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WORD-FORMATION AND SEMANTIC MECHANISMS IN ENGLISH
INTERNET SLANG AND MEMES CREATION AND ITS IMPACT ON
THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

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PREFACE

English Internet slang and memes have become not only a part of the English language, but they have been imposing a great influence on Russian and the verbal culture of young generation as well. Memes have almost replaced usual Internet chatting and emotional expression of most Russian speaking young people. English slang has grown so deeply inside Russian that it is accepted as that of the Russian origin.

The present research paper attempts to show how the English Internet slang and memes are formed and what a great impact they have on the Russian language. The thesis conducts an analysis of the English Internet slang, compares English Internet slang with that of the Russian language as well as analyses the impact of English memes and Internet slang on the Russian language.

The paper consists of the Introduction, three core chapters and the Conclusion. The introductory part provides an overview of the English Internet slang and memes creation history.

Chapter I includes an overview of word-formation processes and semantic mechanisms in English.

Chapter II includes the analysis of 30 most popular English Internet slang words and 10 Internet memes. The aim of the analysis is to find out what word-formation processes and semantic mechanisms are mostly used in modern English Internet slang and memes.

The aim of Chapter III is to study out the impact of English Internet slang and memes on the Russian language. The results are analyzed according to the stated hypothesis. Conclusion sums up the results of the analysis and comments on the hypothesis.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.M. – ante meridiem

B.C.E. – Before Common Era

HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus

i.e. – id est [that is]

JFK – John Fitzgerald Kennedy

PMS – premenstrual syndrome

VIP – very important person

ASAP – as soon as possible

laser - light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation

NASA – National Aeronautics and Space Administration

PIN – personal identification number

radar - radio detection and ranging

scuba - self-contained underwater breathing apparatus

TESOL – Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

‘OG’ - ‘Original gangster’, someone who has been around, old school gangster

‘lmao’ - ‘Laughing My Ass Off’. Used online

‘OMG’ - ‘Oh my god’. Used to express an impression

‘wtf?’ - ‘What the fuck?’ A universal interrogative particle

‘lol’ - ‘Laughing out loud’ or ‘Lots of Laughs’, used to denote great amusement in chat conversations.

‘gg’ - ‘Good game’. A polite remark uttered after the end of a game to indicate that a match was fair and enjoyable

‘IMHO’ - ‘In My Humble (Honest) Opinion’, used on blogs, message boards, forums etc.; used to clarify that the statement being made should not be quoted as a fact, but only as an opinion

‘ih8u’ - An online way to say ‘I hate you’

‘EOM’ - ‘End of Message’, used in message threads

‘BRB’ - ‘Be right back’

SMS - Short Messaging Service technology

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INTRODUCTION

English Internet slang and memes have changed the way the youth speaks. Young people's speech is filled with new, unusual for other people words. Some of them sound funny, some are offensive and others are completely strange. English Internet slang takes such a huge place in the modern world, that it has an impact on other languages and cultures. It is so powerful, that it has already broken in our everyday lives. We can hear it from our children, we can read it from the local newspapers, we can find it everywhere. Russian youth has also changed. Nowadays it speaks a very strange language – a cocktail of unusual Russian, Russian Internet slang and English Internet slang. It is not just a mix of languages, but it is a complete symbiosis. The Russian young people's speech is filled with English Internet slang words, they use Internet memes to express emotions or relation to something, they use English shortenings, and abbreviations, sometimes without even knowing what those mean.

The Internet can be defined as the biggest information source, the so-called 'information bank'. In terms of its impact on society, it ranks with print, the railways, the telegraph, the automobile, electric power and television. Some would equate it with print and television, the two earlier technologies which most transformed the communication environment in which people live (Crystal 2001). Thanks to the Internet the information can be spread over the world in only a matter of seconds. This allowed the slang to be spread very quickly among Internet communities (Flamand 2007-2008).

Definition of English Internet slang

The definition of English Internet slang is based on the definition of English slang. English slang refers to a non-standard and informal English vocabulary which represents synonyms for words and phrases used in standard English. It is usually associated with uneducated people or groups. (Oxford English Dictionary). However, nowadays slang covers all social groups and subcultures. Slang is a part of colloquial language. That means it appears mostly in spoken language and gets richer by speaking. The use of English in the modern world is big, and it is not a stunning fact that English Internet slang is the most used and fast-developing one. English Internet slang is always new and creative; it is a source of many new words. Some of them have become so common in usage that they entered our standard 'offline' language, but others are used for a short time and disappear quickly. The reason they die out is simply because they become boring and widely known.

