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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DIGITAL VOCABULARY OF SOCIAL  
MEDIA IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH / RAZVOJ DIGITALNOG  
VOKABULARA DRUŠTVENIH MEDIJA U SAVREMENOM  
ENGLISKOM JEZIKU

MA THESIS

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## 1. Introduction

It comes as no surprise that everything that is living undoubtedly goes through changes. In the same manner, language goes through change. With the rise of social media, we have created and acquired words or phrases. Therefore, this paper will highlight the words of social media that have already been in existence, but they added new meaning due to social media needs, and words that emerged together with social media. Most of those words experienced a semantic or morphological change. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and TikTok are social media sites used for this analysis, as they are the main sites that have given new expressions to English vocabulary.

The beginning of this paper will focus on the historical background of the English language from OE until now. The second part will briefly discuss the history of the social media sites. The third part is practical, where all the chosen words will be analysed through word-formation processes, as well as their etymology. To explain each word's meaning, the printed version of Oxford Dictionary of English from 2010, as well as online dictionaries will be used. The results will be summarised in tables. At the end of this part, the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) will be used to determine the words' frequency.

## 2. Language Productivity

Native speakers can coin new words with their knowledge of grammatical processes. In linguistics, that phenomenon is referred to as productivity, i.e., to which degree a native speaker uses a particular grammatical process to create a new word. According to Plag (2003, p. 55): “Some affixes are often used to create new words, whereas others are less often used, or not used at all for this purpose. The property of an affix to be used to coin new complex words is referred to as the productivity of that affix.”

In that manner, Plag (2021, p. 483) gives us an example how a new verb cannot be formed with the help of the prefix *en-* (*enlist*, *enroll*), but the verbal suffix *-ize* adjoins to adjectives and nouns creating a new verb, e.g., *peripheralize*. However, rules can be productive or unproductive, regardless of whether they are an inflectional or derivational process. According to Aarts et al. (2021, p. 483): “It is commonly assumed (e.g., Haspelmath 2002, p. 75) that inflectional processes are fully productive, whereas derivational processes are characterized by varying degrees of productivity, with the majority not being fully productive.” As an example, verbs can take the past tense morpheme *-ed*, but not all verbs can adjoin adjectival suffix *-ive*: *associate-associated-associative*; but *call-called-callive* is not possible.

Aside from this, one could argue that the process is not fully productive as some formations of the verbs use ablaut (*sing-sang-sung*), or even change their stems (*bring-brought*). Those verbs are called irregular verbs, and to save productivity as a distinction between inflection and derivation, a conclusion could be drawn that regular inflection is productive, while derivational is not. (Plag, 2021, p. 484) Similarly, we have the plural ending *-(e)s* that can be found on most English count nouns, even as an ending to newly coined terms; however, the plural ending *-en* is regarded as unproductive as it can be found in just a few examples: *oxen*, *children*, *brethren*. (Bauer, 2005, p. 315)

Adding new words is possible through word-formation processes, especially affixation, compounding, and conversion, with an addition of blends, which will be the processes mentioned throughout Chapter 5.

### 3. The English language – The Historical Background

A language's history is inextricably linked to the history of the people who speak it. The English language is no different, representing many centuries of evolution. Political and social events that have profoundly affected the English people in their national life throughout English history have generally had a detectable effect on their language. The Christianization of Britain by the Romans in 597 brought England into contact with Latin civilization resulting in major vocabulary expansion. The Scandinavian invasions led to a significant mixing of the two peoples' languages and cultures. For two centuries after the Norman Conquest, English was primarily the language of the lower classes, while the nobility and those associated with them spoke French almost exclusively. When English regained dominance as the people's language, it was a much altered English from what it had been in 1066, both in form and lexicon.

Like any other language, English is subjected to constant growth and decay. Otherwise, if a language comes to a halt, it is considered dead. A prime example of a dead language is Classical Latin, which hasn't changed in over 2,000 years. If a change happens, the evolution can be traced in grammar and vocabulary; as old words vanish, new words appear, some even change their meaning.

English belongs to the Indo-European family of languages, specifically, it falls into the Germanic branch of Indo-European. The Germanic branch is divided into East Germanic, North Germanic, and West Germanic. East Germanic as Gothic died out; North Germanic languages are Danish, Faroese, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish; West Germanic is the group where English belongs, alongside Frisian, Dutch, Afrikaans, Flemish, German and Yiddish, Frisian being the most similar to English (Minkova and Stockwell, 2009, p. 32).

The following sections will provide a brief overview of the development of the vocabulary of the English language:

- 1) Old English (OE)
- 2) Middle English (ME)
- 3) Early Modern English (EModE)
- 4) Late Modern English (LModE) and Present-day English (PdE)



### 3.1. Old English

The territory that would become England was ruled by the Roman Empire from 43 to 410 AD. They invaded the Celtic tribes, who were the first people that we have any recollection of living in Britain. Britain was a province of the Roman Empire. However, with the upheaval of Germanic invasions, it was costly for Romans to keep the territory. In the 5th century, Jutes, Saxons, Frisians and Angles were the Germanic tribes conquering England, who were an uncoordinated army settling in various parts of the country. They became known as the Anglo-Saxons who marked the 5th century as a period in which OE started. The name of the language is taken from the Angles: *Angle-ish*, and the country's name *England* comes from *Angle-land*. (Minkova and Stockwell, 2009, p. 34)

Unfortunately, the Germanic tribes were illiterate, so not many records of their explorations are available. However, place names indicate a Germanic influence: *-ing* „belonging to“ as a Germanic ending can be found in names such as *Harting, Hastings*; *-ham* „settlement, home“ in names such as *Birmingham, Nottingham*, „but scholars working with this kind of evidence call for extreme caution.“ (Minkova and Stockwell, 2009, p. 34)

In the early stages of OE, we can observe borrowings of foreign words, which will become a well-known pattern for the future development of the English language. There are three sources of borrowings: Celtic, Latin, and later Scandinavian.

As stated at the beginning of this section, Celts were the first people, that we know of, inhabiting Britain. However, words of Celtic origin are scarce, either due to the Germanic tribes driving them off or assimilating them. Some of the borrowings can be seen in place names: *Kent, Dover, York, Thames*; or hybrid names: *Yorkshire, Devonshire, Canterbury*. (Minkova and Stockwell, 2009, p. 34)

Most of the sources on the history of the OE language are written in Latin, as monks and scribes were educated and fluent in Latin, and most of the loanwords are of religious and scholarly nature. However, we can distinguish between two groups of Latin loanwords in OE: Continental borrowings and Christianity and monastic culture.

Continental borrowings reflect administrative, commercial, and military dealings between the Roman Empire and pre-OE Germanic tribes: *camp, street, cheese, wine, gem*. (Minkova and Stockwell, 2009, p. 37)

The adoption of Christianity by the Anglo-Saxons represents the most significant Latin influence upon OE, as most borrowed words were related to the Christian religion: *candle, congregation, devil, eternal, pope*. (Minkova and Stockwell, 2009, p. 37-38) Moreover, scholarly words that are related to reading and writing are: *alphabet, discuss, history, paper, translate*. (Minkova and Stockwell, 2009, p. 38)

The reign of the Vikings in the 8th century brought English into contact with the Scandinavian language. The Scandinavian settlement left ample evidence in the form of place-names, war words and culture. Common Scandinavian place-names consisted of: *-beck* „stream“ e.g. *Beckbury, Beckford*; *-by* „settlement“ e.g. *Carnaby, Rugby*; *-thorpe* „hamlet“ e.g. *Grimsthorpe, Hamthorpe*; *toft* „farmstead“ e.g. *Toft, Thurdistoft*. (Minkova and Stockwell, 2009, p. 39) Unlike the Latin vocabulary that was initiated by priests and monks, the adoption of Scandinavian words came naturally, without special education. Apart from place-names, we can find many common words used in everyday speech: *bag, crawl, die, hit, sky, until*, and pronouns *they, them, their*. (Minkova and Stockwell, 2009, p. 40)

In terms of inflection, OE was purely a synthetic language, while today's English is analytical. „A synthetic language is one that indicates the relation of words in a sentence largely by means of inflections ... Languages that make extensive use of prepositions and auxiliary verbs and depend upon word order to show other relationships are known as analytic languages.“ (Baugh and Cable, 2002, p. 50)

OE, in terms of grammar, resembles modern day German. Nouns and adjectives had four grammatical cases for singular and plural, with the addition of adjectives having separate forms for each of the three genders. Although the verb inflection is simpler compared to the Latin verb, there are unique endings for the different persons, numbers, tenses, and moods. (Baugh and Cable, 2002, p. 50)

## 3.2. Middle English

The Norman Conquest in 1066 brought English into contact with French. English ceased to be a language of government, while French became the language of the upper-class due to the conquerors. (Barber, et al., 2009, p. 144-145)

The period of ME stretches from 1150 to 1500 as a period of levelled inflections, as the vast majority OE inflections started to break down. OE did not change overnight, but with the Conquest, the change seemed rapid because of the introduction of new spelling conventions.

According to Gelderen (2006, p. 91), the transition from OE to ME was the most dramatic change, as words of French and Latin origin were replacing the OE vocabulary, in which endings on nouns, verbs and adjectives disappeared. However, the disappearance of the endings could also be a result of Scandinavian and Celtic influence during the OE period.

Latin was a source of loan translations incorporated into OE by substituting Latin words with English ones, but during and after the ME period, loans were introduced with limited modifications. For example, *unicornus* „one-horn“ is translated into English as *anhorn* „one-horn“, but in ME, speakers returned to the Latin word and borrowed *unicorn*; in the same manner, two more reversions happened: *þrines* „three-ness“ and *dælnimend* „part-taking“, translated from the Latin *trinitas* „the state of being threefold“ and *participium* „part-taking“. *Trinity* and *participle* appear as direct borrowing from Latin after OE. Moreover, place-names incorporated Latin *castra* „camp, walled town“ in names such as *Manchester*, *Winchester* and *Lancaster*. In OE, this word was *caster* but then palatalized to *chester*. (Gelderen, 2006, p. 94)

Second, French loan words are estimated to have numbered around 10,000 as French speakers started to add French words to the English they were acquiring, which marks the strongest influence of French on ME. Some of the terms relate to government (*governement*, *duke*, *governor*), law (*judge*, *jury*, *felon*), learning (*study*, *anatomy*, *medicine*), art and fashion (*art*, *music*, *painting*, *dress*, *garment*), food (*dinner*, *feast*, *pastry*), and religion (*damnation*, *salvation*, *convert*).

According to Gelderen (2006, p. 100), derivational prefixes and suffixes were not borrowed directly but as parts of French and Latin words, as in *majority*, *inferiority*, *glorious*, *dangerous*, *envious*. Moreover, notable are some hybrids that combine Romance and English elements. For example, *en-dear-ment*, which is from English root *dear* with the Romance prefix *-en* and suffix *-ment*. Other examples of hybrids are: *disbelief*, *rekindle*, *overvalue*, *rudely*, *apprenticeship*, *useless*.

Notable is also the *-o(u)r* suffix, which is borrowed from French, but originally derived from Latin words *labor-* and *honor-*. (in ME spelled as *labur* and *honour/honir*). British English adopted *-our*, while American English *-or*, whereby French settled on *-eur*. (Gelderen, 2006, p. 100)

### 3.3. Early Modern English

The Renaissance was a period of „rebirth“ in art, culture, science and politics. It reached England a little before 1500. The Renaissance greatly affected EModE that lasted during the time period from 1500 up to 1700. For the language, the Renaissance meant a freedom of creating and borrowing words, during which English continues to become more analytical. (Gelderen, 2006, p. 155)

Although there was no historical event that marked the beginning of the period as ME had the Norman Conquest, 1500 makes an appropriate beginning of EModE: in 1476 William Caxton was the first one who introduced the process of printing in England, which made texts and reading more accessible and interesting to a wider range of people, and in 1492 Columbus reached the „New World“. All this characterized the transition from ME to EModE.

If we were to compare cultural differences between ME and EModE, one characteristic would stand out – heightened literacy. Before the 15th century, Latin still had a great influence as a language, and it would be a long time before English could replace it in all its fields. With the introduction of the printing press, the idea was to bring books, which previously had been a luxury of a few, within the reach of many. In the late 14th and 16th century, the king was petitioned to make it illegal for common people to learn how to read, as it was believed that educated people

were dangerous for those in power. Nevertheless, literacy continued to spread. At this time, numerous attempts happened to have the Bible printed in English, but after Henry VIII lessened the power of the Pope, English Bibles were no longer dangerous. The translation of the Bible and shifting from Latin to English in church services raised the prestige of English. (Gelderen, 2006, p. 158)

The lexicon experienced a rapid expansion as well. According to Minkova and Stockwell (2009, p. 47), „as many as 4,500 new words were recorded in English during each decade between 1500 and 1700. Two-thirds of these words were creations based on already existing roots and affixes, but an impressive one-third were straight borrowings. Eliminating new words of unknown origin, and words not recorded after 1700 (one-third of the entries), English adopted for permanent use over 20,000 borrowings in two centuries. “

Due to the lack of many Renaissance-related terms English ended up borrowing many words from Latin and Greek. The words are generally taken for practical purposes and occasionally for pedantic ones. There were two types of neologisms – loans and new words.

