



THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

Majidova A. O.

Student, Tashkent International University of Education (TIUE)

Field of Study: Philology and Language Education

Abstract. Social media has become one of the most productive environments for linguistic innovation. This article examines how digital communication influences the contemporary Russian language, with particular attention to lexical borrowing, neologisation, word formation, semantic change, language economy, graphic variation, and multimodality. The study applies descriptive, contextual, and comparative methods to representative examples of Russian-language online discourse and interprets them in relation to current research on computer-mediated communication. The analysis shows that social media does not merely introduce isolated fashionable words. It activates systematic processes at several levels of language: English lexical items are phonologically and grammatically adapted; borrowed stems become bases for Russian derivation; familiar words acquire digital meanings; abbreviated spelling, hashtags, emoji, and other visual signs perform pragmatic functions; and code-switching helps users express identity and group affiliation. At the same time, informal digital conventions may create difficulties when they are transferred into academic or professional writing. It is therefore more accurate to view social-media language not as a direct threat to Russian, but as a rapidly developing functional register whose influence depends on communicative context, audience, and users' linguistic competence.

Keywords: social media, contemporary Russian, digital communication, neologisms, Anglicisms, language economy, emoji.

1. Introduction

Language changes when the social conditions of communication change. In the twenty-first century, one of the most important environments of such change is social media, where millions of users produce, evaluate, copy, transform, and redistribute texts every day. Unlike traditional printed communication, online interaction combines written and spoken features, develops at high speed, and often includes visual, audio, and interactive elements. For this reason, social media is not simply a channel through which existing language is transmitted; it is also a space in which new linguistic forms are tested and circulated.

The Russian-language segment of the Internet demonstrates especially visible lexical and stylistic dynamics. New technologies and platform practices require names for previously unknown objects and actions. At the same time, users adapt foreign words to Russian pronunciation, spelling, morphology, and word-formation patterns. Expressions





MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS

that first function as slang may later enter journalism, advertising, professional speech, and everyday conversation. Research on computer-mediated discourse therefore treats online language as a legitimate object of linguistic analysis rather than as a random collection of errors. Ivanova and Klushina (2021), for example, describe contemporary Russian web communication as a systemic area of innovation affecting lexical, morphological, syntactic, and graphic levels.

The aim of this article is to identify the principal mechanisms through which social media contributes to the development of contemporary Russian. The objectives are: (1) to examine English borrowings and digital neologisms; (2) to describe their integration into Russian word formation and grammar; (3) to analyse strategies of linguistic compression; (4) to explain the pragmatic role of emoji, hashtags, and graphic devices; and (5) to evaluate the relationship between online innovation and the norms of standard written Russian. The central argument is that social media primarily expands the repertoire of Russian by creating a new register of communication, although uncritical transfer of informal conventions into formal contexts may negatively affect clarity and literacy.

2. Materials and Methods

The article uses a qualitative descriptive approach. The material consists of representative lexical, word-formational, graphic, and pragmatic forms widely encountered in Russian-language social-media communication, including words such as контент, сторис, рилс, лайкать, репостнуть, забанить, хейт, кринж, and вайб, as well as common abbreviations, hashtags, and emoji-based constructions. These examples are treated as illustrative linguistic data rather than as a statistically balanced corpus. The analysis combines contextual interpretation, structural description, and comparison with standard Russian usage. The theoretical framework is based on studies of Internet language and computer-mediated discourse, particularly the works of Crystal (2006), Herring and Androutsopoulos (2015), Ivanova and Klushina (2021), and Muravyev, Panchenko, and Obiedkov (2018).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Lexical Innovation and English Borrowings

The most noticeable influence of social media on Russian is lexical. Digital platforms continuously generate new objects, formats, professions, and communicative actions. Many of their names enter Russian from English because the corresponding technologies and platform interfaces were initially developed and internationally distributed through English. Examples include контент (content), блогер (blogger), стример (streamer), пост (post), сторис (stories), рилс (reels), лайк (like), фейк (fake), хейт (hate), хайп (hype), тренд (trend), and челлендж (challenge). In many cases, borrowing is motivated by nominative necessity: the new word names a phenomenon for which no short and equally recognisable Russian equivalent is available.

However, borrowing is not a mechanical replacement of Russian vocabulary. Once a word enters regular communication, speakers evaluate it, change its pronunciation and



**MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS**

spelling, assign grammatical properties to it, and place it within existing semantic relations. The noun блогер behaves as a masculine animate noun and forms the plural блогеры; пост is declined as пост — поста — посту; лайк produces the plural лайки and participates in combinations such as поставить лайк. Other items remain partly unstable. For example, сторис is often used as an indeclinable noun, while рилс may form the colloquial plural рилсы. Such variation is typical of the early stages of lexical adaptation.

