



Digital Tools and Flourishing English Language

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Abstract:

This paper examines the impact of digital tools on English language. Aftermath of COVID pandemic resulted into the rapid use of digital platforms. With the rise of digital media, English has experienced significant changes. English is the Lingua Franca of the internet. The netizens, the active users of internet communicate with one another mediated by screen and English language. The digital age has contributed in dissemination of English language among people. Various digital tools provide ample opportunities to practice English language effectively. This study analyses how the use of digital tools is of great use in learning English language

Keywords: *Digital tools, Social media, Language, Netizens, Evolution, Audiobook, Podcasts, App, Trend, Vocabulary, Digital platform, Internet, Communication, Digital age*

Introduction:

English language has evolved and transformed over time adopting numerous changes. It has a fascinating history spanning over 1400 years. The linguistic changes from old English to its present form reflects the changes in society, culture and the world itself. In the era of digital communication, frequent use of social media platforms, apps, and other digital tools accelerated linguistic evolution. It has given rise to new words, abbreviations and many linguistic patterns. The social media platforms often create and popularise new terms, phrases, reflecting the rapid change in contemporary communication practices. This not only changes the way people communicate but also changes the way people engage with and understand English. This digital age has transformed English like never before. The pace of vocabulary change has accelerated. The global use of internet and the rise of digital communication have

created new contexts for linguistic innovations. Platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook facilitating the dissemination and adoption of new words and phrases. This constant change highlights a fundamental feature of language: its ability to adapt and evolve in response to new technological and societal transformation. This digital age is allowing people to learn English language easily using different digital tools. It is definitely a positive impact of digital platforms on language learners.

Various digital tools and its impact on learning English language:

Language learning apps:

Language learning apps have been around for years and the use of English on the internet and social media has given rise to the urge to learn English language. These apps and learning platforms educate people without making them sit down in a conventional classroom.

1. Duolingo: one can practice English speaking, reading, listening and writing to build vocabulary and grammar skills.
2. Babble: A true classroom experience in app form
3. Memrise: an app for hearing native English speakers
4. Hellotalk: language exchange app, connect people with native English speakers to practice languages.

Dictionary apps:

A dictionary app can help learn new words, improve vocabulary, and understand correct spelling and pronunciation of words. It helps expand vocabulary by learning synonyms, antonyms, and collocations.

1. Dictionary.com- it provides millions of English definitions, spellings, audio pronunciations and word origins.
2. Google Dictionary- An online dictionary service of google that can be accessed in Google search, Google translate and a Google chrome extension.

Audiobooks and Podcasts:

Audiobooks and podcasts are valuable tools for English language learners because they provide listening practice, helping to improve comprehension, pronunciation, exposure to natural speech patterns and different accents. Frequent exposure to spoken English through audiobooks and podcasts enhances the ability to understand native speakers. It features real world conversations, providing exposure to authentic English usage.

Grammar checking apps:

It is now easily possible to correct any English paragraphs using app, one can typically paste a text into an app like Grammarly, Ginger Software or Language Tool. The apps will highlight errors with underlines or coloured text and provide suggested corrections. Accept the suggested corrections or manually modify the text to fix the errors.

Digital storytelling:

Digital storytelling represents yet another cutting-edge method for language development. Telling digital stories can enhance a variety of language abilities, such as vocabulary, grammatical proficiency, and story composition. This approach makes English language learning more dynamic and engaging by fusing contemporary technologies with classical learning method.

