

Fresh Technology, Toy Talk? Linguistic Metadiscourse on Writers' Blogs and Tweets  
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Writer-cum-journalist Linor Goralik has a special interest in handcrafted artifacts. She makes her own jewelry, publishes about handmade fashion, and her blog ([snorapp.livejournal.com](http://snorapp.livejournal.com)) and site ([www.linorg.ru](http://www.linorg.ru)) consciously opt for the amateurly crafted esthetics of early web design. Goralik embraces the imperfection that marks handcrafted design on a linguistic level, too. Blithely ignoring editorial rules, in her weblog and Twitter tweets ([twitter.com/snorapp](https://twitter.com/snorapp)) she permits one typo after another.

Goralik's blog is not unique. In the words of one of her own readers, (linguistic) "rawness" is precisely what makes a blog interesting. Other Russian writers seem to agree with that statement. The internationally renowned author Tat'iana Tolstaia opens her blog ([tanyant.livejournal.com](http://tanyant.livejournal.com)) with the statement that *here*, she is going to defy all grammar and spelling rules. The poet Stanislav L'vovskii emerges from his Twitter entries ([twitter.com/halfofthesky](https://twitter.com/halfofthesky)) as a linguistic happy-go-lucky, who doesn't mind reverting to broken English. Another poet, Dmitrii Vodennikov, claims to fill his blog ([vodennikov.livejournal.com](http://vodennikov.livejournal.com)) with "permanent typos": after all, these only add to their "non-artificiality"?

In a world of spanking new technologies and spellcheckers, so these examples suggest, linguistic norms are there to be consciously deviated from and toyed with. Plays with (language) norms as a guarantee for authenticity and sincerity: that trope runs as a *continuo basso* through metalinguistic discourse on digital writing among Russian authors and their readers. Monitoring that discussion with a special eye for notions of play, my talk explores the following questions: In talk about the language of writers' blogs and tweets, does the traditional binary opposition playfulness <> sincerity hold firm? Or is, in digital realms, "play" considered the very warrant for sincerity and seriousness? And if so, just how new, or old, is that "sincerity-ensuring" function of play?