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**Abstracts**

# **The Language of Russian Instant Messaging: Peculiarities and Commonalities**

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Any linguistic study which is said to be about “computer-mediated communication” (CMC) must be grounded on the assumption that there is something special about this communication register, something that makes it different from other registers and, most importantly, makes the language used in it different as well. Otherwise why study CMC from a linguistic point of view at all?

Quite a lot of CMC research is dedicated exactly to this question: in what way is the language of CMC different—and why? I intend to contribute to this field by focusing on the language of Russian instant messaging (IM). By performing quantitative and qualitative analyses I describe what is unique and what is common in it—both in Russian IM as opposed to other communication registers in Russian and Russian IM as opposed to IM in other languages. I try then to explain why the observed peculiarities do arise.

## Sociolinguistic Specificities of Russian Transliterated Emails

*Sandra Birzer, University of Regensburg*

Transliteration is usually used for academic purposes and follows highly normative conventions. However, during the early stages of email communication many laymen used transliteration due to technical reasons (lacking Unicode-compatibility of Russian characters etc.). These users are not aware of the academic transliteration norms, which makes transliteration an experimental ground for them.

Based on a corpus of texts from eight authors (4 males, 4 females, 4 below thirty years of age, 4 over 30 thirty years; all university graduates) we detected and explored five issues that are typical for transliterated emails and allow to draw conclusions about the varying linguistic behavior of males and females:

1. transliteration variants and their stability: in academic transliteration systems, each Cyrillic grapheme comes with only one transliteration equivalent, whereas our respondents use several transliteration variants for one Russian grapheme, varying from 1.0 to 2.2 transliteration variants (at an average) for one Russian grapheme. Among females the average ranges between 1.0 and 1.5, among males between 1.1 and 2.2. Irrespective of the stability of transliteration equivalents, the Library of Congress transliteration system serves as basis for the transliteration systems of all respondents, probably due to language prestige.
2. orthographic macaronism: the word stems are spelt according to the orthographic conventions of one (donor) language that uses Roman script, whereas the Russian inflectional ending is transliterated. Words displaying orthographic macaronism can be split into two groups: foreign words (e.g. the internationalism *notebook* > *ноутбук* > email: *notebook*, French *Champagne* > *шампанское* > email: *champanskoe*) and orthographic macaronisms that are due to language contact, e.g. the transliteration *v Bibliotheke* of Russian

native speaker with a command of German. Orthographic macronisms are used by both genders equally.

3. phonetic transcription: Russian graphemes representing some highly frequent sound combinations are not transliterated but rendered in a very basic phonetic transcription, e.g. the infinitive ending of reflexive verbs: *-ться* > *-tʃa*. Only male respondents used phonetic transcription.
4. regularity of intervocalic {j}: Some Russian vocalic combinations such as {ae} in *читает* are pronounced with an intervocalic [j]. In transliterated emails some respondents represent the intervocalic /j/ graphically. In some cases the intervocalic {j} is used hypercorrectly, i.e. in vocalic combinations where [j] is not phonetically realized. The regularity rate of intervocalic {j} among tokens of one vocalic combination types is significantly lower among males.
5. transliteration variants of Russian {щ}, or [ʃ] vs. [ʃ:]: generally, the Russian grapheme {щ} represents the sound [ʃ:], yet according to orthoepic norms, *помощник* is one instance where {щ} is depalatalized to [ʃ]. Our respondents consistently chose transliteration variants of {щ} that imply the phonetic realization [ʃ] in many more contexts, e.g. *еще* > *eshe*. Quite interestingly, the opposition [ʃ] vs. [ʃ:] does not form minimal pairs. Therefore the consistent rendering of {щ} by a transliteration variant implying the phonetic realization [ʃ] might be a first indicator for the general depalatalization of the sound represented by {щ}. Males consistently use transliteration variants of {щ} implying the phonetic realization [ʃ].

From a gender-linguistic point of view, our data corroborate the well-known sociolinguistic hypothesis that the language behavior of males is more innovative, but also more inconsistent than the language behavior of females.

## **Tweeting Dmitrii and His Blogging Bureaucrats: New Media's Impact on Political Discourse**

***Michael Gorham, University of Florida***

From the early days of his presidency, Dmitrii Medvedev has touted himself as an internet-savvy president and most of the independent evidence suggests his reputation as Russia's first Geek-in-Chief is fully justified. Subsequent action on the President's part has underscored a deeper commitment to making new media technologies part of the everyday toolbox of the Russian bureaucracy. Most notable are his own blog and Twitter feeds, launched in October 2008 and June 2010 respectively, together with his call to fellow civil servants, in January 2010, to start their own blogs as a means of improving communications and level of trust with citizens in the regions.