Impact of digital age on English vocabulary:

New technologies create new concepts, and with them, new words. Terms like “internet”, “smartphone”, and “app” were practically nonexistent a few decades ago. Technology also influences the meaning of existing words, like “cloud” now referring to data storage instead of just formation in the sky. Technology has significantly impacted language by forming new forms of linguistic expressions like emojis and acronyms, facilitating global connectivity, and influencing language through platforms like social media, often leading to the development of new vocabulary and grammatical structures. The wide reach of different platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and Tiktok allow rapid spread and normalisation of new terms. For example, internet terms like ‘hashtag’, ‘viral’, ‘trending’, ‘reels’ originated from social media context and have since become integrated into everyday language. The environment of social media not only creates new vocabulary but also accelerates its adoption across the world. A new digital vernacular is being created as a result of this digital platforms’ encouragement and the use of acronyms, emoticons, and abbreviations. This alteration raises concerns regarding its influence on conventional language abilities, grammar, spelling, and syntax. Social media and digital tools provide real world language

exposure and opportunities to communicate with native speakers.

Key Ways Digital Age Impacts Language:

New vocabulary and slang: Social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook rapidly introduce new slangs and vocabulary into common usage, shaping language evolution.

Acronyms and abbreviations: The speedy nature of digital communication encourages the use of acronyms and abbreviation, particularly in online messaging. Texting, instant messaging and social media prioritize speed. This fosters the creation of abbreviations (LOL-laugh out loud, DND-do not disturb) that may not be suitable for formal use but influence English language.

Emojis and visual communication: Emojis play a significant role in sharing emotions in digital communication, replacing traditional linguistic expressions. These online dialects can influence mainstream language or create new sub-sections within a language.

Evolving grammar and spelling: Rapid-fire online communication can lead to relaxed grammar rules like missing commas and creative spelling (e.g. “phreak” for “freak”). While not appropriate for formal writing, it reflects how language adapts to new communication styles.

Trends in vocabulary evolution:

In recent years, the rise of social media had a profound impact on the way we communicate, giving birth to a host of new words and phrases that have found their way into everyday use. These words reflect the rapid change in digital age, as well as the unique culture and trends that have emerged on social media platforms.

Trending English words coined by social media:

1. Selfie- No discussion of social media’s linguistic influence would be complete without mentioning this word. This word is derived from ‘self-portrait’, refers to a

photograph taken of oneself, with front camera of a smartphone.

2. Hashtag- Represented by # symbol, it has taken on a life of its own in this digital age. It basically acts as tags that categorize content, allowing users to find exactly what they are looking for. But now if something or someone gets hashtagged, that means they are trending on internet.
3. Emoji- They are small, pictorial icons used to convey emotions, reactions or ideas in text messages and social media posts.
4. Troll- The word troll existed before the advent of social media, but its meaning has evolved significantly in this digital age.
5. Like- This word has taken on a new meaning, in the context of social media. It no longer simply refers to appreciation, but a meter of popularity.
6. Influencer- Digital platforms has given rise to a new group of online celebrities known as influencers.
7. Meme- An image, video, piece of text, typically humorous in nature. They often convey jokes and trends and can go viral within hours.
8. Dm- An abbreviation for “direct message”. It refers to a private message sent between users on platforms like Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.
9. Vlogging- A combination of “video”, and “blogging”. Vlogging involves creating and sharing video content on platform like Youtube. Vloggers document their daily lives, and entertain their audiences.

Conclusion:

Various digital tools have become an effective way for beginners to learn English language. From the invention of writing system to the emergence of digital tools, technology has continually reshaped the way humans interact and express themselves linguistically. The impact of technology on language evolution is multifaceted, encompassing changes in vocabulary,

grammar, communication styles, and even the very structure languages. These different digital platforms have been of great use in learning English language. Now a days it has been affordable, easily accessible and handy. Technology contributes a lot in learning English language. Digital tools kindle the enthusiasm of a new learner to master the English language. The rapid introduction and dissemination of new terms, alongside the adaptation of existing one, reflects the dynamic nature of language in a digital context. The widespread use of abbreviations, borrowed terms underscore the fluidity of language as it adapts new trends in digital age. As English language continues to evolve in response to technological and cultural shifts, understanding these developments offers

valuable insights into the future trajectory of English and its role in a rapidly changing world.

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