Development of Internet English: Alternative Lexis, Syntax and Morphology

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Abstract. The development of the Internet is parallel to the expansion of the Internet culture mainly mediated through the English language. Internet communication is influenced firstly by such physical limitations as the speed of typing which is lower than that of speaking, the amount of symbols, or the absence of prosodic and paralinguistic features in the language, and secondly by the Internet culture. This leads to a language bearing a specific code of symbols together with alternative lexis and rules of syntax, grammar, and morphology. Despite the relative freedom of an individual and the speakers’ geographical / cultural variety, the language contains a codex of general rules, subconsciously followed by skilful users. The Internet language aims at simplification of the traditional language code, but on the other hand a language code is introduced in order to prove that one belongs to the Internet society. The principle of natural selection when seeking to attract potential interlocutors’ attention leads to attempts of partial individualization of language style, and to the pun as the optimum means of one’s self-expression. The above-mentioned features allow referring to the computer language as to a specific full-scale phenomenon, which is subordinate to the English language and does not constitute a fully independent language unit.