For example, loans are: *disability, expectation, delirium, atmosphere*; while new words are: *episcopal, blatant, urban*. (Gelderen, 2006, p. 176)

New words were not always derived from Latin and Greek. Important to note is the term *coining* a word. This thesis will center on this concept in the following chapters since the introduction of social media required changing existing terms or perhaps coining new ones to reflect the new day and age. Even in the EModE period, we witnessed the creation of new words from old ones, and remarkable figures doing so are John Cheke (English classical scholar) and Edmund Spenser (English poet). Cheke created *mooned* and *foresayer*, while Spenser created *belt, glee, gloomy and witless*. (Gelderen, 2006, p. 176)

One of the greatest contributions to EModE was made by the greatest playwright – William Shakespeare. It is believed that he introduced more words into the language than anyone else, with some words and phrases still used widely in present-day English. Some of the examples are: *fap* „drunk“, or *bung* „pocket“. He was also known for using malaprops, which according to the Cambridge dictionary are “the wrong use of one word instead of another word because they sound similar to each other, with results that are unintentionally funny.” As quoted in Gelderen (2006, p.

179), some of the words used are *senslesse* “sensible” - “you are thought heere to be the most senslesse and fit man for the Constable of the watch. (‘sensible’ is meant, Much Ado III, 3, 23)”, and *fartuous* “virtuous” – “shee’s as fartuous a ciuill modest wife. (‘virtuous’ is meant, Merry Wives II, 2, 100)”

As evidence suggests, both French and other Romance languages continue to have an impact on the English lexicon. The majority of the words related to music are Italian, and actually many Spanish borrowings have origin in native American languages, that the Spanish (and Portuguese) came into contact with during their colonial past.

The following words are examples of borrowings from Romance languages: French: *amateur, camouflage, essay, menu, ticket*; Italian: *balcony, allegro, duo, concerto, opera, violin*; Spanish: *barbecue, cigar, tobacco, tomato*. (Gelderen, 2006, p. 178)

The EModE period flourished with means of freedom, not only of grammatical constraints, but also with the means of creating new words. However, grammars and dictionaries, as a form of prescriptive tools to outlaw certain words, have their beginnings in the EModE. (Gelderen, 2006, p. 179)

Even though there was a growing feeling for the English language to fit a norm which lavishly resembles the Latin model, newer findings seem to emphasise the temporary effect prescriptivism had on the English language. As discussed in Yáñez-Bouza (2016, p. 168-169), several important prescriptive grammar principles have indeed been shown to have caused language change, typically leading to a reduction in usage and a subsequent disappearance. For instance, morphological levelling in the past and past participle paradigm of strong verbs like *write* can be seen in late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century usage, with *wrote* as the most common variant in both functions (*write-wrote-have wrote*). However, late 18<sup>th</sup> century grammars criticized this paradigm's lack of precision and suggested the three-form function pattern based on Latin morphology (*write-wrote-have written*). Moreover, a 17<sup>th</sup> century prescriptive rule had also temporary effect on the modal verbs *shall* and *will*. The rule for first-person *shall* is to indicate prediction, while *will* indicated threat or promise. However, this was considered artificial and *will* essentially has replaced *shall* in most contexts. Examples in which grammarians followed language change and with their comments contributed to a decline of a particular variant are features such

as periphrastic comparatives (*more lovelier*) and multiple negation (*I don't want no milk*). By the end of 17<sup>th</sup> century, both examples recorded declines in the language of educated speakers.

### 3.4. Late Modern English and Present-day English

The 1700s mark the time of LModE, a beginning of consolidation, and no more uncontrolled growth. The English language experienced significant changes in the second half of the 17th century as a result of the commercial, intellectual, technological, and social forces that emerged during the Renaissance and were particularly sparked by several worsening crises. The most tense period for Britain started with the Civil War in 1642, which was followed by the proclamation of the republican Commonwealth led by Cromwell in 1649, and the Restoration of Charles II in 1660.

As mentioned in the previous section, the Renaissance was characterized by freedom, but this period brought a sense of standardization, stability and correctness. The 18th century movement known as the Enlightenment was distinguished by its reliance on reason and science as well as its concern for mankind. The abolition of the slave trade by the British Parliament, the French Revolution, and American Independence are a few examples of social and political upheavals that can be attributed to it around the end of the 18th century. (Gelderen, 2006, p. 204)

The Industrial Revolution, which turned an agrarian civilization into an industrial one and may be dated to some extent after 1700, is what defines the 19th century. It is distinguished by a rise in the usage of factories and machinery as well as urbanization. Moreover, it would lead to important linguistic changes. (Gelderen, 2006, p. 204)

With the Industrial Revolution and later developments, new words had to be invented or existing ones modified to keep up with the rapid changes in technology. The most apparent changes are visible in the fields of science such as medicine, physics, electricity, chemistry, psychology, space engineering and other scientific fields. The following examples appeared and remained a part of everyday speech:

Medicine: *anemia, appendicitis, penicillin, cholesterol*; Electricity: *dynamo, commutator, alternating current*; Physics: *calorie, electron, ionization, quantum mechanics*; Chemistry:

*benzine, cyanide, radium*; Psychology: *schizofrenia, extrovert, introvert*; Space engineering: *astronaut, shuttle, countdown*. (Baugh and Cable, 2002, p. 280)

It comes as no surprise that English lexicon was expanding its borders. English borrowed words from other languages, e.g., French, Italian, Spanish, German, Russian. In that manner, we have words such as: French: *apéritif, chauffer, garage*; Italian: *ciao, confetti, vendetta*; Spanish: *canyon, rodeo, barrio*. The USA, same as England, expanded its lexicon. In the Southwestern United States, they adopted culinary terms: Mexican Spanish: *enchilada, jalapeño*, while *chili* was present since the 17<sup>th</sup> century; and Native American language Nahuatl: *guacamole, tamale*. Other languages gave us: German: *angst, gestalt, zeitgeist*; Russian: *vodka, troika, glasnost*. (Baugh and Cable, 2002, p. 284-285)

In order to bridle the language, one has to establish an institution or a body to look after such matters. From 1650 onwards, many were in favour of forming an English academy, resembling the French academy, as a way of fixing and correcting the English language. The main purpose of the French academy was as follows: “The principal function of the Academy shall be to labor with all possible care and diligence to give definite rules to our language, and to render it pure, eloquent, and capable of treating the arts and sciences.” (as quoted in Baugh and Cable 2002, p. 249).

Yet, an English academy never came to happen. Nevertheless, this did not stop the publication of many grammars and dictionaries, which became the main devices of standardization and codification, one of them being Samuel Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* in 1755. As Baugh and Cable (2002, p. 256) state, Johnson's Dictionary had its positive virtues and its defects:

True, it had its defects. Judged by modern standards it was painfully inadequate. Its etymologies are often ludicrous. It is marred in places by prejudice and caprice... But it had positive virtues. It exhibited the English vocabulary much more fully than had ever been done before. It offered a spelling, fixed, even if sometimes badly, that could be accepted as standard. It supplied thousands of quotations illustrating the use of words, so that, as Johnson remarked in his preface, where his own explanation is inadequate “the sense may easily be collected entire from the examples.



## 4. Social Media and Its Influence

For many people, social media has become an integral part of their daily lives. Even though these platforms are new, their growth has been quick, and their influence on people and their behaviour is far greater than anyone could have predicted. According to Statista Research Department, in 2020, there were over 3.6 billion people using social media, with a tendency for the numbers to reach 4.41 billion by 2025.

The introduction of social media denoted a new way of sharing ideas and thoughts with others more easily. According to professors from the European Business School, „[s]ocial media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. “ (Kaplan Andreas and Michael, 2010, p. 61).

### 4.1. Facebook

Facebook was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. First, it was only open to Harvard students, but in 2006 it became available to the public. This social networking website allows users to build their pages of personal interests and connect with friends, colleagues, and other users to share media, content, and communications. According to Wikipedia, it reached global popularity with being the most downloadable app in the 2010s, surpassing over a billion active users in 2012. Since 2004, Facebook is the most influential platform with over 2.2 billion users. (Barr, 2018, Independent Daily) In 2021, Facebook changed its name into Meta.

Something to note about Facebook is that they introduced something called "Wall" to a member's online profile page. Years ago, if we were to mention a wall to someone, our thought process would lead us to think about the walls in our house. Now, however, in a social media context, a wall refers to a member's homepage, where the user shares personal aspects of their life and their interests. This and many more words found a new purpose in the social media world to come.

## 4.2. Instagram

As stated at [webwise.ie](http://webwise.ie), „Instagram is among a breed of smartphone apps that have tapped into the creative, image-based online life of young people.“ It was created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger. By 2012, Facebook acquired the platform, which gained popularity from its picture-editing functionality. Its primary purpose is to share pictures and videos, with the ability to connect your account to Facebook and other social networking platforms. According to Wikipedia, in the 2010s, it was the fourth most downloadable platform, with over a billion users by 2018.

In 2011, a feature called a hashtag was introduced to Instagram, prefaced with a hash symbol or number sign, followed by letters or digits. This symbol was long used in information technology, but its use blossomed through social networking platforms such as Instagram and Twitter. The hashtag helps the user discover new content or attract like-minded people by using specific wording next to the hash symbol instead of generic terms. Users even created trends that are followed by hashtags. One to note is #ThrowbackThursday, where the user is highlighting something from their past.

## 4.3. Twitter

Twitter was launched in July 2006. It is a social networking site on which users share their thoughts and interact with others with messages known as tweets. These tweets were limited to 140 characters, but in 2017, the number doubled up to 280 characters per tweet. According to Wikipedia, by 2013, it was the most visited website, with users posting 340 million tweets a day.

Initially, the idea was to introduce an SMS service to communicate with a small group of users under the name *twtr*, the disemvowelled version of the word twitter. The five-character length of American SMS short-code system inspired the name. Soon enough, the name was changed to *Twitter*, as the name perfectly embodied the meaning of chirps of birds, which is what the product actually was – to create a short message.

In essence, the noun tweet refers to a chirp of a small or young bird. With the introduction of Twitter, the noun quickly gained a new meaning: „a message sent using the online social networking service Twitter.“ (Cambridge Dictionary).

As of mid-2023, the company’s owner Elon Musk, has rebranded and changed Twitter’s name to X. As the research for this paper has been done before the rebranding, the analysis will revolve around the former name of this social media network – Twitter.

#### 4.4. Snapchat

Snapchat was released in July 2011 under the name Picaboo. Shortly after, in September 2011 it was rebranded and launched as Snapchat. The name Snapchat is derived from the intention of sending short snaps that disappear. It also allows posting *Stories* for 24 hours and *Discover* by allowing brands ad-supported short-form content.

The principal feature of Snapchat is that messages and pictures are usually available for a short period of time before they disappear and become inaccessible to users. Moreover, they allow users to keep their photos in a password-protected space.

According to Wikipedia, by 2021, Snapchat had 293 million active users, representing a new, mobile-first direction for social media.

#### 4.5. TikTok

TikTok was initially released in 2016 in China under the name Douyin. Translated from Chinese, the literal meaning is *Vibrating Sound*. The developer is a Chinese company called ByteDance. It offers short-form videos starting from 15 seconds to ten minutes, with a variety of genres from pranks and dances to entertainment. It became available worldwide after their merge with another

well-known social service – Musica.ly in 2018. According to Wikipedia, by the end of 2020, it reached over 2 billion downloads, making it the fastest growing social network of 2020.

The principal feature of TikTok is the creator's ability to create videos, add their desired music, and play with the video in a sense of slowing it down, speeding it up or have a filter over it. Apart from providing fun, it also offers money. Being the fastest growing social network, it has led many companies to advertise and showcase their products.

## 5. Word-formation processes

English offers many ways of creating new words from old words by combining existing words or using affixes to change the meaning of existing words. In the following paragraphs, some of these word-formation processes are briefly discussed.

Words such as *employee*, *unhappy*, *decolonization* are composed of smaller units in order to form larger words with complex meaning. For example, *employee* is composed of the verb *employ* and the ending *-ee*; *unhappy* is composed of the adjective *happy* and *un-*; *decolonialization* is composed of smaller parts *de-*, *colony-*, *-al*, *-ize*, and *-ation*. These are called morphemes, which can be bound and free. Bound morphemes are attached to the central meaningful item of the word, e.g., *un-* must be attached before the central meaningful element of the word, the so-called root, stem and base. In contrast, free morphemes do occur on their own. (Plag, 2003, p. 12-13)

Compounding is another way of word-formation that involves a combination of two or more free morphemes. For example, *greenhouse*, *team manager* or *truck driver*. (Plag, 2003, p. 15)

A word-formation process which involves the creation of a word (of a new word class) from an existing word (of a different word class) without a change in form is called conversion, zero suffixation, or transposition. For example, *water* is a noun, but we can also use it as a verb *water* (provide water): *John waters his flowers every day*. (Plag, 2003, p. 15)

Blending is another word-formation process which is particularly popular with the language of Instagram and Twitter. Plag describes blends as “amalgamations of parts of different words, such as smog (¬ smoke/fog) or modem (¬ modulator/demodulator).“ (Plag, 2003, p. 17) Blends usually combine the first part of the word with the last part of the second word to create a new word, e.g. *breakfast + lunch = brunch*.

## 6. Language change

When we think about it, in the period before the Internet, new words would take time before getting acknowledged. A new term would need to be picked up by lexicographers, recorded in print, just to pave its way into a dictionary.