Medvedev's public justification for the moves, aside from their potent symbolic embrace of his broader campaign for "modernization," rests invariably in the desire to foster what he has called "direct Internet democracy." At first glance, both the blog and the microblog do have the makings of a more direct exchange of ideas between political leaders and citizens, a mode of communication, moreover, that promises to be less formal and off-putting than the complicated hierarchies commonly associated with Russian bureaucratic language and culture. Opinions outside of Russia on new technology's potential for promoting civil society and social change cover the full range of sentiments, from Nicholas Carr's sharp critiques (e.g. "The Amorality of Web 2.0" [2005]), to the more optimistic outlooks of Kevin Kelly ("We Are the Web" [2005]) and Clay Shirky (*Cognitive Surplus* [2010]).

How, if at all, do these debates apply to the Russian-language Internet and how, in turn, does the Runet experience inform the debates? A closer look at the generic, stylistic, and technical aspects of the blogging output of the Russian President and others from his tech-savvy cohort help shed light on the potential benefits and pitfalls of bureaucratic blogging.

## **Global Functions of Russian in the Blogosphere: A Phantomatograph Rather than Social Network**

*Gasan Gusejnov, Moscow State University*

In the Soviet times Russian used to be a regional global language. As one of 5 official languages of the UN it was formally global. But it was not learned on a scale comparable to French or Spanish. Regional-global it was for the former socialist countries, as well as for some people, as they used to say in the USSR, in “Asia, Africa and Latin America,” for people there were educated as pioneers of socialism. However, the decline of this political aim for learning Russian can be marked as a way from Vladimir Mayakovsky in the 1920s (Я русский бы выучил только за то, что им разговаривал Ленин) to Vladimir Vyssotsky in the 1970s (В общественном парижском туалете есть надписи на русском языке!).

What is going on with the global function of Russian now? In Russia itself (at school, in official media, in muscovite urban-talk) in the former republics of the USSR, in the Russian speaking diasporas, in the virtual world of the blogosphere.

In my paper, I am concentrating on two segments of the fourth realm—the blogosphere. Notwithstanding rapidly growing access to the web, just a very small minority of young Russians is using the Internet as an educational or political tool. Analysis of the group (micro-group) speech habits of 16–20 years old undergraduate students give us some material for the hypothesis that on the web, Russian language is used mainly as a tool for the construction of new realities which are adjacent to their social life only punctually. A transnational game seems to unite more young people than any social or political project (in the sense of Stanislaw Lem’s phantomology). A variety of transformations and metamorphic creativity presented in my paper is taken from snap-shots of communication between student groups of the years 2008–2011.

## Russian Language Use in Two Multilingual Internet Contexts

*Susan C. Herring, Indiana University, Bloomington*

*Ewa Callahan, Quinnipiac University*

The online global linguistic ecology is in a period of flux. Although the Internet originated in the United States and English is still the language of much computer-mediated communication, hundreds of millions of people are participating today in languages other than English online, in some form of non-native English, or in a mixture of languages (Danet & Herring 2007). Observing the emergence of these trends, Graddol (1997) predicted that large languages such as Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, and Russian would increase in use alongside English, for example as online regional lingua francas. However, to date relatively little scholarship has addressed Internet multilingualism in relation to the status of individual language groups.

In this talk, we report on the results of two large-scale projects aimed at determining the extent and nature of multilingualism in two Internet contexts, with a focus on Russian. The first project examined the blog hosting site LiveJournal.com, which although launched in the United States is now under Russian ownership. We describe an earlier study of non-English language use on LiveJournal (Herring et al., 2007) and provide updates since site management shifted to Moscow. The second project analyzed language use in university home pages around the world, including Russian universities, as well as use of Russian as a second language on university homepages in other countries. In concluding, we consider the implications of the combined results of these two studies for the status of Russian in the online global linguistic ecology.

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## Русская стиховая культура в эпоху интернета: стихотворения на случай

*Roman Leibov, Tartu University*

Современная ситуация на рынке новостей, как известно, характеризуется резким изменением ролей адресанта и адресата в коммуникационном процессе.