Internet slang, or Cyber-slang, is not just a language of the Internet, but a complex multilingual set of languages used in the Internet every day. It has been changing over time together with its users. It can be said that Internet slang is a type of slang that is used among Internet dwellers, and increasingly being developed by them. A logical question can be asked – What is the point of preferring Internet slang to the usual one? The point is to ease communication, because Internet slang is usually much shorter, which saves time and gives the writer an opportunity to express more complete thought. Such space saving is not new; one of the first devices of communication, the telegraph, also had its rich collection of abbreviations (*Don't be 404* 2008). The thing is that in the Internet habitat, where users are expected to have maximum freedom, both writer and reader are constrained linguistically by certain Internet properties: software, computer hardware and networking hardware, which link them. This connection brings users to a new level of communication; it makes a new society, which members do not need usual language to interact with each other.

The Internet has helped people from all over the world to become connected to one another. The ease of English Internet slang has already made it a great tool of establishing Internet relationships. Most English Internet slang words are recognizable for everyone. It is very close to the idea of Esperanto, which makes English Internet slang look more and more like artificial language. However, while Internet slang saves time for the sender, it takes two times as long for the receiver to understand; according to a study by psychologist Nenagh Kemp (2012) at the University of Tasmania. But it can be only applied to an unskilled receiver, because a well-prepared person does not notice any differences between a slang-mutated word and the normal one.

According to scientists, the development of Internet slang with its shortenings and misspellings is a normal part of English evolution. Some lexicographers even consider it as a form of Queen's English (*ibid*). English Internet slang can even be used as language teaching material in second language classrooms in order to raise communicative competence by imparting some of the cultural value attached to English that is available only in slang (Quintana 2004).

Most people use abbreviations in SMS. The same is happening in the Internet, from multimillion social networking web-pages to different small forums. The Internet is changing the way we think. One of the ways it's changing us is linguistic. Acronyms, keyboard symbols and abbreviations are good examples of Internet slang tools. Internet

slang is the fastest in means of language developing. New words replace the old ones, new dialects of slang, such as Leetspeak or Lolspeak appear, moving the language development far beyond from grammatical or even logical borders.

It seems that English-speaking students, over the past several years, have increasingly used a more informal English vocabulary in formal assignments. Even university-level research papers are now being filled with casual 'lazy' phrases like 'you know' and words like 'guy' - informal words that were absent almost a decade ago (Abrams 2010).

The main effect of the Internet on language has been to make the language more communicative, expressive and rich, filling the language with new possibilities, giving it the opportunities that haven't existed in the past (ibid).

Although Internet slang has always been considered as an 'opposition' to usual language, its growing popularity has made it a part of common language, on which it also has a great impact (Eller 2005: 6). Frequently used Internet slang has almost developed into R. Dawkins 'memetic units of cultural information', cultural units that are passed from one generation to another by non-genetic means like imitation (Dawkins 1976: 301).

Definition of Internet memes

We surf the internet at different times, from different locations, but are instantly united by one common factor: the Internet meme. Meme is the unit of information that evolves through culture. Memetics provides a powerful new way to think about things such as, for example, creativity (Gabora 1997). An Internet meme is an abstraction that like words spreads from one person to another via the Internet (Schubert 2003). The concept of a meme was described by Richard Dawkins in his 1976 book *The Selfish Gene*, as an attempt to explain the way cultural information spreads; internet memes are a subset of this, specific to the culture and environment of the Internet.

In modern world the Internet meme is a cultural concept, which may be an image or a video that is rapidly shared throughout the Internet. Whether you were aware of its definition or not, you have probably already experienced an Internet meme without even knowing it. The meme reaches us, internet users, across a variety of networks: it may begin in one place, and carry over onto a different network. A meme that begins as a joke on any webpage may end up on your Facebook newsfeed, which according to modern standards means a great fame.

Internet users prefer sharing emotions over facts. It is totally normal, because Internet communication is becoming more and more popular bringing its advantages over face-to-face speech. That is why all those smileys and different yellow little faces were added to social networks and programs of instant messaging. These smileys are also memes, because they have emotions. Each face has its own purpose - to express different feelings to communicants. Even ten years ago it was clear that memes were emotions of the Internet.

Meme is a type of communication that has elements of repetition which include a name, an image and a phrase. Memes are believed to be the product of an unplanned, sporadic and uncensored freedom of creativity; therefore, memes are mostly unreal and basically meaningless. Meme is regarded as a phenomenon of self-exposure behaviour by individuals who wish to gain popularity through the rise of Internet and media offerings, which is easily accessible.

It must be stressed enough that Memes are, and will always be, most of the time humor-centered, with several 'shock-value' added to the mix. These main elements will let the audience keep getting curious about them, and hence will attract more people and spread them quickly.

In recent years Russian Internet sources have copied and developed most of English Internet memes. Moreover, the Russian language under the influence of English Internet slang has experienced a real lexical explosion, which led to a number of important changes. One of them was the rapid process of word-formation: new derived words entered the language not slowly and quietly like it could be expected from usual language evolution, but spontaneously created a whole linguistic community around the words and events of modern Russian youth (Borzenko, Kljuzeva 2009).