English, like any other living language, is changing whether we like it or not. It is not just the matter of creating new words, but new pronunciations and grammatical forms are constantly being used, while, at the same time, old words and forms are gradually phasing out.

Vocabulary is the area which readily manifests changes. Even though it takes a while for a word to be acknowledged, a certain word can gain popularity amongst Internet users in a short period of time.

Over the last few decades, dictionaries have been trying to keep up with all the neologisms, update the meaning of the already existing words, as words coming from social media can become trendy within hours. „Plainly the Internet is lexically highly active and rapidly changing.“ (Crystal, D. 2011, p. 60)

According to the *Online Oxford Dictionary of English (OED)*, they update their dictionary on a quarterly basis, and they are in the works for releasing *the Third Edition of the OED*.

In the following sections, some of the most frequently used words of social media will be discussed. The criteria for selection of the words are based on the intuition of the author, an ardent user of social media. For the purpose of this research, words are extracted from popular social media sites: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and TikTok. First, all the words will be classified according to their origin i.e., the social media they come from. Second, they will be analysed in terms of word-formation processes used for their creation and changes in meaning as well as their etymology. Third, the most frequent meaning of some words (not in the context of social media) will be examined and portrayed with a brief explanation for each of the words. Fourthly, the Corpus of Contemporary English (COCA) will help us investigate the frequency of selected words.

## 6.1 Words Classified by Social Media

Table 1. Words Classified by Social Media

| <b>Social Media Network</b>                      | <b>FACEBOOK</b> | <b>INSTAGRAM</b>    | <b>TWITTER</b> | <b>SNAPCHAT</b> | <b>TIKTOK</b> |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Words originating from social media sites</b> | block           | follow              | retweet        | Snapchat        | fire          |
|  | chat            | follower            | spam           | snapchatter     | flex          |
|  | comment         | inbox               | tweeple        | snapsterpiece   | shadowban     |
|  | Facebook        | influencer          | tweeps         | streak          | slay          |
|  | facebooker      | instafood           | tweet          |                 | tea           |
|  | friend          | Instagram           | Twitter        |                 | tiktoker      |
|  | like            | instagrammable      | twitterverse   |                 | TikTok        |
|  | message         | instagrammer        |                |                 |               |
|  | newsfeed        | instalike           |                |                 |               |
|  | share           | like                |                |                 |               |
|  | status          | selfie <sup>1</sup> |                |                 |               |
|  | timeline        | story               |                |                 |               |
|  | troll           | tag                 |                |                 |               |
|  | unfriend        | unfollow            |                |                 |               |
| wall   | unlike          |                     |                |                 |               |

As seen in Table 1, words are classified according to their respective social media networks. In this section, we will briefly discuss the names of all the networks.

*Facebook* is the network that is in longer use than all the other sites. By 1983, *facebook* was a reference book that is made up of individuals' names and photos, originally used among U.S. students. (Online Etymology Dictionary) The word *facebook* is a compound noun, combined out of *face* (n.) + *book* (n.). In 2004, *Facebook* trademarked the name as a proper noun with a capital F. According to the Online Etymology Dictionary and Hoad (1996, p. 164) *face* was first recorded c. 1300 from Old French *facia*, an alteration of Latin *faciēs* meaning „form, appearance“. *Book* is from OE *bōc* meaning “book, writing, written document”. (Online Etymology Dictionary) It is a derivative of *bōcō* meaning “beech”- “The notion being of beechwood tablets on which runes were

<sup>1</sup> In 2017, Instagram boosted the number of selfies posted; moreover, it also has a leading number of photos with the hashtag #selfie (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selfie>)

inscribed; but it may be from the tree itself (people still carve initials in them).” (Online Etymology Dictionary & Hoad, 1996, p. 46)

*Instagram* became known as a site where you primarily publish photos and videos. *Instagram* got its name by blending two lexical items together: *instant camera* + *telegram* (n.). (Wikipedia) An instant camera is a camera that produces a finished photograph rapidly after each exposure. It is a phrase formed from the adjective *instant* and the noun *camera*. *Telegram* is a message sent by telegraph, while a telegraph is a system for processing messages to a distant place. Blending the first part of the first word (*insta*) and the last part of the second word (*gram*) results in the word *Instagram*.

*Twitter* is a site that allows only 280 characters per tweet. Naturally, *twitter* (v.) is of imitative origin referring to birds, while *tweet* (n.) is the imitative sound made by a small bird, which is what one does on Twitter – publishes *tweets*. It comes from the 14<sup>th</sup> century word *twiteren* as a reference to birds. (Online Etymology Dictionary) In 2006, the network site launched under the name Twitter as the name perfectly embodied the meaning of chirps of birds, which is writing short messages.

*Snapchat* is derived from the intention of sending short snaps that disappear. It is a compound noun from *snap* (n.) + *chat* (n.). *Snap* is a quick or sudden bite from Dutch or German *snappen* meaning „to snap“. (Online Etymology Dictionary) *Chat* is short for *chatter* meaning „to converse familiarly“ as a verb that appeared in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century, or as a noun meaning „familiar conversation.“ (Online Etymology Dictionary)

*TikTok* is a network that appeared recently, in 2016, but it experienced a massive boom in 2020 during the pandemic. According to the website Dictionary: „The name, apparently, is a play on *tick-tock*, onomatopoeia for clocks and a term for countdowns and minute-by-minute action.“ It started as *ticktack*, which is „expressive of duplicated or alternating ticking sound“ in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, *tick-tock*, and then *tick-tick* appeared in the 18<sup>th</sup>, and *tick-tock* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (Hoad, 1996, p. 493)



## 6.2 Words Classified by Word-Formation Processes

Table 2. Words Classified by Word-Formation Processes

| <b>Word-formation process</b> | <b>Compounding</b>    | <b>Blending</b> | <b>Affixation</b>       | <b>Same form, new meaning</b> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Words                         | newsfeed <sup>2</sup> | instafood       | facebooker              | block                         |
|                               | timeline <sup>3</sup> | instalike       | follower <sup>4</sup>   | chat                          |
|                               | shadowban             | tweeple         | inbox <sup>5</sup>      | comment                       |
|                               |                       | tweeps          | influencer <sup>6</sup> | fire                          |
|                               |                       | twitterverse    | instagrammable          | flex                          |
|                               |                       |                 | instagrammer            | follower                      |
|                               |                       |                 | retweet                 | friend                        |
|                               |                       |                 | selfie                  | inbox                         |
|                               |                       |                 | snapchatter             | influencer                    |
|                               |                       |                 | tiktoker                | like                          |
|                               |                       |                 | unfollow                | message                       |
|                               |                       |                 | unfriend                | newsfeed                      |
|                               |                       |                 | unlike                  | share                         |
|                               |                       |                 |                         | slay                          |
|                               |                       |                 |                         | snapsterpiece                 |
|                               |                       |                 |                         | spam                          |
|                               |                       |                 |                         | status                        |
|                               |                       |                 |                         | story                         |
|                               |                       |                 |                         | streak                        |
|                               |                       |                 |                         | tag                           |
|                               |                       |                 | tea                     |                               |
|                               |                       |                 | timeline                |                               |
|                               |                       |                 | tweet                   |                               |
|                               |                       |                 | wall                    |                               |

<sup>2</sup> Newsfeed is repeated in both “Compounding” and “Existing form, new meaning” because the form already existed, only the new meaning was added.

<sup>3</sup> Timeline is repeated in both “Compounding” and “Existing form, new meaning” because the form already existed, only the new meaning was added.

<sup>4</sup> Follower is repeated in both “Compounding” and “Existing form, new meaning” because the form already existed, only the new meaning was added.

<sup>5</sup> Inbox is repeated in both “Compounding” and “Existing form, new meaning” because the form already existed, only the new meaning was added.

<sup>6</sup> Influencer is repeated in both “Compounding” and “Existing form, new meaning” because the form already existed, only the new meaning was added.

In Table 2, all the given words (except social media site names that were previously discussed) are classified into different word-formation groups depending on which process a word went through.

## I. Compounding

As stated before, compounding is word-formation that involves a combination of two or more free morphemes. The process of compounding is presented in the following examples:

- 1) *Newsfeed* (n.) – a combination of *news* (n.) + *feed* (n.) meaning “A service by which news is provided on a regular basis for onward distribution or broadcasting.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1196) In other words, a screen that is updated regularly to show the latest news. *News* originated in late ME from Old French *novelles* or medieval Latin *nova* “new things.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1196) Interestingly enough, *feed* (v.) started as a verb meaning “give food to, either to an animal, baby or a person.” It can also be a noun as “an act of giving food, especially to animals or a baby.” It is from OE *fēdan* (v.), of Germanic origin, related to Dutch *voeden*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 540) Now, *feed* refers to “a web page, screen, etc. that changes often to show the latest information” (Cambridge Dictionary)
- 2) *Timeline* (n.) – a combination of *time* (n.) + *line* (n.). According to the Oxford Dictionary of English (2010, p. 1862), *timeline* means “A graphical representation of a period of time, on which important events are marked.” However, in social media terms it represents “The part of a social media website where items that have been added by you, or that relate to you, are shown.” (Cambridge Dictionary) *Time* is from OE *tīma*, of Germanic origin meaning “the indefinite continued progress of existence and events in the past, present, and the future regarded as a whole.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1862) *Line* is “a long, narrow mark or band” from OE *line* “rope, series” of Germanic origin, from Latin *linea* “flax, fibre.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1026-1027)
- 3) *Shadowban* (v.) – it is a combination of *shadow* (n.) + *ban* (v.) which means “to ban a discussion board user without their knowledge, allowing them to continue reading and commenting, but rendering their comments invisible to other users.” (Wiktionary) *Shadow* usually refers to “a dark area or shape produced by a body coming between rays or light and a surface, or partial or complete darkness.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1633)

*Shadow* originated from OE *scead(u)we*, *sceadwian* from Germanic origin meaning “to shield from attack”, related to German *schatten* and Dutch *schaduw*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1633) *Ban* refers to “officially or legally prohibit something or prevent someone from doing something.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 126) It is from OE *bannan* “summon by a public proclamation” of Germanic origin, partially from Old French *ban* “proclamation, summons, banishment.” It is believed that the term *shadowban* occurred around 2015 when a site called *Reddit* implemented this feature to prevent spam accounts. (Wikipedia)

## II. Blending

Another word-formation process popular mostly in the social media world, especially with Instagram and Twitter, is blending i.e., combining two expressions into one. “Because most blends can only usually be understood in context, only a very few of them (e.g., the linguistic term *Franglais*), are adopted into everyday language.” (Bussmann et al., 1996, p. 137)

Some of the examples are as follows:

- 4) *Instafood* – the word is a blend of two words: the first part of the word *Instagram* (n.) + *food* (n.). It is usually found under a person’s post on Instagram in the form of the hashtag *#instafood* to indicate that the picture has something to do with food. (Hadziahmetovic Jurida and Rahmanovic, 2020, p. 68)
- 5) *Instalike* – the word is a blend of two words: *Instagram* (n.) + *like* (n.) usually found as a hashtag *#instalike* to encourage users to like the post. (Hadziahmetovic Jurida and Rahmanovic, 2020, p. 68)
- 6) *Snapsterpiece* – the word is a blend of *snapchat* (n.) + *masterpiece* (n.), which is a picture taken within the Snapchat application, whereby the user includes lettering, filters or drawings. The edited picture, once the user tries to leave the application without saving the picture, is called *snapsterpiece*. (neologisms.rice.edu)
- 7) *Tweeps* – the word came as a blend of *Twitter* (n.) + *peeps* (n.) meaning people using Twitter. *Peeps* in this context is a slang indicating people. (dictionary.com)

- 8) *Tweeple* – this word is a blend of *Twitter* (n.) + *people* (n.). This is another variation on the term for people using Twitter, singular form *twerson* (*Twitter* + *person*) (Hadziahmetovic Jurida and Rahmanovic, 2020, p. 68)
- 9) *Twitterverse* – it is a combination of *Twitter* (n.) + *universe* (n.) which stands for all the users of Twitter collectively. (Hadziahmetovic Jurida and Rahmanovic, 2020, p. 68)

### III. Affixation

Affixation is a process of coining new words out of existing ones with the help of affixes. In other words, affixation is also derivation. “Derivation by affixation consists in making up new words by adding affixes, or endings, to more basic forms of the word. Mostly these derivations require no special definition or explanation because they follow regular rules.” (Minkova and Stockwell, 2009, p. 7)

The process of affixation is present in the following examples:

- 10) *Facebooker* – *Facebook* (n.) + *-er*
- 11) *Instagrammer* – *Instagram* (n.) + *-er*
- 12) *Snapchatter* – *Snapchat* (n.) + *-er*
- 13) *Tiktoker* – *Tiktok* (n.) + *-er*
- 14) *Influencer* – *influence* (v.) + *-er*
- 15) *Follower* – *follow* (v.) + *-er*
- 16) *Instagrammable* – *Instagram* (n.) + *-able*
- 17) *Inbox* – *in* + *box* (n.)
- 18) *Retweet* – *re-* + *tweet* (n.)
- 19) *Selfie* – *self* + *-ie*
- 20) *Unlike* – *un-* + *like* (v.)
- 21) *Unfollow* – *un-* + *follow* (v.)
- 22) *Unfriend* – *un-* + *friend* (n.)