Во-первых, по словам Клэя Ширки, теперь новости охотятся за получателями. Одновременно это означает девальвацию новостной информации, не «поймавшая» своего адресата новость обречена на «вымирание» в информационном поле. Во-вторых, само представление о «новости» подвергается радикальному переосмыслению, речь идет не просто о количественном приращении источников, претендующих на то, чтобы выступать в роли «новостей», но и о качественном сдвиге. В-третьих, новую роль обретают разного типа реакции аудитории на новостную информацию. Наиболее очевидный и тривиальный пример обратной связи—формат онлайн-СМИ с обсуждением опубликованных материалов. Здесь количество и интенсивность комментариев наглядно представляют удельный вес новостной заметки в поле читательского внимания. Существуют и другие механизмы измерения этого внимания (сами по себе включающиеся в коммуникационный обмен и влияющие на него): таковы, в частности специальные поисковые устройства, работающие с блогами и отслеживающие новостные единицы (сюжеты), привлекающие наибольшее внимание аудитории.

При изучении трансляции новостных сюжетов в густонаселенной «глобальной деревне» следует иметь в виду два типа трансляции: в первом случае речь будет идти о простой репликации информации, во втором—о разного рода дискурсивных трансформациях исходного сюжета. При описании специфики национальных «субнетов» следует учитывать и устоявшиеся в разных сетевых субкультурах типы этих трансформаций.

Мой доклад посвящен описанию одного из таких типов трансформационной реакции на новости, в высокой степени специфичному именно для русской сетевой субкультуры — стихотворениям на случай. Я попытаюсь на ряде примеров показать, как и почему имеющая давнюю традицию окказиональная поэзия встраивается в новую медиа-среду.

## Varieties of Computer-Mediated Metalanguage

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Scholarship on “new media and language” is a rapidly evolving field, with a growing number of book-length contributions on the impact of new technologies on linguistic change and language use, language ideology and social contexts and patterns for verbal interaction (cf., among others, Posteguillo 2003, Crystal 2006, 2009, Herring & Danet eds. 2007, Goggin & McLelland eds. 2008, Baron 2009). So far, less attention has been paid to the metalinguistic aspects of computer-mediated communication (CMC) (cf., however, Johnson & Ensslin eds. 2007, Johnson & Milani eds. 2009). How does CMC influence the ways we discuss, talk about, reflect upon, and conceive of language? How is CMC itself framed and talked about in the new media, in contrast to its representation in print media (cf. Thurlow 2006, 2007, Jones & Schiefelin 2009)? Among the obvious new or changed conditions for discussing language in a digital environment are the ample opportunities for professionals and lay people to interact and the possibility of using multimodal means to state or illustrate an argument, attitude or position. Is it also possible to detect peculiarities in the structure, language and style of computer-mediated metatalk?

In this paper I will look at computer-mediated metalanguage in a selection of different Internet forums (YouTube comments vs forums on Gramota.ru; comments/discussions mainly in English, Russian, Danish, Norwegian). I will attempt to identify some general tendencies and discuss the degree to which some features may be language-specific and/or linked to the individual language’s linguistic culture.

Characteristic of language use in many digital contexts is a high degree of linguistic awareness, playfulness, a self-reflexive and often ironic attitude (for example, *iazyk padonkoff*, SMS and IM language). I suggest that this aspect of CMC also influences the style of computer-mediated metalanguage, which in many cases can be shown to employ a high degree of performative, playful and even poetic style.

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## Recent Developments in the Post-Soviet New Media: Ukraine and Belarus

*Galina Miazhevich, Oxford University*

Whilst the economic-political aspect of the transformations which took place following the fall of the Berlin Wall has been extensively explored, the role of the media, which have become a leading force in the transformation process, has yet to receive a full assessment (Zassoursky & Vartanova 1999). Some former Eastern bloc countries have seen their media systems actively engaged in facilitating democratization and the fostering of civil society. However, in others (Belarus being one of the most vivid examples), the same instruments have been used to support and promote authoritarian political systems. This distinction raises questions about the transferability and applicability of western concepts of democracy and media freedom to the post-communist context. The advent and growth of new media technologies adds another twist to that and, to the associated media-theoretical issues (Fossato, Lloyd & Verkhovskij 2008).