Russian youth has faced an active, uncontrolled invasion of English Internet slang, not only in the spoken language but also in the various genres of journalism. Depending on the origin, new word groups and categories of Russian words began to form. Internet memes is the most interesting one of them (ibid). The spread of English Internet memes has become almost unprompted among Russian youth. Spontaneous straying from one Internet user to another is not a feature of any information but only the one that somehow has an influence on people. Russian youth had never been a gourmet in means of choosing an Internet source to be faithful to, but Russian Internet community had

never faced something as big as English Internet memes. Russian youth began to develop English memes giving them new features like new sense of humour, new meaning, and new purposes. For Russian youth English Internet memes have become a tool of communication not only on the Internet. Russian teenagers created different web-pages with Internet memes which were originally English, but under a great influence and attention of Russian Internet community, turned into Russian Internet memes. From that time, Russian Internet memes, based already on Russian culture, began to develop on their own, acquiring new meanings and affecting new threads (Tuchkov 2002).

It is believed that the idea of memes as replicators is important because it can be used to explain our unique properties and the growth of our complex culture and society in general. One of the most important factors that drive the evolution of memetics is the language of communication. It is known that simple oral communication or slang has significantly increased the velocity of propagation, loyalty, fecundity, fidelity, and longevity, which are characteristics of memes. By changing the structure of the word, by adding suffixes and prefixes, users develop the culture of memes, improving quality and increasing the prevalence, and significance of memes (Morton 2000), (Kunal 2009).

The benefits brought by memes are obvious; English Internet memes pursue humorous purposes. Constant awareness and critical reconsideration is a necessary part of social life, which is never reduced. This process does not allow serious problems of society to go deeper, constantly pulling them out into the light. Creation of good Internet memes is a harmless way of expression and development of imagination. But an excessive and improper use of memes peppered with grammatical errors must be avoided (Knobel 2006).

In the understanding of Russian youth, memes are just jokes, pictures, wearing a humorous character. However, memes are the engines of new Internet concepts. In the development of online communities, in particular the Russian Internet community, memes have an important place because they develop self-awareness and, in addition, provide information about different events and the various changes taking place in the world.

Memes, like Internet slang, are also psychological. They identify the freedom of youth, its creativity and full social openness. If we realize that memes lead towards full social

dialogue and the development of social consciousness, even drastic changes in modern Russian can be accepted. These changes make our language a little more original and interesting, pointing to random errors in the global Network (Tuchkov 2002).

All in all, Russian youth's language is under a great influence of English Internet slang and memes which develop the language and its speakers' communication style in different ways. This influence itself is the topic of the research and puts forward the following aims:

- 1) To research English word-formation processes and semantic mechanisms.
- 2) To analyze word-formation and semantic mechanisms in English Internet slang and memes creation.
- 3) To examine whether English Internet slang and memes have an impact on Russian.
- 4) To explore English Internet slang and memes used among Russian youth.

The hypothesis put forward by the thesis holds that:

- 1) English Internet slang and memes are predominantly created by shortening, abbreviation and semantic shift.
- 2) English Internet slang and memes have an impact on the Russian language.

CHAPTER I

WORD-FORMATION AND SEMANTIC MECHANISMS IN ENGLISH

1.1 Introduction. Language changes

All languages change. The changes of language affect all areas of its use. There are different types of language change: phonetic changes, lexical changes, semantic changes, and syntactic changes (Aitchison 2001). “For centuries people have speculated about the causes of language change. The problem is not one of thinking up possible causes, but of deciding which to take seriously” (ibid).

There are many factors that force language to develop and change. The causes of language change, which are necessary for the existence and development of communication, can be divided into two categories. These are 'external' and 'internal'. External sociolinguistic factors are social factors outside the language system. Internal psycholinguistic factors are linguistic and psychological factors which exist in the structure of the language and the minds of the speakers (ibid: 2)

There are many factors that affect the rate of language change. The more members of the community are creative and loyal to the new and the more they use the new forms of a word or a phrase, the faster their language changes. If most members of the community try to use only correct language and preserve stability, the more slowly their language mutates. If some form of pronunciation is preferred and is used most frequently, or a figure of speech becomes the most desirable, then this form is absorbed and becomes the primary. “The important thing to remember about change is that, as long as people are using a language, that language will undergo some change” (Ottenheimer 2009). Technology with its constant development is a good example of an external factor. When something new appears in the world of technology then a special term is needed to describe it. An example of an external factor is the ever-changing developments of technology. Another example of an external factor would be fashion. The imitation of certain words through different social groups will spread new fashionable and socially desirable terms. Fashionable things will come and go but some characteristics of a term may stay in the language, creating a recognised lexical term. For example, after the Russian Revolution of 1917, upper class pronunciations of Russian suddenly became undesirable and people tried to hide their “inappropriate” pronunciation (Aitchison 2001).