Most of the examples mentioned contain *-er* as a suffix, but there are also *un-*, *re-*, and *-able*.

Usually, *-er* is combined with nouns or verbs to denote a person’s occupation. The *-er* is from ME *-er(e)*, from OE *-ere*, from Proto-Germanic *-arjaz*, usually thought to be borrowed from Latin *-*

*arius* (Hoad, T.F. 2002, p. 153). *Facebooker, instagrammer, tiktok, snapchat, follower* classifies people as users of a certain network. The term *influencer* especially has gained importance since the beginning of the Facebook and Instagram times as ordinary people started posting publicly about their life, which gained them a certain number of followers over the years. Companies usually use influencers as marketing tools to promote their brand. For this reason, in 2022 OED included additional meaning for the word *influencer* „a well-known or prominent person who uses the internet or social media to promote or generate interest in products, often for payment.”

*Un-* is a prefix expressing negation or contradiction. It originates from OE *un-*, also related to Germanic *un-*, Sanskrit *an-*, *a-*, and a gradation variation of *-ne* “not”. (Hoad, T.F., 2002, p. 513) Examples such as *unlike, unfollow* and *unfriend* denote negation. *Unlike* is giving a negative response to someone’s post, *unfollow* refers to stopping receiving notifications or updates from a certain person, and *unfriend* means to delete someone from your friends’ list, especially on Facebook.

*Re-* is a prefix meaning “back” or “again”. It emerged from Latin *re-*, usually occurring with English words of Latin or Romance origin. (Hoad, T.F., 2002, p. 390) In this sense, *retweet* means “to share or forward someone else’s message on Twitter” (Dictionary)

The suffix *-able* is added to words to form adjectives. Its origin can be traced back to French *-able* or Latin *-abilis*, used to form adjectives from English verbs ending in *-ate*, but later used to form adjectives from verbs of all types.

When dealing with these affixes, it is important to point out certain studies that deal with English affixes and their productivity. In a wide variety of words that English has, a large part of it is formed with prefixes and/or suffixes. A study done by V. Mititelu from Romania begins with the hypothesis that the meaning of a derived word is compositional and “that affixes that are involved in deriving words that develop meanings independently from their base word are morphologically productive ones”. The results seem to support the hypothesis. The results have shown that the most frequent affixes are: *-er, -ly, -y, -ness, -al, -ic, -ity, -able*, while the most productive are *-er, -y, -ly, -ness*.

*Instagrammable* in that sense refers to something that is worthy of publishing on Instagram. Moreover, with adjectives ending in *-able* it is possible to form adverbs ending with *-ably*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 4)

*In* in *inbox* is made from the preposition *in* indicating „the situation of something that is or appears to be enclosed or surrounded by something else”. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 881) It is from OE *in* of Germanic origin. It has common grounds with the Latin *in* and Greek *en*. *Inbox*, in that sense, refers to a folder where emails are received and held. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 882)

The form *-ie* as a suffix is a spelling variant of *-y*. The suffix *-y* is used for forming adjectives e.g., *messy*, *milky* from OE *-ig* of Germanic origin; diminutive nouns and pet names (also *-ey* or *-ie*) e.g., *aunty*, *Timmy* from ME; or for forming nouns e.g., *honesty*, *jealousy* from French *-ie*, Latin *-ia*, *-ium*, or Greek *-eia*, *-ia*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 2054) The most recent example of using *-y* or *-ie* for diminutive nouns is the word *selfie* meaning “photograph taken by pointing the camera at oneself.” (The Online Etymology Dictionary) It consists of *self* (pron.) + *ie*. According to the Oxford Dictionary of English (2010, p. 1613) *self* as a noun means “a person’s essential being that distinguishes them from others”, as a pronoun “oneself, in particular”, or adjective “of the same material and colours as the rest of the item.” It is from OE of Germanic origin, related to German *selbe* and Dutch *zelf*, while as a verb it appeared in the 20<sup>th</sup> century for botany or genetics, e.g., *Progeny were derived from selfed crosses*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1613)

#### IV. Existing form, new meaning

These words were affected by social media, which distinguishes them from their general meaning used in everyday life. Some words have undergone conversion, whereby this chapter deals with words that have not changed their form, but rather their meaning.

The examples are as follows:

##### 23) *block* (v.)

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of English* (2010, p. 181) *block* means "make the movement or flow in (a passage, pipe, road, etc.) difficult or impossible, or put an obstacle in the way of something." In the social media context, *block* means to stop someone from having contact with you. It is of unknown ultimate origin, but it is traced back to ME (denoting a tree stump), from Old French *bloc* (n.) and *bloquer* (v.), from Middle Dutch *blok*. (*Oxford Dictionary of English*, 2010, p. 181)

##### 24) *chat* (v.) → *to chat* (n.)

An example of conversion can be seen in the word *chat*. *Chat* as a noun refers to "informal conversation, or the online exchange of messages in real time with one or more simultaneous users of a computer network", while as a verb it means "exchange messages online in real time with one or more simultaneous users of a computer network." (*Oxford Dictionary of English*, 2010, p. 295) Its origin is traced back to ME, as a short form of *chatter* (v.).

##### 25) *comment* (n.) → *to comment* (v.)

*Comment* has also undergone the process of conversion. As a noun, the meaning refers to "a written remark expressing an opinion or reaction." (*Oxford Dictionary of English*, 2010, p. 349) However, social media interestingly popularized the term *comment* as a verb meaning "express an opinion or reaction in speech or writing." (*Oxford Dictionary of English*, 2010, p. 349) *Comment* (n.) occurred in late 14th century, directly from Latin *commentum* "comment, interpretation" (Hoad, T. F., 2002, p. 86)

26) *fire* (n.) → *fire* (adj.)

According to the Oxford Dictionary of English (2010, p. 656) *fire* means “a process in which substances combine chemically with oxygen from the air and typically give out bright light, heat, and smoke.” It descends from OE *fyr* (n.), *fyrian* (v.) “supply with material for a fire” of Germanic origin, related to German *Feuer* and Dutch *vuur*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 656) The word has gone through conversion, showcasing an interesting transition from a noun to adjective since *fire* as a slang word means that something is cool or exciting, or even convey that someone is attractive.

27) *flex* (v.)

The meaning of the word *flex* usually means to bend a limb or joint, which is probably a back-formation (the part of the word that is clipped off is a recognizable affix (Minkova and Stockwell, 2009, p. 15)) of the word *flexible*. It is traced back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, originating from Latin *flex* “bent”, from the verb *flectere*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 669) However, this meaning does not correlate with the meaning it has now, as it has become more of a slang word – “to show off, whether it be your physique, your belongings, or some other thing you consider superior to those of others. The act of flexing is often criticized as a power move, considered arrogant and insincere.” (Dictionary)

28) *friend* (n) → *to friend* (v.)

Another conversion process is seen in the word *friend*. *Friend* as a noun refers to “a person with whom one has a bond of mutual affection, typically one exclusive of sexual or family relations.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 700) The online meaning refers to a contact on a social media site. It is interesting how Facebook popularized *friend* as a verb „add (someone) to a list of friends or contacts on a social networking website.“ (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 700) It comes from the OE word *freond* of Germanic origin, related to German *Freund* and Dutch *vriend*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 700)

29) *follow* (v.)

The term that Instagram popularized is *follow*. *Follow* means “to go or come after a person or thing proceeding ahead or move or travel behind.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 679) The



origin goes all the way back to Proto-Germanic *fulgijanaq* “to follow”; OE *fylgan*, and ME *folgen*. (Etymologeek) In the context of Instagram, when you choose to click the button 'Follow', it means you want to follow updates from a certain someone and information they often share.

30) *like* (v.)

A word whose online meaning is related to the general meaning is *like* – “find agreeable, enjoyable, or satisfactory.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1023) The online meaning is closely tied to the general meaning, as clicking the like button refers to a person's approval – “to show that you think something is good on a social networking website by clicking on a symbol or the word 'like'.” (Cambridge Dictionary) It comes from OE *lician* “be pleasing” of Germanic origin, related to Dutch *lijken*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1023)

31) *message* (n.) → *to message* (v.)

The process of conversion can also be seen in the word *message*. According to the Oxford Dictionary of English (2010, p. 1111), *message* as a noun is a “verbal, written, or recorded communication sent to or left for a recipient who cannot be contacted directly, or an email or similar electronic communication.” As a verb, it is “to send a message to someone, especially by email.” However, *to message someone* can also refer to contact a person over Facebook or other social media sites. It is traced back to ME from Old French and based on Latin *missus*, noun use of the past participle of *mittere*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1111)

32) *slay* (v.)

An example where the general meaning of a word does not correlate with the new meaning is *slay*. *Slay* means to kill in a violent way, with a reference to a person or animal. It derives from OE *slēan* “strike, kill” of Germanic origin, related to German *schlagen* and Dutch *slaan*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1676) The new meaning could also be considered as a slang word – “to do something spectacularly well,” especially when it comes to fashion, artistic performance, or self-confidence” (Dictionary)

33) *share* (v.)

Another word whose social media meaning can be related to the general meaning is *share*. *Share* means “have a portion of something with another or others or tell someone about something.”

(Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1637) The verb *share* is of Germanic origin, dating from the late 16th century. It originates from OE *scearu* “division, part into which is something divided”, related to Dutch *schare* and German *Schar* “troop, multitude.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1637) *Share* as a verb now refers to publishing something on your feed for your friends or followers to see. It can be used to promote someone else’s work, or publicly announce something about oneself.

34) *status* (n.)

The word *status* refers to “relative social or professional position”. It is from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, from Latin, literally “standing”, from *stare* “to stand.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1742) In the social media context, *status* refers to “a short post on a social networking website or messaging application that gives information about the user’s present situation, activities, thoughts, etc.” (Dictionary)

35) *story* (n.)

The word *story* refers to “an account of imaginary or real people and events told for entertainment, or a piece of gossip.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1758) It originates from ME denoting a historical event, a short form of Anglo-Norman French word *estoria*, from Latin *historia*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1758) The social media meaning is not completely different from the general meaning as publishing a story (for example, on Instagram) means to share a picture with your friends or followers. The picture can still tell its own story, at least for 24 hours.

36) *streak* (n.)

An interesting feature introduced by Snapchat is a *streak*. *Streak* as a word refers to “a long, thin line or mark of a different substance or colour from its surroundings.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1762) It comes from OE *strica* “line of motion, stroke of a pen” of Germanic origin, related to Dutch *streek* and German *Strich*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1762) However, in the Snapchat use, *streak* refers to “the count how many consecutive days two people have been sending Snaps to each other. Every day they send a Snap their streak gets longer.” (childnet.com)

37) *tag* (n.) → *to tag* (v.)

Another example of conversion is *tag*. Previously, *tag* (n.) used to be and still can be referred as “a label attached to someone or something for the purpose of identification or give other information.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1810) However, Instagram introduced *tag* “to add a link to someone's profile from a photo or comment on a website such as Instagram or Facebook.” (Cambridge Dictionary) It is of unknown origin, but according to Hoad, T.F. (2002, p. 481), *tag* referred to a small piece on a garment in the 14th century, or in the 18th century, a brief quotation.

38) *tea* (n.)

An interesting change of meaning happened to the word *tea*. *Tea* means “a hot drink made by infusing the dried crushed leaves of the tea plant in boiling water.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1824) It is believed to have been borrowed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century from Chinese, *te* via Malay, related to Mandarin *cha*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1824) *Tea* as a slang word is a synonym for gossip.

39) *troll* (n.) → *to troll* (v.)

Instagram interestingly popularized the term *troll* (v.) as a verb. Back in the mid-14th century, *troll* (n.) signified “an ugly cave-dwelling creature depicted as either a giant or dwarf.” Nowadays, through the process of conversion, trolling someone on the Internet means to leave offensive messages to provoke others for their own amusement in order to cause disruption. (Etymologeek) The word *troll* (n.) was adopted in English in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, from Old Norse and Swedish *troll* and Danish *trolde*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1904)

40) *tweet* (n.) → *to tweet* (v.)

In order to share a message in the world of Twitter, one must *tweet* (v.) something. *Tweet* is a popularized term, which in traditional meaning refers to “the chirp of a small or young bird.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1918) Now, even dictionaries distinguish a new, online meaning for this term, which is “make a posting on the social networking service Twitter.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1918) It appeared mid-19th century as a noun, imitative of the sound of a bird. (The Online Etymology Dictionary)

41) *wall* (n.)

The need to name something was met by taking words from the existing vocabulary of the English language and re-assigning them to fit new features, as it came to be with the word *wall* in the Facebook world. In its traditional sense, *wall* refers to “a continuous vertical brick or stone structure that encloses or divides an area of land.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1997) *Wall* goes all the way back to OE *weall*, from Latin *vallum* “rampart”, a collective form of *vallus* “stake.” (The Online Etymology Dictionary) Now, it's a landing page of a user, where the user shares their thoughts, feelings and whereabouts.

