

MODERN INTERNET VOCABULARY IN ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN: SIMILARITIES AND BORROWINGS

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Abstract: The rapid growth of digital communication has introduced a wide range of new lexical items into contemporary languages. English, as the global language of technology, has had a particularly strong influence on the development of internet vocabulary in other languages, including Russian. This article explores the similarities, borrowings, and linguistic mechanisms that shape modern English and Russian internet vocabulary. It examines direct loanwords, semantic extensions, phonetic adaptations, hybrid constructions, and the cultural and social factors that contribute to cross-linguistic exchange. The findings show that online discourse encourages linguistic convergence and creativity, resulting in shared digital terminology across both languages.

Keywords: Internet vocabulary; English–Russian borrowings; digital discourse; neologisms; hybrid forms; slang; online communication; cyberculture.

The emergence of the internet has created a dynamic linguistic environment in which new forms of communication develop rapidly. English functions as the primary donor language in this digital space due to its dominance in science, technology, and global media. As a result, many languages—including Russian—have adopted a large portion of their internet terminology directly from English. Scholars note that digital globalization encourages linguistic convergence and cross-cultural lexical exchange[1].

This article investigates similarities and borrowing patterns in English and Russian internet vocabulary. It considers the ways in which English terms enter Russian, how Russian speakers adapt them, and how shared online culture shapes the lexical choices of users in both languages.

Theoretical Background

Internet vocabulary, sometimes referred to as netspeak, represents a hybrid register that mixes characteristics of spoken and written communication[2]. Digital discourse is marked by spontaneity, informality, and constant innovation, which lead to the rapid formation of neologisms. English, as the dominant language of global platforms, contributes extensively to these processes. Linguistic borrowing refers to the adoption of lexical items from one language into another. In the context of internet communication, borrowing often occurs because new digital concepts appear faster than native equivalents can be developed. As a result, English terminology spreads widely and becomes embedded in the lexicon of other languages.

English Influence on Russian Internet Vocabulary

Direct Loanwords

Russian internet vocabulary contains a significant number of direct English loanwords, such as:

лайк (like)

чат (chat)

стрим (stream)

контент (content)

блог (blog)

фоловер (follower)

These words typically preserve their original meaning. Russian speakers also create new forms by adding Russian grammatical endings, for example: лайкать ("to like"), постить ("to post").

Semantic Extensions. English influence leads to semantic changes in some Russian words. The Russian verb троллить, derived from troll, evolved from the idea of "teasing" and now means provoking someone online. Similarly, the noun пост has gained an additional meaning: "an online publication."

Phonetic and Orthographic Adaptation

Borrowed words undergo phonetic adjustment to fit the Russian language system:

- *browser* → *браузер*
- *spam* → *спам*
- *server* → *сервер*

These adaptations allow English terms to be integrated smoothly into Russian usage.

Shared Features of English and Russian Internet Vocabulary

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Both English and Russian online communication rely heavily on abbreviations for fast **expression:**

LOL

OMG

AFK

Russian speakers commonly use English abbreviations without translation, sometimes phonetically adapting them (“ЛОЛ”).

Hybrid Constructions

Hybrid lexical forms arise from mixing English roots with Russian morphology:

фейковые новости (fake news)

реквестнуть (to request)

публик страница (public page)

These hybrids combine expressive and functional elements from both languages.

Universal Internet Slang

Some internet terms spread globally with minimal change:

- *memе* → *мем*
- *emoji* → *эмодзи*
- *hashtag* → *хэштег*

This demonstrates the formation of a shared global digital lexicon.

Cultural and Social Factors

Influence of Global Platforms

Platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Twitch distribute English terminology to international users. Russian speakers adopt such vocabulary quickly because these platforms operate in largely English-based environments.

Gaming Communities

Gaming culture is a major source of borrowing. Terms like скилл (skill), лут (loot), and рейт (raid) have become widely used not only in gaming contexts but also in everyday youth speech.

Youth Identity and Prestige:

English internet slang often carries social prestige among Russian youth. Using English-based terminology can signal digital literacy, openness to global culture, or membership in online communities[4].

Differences Between English and Russian Internet Vocabulary

Morphology:

English verbs do not inflect, whereas Russian applies its own inflectional endings (e.g., банить, “to ban”).

Slang Innovation:

Russian users create original internet slang (e.g., зашквар, кринжевать, рофлить) that has no precise English equivalent.

Alphabet Differences:

English uses the Latin script; Russian uses Cyrillic. Many borrowed words are transliterated, although some users deliberately keep English spelling for stylistic reasons.

Modern internet vocabulary illustrates the close interaction between English and Russian in the digital age. English provides the majority of terms associated with technology, communication, and online culture. Russian speakers adopt and modify these terms through direct borrowing, semantic shifts, and hybridization. At the same time, Russian users create new slang expressions that contribute to the richness of online discourse.

The evolving nature of digital communication ensures continued lexical exchange between English and Russian. As global connectivity increases, shared digital terminology will continue to shape the linguistic landscape of both languages.

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