Foreign influences can change the language due to the borrowings of words or semantics from foreign languages. This factor can affect the following:

- 1) Phonology – the study of the sound system of a language (Collins English Dictionary 1994).
- 2) Lexis – the totality of vocabulary items in a language, including all forms having lexical meaning or grammatical function (Collins English Dictionary 1994).
- 3) Structural change

In the world of the Internet, users, especially teenagers, tend to use unique expressions. An Internet writer usually does not think about the process of creating new words, or word-formation process, and creates them by chance to improve the expressiveness and attract more attention. As a consequence of this process, more and more new words appear. Due to the speed and capabilities of the Internet the new words spread around the world and get into other languages, mutating again and again under the influence of different grammars to new words, acquiring a new meaning. Internet communities, which develop the culture of Internet slang and memes, become the creators of hundreds of different words without even knowing it, by what they leave an impact on the language. In order to examine how Internet slang is changing, how new words are created, it is first necessary to find out what the definition of word-formation is, and why it has recently become so interesting (Melieffton 2002).

1.2 History of word-formation study

During the last 30 years word-formation has been a very interesting topic. Study of word-formation processes can bring a lot of new things to the linguistics, such as the prediction of development tendencies in languages, could contribute to the enrichment and the evolution of language, and make a significant benefit to the study of foreign as well as the native languages. However, due to a lack of methodology and almost complete absence of the background study of this aspect, so far there is no single theory of the word-formation, so this field of study is still an open topic (Bauer 1983).

So far there is no complete theory of the formation of words. The complexity is that word-formation has always been considered from a synchronic or diachronic point of view, while both these concepts have a right to exist. English grammar did not embrace the word until the 1970s. English and American structuralism (*Syntactic Structures*,

Chomsky 1957) was not interested in the word as in a unit, because the main subjects of the study were smaller units. Transformational Generative Grammar was also not interested in the word, because it studied larger units. It was thought that the sentence was not made of words but of morpheme units, smaller than a word. And the word itself did not matter, because it was not considered a separate type of unit (ibid).

Study of word-formation became topical only in 1970 with the publication of Noam Chomsky's *Review of Skinner's Verbal Behavior*. Since then, different linguists have considered the formation of words from very different perspectives: from the phonological point of view (Halle 1973, Lightner 1975), the syntactic point of view (Jackendoff 1975, Roeper 1978) and from the semantic point of view (Leech 1974) (ibid).

1.3 Processes of word-formation

Word-formation is the process of forming new words on the basis of old ones. Each word-formation process is resulted in the production of a new type of word (Jackson, Amvela 2000: 69). Word-formation includes the following processes: 1) **coinage**, 2) **borrowing**, 3) **nonce words**, 4) **calquing**, 5) **compounding** (composition), 6) **blending**, 7) **clipping** (shortening), 8) **back-formation**, 9) **abbreviation**, **eponyms**, 10) **conversion**, 11) **derivation** (Yule 1985).

1) **Coinage** is the word-formation process in which a new word is created either deliberately or accidentally without using the other word formation processes and often from seemingly nothing (Oxford English Dictionary 2012). For example, the following list of words provides some common coinages found in everyday English: a) 'Google', b) 'heroin', c) 'escalator', d) 'kerosine', e) 'zipper', f) 'nylon'

2) **Borrowing** is the word formation process in which a word from one language is borrowed directly into another language (Oxford English Dictionary 2012). For example, the following common English words are borrowed from foreign languages:

- a) 'paprika' – Hungarian
- b) 'murder' – French
- c) 'yo-yo' – Tagalog
- d) 'galore' – Irish

3) **Nonce Words** are new words formed through any number of word formation processes and used on a single occasion (Oxford English Dictionary 2012). For

example, the follow list of words provides some nonce words with definitions as identified in the Oxford English Dictionary:

- a) 'twi-thought' – an indistinct or vague thought.
- b) 'cotton-wool' – to stuff or close the ears with cotton-wool.
- c) 'witchcraftical' – The practices of a witch or witches; the exercise of supernatural power supposed to be possessed by persons in league with the devil or evil spirits. Power or influence like that of a magician; bewitching or fascinating attraction or charm (Kosur, Goss 2011: 1-2).

Although most nonce words come in and out of use very quickly, some nonce words catch on and become everyday words. For example, Lewis Carroll coined the word '*chortle*', a blend of '*chuckle*' and '*snort*', for the poem *Jabberwocky* in the book *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*; unlike most nonce words, however, '*chortle*' has gained acceptance as a legitimate blended word (Oxford English Dictionary 2012).