### 6.3 Examples of words Outside of Social Media Context

Table 3. Words Outside of Social Media Context

|  | <b>WORDS</b>                | <b>Home</b>   | <b>Inbox</b>   | <b>Platform</b>  | <b>Spam</b>  | <b>Upload</b>  |
|--|-----------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Words in widespread use before the rise of social media</b> | General meaning             | A place where one lives permanently.                        | A box of tray (as on a desk) for holding incoming interoffice mail/correspondence and other papers | A flat raised area or structure from which you make a speech or give a performance | Used to refer to a variety of tinned meat                                | None   |
|  | Meaning before social media | A variation of homepage - an introductory page of a website | A place on a computer where all the emails received are kept                                       | The type of computer system which determines what kind of software it can run      | Unwanted mails (advertisement, newsletters) received in a computer inbox | Transferring data from a one computer to another, especially to a larger network or server |
|  | Social media meaning        | An introductory page of a website                           | Verbalized in a sense of sending someone a private message   | The type of computer system which determines what kind of software it can run      | Unwanted mails (advertisement, newsletters) received in a computer inbox | Transferring data from a one computer to another, especially to a larger network or server |

Words from Table 3. will be discussed since they came about before the rise of social media. The table gives a brief overview, but they will be discussed in more depth in the following paragraphs.

#### 42) home (n.)

According to the ODE *home* is “the place where one lives permanently.” It appeared as the OE word *ham* as a collection of dwellings, village, estate, house, closely related to Dutch *heem* and German *Heim*. (Hoad, T.F., 2002, p. 219) Nowadays, when you open Facebook or Instagram, home is the first page that appears on your screen. It is also used as a variation of homepage which refers to the same meaning. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 838)

#### 43) inbox (n.)

According to the Online Etymology Dictionary, the first use of *inbox* (n.) occurred in 1984 in the electronic mail sense. It is „a box of tray (as on a desk) for holding incoming interoffice mail/correspondence and other papers. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

Moreover, *inbox* (v.) also can be a verb in the sense of sending someone a private message on social media. (Cambridge Dictionary) Adding in (prep.) to box (n.) created inbox. According to Hoad, T.F. (2002, p. 231), it originates from OE *in* “marking bounds or limits within which”. On the other hand, *box* is a “receptacle of wood, etc” from OE *box*, probably from late Latin *buxis*, and Latin *pyxis* “boxwood box” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 205; Hoad, T.F., 2002, p. 48 & 380)

#### 44) platform (n.)

General meaning of *platform* is „a flat raised area or structure, or the raised part of the floor in a large room, from which you make a speech or give a musical performance.“ (Cambridge Dictionary) In the online world, the meaning changes to „the type of computer system or smartphone you are using, in relation to the type of software you can use on it.“ (Cambridge Dictionary) It appeared in the 18th century as a borrowing from the French word *plateforme* (French *plate* „flat“ + *forme* „form“). (Hoad, T. F., 2002, p. 357)

#### 45) spam (n.)

Messages that are received and found within the inbox often may be *spam*. *Spam* usually refers “irrelevant or inappropriate messages sent on the Internet to a large number of users” i.e., *spamming* them. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1709) However, *spam* seemed to have a completely different meaning back in the day. In the 20th century, *spam* referred to the name of a variety of tinned meat, probably a conflation of *sp(iced h)am*. (Hoad, T.F., 2002, p. 451) “The Internet sense appears to derive from a sketch by the British ‘Monty Python’ comedy group, set in a café in which every item on the menu includes spam.” (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1709)

#### 46) upload (v.)

If something needs to be put on the Internet for others to see or use, that is possible through an act called *upload* (v.) – „to copy or move programs or information to a larger computer system or to the internet. “(Cambridge Dictionary). It comes from the English words *load* and *up*. *Up* (adv.) refers to “towards a higher place or position.” It is from OE *up(p)*, *uppe* of Germanic origin, related to Dutch *op* and German *auf*. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1953-1954) *Load* (n.) is defined as “a heavy or bulky thing that is being carried or is about to be carried.” It originates from OE *lad* “way, journey, conveyance” of Germanic origin. (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010, p. 1035)

## 6.4 COCA

This section will delve into the world of the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) to determine the frequency of the words analysed through this paper.

The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) is the only large and "representative" corpus of American English. The corpus contains more than one billion words of text (25+ million words each year 1990-2019) from eight genres: spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, academic texts, and (with the update in March 2020): TV and Movies subtitles, blogs, and other web pages. (COCA)

The corpus was created in 2008 by a corpus linguistics professor at Brigham Young University – Mark Davies. The corpus allows searches in at least two main ways:

- By genre: tv/movies, blog, web, spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper, and academic texts;
- By year: from 1990 to 2019

For this part of the analysis, the list search has been used. Words discussed throughout the paper have been searched in the corpus in capitalized letters, given that COCA explains this search as “If you capitalize an entire word, it will find all forms of that word.” That way we are presented with lemmas meaning the canonical form and/or dictionary form of a set of words. For example, BLOCK for *block, blocks, blocked, blocking*.

The searches were not limited to a particular part of speech since conversions in many instances are also relevant for the vocabulary investigated and their usage may be generally affected by an increase in the related part of the vocabulary.

All genres that are provided in the corpus are used for comparison. We will look at them and do a brief examination to showcase what words have the highest frequency and in which genre the frequency is the highest.



### 6.4.1 Corpus Analysis

The following chapter will display the COCA lists for each of the words analysed in this paper.

A picture of the chart will be portrayed under each of the words to visually portray the frequency of the words. The darker the colour blue, the higher the frequency. With each chart, a brief analysis is provided.

Five words were not found within the COCA corpus. Those are: *instafood*, *instalike*, *snappchatter*, *snappsterpiece*, *tiktoker*.

Table 4. BLOCK

| HELP | ⓘ | ★ |          | ALL    | BLOG  | WEB   | TV/M | SPOK | FIC   | MAG   | NEWS  | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|----------|--------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ⓘ | ★ | BLOCK    | 62469  | 6376  | 6519  | 5312 | 4950 | 7400  | 7399  | 19260 | 5253 | 5847    | 8086    | 6887    | 6436    | 12991   | 9327    |
| 2    | ⓘ | ★ | BLOCKS   | 26975  | 2761  | 2943  | 2205 | 1922 | 4535  | 4649  | 4823  | 3137 | 3274    | 3482    | 3659    | 3539    | 3783    | 3534    |
| 3    | ⓘ | ★ | BLOCKED  | 12521  | 1646  | 1759  | 947  | 1296 | 1837  | 1650  | 2443  | 943  | 1388    | 1271    | 1377    | 1418    | 1470    | 2192    |
| 4    | ⓘ | ★ | BLOCKING | 6153   | 765   | 793   | 693  | 512  | 1278  | 902   | 847   | 363  | 682     | 704     | 775     | 730     | 792     | 912     |
|      |   |   | TOTAL    | 108118 | 11548 | 12014 | 9157 | 8680 | 15050 | 14600 | 27373 | 9696 | 11191   | 13543   | 12698   | 12123   | 19036   | 15965   |

The early years of social media show a rather even and stable use of the word *block*. It is obvious that the word's various meanings have much use in the news genre. Having a quick look under the context option of the very same word, we can notice that the word *block* is, for example, used in a sense of a city block, as many newspapers have reported of various activities in different parts of a city. However, with the peak years of social media, going into the 2010's, we can observe a heightened use of the word *block*.

Table 5. CHAT

| HELP | ① | ★ |          | ALL   | BLOG | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC  | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|----------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | CHAT     | 13761 | 2262 | 1745 | 2140 | 1332 | 1578 | 2045 | 1913 | 746  | 907     | 1384    | 1600    | 1720    | 1888    | 2255    |
| 2    | ① | ★ | CHATTING | 4149  | 667  | 488  | 377  | 363  | 1010 | 623  | 481  | 140  | 354     | 458     | 511     | 611     | 593     | 467     |
| 3    | ① | ★ | CHATTED  | 2030  | 268  | 186  | 72   | 134  | 648  | 347  | 318  | 57   | 201     | 233     | 238     | 283     | 326     | 295     |
| 4    | ① | ★ | CHATS    | 1722  | 228  | 225  | 82   | 105  | 154  | 338  | 337  | 253  | 115     | 178     | 202     | 215     | 332     | 227     |
|      |   |   | TOTAL    | 21662 | 3425 | 2644 | 2671 | 1934 | 3390 | 3353 | 3049 | 1196 | 1577    | 2253    | 2551    | 2829    | 3139    | 3244    |

The word chat had been present in various genres through time, as it always referred to informal conversation. However, how years have passed we can see that its use has grown.

Table 6. COMMENT

| HELP | ① | ★ |            | ALL    | BLOG  | WEB   | TV/M | SPOK  | FIC  | MAG   | NEWS  | ACAD  | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|------------|--------|-------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | COMMENTS   | 104874 | 41073 | 28205 | 714  | 7005  | 1350 | 6905  | 10486 | 9136  | 3907    | 4186    | 4556    | 5067    | 4758    | 13122   |
| 2    | ① | ★ | COMMENT    | 83621  | 28728 | 19048 | 2683 | 8536  | 3015 | 5393  | 11481 | 4737  | 4911    | 6476    | 4989    | 4916    | 5145    | 9408    |
| 3    | ① | ★ | COMMENTED  | 9284   | 2295  | 1656  | 55   | 390   | 1100 | 902   | 510   | 2376  | 927     | 872     | 811     | 969     | 869     | 885     |
| 4    | ① | ★ | COMMENTING | 5909   | 2311  | 1337  | 85   | 487   | 205  | 387   | 434   | 663   | 349     | 329     | 347     | 357     | 408     | 471     |
|      |   |   | TOTAL      | 203688 | 74407 | 50246 | 3537 | 16418 | 5670 | 13587 | 22911 | 16912 | 10094   | 11863   | 10703   | 11309   | 11180   | 23886   |

Comment is the most frequently found in blogs. Part of this frequency may be because blogs usually have a section, which is found underneath an article, where people can leave comments, or while writing an article, people usually encourage other users to leave a comment i.e. “Your comments and suggestions are welcome.” Not much increase in frequency can be seen in the earlier years of social media, as it has remained stable throughout the years, however the total number more than doubles in the last period.

Table 7. FACEBOOK

| HELP | ① | ★ |          | ALL   | BLOG  | WEB   | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|----------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | FACEBOOK | 50332 | 15763 | 14091 | 734  | 4192 | 408 | 8112 | 5790 | 1242 | 1       | 3       | 2       | 1323    | 6749    | 12400   |

0.219 seconds

It comes as no surprise, that Facebook, as a name of a popular social media network, has seen the most popularity in blogs and web genre. It is also evident that Facebook gained popularity in the period of 2010-14 as that is the time when the number of users surpassed a billion. It did not stop there, so the period of 2015-19 has seen a jump in usage.

Table 8. FACEBOOKER

| HELP | ① | ★ |            | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|------------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | FACEBOOKER | 7   | 2    | 4   |      |      |     |     | 1    |      |         |         |         |         |         | 1       |

0.324 seconds

A word that hasn't seen much daylight is Facebooker. As it only came around with the beginnings of the social network Facebook, it is apparent that only Web, Blog, and News have recorded some examples. Throughout the years, the words barely existed, at least according to the COCA corpus.

Table 9. FIRE

| HELP | ① | ★ |        | ALL    | BLOG  | WEB   | TV/M  | SPOK  | FIC   | MAG   | NEWS  | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | FIRE   | 150603 | 14264 | 17944 | 28457 | 18744 | 26721 | 16720 | 21060 | 6693 | 19907   | 18558   | 20728   | 18924   | 19079   | 21199   |
| 2    | ① | ★ | FIRE   | 41435  | 4713  | 4304  | 7920  | 6942  | 4283  | 4344  | 7845  | 1084 | 4884    | 4823    | 5147    | 5370    | 5045    | 7149    |
| 3    | ① | ★ | FIRE   | 16473  | 1444  | 1758  | 1355  | 2411  | 3602  | 2387  | 2232  | 1284 | 2709    | 2390    | 2436    | 2089    | 1699    | 1948    |
| 4    | ① | ★ | FIRING | 9443   | 1076  | 1189  | 1292  | 1509  | 1346  | 1273  | 1422  | 336  | 1061    | 1173    | 1274    | 1149    | 1098    | 1423    |
|      |   |   | TOTAL  | 217954 | 21497 | 25195 | 39024 | 29606 | 35952 | 24724 | 32559 | 9397 | 28561   | 26944   | 29585   | 27532   | 26921   | 31719   |

Fire, as a word that existed long before social media and only got further popularized as an adjective, covers a large area of different genres and periods. The table above showcases the highest presence in tv/movies and fiction. As we move to the right side of the table, we see a rather stable presence throughout different periods. The most frequent usage was recorded in the period of 2015-19.

Table 10. FLEX

| HELP | ① | ★ |         | ALL  | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC  | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|---------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | FLEX    | 3755 | 514  | 570 | 174  | 135  | 250  | 1668 | 267  | 177  | 351     | 488     | 462     | 449     | 574     | 347     |
| 2    | ① | ★ | FLEXED  | 1233 | 54   | 89  | 18   | 21   | 650  | 220  | 75   | 106  | 167     | 170     | 178     | 200     | 187     | 188     |
| 3    | ① | ★ | FLEXING | 928  | 68   | 72  | 43   | 62   | 327  | 216  | 96   | 44   | 137     | 123     | 123     | 131     | 127     | 147     |
| 4    | ① | ★ | FLEXES  | 350  | 25   | 30  | 10   | 14   | 84   | 127  | 34   | 26   | 40      | 57      | 62      | 43      | 60      | 33      |
| 5    | ① | ★ | FLEXI   | 19   | 5    | 2   | 1    | 2    | 1    | 3    | 5    |      | 5       | 1       | 1       | 2       | 2       | 1       |
|      |   |   | TOTAL   | 6285 | 666  | 763 | 246  | 234  | 1312 | 2234 | 477  | 353  | 700     | 839     | 826     | 825     | 950     | 716     |

Flex seems to have gained popularity in the magazine genre. Even though this word, like *fire*, got additionally popularized through social media, it has a distinctly lower usage as opposed to *fire*. In the table above we can see that numbers are low, with the highest number in 2010-14.