A second important process is semantic change. Existing Russian words receive specialised digital meanings: лента refers not only to a physical strip but also to a personalised feed; канал denotes a communication space on a platform; профиль becomes a structured representation of a user; подписчик identifies a follower of an account; and история may refer to temporary visual content. These examples show that the digital transformation of Russian vocabulary occurs both through external borrowing and through the internal development of meanings.

Table 1. Main Linguistic Processes in Russian Social-Media Communication

Process	Examples	Principal function
Direct borrowing	контент, блогер, сторис, рилс, фейк	Naming new digital objects, formats, and roles
Russian derivation	лайкать, репостнуть, забанить, хейтерский	Integrating borrowed stems into Russian word formation
Semantic extension	лента, канал, профиль, подписчик, история	Creating digital meanings from existing Russian words
Compression	спс, пж, лс, норм, имхо	Increasing speed and reducing message length
Graphic and multimodal signs	emoji, CAPS, repeated letters, “+”, brackets	Expressing emotion, evaluation, emphasis, and stance
Platform markers	#новости, @username	Navigation, topic indexing, and direct addressing

3.2. Word Formation and Morphological Integration

The productivity of a borrowing becomes especially clear when it begins to generate new Russian words. Social-media discourse readily combines English stems with Russian prefixes, suffixes, and inflectional endings. From лайк, speakers form лайкать and лайкнуть; from репост, репостить and репостнуть; from бан, банить, забанить, and разбанить; from хейт, хейтить, хейтер, and хейтерский. These formations follow





MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS

familiar Russian patterns and can express aspect, completion, repetition, agency, or evaluation.

This process demonstrates the adaptive capacity of Russian morphology. The borrowed base is not kept outside the grammatical system; instead, it becomes material for native derivational models. The verb забанить is particularly illustrative: the English stem ban is combined with the Russian prefix за- and the infinitive suffix -ить, creating a perfective verb that can be conjugated normally: я забанил, она забанила, они забанили. Similarly, the adjective кринжовый is formed from кринж with the productive suffix -ов- and expresses an evaluative characteristic. Social media therefore accelerates lexical change, but the structural mechanisms that organise this change remain recognisably Russian.

3.3. Language Economy and Graphic Variation

A second major tendency is language economy. Digital communication often takes place under conditions of speed, divided attention, small screens, and rapid turn-taking. Users therefore reduce linguistic effort through abbreviations, ellipsis, shortened spelling, and simplified punctuation. Russian examples include спс (спасибо), пж (пожалуйста), лс (личные сообщения), норм (нормально), ок, and имхо, which originated from the English abbreviation IMO but is now commonly written in Cyrillic. Short clauses without an explicit subject, punctuation, or capital letter may still be understood because the platform, previous messages, and shared knowledge provide the missing context.

Graphic choices can also carry meaning. Capital letters may signal emphasis or shouting; repeated letters intensify emotion, as in дааа or нееее; several exclamation marks increase expressiveness; brackets may indicate a smile in Russian-language messaging; and the plus sign can function as agreement or support. These practices are not merely defective spelling. They form a set of context-dependent conventions that compensate for the limited prosody and gesture of written interaction. Research on language economy likewise shows that abbreviations and emoji can support speed, emotional expression, and group cohesion rather than simply reducing the quality of language (Kjose & Bekar, 2024).

3.4. Emoji, Hashtags, and Multimodality

Social-media texts are increasingly multimodal. A message may combine words with images, video, sound, hyperlinks, stickers, GIFs, emoji, hashtags, and mentions. Emoji often perform pragmatic functions comparable to intonation, facial expression, or gesture. A smiling emoji may soften a request; a laughing emoji may mark a statement as humorous; a sceptical or inverted face may signal irony; and a heart may express support without a complete verbal sentence. The interpretation of these signs nevertheless depends on context and may differ between users, communities, and platforms.

Hashtags and mentions also influence the organisation of language. A hashtag compresses a topic into a searchable unit, for example #русскийязык or #новостиобразования. It can function simultaneously as a label, a comment, and an





MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS

evaluative statement. A mention beginning with @ directly addresses another user and changes the participation structure of the message. These elements demonstrate that contemporary digital writing cannot be analysed only as a sequence of words: its meaning emerges from the interaction of linguistic and technical signs.