4) Calquing is the word formation process in which a borrowed word or phrase is translated from one language to another. Calques are also referred to as root-for-root or word-for-word translations (Oxford English Dictionary 2012). For example, the following common English words are calqued from foreign languages:

- a) 'loanword' – German – Lehnwort
- b) 'beer garden' – German – Biergarten
- c) 'wisdom tooth' – Latin – dēns sapientiae
- d) 'blue-blood' – Spanish – sangre azul
- e) 'pineapple' – Dutch – pijnappel
- f) 'long time no see' – Chinese – hǎo jiǔ bu jiàn

5) Compounding, or composition is the word formation process in which two or more lexemes combine into a single new word (Oxford English Dictionary 2012). Compound words may be written as one word or as two words joined with a hyphen. For example:

- a) noun-noun compound: 'note' + 'book' → 'notebook'
- b) adjective-noun compound: 'blue' + 'berry' → 'blueberry'
- c) verb-noun compound: 'work' + 'room' → 'workroom'
- d) noun-verb compound: 'breast' + 'feed' → 'breastfeed'
- e) verb-verb compound: 'stir' + 'fry' → 'stir-fry'
- f) adjective-verb compound: 'high' + 'light' → 'highlight'
- g) verb-preposition compound: 'break' + 'up' → 'breakup'
- h) preposition-verb compound: 'out' + 'run' → 'outrun'

- i) adjective-adjective compound: 'bitter' + 'sweet' → 'bittersweet'
- j) preposition-preposition compound: 'in' + 'to' → 'into'

Compounds may be compositional, meaning that the meaning of the new word is determined by combining the meanings of the parts, or noncompositional, meaning that the meaning of the new word cannot be determined by combining the meanings of the parts. One relatively well-used example of this is the difference in the semantic relation between the two components in "olive oil" and "baby oil". You make olive oil by squeezing olives until the oil runs out of them. This is not how you make baby oil (Kosur, Goss 2011: 5) (King 2010: 1).

6) Blending is the word formation process in which parts of two or more words combine to create a new word whose meaning is often a combination of the original words (Oxford English Dictionary 2012). For example:

- a) 'breakfast' + 'lunch' → 'brunch'
- b) 'chuckle' + 'snort' → 'chortle'
- c) 'cybernetic' + 'organism' → 'cyborg'
- d) 'motor' + 'hotel' → 'motel'
- e) 'smoke' + 'fog' → 'smog'
- f) 'Spanish' + 'English' → 'Spanglish'

7) Clipping, or shortening is the word formation process in which "a word is taken apart" (the reduction of a word to one of its parts) (Marchand 1969).

Clipping can be divided to the following types: Fore-clipping, middle clipping, back clipping and complex clipping.

- a) **Fore-clipping** is the type, in which the final part is retained: pike (turnpike), chute (parachute), gator (alligator), phone (telephone), varsity (university), coon (raccoon).
- b) **Middle clipping** is the type, in which the middle of the word is retained: flu (influenza), fridge (refrigerator), jams (pajamas/pyjamas), shrink (head-shrinker).
- c) **Back clipping** is the most common type, in which the beginning is retained. The unclipped original may be either a simple or a composite. Examples are: ad (advertisement), cable (cablegram), doc (doctor), exam (examination), fax (facsimile), gas (gasoline), gym (gymnastics, gymnasium), memo (memorandum), mutt (muttonhead), pub (public house), pop (popular music).
- d) **Complex clipping** is the type, in which clipped forms are also used in compounds and one part of original word usually remains intact: linocut (linoleum cut), cablegram (cable telegram), op art (optical art), org-man (organizationman) (ibid).

8) Back-formation is the process of creating a new lexeme by removing actual or supposed affixes. The resulting neologism is called a back-formation, a term coined by James Murray in 1889 (Oxford English Dictionary 2012). In comparison with clipping back-formation may change the part of speech or the word's meaning, whereas clipping creates shortened words from longer words, but does not change the part of speech or the meaning of the word. Examples:

- a) 'diplomat' from 'diplomatic'

- b) 'donate' from 'donation'
- c) 'edit' from 'editor'
- d) 'gamble' from 'gambler'
- e) 'greed' from 'greedy' (the noun was originally 'greediness')
- f) 'kidnap' from 'kidnapper'
- g) 'obligate' from 'obligation'
- h) 'pea' from 'pease' (Middle English)

9) Abbreviation is the word formation process in which a word or phrase is shortened. Abbreviation is related to both the word formation processes of clipping and blending. Although abbreviation is largely a convention of written language, sometimes abbreviations carry over into spoken language. For example:

Written Abbreviations

- a) Apr. – April
- b) cm – centimeter(s)
- c) dept. – department
- d) Dr. – doctor
- e) Jr. – Junior
- f) Mr. – Mister
- g) oz – ounce(s)
- h) Sun. – Sunday

Spoken-Written Abbreviations

- a) A.M. – ante meridiem
- b) B.C.E. – Before Common Era
- c) HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- d) i.e. – id est [that is]
- e) JFK – John Fitzgerald Kennedy
- f) PMS – premenstrual syndrome
- g) VIP – very important person

Other examples:

- a) ASAP – as soon as possible
- b) laser - light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation
- c) NASA – National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- d) PIN – personal identification number
- e) radar - radio detection and ranging
- f) scuba - self-contained underwater breathing apparatus
- g) TESOL – Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

Eponyms are word forms by the word formation process in which a new word is formed from the name of a real or fictitious person. For example:

- a) boycott – Charles C. Boycott
- b) cardigan – James Thomas Brudenell, 7th Earl of Cardigan
- c) cereal – Ceres

- d) guillotine – Joseph Ignace Guillotin
- e) jacuzzi – Candido Jacuzzi
- f) narcissistic – Narcissus
- g) nicotine – Jean Nicot
- h) pasteurization – Louis Pasteur
- i) praline – César de Choiseul, Count Plessis-Praslin
- j) sadistic – Marquis de Sade
- k) salmonella – Daniel Elmer Salmon
- l) sandwich – John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich
- m) volcano – Vulcan

10) Conversion is the word formation process in which a word of one grammatical form becomes a word of another grammatical form without any changes to spelling or pronunciation.

For example, the noun *email* appeared in English before the verb: a decade ago I would have sent you an email (noun) whereas now I can either send you an email (noun) or simply email (verb) you. The original noun *email* experienced conversion, thus resulting in the new verb *email*. Conversion is also referred to as zero derivation or null derivation with the assumption that the formal change between words results in the addition of an invisible morpheme. However, many linguistics argue for a clear distinction between the word formation processes of derivation and conversion (Bright Hub Education, Kosur 2012).

There are different types of conversion, which are:

Noun to Verb Conversion

- a. access – to access
- b. bottle – to bottle
- c. email – to email
- d. Google – to google

- e. microwave – to microwave
- f. name – to name
- g. salt – to salt
- h. ship – to ship

(Kosur 2012: para. 4)

For example:

- a) My grandmother bottled (verb) the juice and canned (verb) the pickles.
- b) My grandmother put the juice in a bottle (noun) and the pickles in a can (noun).
- c) She microwaved (verb) her lunch.

Verb to Noun Conversion

- a) to call – call
- b) to clone – clone
- c) to command – command
- d) to cover – cover

- e) to cry – cry
- f) to experience – experience
- g) to increase – increase

(Kosur 2012: para. 4)

For example:

- a) The guard alerted (verb) the general to the attack (noun).
- b) The enemy attacked (verb) before an alert (noun) could be sounded.
- c) Sometimes one just needs a good cry (noun).
- d) The baby cried (verb) all night.
- e) We need to increase (verb) our productivity to see an increase (noun) in profits.

11) Derivation is the word formation process in which an affix attaches to the base form of a word to create a new word. Affixes, which include prefixes and suffixes, are bound morphemes. Morphemes are the smallest linguistic unit of a language with semantic meaning. Bound morphemes, unlike free morphemes, cannot stand alone but must attach to another morpheme such as a word. For example, the following two lists provide examples of some common prefixes and suffixes with definitions in English:

Prefixes

- a- – without, not
- co- – together
- de- – opposite, negative, removal, separation
- dis- – opposite, negative
- en- – cause to be
- ex- – former, previous, from
- in- – negative, not
- non- – absence, not
- re- – again, repeatedly
- un- – negative, not, opposite, reversal

Suffixes

- -able – sense of being
- -er – agent
- -ful – characterized by
- -fy – make, become, cause to be
- -ism – action or practice, state or condition
- -less – lack of
- -ly – -like
- -ology – study, science
- -ship – condition, character, skill
- -y – characterized by, inclination, condition

(Kosur 2012: para. 12)

Derivation may result in new words of the same grammatical form, e.g., noun to noun, or of different grammatical forms, e.g., verb to noun. For example:

Grammatical Form Retaining Derivation

- verb to verb: appear → disappear
- noun to noun: friend → friendship
- adjective to adjective: practical → impractical

Grammatical Form Changing Derivation

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • verb to noun: preserve → preservation • verb to adjective: bore → boring • noun to verb: code → codify • noun to adjective: nature → natural | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adjective to noun: ugly → ugliness • adjective to verb: sweet → sweeten • adjective to adverb: quick → quickly |
|---|--|

(Kosur 2012: para. 14)

Although both processes involve the affixation of suffixes, derivation differs from inflection, because the inflection results in the creation of a new form of the same word rather than a new word.

1.4 Semantic change

Semantic change is a change in the meaning of a word. Changes in meaning are as common as changes in form. Like the latter they can be internally or externally motivated. Every word has a variety of senses and connotations, which can be added, removed, or altered over time (Stockwell, Minkova 2001). The alteration of meaning occurs because words are constantly used and what is intended by speakers is not exactly the same each time. If a different intention for a word is shared by the speech community and becomes established in usage then a semantic change has occurred.

There are different types of change which will be discussed presently. The most neutral way of referring to change is simply to speak of semantic shift which is to talk of change without stating what type it is (Traugott, Dasher 2002).

1.5 Types/mechanisms of semantic change

1) **Extension (or widening)** is a type of semantic change, where all features are dropped out. Widening may result in either more homonymy or in more polysemy. Semantic widening broadens the meaning of a word. This process is also called 'generalization'. Some factors that affect semantic widening are linguistic factors, psychological factors, sociocultural factors, and cultural/encyclopedic factors. (Free Online English Dictionary 2013).

