted by the mainstream. Ostendorf et. al (2010) underlined that internet slang words are widely used on social media. They also pointed out in their study that posts and messages on social media contain a large amount of emoticons, internet slang words, abbreviations and misspelled words. According to Lytle (2011), the way students communicate with one another through social media and text messaging is creeping into high school classrooms. Slang words and textspeak have become a common sight on student assignments, befuddling language teachers.

References:


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