

The Russian Internet Language as the Ultimate Language Play

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The playful function of language has always constituted an important parameter in human communication. As a new technology of communication, the Internet has fostered more language playfulness than at any other previous period in linguistic history. The aim of this presentation is to show how and why computer interaction has become the ultimate playground not only for language game lovers but also for all Internet users. I present a different case study for each of the four factors identified by Danet (2001) as instrumental in promoting Internet playfulness, i.e., interactivity, hacker culture, as a new social and cultural frontier, and the masking of identity. I look at the aspects of linguistic structure most often manipulated in live bloggers' entries and their readers' commentaries as well as at the nicknames Russian bloggers choose for themselves.