3.5. Code-Switching, Identity, and Group Membership

Russian social-media users frequently alternate between Russian and English elements. Such code-switching may be motivated by terminological convenience, professional habit, humour, prestige, or membership in a digital community. Expressions such as “скинь фидбек”, “это мой дедлайн”, “запости апдейт”, or “очень relatable” combine Russian grammar with English lexical material. In youth and professional communities, these hybrids can index modernity, technological competence, or shared experience. At the same time, excessive use may exclude readers who do not know the relevant vocabulary.

The social function of such language is therefore as important as its lexical content. Knowledge of current slang, abbreviations, memes, and platform conventions helps users display belonging to a group. Conversely, deliberate avoidance of these forms may communicate formality, distance, or professional status. Social-media language is thus not homogeneous: it varies according to age, occupation, platform, topic, audience, and communicative purpose.

3.6. Innovation, Norm, and Linguistic Culture

The influence of social media is often evaluated in opposite ways. One position emphasises enrichment: new words increase expressive possibilities, rapidly name new realities, and stimulate linguistic creativity. The other emphasises risk: uncontrolled borrowing, reduced punctuation, non-standard spelling, and constant compression may weaken formal writing skills. Both assessments contain an element of truth, but neither is sufficient by itself.

A distinction must be made between language change and communicative error. Borrowing, semantic development, and word formation are normal mechanisms in the history of every language. A colloquial abbreviation used in a private chat is not automatically evidence of illiteracy. The real problem arises when a speaker cannot switch registers and transfers informal conventions into an academic paper, official letter, or professional report. Linguistic competence therefore includes not only knowledge of standard rules but also the ability to select forms appropriate to the situation.

From an educational perspective, social-media language should be analysed critically rather than simply prohibited. Students can compare digital and academic registers, examine the adaptation of borrowings, identify the pragmatic functions of emoji, and discuss when abbreviated forms are appropriate. Such tasks develop language awareness and help learners understand that standard Russian and digital Russian are related but not interchangeable functional varieties.





MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC
SOLUTIONS

4. Conclusion

Social media is a powerful catalyst of change in the contemporary Russian language. Its influence is visible not only in the appearance of fashionable slang but also in systematic lexical, semantic, morphological, graphic, and pragmatic processes. English borrowings supply names for digital realities; Russian affixes and inflections integrate foreign stems into the grammatical system; existing words acquire new meanings; abbreviations and ellipsis increase communicative speed; and emoji, hashtags, and mentions expand the resources available for expressing emotion, stance, topic, and social relationships.

These developments should not be interpreted as the inevitable decline of Russian. Social-media discourse constitutes a rapidly evolving register shaped by technological conditions and social practices. It enriches the language when users employ its resources creatively and appropriately, but it may create communicative problems when informal habits are transferred mechanically into contexts that require standard spelling, precise terminology, and explicit argumentation. The key issue is therefore not whether digital innovation should be accepted or rejected, but whether speakers possess sufficient register awareness to choose forms according to audience and purpose.

Further research should use larger platform-specific corpora and compare different age groups, genres, and communicative communities. Particular attention should be paid to the long-term fate of recent borrowings: some will disappear with changing trends, while others will become stable elements of standard or widely used colloquial Russian.

References

Crystal, D. (2006). *Language and the Internet* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Dresner, E., & Herring, S. C. (2010). Functions of the nonverbal in CMC: Emoticons and illocutionary force. *Communication Theory*, 20(3), 249–268. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2010.01362.x>

Herring, S. C., & Androutsopoulos, J. (2015). Computer-mediated discourse 2.0. In D. Tannen, H. E. Hamilton, & D. Schiffrin (Eds.), *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (2nd ed., pp. 127–151). Wiley Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118584194.ch6>

Ivanova, M. V., & Klushina, N. I. (2021). Russian language in modern web space: Dynamic processes and development trends. *Russian Language Studies*, 19(4), 367–382. <https://doi.org/10.22363/2618-8163-2021-19-4-367-382>

Kjose, A., & Bekar, M. (2024). Language economy: Abbreviations and emoji in social media. *Facta Universitatis, Series: Linguistics and Literature*, 22(1), 151–162. <https://doi.org/10.22190/FULL240411011K>

Muravyev, N., Panchenko, A., & Obiedkov, S. (2018). Neologisms on Facebook. arXiv:1804.05831. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.1804.05831>





MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC
SOLUTIONS

Tagliamonte, S. A., & Denis, D. (2008). Linguistic ruin? LOL! Instant messaging and teen language. *American Speech*, 83(1), 3–34. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00031283-2008-001>

Thurlow, C., & Brown, A. (2003). Generation Txt? The sociolinguistics of young people's text-messaging. *Discourse Analysis Online*, 1(1).