The paper will approach that twist under the theoretical umbrella of Laclauan (1985) hegemony modified for the post-Soviet context (the study's starting point is the Gramscian (1991) hegemony framework and the notion of "consensus management" (Chomsky & Hernan 1988). My earlier application of this framework to Russia's state-controlled media revealed an example of *weak* hegemony since the ruling elite, whether in its government or its media embodiment, cannot situate itself within the 'chains of equivalence' which constitute consensus in the Laclauan model, but must impose power from above. This weakness manifests itself in Russian state TV's rigid framing of alternative voices from an official viewpoint (Miazhevich, *forthcoming*). The goal of this study is two-fold: 1) to evaluate the *new media's* role in generating a counter-hegemonic public sphere in the region and 2) to unpack their uniquely multi-dimensional nature in the post-Soviet cultural setting. I focus on two former Soviet Union (fSU) states, where the potential of the new

media plays out in dramatically different ways: Ukraine and Belarus.

As a result I explore various sources dealing with the post-Soviet media's potential for undercutting the existing status quo in the society and the hegemony of large mass communication corporations. Next, the current lack of systematic monitoring of developments in this area needs to be made good (e.g. we need to know who the 'new media' actors in fSU are and what challenges social networking, blogging, video-posting websites and online communities pose to existing power structures in post-communist space). Bearing in mind the unique features of the fSU media sphere (e.g. the extreme popularity of Live Journal in Russia) I infer that such dilemmas as 'popularity versus authority' or 'the relationship between the media and audiences' will play out differently than in the western media environment.

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## **«Словечки-ублюдки». Интернет-дебаты о состоянии русского литературного языка**

***Daniel Müller, University of Gießen***

Русский литературный язык в настоящее время подвергается процессам интернационализации и коллоквиализации. Описание оценки этих процессов как экспертами-лингвистами, так и обыкновенными пользователями языка является составной частью научного проекта «Типы славянских стандартных языков», проводимого в Гиссенском университете.

В рамках данного доклада описывается, каково эмоционально-оценочное отношение пользователей интернета как к внешним заимствованиям русского литературного языка (англицизмам), так и к внутренним (из ненормативной лексики). Диапазон оценочных установок простирается от абсолютного неприятия заимствований со стороны ревнителей чистоты русского литературного языка (пуристов) до либерального приветствия этих процессов.

## The Language Situation of Cyber Ukraine

*Alla Nedashkivska, University of Edmonton*

Although the use of the Internet in Ukraine has attracted some attention in media and journalistic studies, very little consideration has been made to linguistic issues. This study is an initial inquiry into the linguistic diversity of the Ukrainian virtual discursive space. The paper reports on a study of the Internet language practices of top Ukrainian web sites. The distribution of languages (Ukrainian, Russian, and English), that is, exclusivity, preference or coexistence of languages on principal Internet pages is studied. The analysis is based on premises of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), in which texts, here Internet sites, are socioculturally shaped and constitute society and culture in transformative and reproductive ways (Paniagua et al. 2007). Within the CDA framework, the focus is on the analysis of orders of discourse (Fairclough 1995b), which are particular conventionalized practices, available to text producers and interpreters on a given social environment (Fairclough 1995a:188).

Drawing on the analysis of orders of discourse, the paper explores the relationship between language choices and discursive practices in Ukrainian cyberspace. My focus is on web sites that epitomize two orders of discourse: public and private, and how the representation of language choice juxtaposes them. The results are linked to a discussion of wider societal processes and how the results inform us on the nature of Internet discursive practices in Ukrainian society in general and the linguistic situation in Ukraine overall.

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## **ByNet — Just Another National Internet?**

*Martin Paulsen, University of Bergen*

ByNet is the Belarusian internet, its title is taken from the local pronunciation of the Belarusian national top level domain “.by”. It is thus parallel to the RuNet, but has been far less studied. One of the reasons for this is obviously the fact that Belarus is a much smaller country, another reason is the fact that most Belarusians communicate in Russian, and the Belarusian internet has therefore often been included in the RuNet, especially by researchers outside the country. I will use this paper to discuss why this is, conceptually, a bad idea.

I shall start by addressing the terminology very briefly, both with regard to the alternative term BelNet, and to the relationship between the Cyrillic and Latin version of the now accepted term ByNet. I go on to talk about the idea of national internets in general, and the research on the neighbouring RuNet in particular. This discussion will be seen in relation to a more general juxtaposition between the long-standing, romantic idea of Internet as an inherently global phenomenon, and recent warnings of a segmentation of the Internet into national internets. I will pay special attention to juridical, logistic and economic reasons for talking about a separate ByNet.

In light of this I will ask whether the Belarusian internet is more national than other national internets, and, briefly, what my proposed understanding of the ByNet means for the established understanding of the RuNet.