Moreover, another form of word has found its way in this table which is flexi. According to the few examples, it is used as an adjective, but it has not been subjected to analysis throughout the paper.

Table 11. FOLLOW

| HELP | ① | ★ |           | ALL    | BLOG  | WEB   | TV/M  | SPOK  | FIC   | MAG   | NEWS  | ACAD  | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|-----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | FOLLOW    | 106413 | 18430 | 18112 | 15128 | 9669  | 11594 | 13678 | 9523  | 10279 | 10754   | 11560   | 11897   | 11552   | 11671   | 12437   |
| 2    | ① | ★ | FOLLOWED  | 87760  | 8321  | 11397 | 4276  | 5659  | 20202 | 11743 | 11771 | 14391 | 11410   | 10768   | 11052   | 11270   | 11462   | 12080   |
| 3    | ① | ★ | FOLLOWING | 75046  | 10342 | 11757 | 4953  | 6771  | 6871  | 9776  | 8713  | 15863 | 7688    | 7893    | 8588    | 8526    | 8691    | 11561   |
| 4    | ① | ★ | FOLLOWS   | 32347  | 3935  | 6427  | 797   | 1848  | 3614  | 3637  | 3193  | 8896  | 3786    | 3954    | 3765    | 3257    | 2968    | 4255    |
|      |   |   | TOTAL     | 301566 | 41028 | 47693 | 25154 | 23947 | 42281 | 38834 | 33200 | 49429 | 33638   | 34175   | 35302   | 34605   | 34792   | 40333   |

One of the words with generally high frequency even outside of the social media context. We can see that the word is particularly frequent in the web and academic sections. Moreover, we can see a flow upwards where it reached its peak frequency in 2015-19.

Table 12. FOLLOWER

| HELP | ① | ★ |           | ALL   | BLOG | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|-----------|-------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | FOLLOWERS | 14357 | 3543 | 3015 | 739  | 1294 | 598 | 1970 | 1556 | 1642 | 1227    | 1043    | 1175    | 1204    | 1196    | 1954    |
| 2    | ① | ★ | FOLLOWER  | 2171  | 634  | 497  | 133  | 156  | 129 | 191  | 183  | 248  | 165     | 154     | 154     | 149     | 180     | 238     |
|      |   |   | TOTAL     | 16528 | 4177 | 3512 | 872  | 1450 | 727 | 2161 | 1739 | 1890 | 1392    | 1197    | 1329    | 1353    | 1376    | 2192    |

Another word that goes hand in hand with follow is *follower*. The most frequent use can be seen in blogs and web. *Follower* is not a new word, but it did gain a new meaning with the rise of social media. Before, followers used to refer to a person following a certain practice or religion. That meaning is not excluded today, but there has been added another meaning of a person following a certain individual on social media.

Table 13: FRIEND

| HELP | ① | ★ |         | ALL    | BLOG  | WEB   | TV/M  | SPOK  | FIC   | MAG   | NEWS  | ACAD  | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|---------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | FRIENDS | 232149 | 33994 | 33938 | 41953 | 26892 | 28802 | 28742 | 26547 | 11281 | 23929   | 27264   | 28943   | 29079   | 28633   | 26369   |
| 2    | ① | ★ | FRIEND  | 193005 | 21983 | 22936 | 53119 | 20054 | 31127 | 21028 | 16608 | 6150  | 22249   | 25579   | 25160   | 25820   | 25039   | 24239   |
|      |   |   | TOTAL   | 425154 | 55977 | 56874 | 95072 | 46946 | 59929 | 49770 | 43155 | 17431 | 46178   | 52843   | 54103   | 54899   | 53672   | 50608   |

The word friend is the most frequently used in the tv/movies genre. The use throughout the years remains relatively stable, as *friend* was already a well-established word. We can see the highest number of uses in 2005-09, which might be due to the launch of Facebook, as it also popularized the word as a verb.

Table 14: HOME

| HELP  | ① | ★ |          | ALL    | BLOG  | WEB   | TV/M  | SPOK  | FIC   | MAG   | NEWS   | ACAD  | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|-------|---|---|----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1     | ① | ★ | HOME     | 559165 | 57355 | 57419 | 93861 | 65519 | 80738 | 77060 | 94807  | 32406 | 70907   | 76715   | 76742   | 78856   | 73022   | 68149   |
| 2     | ① | ★ | HOMES    | 62336  | 7336  | 6805  | 2310  | 8191  | 3209  | 9555  | 19086  | 5844  | 8372    | 7858    | 8313    | 9555    | 7840    | 6257    |
| 3     | ① | ★ | HOMING   | 362    | 16    | 37    | 49    | 15    | 79    | 81    | 27     | 58    | 66      | 57      | 52      | 50      | 39      | 45      |
| 4     | ① | ★ | HOMED    | 143    | 4     | 7     | 7     | 6     | 40    | 51    | 24     | 4     | 23      | 18      | 16      | 18      | 28      | 29      |
| 5     | ① | ★ | HOME-THE | 1      |       |       |       |       |       | 1     |        |       |         |         |         |         | 1       |         |
| TOTAL |   |   |          | 622007 | 64711 | 64268 | 96227 | 73731 | 84066 | 86748 | 113944 | 38312 | 79368   | 84648   | 85123   | 88479   | 80930   | 74480   |

Home is an interesting word to observe as its meaning goes all the way back before social media occurred. It is a place where one lives permanently, which is a word used more frequently in everyday life, as opposed to the social media meaning of a homepage. Therefore, we can see different frequencies. The highest frequency of the word home was in the period of 2005-09, which might be since social media had been slowly introduced to the wider public.

Table 15: INBOX

| HELP  | ① | ★ |          | ALL  | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|-------|---|---|----------|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1     | ① | ★ | INBOX    | 3789 | 695  | 602 | 32   | 72   | 90  | 1229 | 1050 | 19   |         | 8       | 43      | 131     | 214     | 2096    |
| 2     | ① | ★ | IN-BOX   | 208  | 18   | 22  | 16   | 9    | 46  | 77   | 17   | 3    | 7       | 25      | 50      | 35      | 34      | 17      |
| 3     | ① | ★ | INBOXES  | 163  | 63   | 43  | 2    | 3    | 2   | 28   | 17   | 5    |         | 1       | 8       | 13      | 12      | 23      |
| 4     | ① | ★ | IN-BOXES | 39   | 4    | 3   |      | 3    | 3   | 16   | 10   |      |         | 6       | 13      | 5       | 6       | 2       |
| TOTAL |   |   |          | 4199 | 780  | 670 | 50   | 87   | 141 | 1350 | 1094 | 27   | 7       | 40      | 114     | 184     | 266     | 2138    |

Inbox has an uneven spread between different genres. The most prominent genres are magazine and news, while the least amount of frequency is in tv/movies and academic. However, when looking through different periods, inbox as a word had a significant jump in the 2015-19 period.

Table 16: INFLUENCER

| HELP  | ① | ★ |             | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|-------|---|---|-------------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1     | ① | ★ | INFLUENCERS | 529 | 179  | 98  | 9    | 65   | 5   | 110 | 34   | 29   | 3       | 6       | 6       | 24      | 41      | 172     |
| 2     | ① | ★ | INFLUENCER  | 236 | 58   | 48  | 16   | 19   | 3   | 61  | 21   | 10   | 5       | 2       | 2       | 9       | 11      | 101     |
| TOTAL |   |   |             | 765 | 237  | 146 | 25   | 84   | 8   | 171 | 55   | 39   | 8       | 8       | 8       | 33      | 52      | 273     |

Influencer is an interesting word to look at as it acquired a new meaning due to social media. An influencer is usually an ordinary person, who started publicly publishing their life, so it is no surprise that it is most prominent in blogs, web and mag genres. Moreover, the word influencer has reached its highest peak in 2015-19 period.

Table 17: INSTAGRAM

| HELP          | ① | ★ |           | ALL  | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|---------------|---|---|-----------|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1             | ① | ★ | INSTAGRAM | 4879 | 974  | 590 | 263  | 735  | 46  | 1637 | 563  | 71   |         |         |         |         | 393     | 2922    |
| 0.188 seconds |   |   |           |      |      |     |      |      |     |      |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |

Instagram, the name of a leading social media platform, has not found much place throughout different genres. The most notable mentions are in the genre of magazine. However, since the very word did not exist up until Instagram was founded, which is around 2012, all the earlier periods remain empty. It started gaining recognition in 2010-14, while later it reached its peak in 2015-19.

Table 18: INSTAGRAMMER

| HELP          | ① | ★ |              | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|---------------|---|---|--------------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1             | ① | ★ | INSTAGRAMMER | 11  | 5    | 2   |      |      |     | 4   |      |      |         |         |         |         |         | 4       |
| 0.328 seconds |   |   |              |     |      |     |      |      |     |     |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |

Instagrammer is closely tied to Instagram. An Instagrammer is a person who uses Instagram. Its biggest frequency is recorded in blogs, while the instances of it are found only in the 2015-19 period.

Table 19: INSTAGRAMMABLE

| HELP          | ① | ★ |                | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|---------------|---|---|----------------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1             | ① | ★ | INSTAGRAMMABLE | 7   |      |     | 1    | 1    |     | 3   | 2    |      |         |         |         |         |         | 7       |
| 0.156 seconds |   |   |                |     |      |     |      |      |     |     |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |

Another derivative of Instagram is the adjective instagrammable. That usually refers to something worthy publishing on Instagram. It comes as no surprise that the frequency of this word is not as high, since the social media platform did not exist up until 2012.

Table 20: LIKE

| HELP | ① | ★ |        | ALL     | BLOG   | WEB    | TV/M   | SPOK   | FIC    | MAG    | NEWS   | ACAD  | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | LIKE   | 2366771 | 321789 | 262187 | 542841 | 374650 | 366195 | 236273 | 183626 | 79210 | 256488  | 289733  | 289654  | 297579  | 317841  | 331500  |
| 2    | ① | ★ | LIKED  | 59978   | 7047   | 6727   | 9449   | 5699   | 18984  | 5420   | 4726   | 1926  | 7173    | 8208    | 7892    | 7773    | 8102    | 7056    |
| 3    | ① | ★ | LIKES  | 43584   | 6178   | 5393   | 9430   | 4409   | 5043   | 6178   | 5998   | 955   | 4968    | 5650    | 5499    | 5359    | 5043    | 5494    |
| 4    | ① | ★ | LIKING | 3777    | 876    | 644    | 617    | 335    | 559    | 284    | 195    | 267   | 318     | 344     | 387     | 349     | 429     | 430     |
|      |   |   | TOTAL  | 2474110 | 335890 | 274951 | 562337 | 385093 | 390781 | 248155 | 194545 | 82358 | 268947  | 303935  | 303432  | 311060  | 331415  | 344480  |

The word *like* had a continuous growth throughout the years, with the most popular use in the latest years of 2015-19. We can also see that it has been used more in tv/movies and fiction than in blogs or web. However, *like* was further popularized as a verb through social media in which

you show interest for a certain photo or textual post. This does not stop here – *like* also has a plural form, but more than that, it is frequently used as a verb, with an addition of preposition, adjective and conjunction (which is mostly found in American English.)

Table 21: MESSAGE

| HELP | ① | ★ |           | ALL    | BLOG  | WEB   | TV/M  | SPOK  | FIC   | MAG   | NEWS  | ACAD  | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|-----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | MESSAGE   | 98521  | 14306 | 15383 | 11948 | 18364 | 8862  | 11517 | 11179 | 6962  | 10776   | 11118   | 11229   | 11395   | 10972   | 13342   |
| 2    | ① | ★ | MESSAGES  | 31312  | 4274  | 5369  | 2587  | 4064  | 2678  | 4472  | 3834  | 4034  | 2723    | 3057    | 3704    | 3880    | 3833    | 4472    |
| 3    | ① | ★ | MESSAGING | 724    | 177   | 172   | 19    | 78    | 14    | 134   | 85    | 45    | 4       | 11      | 33      | 73      | 95      | 159     |
| 4    | ① | ★ | MESSAGED  | 260    | 47    | 36    | 21    | 22    | 60    | 35    | 38    | 1     | 1       | 1       | 9       | 21      | 36      | 109     |
|      |   |   | TOTAL     | 130817 | 18804 | 20960 | 14575 | 22528 | 11614 | 16158 | 15136 | 11042 | 13504   | 14187   | 14975   | 15369   | 14936   | 18082   |

The word message has had a lot of use in the web and spoken genres. Looking at it through the years, it had slight ups and downs, with its lowest frequency in 1990-94, but it reached its peak use in 2015-19.

Table 22: NEWSFEED

| HELP          | ① | ★ |          | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|---------------|---|---|----------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1             | ① | ★ | NEWSFEED | 208 | 85   | 70  |      | 8    | 19  | 16  | 7    | 3    |         | 2       | 4       | 7       | 10      | 30      |
| 0.188 seconds |   |   |          |     |      |     |      |      |     |     |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |

Newsfeed has been popular in the blogs and web genres, but looking at its development through the years, there has not been much use for it. Its use peaks in the latest period of 2015-19.