- a) 'guy' - Guido (Guy) Fawkes was the leader of the plot to blow up the English Houses of Parliament. The word "guy," eventually came to mean "a person of grotesque appearance." Over time, the word came to mean "a man or a boy."
- b) 'cool' - the slang word that meant "a jargon of jazz musicians". Over time it began to mean a general word to describe something preferable or interesting (English Slang Dictionary).
- c) see Appendix 1

2) **Narrowing (or specialisation, restriction)** is a type of semantic change, when due to decreased range of meaning a word can be used appropriately only in fewer contexts than before (Free Online English Dictionary 2013). In other words semantic narrowing is the shift in which words refer to a more specific class of items or objects or the process by which a word's meaning becomes less general than its earlier meaning. The process by which semantic narrowing occurs is called specialization. Specialization is a

process by which the meaning of a word shifts from the general to the specific definition. (Free Online English Dictionary 2013).

- a) 'girl' - originally meant a person of any gender, but now means a female person.
- b) 'deer' - originally meant 'a four-legged beast', but now means an animal of specific family.
- c) 'wife' – originally meant 'a woman', nowadays means 'married woman'.

3) Metonymy (From the Greek, 'the change of name') can be defined as a figure of speech in which a word or a phrase is used to describe another word or a phrase. Metonymy can be also a separate rhetorical strategy of naming or describing something using not direct, but associated words. (Dictionary, Encyclopedia and Thesaurus 2013).

Examples:

- 'The White House says chemical weapon was used in Syria'. – here 'The White House' is used instead of 'The US government'.
- 'The pen is mightier than the sword'. - 'pen' here means 'written word', while 'sword' stands for 'use of weapons'.

4) Metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or a phrase is used to describe something it is not literally connected to. (Free Online English Dictionary 2013).

Examples:

- 'Time is a thief' – this is a metaphor which means that time passes by and 'steals' our lifetime.
- 'His head was about to explode' – this metaphor indicates that the man was very exhausted or nervous. But literally it means that his head was highly explosive, which cannot be real.
- 'I feel blue' means 'I feel sad', but the literal meaning of it is not logical.

5) Meiosis (from the Greek 'to make smaller') is a figure of speech that is used to make a term or a name less significant or to make something or someone smaller in size or position. (available on www.thefreedictionary.com).

Examples:

- 'slasher' for surgeon
- "rhymester" for poet

6) Hyperbole is a figure of speech in which exaggeration is used for emphasis or effect. (available on www.thefreedictionary.com).

Examples:

- 'This book weighs a ton.'
- 'I am so hungry, I could eat a horse.'

7) Amelioration is a semantic shift in the sense of a word in the direction towards an improvement and more positive value.

Examples:

- 'dude' (originally 'a weird man') becomes 'guy, man, person'

8) Taboo replacement and avoidance of obscenity is a mechanism, when a positive word is used to change a negative word.

Examples:

- 'an ass' (an animal) becomes 'a donkey'
- 'a penis' becomes 'a little friend'

9) Degeneration is a semantic shift in the sense of a word in the direction towards a less positive, more negative value.

Examples:

- 'silly' (originally meant 'simple') becomes 'stupid, foolish'

It can be seen that new words can appear by means of different word-formation processes and semantic mechanisms.

CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF WORD-FORMATION PROCESSES AND SEMANTIC MECHANISMS USED IN ENGLISH INTERNET SLANG AND MEMES CREATION

There are thousands of English Internet slang words (Urban Dictionary – the web-page, where all new Internet slang words are described and analysed). There are hundreds of Internet memes too. Every single user creates dozens of slang words and Internet memes daily. It is impossible to be ‘up-to-date’ with them. Only 30 most popular English Internet slang words (Urban Dictionary) and 10 Internet memes (Internet Meme Database – the source where the new Internet memes appear) were chosen for the analysis below.

2.1 English Internet slang (Urban Dictionary)

Slang word or abbr.	Description	Word-formation process	Semantic mechanism	Example
‘jajaja’	It is a form of laughing, used in online chat. Came from Spanish and Mexican, where the ‘J’ is pronounced like ‘H’; just like ‘San Jose’.	Borrowing	-	1) -*guy tells a joke* -‘jajaja’ 2) Cesar - ‘I just jumped the border!’ Ciaran – ‘jajaja’
‘brandon’	The most amazing person alive.	Eponym	Widening	‘This guy is such a brandon.’
‘OG’	‘Original gangster’, someone who has been around, old school gangster.	Abbreviation (Acronym)	-	‘Yo, what up OG? What’s good in tha hood?’