## **Social Network Snobs—The Russian *snob.ru* on the Background of Exclusive Anglo-American Online Networks**

*Tine Roesen, Aarhus University*

As increasing numbers of the world's online population join social network sites and set up their personal profiles and blogs, not only are the most popular site platforms under technical stress, but a countertrend seems to be emerging: network sites for the select few. As if reversing the development of new social media towards the ever more global and inclusive, these niche networks favour exclusion and thereby introduce social stratification beyond the digital divide. From the internationally accessible aSmallWorld.net and affluence.org, to the geographically selective carbonNYC.com and elixio.net, Anglo-American elite sites share a row of common characteristics: they have peer-confirmed or invitation-only membership; member selection criteria include professional success and/or wealth; and in everything from design to contents they signal excellence and exclusivity.

It is on the background of these Anglo-American sites that I will continue my inquiry into the Russian elite network site *snob.ru*. The Russian site, which was launched 2008, the project also including a printed magazine, shares some of the above-mentioned exclusivity characteristics, but apparently also has certain specific traits. First, the founders of the site claim to have a special, "Russian" understanding of the word "snob". I will discuss this claim and consider whether in this definition, "snob" is just another word for elite. Second, the site has gradually opened still more features to others than the invited few, now presenting two categories of members: by invitation and by subscription. And, third, *snob* targets internet users who "think in Russian"—a new elite, as it were, of "global Russians". Although recent Anglophone extensions may signal further linguistic internationalisation, the *snob* network stands out as a national (if partly diasporic) elite, which, moreover, seems to have a flair for cultural rather than economic riches, revering literary writers in particular. My concluding remarks will therefore touch upon the question of whether Russia's new economic and cultural elites here blend into one.

## Hyping the Writer's Typo: Russian Rage or Global Trend?

*Ellen Rutten, University of Bergen*

As yet, studies of online language have been witnessing a curious paradox. Several leading publications in the field explore anglophone material, taking the linguistic and cultural context of their material for granted. When speaking of 'the Internet', 'the blog' or of 'social media,' more often than not experts limit themselves to English-speaking links, blogs or social-networking sites. They do so without specifying that linguistic demarcation. Among Russianists, a diametrically opposite trend dominates: many a scholar of Russian online language discusses his/her sources as culturally specific material, while neglecting or only marginally pondering the global trends with which they align.

My paper is an attempt to break with that habit. It scrutinizes the topic that I explore for the Future of Russian project: the language employed in Russian writers' blogs. My research delves into the grammatical and stylistic laconism which marks the language of Russia's widest-read literary blogs. I purport that—rather than a result of authorial sloppiness—the linguistic laconism pervading these blogs is, in fact, meticulously constructed.

In Passau, I discuss this trend relying on the literary blog writings of the young Russian cult author polumrak. I question to what extent polumrak's language requires a discussion in terms of Russian cultural paradigms. His linguistic idiosyncrasies can be analyzed as a response to social and rhetoric developments that are unique to (post-)Soviet Russia; but they cannot be understood properly without taking into account other, more globally enacted cultural trends. Pertinent among these is the trend which I call 'deliberate imperfection': a defiance of professionalism and perfectionism in creative spheres which rely on new technologies. At the moment, that trend can be discerned within a wide range of creative disciplines—and on a global scale. Having been trained as a Slavist, I am used to contemplating the culturally specific features of my material; but is it productive to approach polumrak's 'de-

liberate imperfection' from that angle? Or should I frame my project (as scholars of anglophone sources do) as a study of general cultural trends, which happens to depart from Russian cases? As my paper demonstrates, the answers to these theoretical questions can have highly tangible practical implications.

## **Transfictionality, Transmediality, and Internet Storytelling**

*Marie-Laure Ryan, University of Boulder, CO*

In this presentation I propose to discuss the phenomenon of “media convergence” in storytelling, defined by Henry Jenkins as “the flow of content through multiple media platforms” or as “a narrative so large, it cannot be covered in a single medium.” I will distinguish various types of transmedial storytelling, from the “snowball” type, where a popular narrative spontaneously generates multiple offsprings, to the “distributed content” type, where the participation of multiple media is planned from the very beginning, and the augmented reality game (ARG), where the narrative material are not only distributed, but form a chain that leads the users to the solution of a mystery.

I will examine these phenomena in the light of the narratological notion of transfictionality, which describes the migration plots or characters across different texts, and I will discuss the role of the Internet in promoting new forms of a transmedial storytelling that address a global audience.