Table 23: PLATFORM

| HELP | ① | ★ |           | ALL   | BLOG | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC  | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|-----------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | PLATFORM  | 31432 | 7101 | 5520 | 988  | 2684 | 3773 | 5477 | 3107 | 2782 | 2482    | 2606    | 2630    | 2587    | 2965    | 5541    |
| 2    | ① | ★ | PLATFORMS | 8506  | 2149 | 1848 | 153  | 399  | 321  | 1691 | 865  | 1080 | 392     | 408     | 446     | 573     | 786     | 1904    |
|      |   |   | TOTAL     | 39938 | 9250 | 7368 | 1141 | 3083 | 4094 | 7168 | 3972 | 3862 | 2874    | 3014    | 3076    | 3160    | 3751    | 7445    |

Platform is a word that was borrowed from French in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, denoting a raised area on which one can perform speeches or give a musical performance. It only appropriated a new meaning with the appearance of social media as „the type of computer system or smartphone you are using, in relation to the type of software you can use on it” (Cambridge Dictionary) Therefore, the presence of the word platform is visible through different genres. When looking at the different time periods, the word platform kept a steady line before jumping from 24.05 to 45.15 frequency in 2015-19.

Table 24: RETWEET

| HELP          | ① | ★ |         | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|---------------|---|---|---------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1             | ① | ★ | RETWEET | 99  | 42   | 30  | 2    | 8    |     | 10  | 3    | 4    |         |         |         | 1       | 11      | 15      |
| 0.184 seconds |   |   |         |     |      |     |      |      |     |     |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |

Retweet is closely tied to Twitter and tweet, as it refers to re-posting a tweet publicly with the people who follow you on Twitter. The highest frequency is recorded in blogs and web, with 2015-19 period showing the highest usage.

Table 25: SELFIE

| HELP          | ① | ★ |        | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|---------------|---|---|--------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1             | ① | ★ | SELFIE | 865 | 2    |     | 202  | 277  | 28  | 228 | 128  |      |         |         | 4       |         | 140     | 719     |
| 0.164 seconds |   |   |        |     |      |     |      |      |     |     |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |

Selfie, as a newly coined word, hasn't recorded much usage. This word came about in 2002, but it did not see much use until 2012. During the period of 2015-19 is the time when it started gaining popularity.

Table 26: SHADOWBAN

| HELP          | ① | ★ |           | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|---------------|---|---|-----------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1             | ① | ★ | SHADOWBAN | 1   |      |     |      |      |     | 1   |      |      |         |         |         |         |         | 1       |
| 0.328 seconds |   |   |           |     |      |     |      |      |     |     |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |

Shadowban, according to the chart seen in COCA, seems to be the least used and known word amongst those recorded in COCA. The only genre that recorded any mentions is magazine, which is one mention in a sci/tech article from 2019. That results in its 0.01 frequency per million in the 2015-19 period.

Table 27: SHARE

| HELP | ① | ★ |         | ALL    | BLOG  | WEB   | TV/M  | SPOK  | FIC   | MAG   | NEWS  | ACAD  | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|---------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | SHARE   | 138222 | 28323 | 25759 | 9655  | 10548 | 7386  | 21025 | 19699 | 15827 | 14201   | 13363   | 13766   | 12846   | 13414   | 16550   |
| 2    | ① | ★ | SHARED  | 34586  | 5062  | 4673  | 1514  | 2586  | 4853  | 5064  | 4357  | 6477  | 3605    | 3552    | 3818    | 3906    | 4495    | 5475    |
| 3    | ① | ★ | SHARING | 34209  | 9191  | 6626  | 1864  | 2764  | 2094  | 4171  | 2900  | 4599  | 2356    | 2597    | 2991    | 3157    | 3431    | 3860    |
| 4    | ① | ★ | SHARES  | 28512  | 3481  | 3752  | 778   | 2230  | 653   | 6670  | 7823  | 3125  | 4059    | 4493    | 3520    | 2704    | 2266    | 4237    |
|      |   |   | TOTAL   | 235529 | 46057 | 40810 | 13811 | 18128 | 14986 | 36930 | 34779 | 30028 | 24221   | 24005   | 24095   | 22613   | 23606   | 30122   |

As opposed to the previous examples, share has had much use through various genres, from blogs to web up to magazines and news. Share had already a deep-rooted meaning in the language, before



broadening it with the appearance of social media. Nonetheless, share existing as a noun and verb only contributed to the high numbers recorded inside the COCA corpus.

Table 28: SLAY

| HELP | ① | ★ |         | ALL  | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|---------|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | SLAIN   | 1688 | 108  | 494 | 188  | 54   | 242 | 170 | 358  | 74   | 205     | 184     | 182     | 165     | 156     | 194     |
| 2    | ① | ★ | SLAY    | 1383 | 117  | 325 | 273  | 43   | 241 | 107 | 209  | 68   | 125     | 144     | 135     | 117     | 213     | 207     |
| 3    | ① | ★ | SLAYING | 570  | 65   | 96  | 80   | 22   | 50  | 80  | 144  | 33   | 56      | 76      | 72      | 68      | 53      | 84      |
| 4    | ① | ★ | SLAYS   | 161  | 18   | 32  | 38   | 7    | 25  | 17  | 12   | 12   | 20      | 13      | 22      | 21      | 18      | 17      |
| 5    | ① | ★ | SLAYED  | 88   | 14   | 9   | 29   | 9    | 6   | 7   | 13   | 1    | 6       | 7       | 9       | 8       | 16      | 19      |
|      |   |   | TOTAL   | 3890 | 322  | 956 | 608  | 135  | 564 | 381 | 736  | 188  | 412     | 424     | 420     | 379     | 456     | 521     |

Slay has significant mentions throughout different genres. The most notable are web, tv/magazine, fiction and news, with the highest usage during the 2010-14 period.

Table 29: SNAPCHAT

| HELP | ① | ★ |          | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|----------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | SNAPCHAT | 907 |      | 2   | 59   | 115  | 10  | 538 | 156  | 27   |         |         |         |         | 47      | 858     |

0.188 seconds

Snapchat, same as Instagram, only appeared around 2011. As it is relatively new, there has not been much time for it to reach high frequency throughout the years. The most notable genre is mag, while the period with the most mentions is the period of 2015-19.

Table 30: SPAM

| HELP | ① | ★ |      | ALL  | BLOG | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | SPAM | 5198 | 1711 | 1553 | 163  | 279  | 130 | 660 | 640  | 62   | 112     | 167     | 559     | 364     | 212     | 520     |

0.188 seconds

Spam goes back to the 20th century referring to tinned meat. However, it seems that its new meaning, irrelevant messages in one’s inbox, gained more popularity. Looking at the chart, spam is mostly present in the blogs and web genres, and a bit less in magazine and news. Looking through the time periods, the presence of the word spam is uneven. First it reached its peak in 2000-04 then it dropped down in 2005-09, and 2010-14 before going up again in 2015-19.

Table 31: STATUS

| HELP | ① | ★ |          | ALL   | BLOG | WEB   | TV/M | SPOK | FIC  | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD  | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|----------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | STATUS   | 75140 | 9803 | 11200 | 2355 | 4672 | 2464 | 7988 | 8489 | 28169 | 8954    | 8876    | 8411    | 9445    | 9397    | 9054    |
| 2    | ① | ★ | STATUSES | 457   | 84   | 80    | 4    | 7    | 11   | 28   | 10   | 233   | 38      | 41      | 30      | 76      | 46      | 62      |
|      |   |   | TOTAL    | 75597 | 9887 | 11280 | 2359 | 4679 | 2475 | 8016 | 8499 | 28402 | 8992    | 8917    | 8441    | 9521    | 9443    | 9116    |

Status reached its peak usage in academic texts, as it could be due to a high volume of historic texts, where status usually referred to someone of a high professional position, status of an application, legal status, etc. However, it remained in a rather stable use throughout the years, with its highest frequency in 2005-09.

Table 32: STORY

| HELP | ① | ★ |           | ALL    | BLOG  | WEB   | TV/M  | SPOK  | FIC   | MAG   | NEWS  | ACAD  | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|-----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | STORY     | 319532 | 46277 | 52172 | 29835 | 65522 | 30640 | 34640 | 35312 | 25134 | 30667   | 35396   | 35861   | 38001   | 38806   | 42352   |
| 2    | ① | ★ | STORIES   | 112781 | 15993 | 17158 | 6581  | 18316 | 13586 | 15156 | 13359 | 12632 | 11822   | 12778   | 12970   | 12858   | 13413   | 15789   |
| 3    | ① | ★ | STORYS    | 9      | 1     | 2     |       | 3     | 2     |       | 1     |       |         |         | 2       | 2       |         | 2       |
| 4    | ① | ★ | STORY-THE | 4      |       |       |       |       | 1     | 1     |       | 2     |         |         |         |         | 4       |         |
|      |   |   | TOTAL     | 432326 | 62271 | 69332 | 36416 | 83841 | 44229 | 49797 | 48672 | 37768 | 42489   | 48174   | 48833   | 50861   | 52223   | 58143   |

Story as a well-established word in the language, it is particularly frequent in the spoken, as well as in blogs and the web genre. Moreover, it recorded a very high frequency count through the periods, significantly increasing in 2015-19. This might be at least partly because stories were first introduced on Snapchat before moving on to Instagram and other platforms as a form of a 24-hour post for people to see.

Table 33: STREAK

| HELP | ① | ★ |           | ALL   | BLOG | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC  | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|-----------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | STREAK    | 10298 | 1133 | 1063 | 606  | 459  | 1110 | 1282 | 4507 | 138  | 1246    | 1373    | 1290    | 1383    | 1267    | 1543    |
| 2    | ① | ★ | STREAKS   | 2399  | 157  | 165  | 86   | 39   | 1046 | 450  | 383  | 73   | 394     | 372     | 341     | 342     | 321     | 307     |
| 3    | ① | ★ | STREAKED  | 1378  | 37   | 43   | 18   | 23   | 997  | 129  | 85   | 46   | 241     | 209     | 213     | 254     | 204     | 177     |
| 4    | ① | ★ | STREAKING | 652   | 42   | 38   | 44   | 31   | 297  | 102  | 82   | 16   | 98      | 107     | 96      | 105     | 85      | 81      |
|      |   |   | TOTAL     | 14727 | 1369 | 1309 | 754  | 552  | 3450 | 1963 | 5057 | 273  | 1979    | 2061    | 1940    | 2084    | 1877    | 2108    |

Streak sky-rocketed in the news genre. Looking into it more, it shows that it is mostly popular in the sports section of news, as streak in sports refers to uninterrupted sequence of wins. Through the time periods, it remained steady, with the highest frequency recorded in 2015-19.

Table 34: TAG

| HELP | ① | ★ |         | ALL   | BLOG | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC  | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|---------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | TAG     | 15770 | 3138 | 2791 | 1780 | 1057 | 1602 | 2651 | 1831 | 920  | 1361    | 1610    | 1648    | 1729    | 1761    | 1732    |
| 2    | ① | ★ | TAGS    | 7854  | 1916 | 2032 | 439  | 231  | 625  | 1067 | 903  | 641  | 555     | 538     | 687     | 730     | 657     | 739     |
| 3    | ① | ★ | TAGGED  | 3081  | 465  | 502  | 292  | 133  | 398  | 470  | 435  | 386  | 302     | 335     | 330     | 368     | 362     | 417     |
| 4    | ① | ★ | TAGGING | 1583  | 190  | 235  | 131  | 62   | 156  | 197  | 125  | 487  | 209     | 366     | 118     | 154     | 145     | 166     |
|      |   |   | TOTAL   | 28288 | 5709 | 5560 | 2642 | 1483 | 2781 | 4385 | 3294 | 2434 | 2427    | 2849    | 2783    | 2981    | 2925    | 3054    |

Tag, as a word traced all the way back to the 14th century, has two meanings that are used nowadays. With a tag, you can refer to a label attached to something or someone, or you can tag a certain person on a photo on Facebook. Delving into blogs, where the word is at its highest, tag is used as capitalized TAG referring to a triacylglyceride accumulation, mostly in academic works. Next is the web, where the word is usually used as a label of some sort. Moreover, the presence throughout the time periods seems to have been steady, with the highest frequency in 2015-19.

Table 35: TEA

| HELP | ① | ★ |       | ALL   | BLOG | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC   | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | TEA   | 46204 | 7242 | 6129 | 5864 | 4027 | 10379 | 6538 | 4751 | 1274 | 4304    | 4913    | 5412    | 5135    | 8825    | 4244    |
| 2    | ① | ★ | TEAS  | 1329  | 158  | 134  | 67   | 51   | 182   | 386  | 243  | 108  | 186     | 214     | 219     | 160     | 168     | 90      |
|      |   |   | TOTAL | 47533 | 7400 | 6263 | 5931 | 4078 | 10561 | 6924 | 4994 | 1382 | 4490    | 5127    | 5631    | 5295    | 8993    | 4334    |

Tea, as a hot beverage, is traced all the way back to the 17th century. Having a brief look through the genres, it seems that the word is used usually to refer to a hot beverage or referring to the famous Tea Party. The most presence is in the genre of fiction. The 2010-14 period recorded its highest presence.

