

“LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF YOUTH SLANG IN CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN”Lecturer: **Murodkhodzhayeva Malika Alisherovna**

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Abstract: The article is devoted to the analysis of the linguistic characteristics of youth slang in contemporary Russian. It examines the sources of its formation, its structural-semantic and functional features, as well as the influence of the digital environment on the development of slang vocabulary. It is emphasized that youth slang represents a dynamic subsystem of the language that reflects current social, cultural, and communicative trends in modern society.

Keywords: youth slang, contemporary Russian language, linguistic features, slang vocabulary, internet communication, Anglicisms, language play, word-formation models, sociolinguistics, jargon, digital environment, metaphoricality, evaluative lexicon.

Introduction

Youth slang constitutes one of the most dynamic and rapidly evolving layers of contemporary Russian. It includes specific vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and word-formation models actively used by young people (primarily aged 14–30) in informal, everyday communication.

The relevance of studying youth slang is determined by its extreme mobility, its ability to instantly reflect cultural, technological, and social transformations in society, and its noticeable influence on the general language norm.

The aim of this article is to analyze the main linguistic features of contemporary youth slang, identify its phonetic-orthographic, morphological, lexical-semantic, and syntactic characteristics, and determine the key factors affecting its formation, dissemination, and functioning in the digital era.

Main Body

Youth slang develops under the influence of several key sources, which constantly interact with each other:

1. Massive borrowings from English. Anglicisms constitute the most noticeable layer of new vocabulary. Words and expressions are introduced primarily through the internet and pop culture: crush, cringe, rofl, hype, flex, chill, move, vibe, toxic, ship, trigger, etc. Borrowed units are quickly Russified, acquiring Russian suffixes, conjugations, and declensions (za-friendzone, cringe-anut', za-hype-it').
2. Digital environment and gaming culture. The main generator of new slang is social networks (TikTok, Telegram, VKontakte), streaming platforms (Twitch, YouTube), and online games. This is where words such as boost, farm, loot, donate, streak, kick, report, afk, tilt, imba, nerf, buff, etc., originate and rapidly spread.
3. Heritage of traditional youth jargon. Some vocabulary is inherited from the 1990s–2010s and remains relevant: tusa, vpiska, otkid, zachet, dvizh, prikol, chel, tyomny, baze, otstoy, etc. These words form a relatively stable core.
4. Internal linguistic creativity. Young people actively use their own word-formation mechanisms:

Clipping: vidos, fotka, prepod, para

Suffixes of subjective evaluation (-chik, -ik, -ukha, -nutost'): memchik, kotik, toksichek, bazovost'

Verb formation (-nut', -anut', -it'): like-nut', check-nut', cringe-anut'

Contamination and hybridization: zhiza ← zhiznennaya situatsiya, sheimit' ← shame.

Structural-Semantic Features

Word Formation

- High productivity of suffixes expressing emotional evaluation (-chik, -ochek, -ishche, -ukha).
- Abundance of verbs with prefixes za-/ot- and suffixes -nut'/-anut' (zashkvaritsya, otletet', zaskamit').
- Formation of nouns with the suffixes -ovost'/-nutost' (cringe-vost', sigma-vost').
- Active use of clipped forms and abbreviations (pzh, nz, imho, kek).

Semantic Processes

1. Extension and narrowing of meaning (crush — both “romantic interest” and “technical failure”).
2. Metaphorical transfer (go v DS, slit' info, nakhoditsya na odnoi volne).
3. Strong evaluative and expressive function (lyutyi, zhest', imba, baza, sigma, cringe).
4. Polysemy and homonymy within slang (top — “best” or “stupid,” depending on context).

Grammatical Adaptation

Slang words are fully integrated into Russian morphology: they decline, conjugate, and agree in gender and number (cringovyi/cringovaya, til'tanul/til'tanula, toksikov/toksichek).

Functions of Youth Slang

1. Group identification — signals “I’m one of you,” marking membership in a specific community.
2. Expressive-emotional — enhances emotional coloring, conveys irony, sarcasm, or enthusiasm.
3. Playful and creative — linguistic play, experimentation, demonstration of wit.
4. Economy of speech — short forms replace long descriptions.
5. Distancing and protest — opposing oneself to “adult” formal language and norms.

Influence of the Digital Environment

The internet has radically changed the speed and scale of slang dissemination:

- Viral memes and challenges create new words within hours.
- Visual content (TikTok, Reels, Shorts) reinforces pronunciation and usage.
- Globalization leads to code-mixing: Russian-English hybrids (cringovyi content, toxic behavior).
- Slang quickly spreads beyond youth communities into advertising, media, political speech, and even textbooks.

Conclusion

Youth slang is the liveliest and most dynamic layer of contemporary Russian. It instantly reflects changes in culture, technology, and society, serving as a marker of group identity and a powerful tool for linguistic creativity.

In the digital era, the speed of emergence and dissemination of new words has reached unprecedented levels, and the boundary between slang and literary language is rapidly blurring.

Studying youth slang is important for understanding the evolution of the Russian language as a whole. Today’s cringe, baza, and sigma are likely to become part of everyday speech tomorrow, just as hundreds of words from previous generations have. Slang does not damage the language but renews and enriches it.



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