## **Russia Global: the Multimodality of the ‘Mir’ Project**

*Lara Ryazanova-Clarke, University of Edinburgh*

In 2009, in formulating a new doctrine of Russian national security until 2020, Dmitry Medvedev called the Russian language “a tool of national security.” The paper will discuss the use of the Russian language multimodal discourse employed in the construction of meanings intended for the consumption across the former Soviet Union. The case study is the multi-state media project Mir which combines television, radio and textual forms available from a single internet platform. As the ideology of integration of the post-Soviet world increases its currency in Kremlin, Mir is set to provide the soft power tool of integration, and is tasked with a mission to “improve the image of every country in the CIS as well as CIS in whole.”

The paper will examine the tools of construction of the nostalgia for the common Soviet past, the notion of the diaspora and the unifying image of the Russian language.

## **Format vs. Language: Examining Russian Online Television Channels**

***Vlad Strukov, University of Leeds***

The paper will start with an overview of the process of digitization of television in the Russian Federation, paying special attention to the government's policies regulating language use in DTV as well as the relationship between the format of broadcasting (over web, air, satellite, etc.) and ethnic and linguistic context. I will then focus on Russian television channels that are produced, disseminated and consumed predominantly online and I will examine these channels' language policies at work. In particular, I will compare the use of Russian language in relation to the channel and programme format on three TV channels, namely *Pervyi Igrovoi*, *Man-TV* and *Russkii ekstrim*. The choice of these channels is defined by their interest in 'lifestyle' type of entertainment and their appeal to a common audience (young professional urban males).

I will discuss the linguistic framing of these channels on the internet as well as how Russian is used in the channels' blogs and other interactive online media. My main argument is that despite media convergence there is growing disenfranchisement of Russian language users online. I will also attempt to put forward a few theoretical claims regarding media/language analysis in the post-broadcast era, ironically inverting the title of Lev Manovich's study *The Language of New Media* (2001) to 'New Media of the Language'.

## **Towards a Cyberlinguistic Definition of Eurasia**

*Dirk Uffelmann, University of Passau*

“[...] Eurasia is also a trope, a figure of speech. Future hegemons might still, under certain circumstances, find it useful.” (Gleason, 2010, p. 32)

Drawing on the theoretical discussion of common features of cultures in the post-Soviet space, this paper proposes to refocus on the linguistic dimension and to investigate post-Russian Eurasia. Is not the role of the Russian language coming under serious challenge in the post-Soviet context, where independent states are downgrading the status of Russian in administration and education and where ethnic Russians are ‘remigrating’ from former Soviet republics to the Russian Federation? There is, however, one medium in which Russian is gaining new significance as a language of inter-regional communication: the internet. Albeit to a lesser degree than English and Chinese, Russian serves as a means of communication between Russian-speaking communities all over the world. What is more, the Russian internet (Runet) offers access to elaborated resources of contemporary culture (video and music downloads etc.).

The paper discusses the role the Russian-based Runet plays for Eurasian web communities outside the Russian Federation, mostly relying on Kazakh material, and asks whether post-colonial anxieties about Russian cultural imperialism through the Runet are justified or not and what the Kazakh, possibly post-colonial strategies of coping with this situation are. Essential to this essay is the notion of cyberimperialism, which combines aspects of media studies with postcolonial studies. The interdisciplinary approach to internet studies is completed by a linguistic focus on the performativity of language usage online for creating situational language identities.

## **“Russian Talk” in Twitter**

***Vera Zvereva, RGGU, Moscow***

In recent years the global Internet audience has become familiar with new communication tools and technologies. Digital media services not only provide new facilities and recombine such functions as blogging, commenting, posting multimedia files and involving individuals into social networks. They also modify the possibilities of the users’ self-expression and self-representation. At the same time these services imply different uses of language.

This paper is focused on micro-blogging. It deals particularly with the question of adaptation of Russian to the capacities and requirements of Twitter. Twitter is less popular among Russian web users than *LiveJournal*. The latter has formed generations of LJ users with their heroes and legends, as well as slang, styles, literary experiments and communication practices. Twitter in Russia, in its turn, sways between public interest and lack of popularity.

This paper aims to study the adjustment of Russian—of its norms, poetics of “Russian talk,” worked through communication techniques from *LiveJournal.com* and fora—to Twitter. Does the Russian communicative specifics retain in micro-blogging? Or does this global medium eliminate all special features? In order to answer this question, in this paper attention is given not only to Twitter, but also to the on-going attempts to create its Russian-speaking analogues.