Table 36: TIKTOK

| HELP | ① | ★ |        | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|--------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | TIKTOK | 52  |      |     |      | 1    |     | 48  | 3    |      |         |         | 2       |         | 1       | 49      |

0.203 seconds

TikTok, the newest social media platform, recorded some presence, mostly in magazine sci/tech articles. Since it appeared only in 2016, it is no surprise that the highest presence is in 2015-19.

Table 37: TIMELINE

| HELP  | ① | ★ |            | ALL  | BLOG | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|-------|---|---|------------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1     | ① | ★ | TIMELINE   | 7085 | 1516 | 2015 | 487  | 745  | 305 | 696 | 794  | 527  | 76      | 223     | 294     | 615     | 894     | 1452    |
| 2     | ① | ★ | TIMELINES  | 876  | 249  | 193  | 32   | 63   | 50  | 82  | 57   | 150  | 5       | 21      | 51      | 91      | 100     | 166     |
| 3     | ① | ★ | TIME-LINE  | 81   | 23   | 14   | 4    | 3    | 16  | 1   | 6    | 14   | 9       | 9       | 14      | 4       | 3       | 5       |
| 4     | ① | ★ | TIME-LINES | 22   | 7    | 2    |      |      | 10  |     | 1    | 2    | 1       | 2       | 7       |         |         | 3       |
| TOTAL |   |   |            | 8064 | 1795 | 2224 | 523  | 811  | 381 | 779 | 858  | 693  | 91      | 255     | 366     | 710     | 997     | 1626    |

With its highest usage in web and blogs, timeline did not see much usage. Nonetheless, it still did not stop to have a slightly exponential rise. This could be since now timeline has been part of social media, where people or you can share information for others to see.

Table 38: TWITTER

| HELP  | ① | ★ |            | ALL   | BLOG  | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|-------|---|---|------------|-------|-------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1     | ① | ★ | TWITTER    | 36296 | 12199 | 8647 | 438  | 4144 | 195 | 5472 | 4348 | 853  | 11      | 13      | 15      | 800     | 4742    | 9869    |
| 2     | ① | ★ | TWITTERING | 154   | 23    | 18   | 13   | 29   | 38  | 16   | 10   | 7    | 11      | 7       | 13      | 46      | 25      | 11      |
| 3     | ① | ★ | TWITTERS   | 108   | 32    | 23   | 1    | 19   | 8   | 17   | 5    | 3    | 2       | 1       | 6       | 21      | 11      | 12      |
| 4     | ① | ★ | TWITTERED  | 77    | 6     | 12   |      | 2    | 44  | 6    | 5    | 2    | 9       | 9       | 9       | 14      | 14      | 4       |
| TOTAL |   |   |            | 36635 | 12260 | 8700 | 452  | 4194 | 285 | 5511 | 4368 | 865  | 33      | 30      | 43      | 881     | 4792    | 9896    |

Twitter, the name of a well-known social media platform, reached its peak in blogs as well as in the web genre. It started slowly in 2005-09, then jumping to a notable presence in 2010-14, before reaching its peak in 2015-19.

Table 39: TWITTERVERSE

| HELP          | ① | ★ |              | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|---------------|---|---|--------------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1             | ① | ★ | TWITTERVERSE | 41  | 15   | 9   | 1    | 3    |     | 5   | 7    | 1    |         |         |         | 1       | 8       | 8       |
| 0.203 seconds |   |   |              |     |      |     |      |      |     |     |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |

Twitterverse is recorded mostly in the genre of blogs. This also results in a lower recorded frequency of the word in the different time periods.

Table 40: TROLL

| HELP  | ① | ★ |          | ALL  | BLOG | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC  | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|-------|---|---|----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1     | ① | ★ | TROLL    | 4774 | 1698 | 1088 | 577  | 115  | 626  | 299 | 150  | 221  | 426     | 227     | 253     | 373     | 229     | 480     |
| 2     | ① | ★ | TROLLS   | 3001 | 1152 | 756  | 187  | 69   | 378  | 269 | 102  | 88   | 142     | 114     | 173     | 118     | 140     | 406     |
| 3     | ① | ★ | TROLLING | 1799 | 578  | 354  | 101  | 84   | 103  | 361 | 179  | 39   | 128     | 126     | 110     | 210     | 119     | 174     |
| 4     | ① | ★ | TROLLED  | 270  | 58   | 28   | 12   | 14   | 41   | 63  | 48   | 6    | 28      | 22      | 14      | 38      | 37      | 45      |
| TOTAL |   |   |          | 9844 | 3486 | 2226 | 877  | 282  | 1148 | 992 | 479  | 354  | 724     | 489     | 550     | 739     | 525     | 1105    |

Troll, in comparison to story or friend, has recorded less use, with its only significant usage in blogs and web. Troll as a word refers to an ugly creature, which in context of social media, has

been used and abused in sense of harassing someone by leaving offensive comments. Its highest frequency is in 2015-19.

Table 41: TWEETLE

| HELP          | ① | ★ |         | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |  |
|---------------|---|---|---------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--|
| 1             | ① | ★ | TWEETLE | 3   |      | 3   |      |      |     |     |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |  |
| 0.172 seconds |   |   |         |     |      |     |      |      |     |     |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |  |

With only 0.02 frequency per million in the genre of web, and no presence throughout the time period, this is one of the least frequently mentioned word in the COCA as compared to the rest of the words analysed.

Table 42: TWEEPS

| HELP          | ① | ★ |        | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|---------------|---|---|--------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1             | ① | ★ | TWEEPS | 45  | 21   | 19  |      | 2    | 1   | 1   |      | 1    |         |         |         |         | 1       | 4       |
| 0.188 seconds |   |   |        |     |      |     |      |      |     |     |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |

*Tweeps* record more presence in COCA as opposed to *tweeple*. Mostly, it is recorded in blogs and web, with minimal mention during the period of 2015-19.

Table 43: TWEET

| HELP | ① | ★ |          | ALL   | BLOG | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|----------|-------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | TWEET    | 8419  | 2182 | 1462 | 299  | 2196 | 70  | 1202 | 877  | 131  | 19      | 42      | 54      | 104     | 1122    | 3434    |
| 2    | ① | ★ | TWEETS   | 6082  | 1692 | 1292 | 79   | 1171 | 56  | 1042 | 567  | 183  | 1       | 1       | 2       | 78      | 763     | 2253    |
| 3    | ① | ★ | TWEETED  | 5060  | 900  | 573  | 60   | 1407 | 19  | 1120 | 932  | 49   |         |         |         | 32      | 574     | 2980    |
| 4    | ① | ★ | TWEETING | 2265  | 472  | 349  | 72   | 875  | 25  | 274  | 165  | 33   | 3       | 5       | 1       | 37      | 390     | 1008    |
|      |   |   | TOTAL    | 21826 | 5246 | 3676 | 510  | 5649 | 170 | 3638 | 2541 | 396  | 23      | 49      | 57      | 251     | 2849    | 9675    |

Tweet is directly related to the social media platform Twitter. It is mostly present in the genres of spoken language, and blogs. Moreover, it recorded a decent usage during the period of 2015-19.

Table 44: UNFOLLOW

| HELP          | ① | ★ |          | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|---------------|---|---|----------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1             | ① | ★ | UNFOLLOW | 95  | 28   | 35  | 17   | 6    |     | 7   | 1    | 1    |         |         |         |         | 5       | 27      |
| 0.188 seconds |   |   |          |     |      |     |      |      |     |     |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |

*Unfollow*, as the counterpart of *follow*, has much lower results as compared to the word *follow*. The highest presence is the genres of web and blogs, with the most usage in 2015-19 period.

Table 45: UNFRIEND

| HELP          | ① | ★ |          | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|---------------|---|---|----------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1             | ① | ★ | UNFRIEND | 93  | 33   | 25  | 2    | 15   | 2   | 15  | 1    |      |         |         |         | 2       | 14      | 19      |
| 0.172 seconds |   |   |          |     |      |     |      |      |     |     |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |

*Unfriend*, directly tied to *friend*, records very low results as opposed to the word *friend*. It is mostly present in the genres of blogs and web, with lesser usage in spoken language and magazines. The period of 2015-19 records most usage.

Table 46: UNLIKE

| HELP          | ① | ★ |        | ALL   | BLOG | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC  | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|---------------|---|---|--------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1             | ① | ★ | UNLIKE | 45616 | 6128 | 6216 | 1926 | 3300 | 4487 | 8841 | 6521 | 8197 | 5735    | 5779    | 5884    | 5472    | 5337    | 5065    |
| 0.219 seconds |   |   |        |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |         |         |         |         |         |         |

*Unlike*, directly tied to *like*, had more luck with the presence as opposed to *unfriend* and *unfollow*. This can also be tied to the fact that *unlike* existed before as a preposition and adjective. Even though *like* is still way ahead, *unlike* still recorded some presence, mostly in the genres of magazine and academic texts, but with the most usage during the period of 2000-04.

Table 47: UPLOAD

| HELP | ① | ★ |           | ALL  | BLOG | WEB  | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG  | NEWS | ACAD | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | UPLOAD    | 3627 | 1046 | 1234 | 263  | 80   | 232 | 524  | 124  | 124  | 20      | 63      | 126     | 284     | 383     | 471     |
| 2    | ① | ★ | UPLOADED  | 1883 | 493  | 545  | 166  | 43   | 143 | 266  | 102  | 125  | 9       | 23      | 41      | 143     | 222     | 407     |
| 3    | ① | ★ | UPLOADING | 975  | 301  | 306  | 81   | 18   | 45  | 131  | 32   | 61   | 6       | 12      | 40      | 66      | 111     | 133     |
| 4    | ① | ★ | UPLOADS   | 437  | 114  | 115  | 14   | 9    | 56  | 96   | 24   | 9    | 4       | 11      | 38      | 32      | 52      | 71      |
|      |   |   | TOTAL     | 6922 | 1954 | 2200 | 524  | 150  | 476 | 1017 | 282  | 319  | 39      | 109     | 245     | 525     | 768     | 1082    |

Upload recorded most presence in web and blog. However, the presence throughout different time periods has been low but steadily increasing.

Table 48: WALL

| HELP | ① | ★ |          | ALL    | BLOG  | WEB   | TV/M  | SPOK  | FIC   | MAG   | NEWS  | ACAD  | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 | 2005-09 | 2010-14 | 2015-19 |
|------|---|---|----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1    | ① | ★ | WALL     | 126534 | 11516 | 14022 | 9744  | 16829 | 32413 | 19593 | 15127 | 7290  | 16156   | 15976   | 16377   | 16714   | 16792   | 18981   |
| 2    | ① | ★ | WALLS    | 48675  | 3131  | 4140  | 3360  | 2354  | 16085 | 9273  | 6206  | 4126  | 6735    | 6919    | 7410    | 7428    | 6826    | 6086    |
| 3    | ① | ★ | WALLED   | 522    | 39    | 57    | 35    | 27    | 182   | 90    | 65    | 27    | 76      | 67      | 55      | 68      | 83      | 77      |
| 4    | ① | ★ | WALL-THE | 1      |       |       |       |       | 1     |       |       |       |         |         |         |         | 1       |         |
|      |   |   | TOTAL    | 175732 | 14686 | 18219 | 13139 | 19210 | 48681 | 28956 | 21398 | 11443 | 22967   | 22962   | 23842   | 24210   | 23702   | 25144   |

Wall goes all the way back to OE; therefore, it is a word that has been around for a while. It is mostly recorded in the genre of fiction. It has also maintained a steady growth throughout the time, with 1995-99 as the lowest recorded and going up to 2015-19 where it records highest usage.

## 7. Conclusion

Social media plays an important role and has a significant impact on the language, especially the English language. However, the social media language is still a young topic as it is progressing each day. Some might argue that there are positive and negative sides of the impact of social media on the language. Social media offers easier communication, and as has been seen throughout the paper, the conversation through social media has added many new words into the vocabulary and more words are about to arise. On the other hand, the conversation that is held through social media can often lead to words changing their shape as the time we are living is moving quickly.

The purpose of this paper was to investigate new words and old words that changed their meaning due to social media networks. The analysis reveals their etymology, word-formation processes and frequencies. The primary source of words were social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and TikTok, with the secondary source being online and printed dictionaries, as well other relevant online tools and publications. Visual representation in the form of tables has been included in the paper to classify each word into its respective social media network, and word-formation process. There is a total of fifty-one words analysed. Facebook and Instagram are the leaders in the creation of words as they are the oldest social media sites, but TikTok as a new social media platform could easily overtake Facebook and Instagram in the following years. As a result, future studies in this field could be conducted as more changes to the language will emerge with time.

Something that we can observe from the charts provided from the COCA corpus is that we can see a steady growth in certain forms of words, which had not been seen before. If we were to extract a few examples with the highest frequency recorded in the corpus, those would be *comment*, *fire*, *friend*, *follow*, *home*, *like*, *message*, *story*. The highest recorded word is *like* due to its different forms.

Naturally, new words that have been coined as a need to describe something, e.g., *facebooker*, *instagrammer*, *instagrammable*, *retweet*, *selfie*, *shadowban*, *tiktok*, *twitterverse*, *tweeple*, *tweeps* have the lowest recorded use in the corpus, but only time will tell if these words see the light of the day with more use or if they will die down.

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