'kush'	A strain of Cannabis. The name "Kush" originates from the Hindu-Kush mountains, where it was cultivated for thousands of years.	Borrowing	Metonymy,	<i>'The kush was good.'</i>
'lmao'	'Laughing My Ass Off'. Used online.	Abbreviation (Acronym)	-	<i>Matt: Bill fell off the horse and injured his pelvis in 6 different places.</i> <i>Joe: LMAO!</i>
'OMG'	'Oh my god'. Used to express an impression.	Abbreviation (Acronym)	-	<i>'omg that is so cool!!!'</i>
'wtf?'	'What the fuck?' An universal interrogative particle.	Abbreviation (Acronym)	-	<i>'wtf is wrong with you!?'</i>
'lol'	'Laughing out loud' or 'Lots of Laughs', used to denote great amusement in chat conversations. Now it is overused to the point where nobody laughs out loud when they say it.	Abbreviation (Acronym)	Widening	<i>A: 'I'm probably gonna kill myself tonight...'</i> <i>B: 'lol'</i>
'Yo'	A declarative or imperative exclamation, whether	Coinage	Widening	<i>'Yo! What the hell do you think you are doing?! Yo,</i>

	alone or within a sentence (original meaning in Afro-American slang was 'hello').			<i>just do your job!</i>
'toni' or 'tonie'	The most amazing woman ever. A great shoulder to cry on, an excellent listener.	Eponym	Widening	<i>'I had a bad day. I need a toni.'</i>
'gg'	'Good game'. A polite remark uttered after the end of a game to indicate that a match was fair and enjoyable.	Abbreviation (Acronym)	-	<i>*Red team wins*</i> <i>Red Team: GG</i> <i>Blue Team: GG</i>
'IMHO'	'In My Humble (Honest) Opinion', used on blogs, message boards, forums etc.; used to clarify that the statement being made should not be quoted as a fact, but only as an opinion.	Abbreviation (Acronym)	-	<i>'Your girlfriend is ugly ...IMHO.'</i>
'app'	Shortened form of 'application.' Popularized by Apple Computers Inc. with the introduction of the iPhone.	Shortening	Narrowing (Smartphone application)	<i>'I've just downloaded this great app for my phone.'</i>
'facepalm'	The act of dropping one's face or forehead	Compounding	-	<i>'Today I locked my keys in my car.'</i>

	into one's hand. Usually written between asterisks in online conversation, to demonstrate an action.			<i>Again.</i> <i>*facepalm*</i>
'to troll'	To say something provocative with the intention of causing maximum disruption and argument.	Conversion (Noun to Verb)	Widening	<i>'Stop trolling me!'</i>
'noob' or 'n00b'	An inexperienced and/or ignorant or unskilled person. Especially used in computer games.	Coinage	-	<i>'God, that guy is a serious n00b.'</i>
'ih8u'	An online way to say 'I hate you'.	Abbreviation, Shortening	-	<i>'ih8u d00d' ('I hate you, dude')</i>
'nolan'	The most handsome man in the world. (probably from the name of Christopher Nolan).	Eponym	-Widening	<i>'Wow, look at that Nolan, I wish I could be like him.'</i>
'403' (Verb)	'To deny access': 1) When attempting to access a forbidden webpage (originally an error in the Internet browser) 2) When attempting to perform a physical	Nonce words, Conversion (Noun to Verb)	Widening	1) <i>'Yeah, I tried to download that file, but got 403'ed.'</i> 2) <i>'Yeah, I tried to kiss Megan last night but got 403'ed.'</i>

	action			
'E-void'	From 'avoid.' Avoiding someone electronically such as on Facebook, e-mail, IM, or text messages.	Nonce word, Blending ('Electronicall y' + 'Avoid')	Narrowing	<i>Guy#1: 'I sent Laura a message on facebook two weeks ago but she still hasn't responded.'</i> <i>Guy#2: 'Dude, it sounds like you're being e-voided.'</i>
'dub'	Short for the expression 'double dime' meaning \$20 worth of anything, especially narcotics	Shortening	Widening	<i>'Lemme get a dub, I gotta get high.'</i>
'pwned'	A misspelling of the word 'owned', means 'to be owned' or 'to be dominated' by an opponent or situation (usually connected with online games and the Internet).	Nonce words, Coinage	Narrowing	<i>'You just got pwned.'</i>
'kristina'	An intelligent and sexy female.	Eponym	-Widening	<i>1 - 'Woah look at that girl!'</i> <i>2 - 'she must be a kristina'</i>
'jonny' or	A condom.	Eponym	Narrowing	<i>'Don't be silly'</i>

'willy'				<i>wrap you willy'</i>
'merp'	<p>1) a word which is said when an awkward conversation is happening or you do not know what to say</p> <p>2) a simple word with many uses. It can either mean something good or bad when used in the context of a sentence.</p>	Coinage, Derivation	-	<p>1) <i>Jesse: What's up?</i></p> <p><i>Jason: Not much, you?</i></p> <p><i>*silence*</i></p> <p><i>Jesse: Merp</i></p> <p>2) <i>'I love you so much, you are so merpy.'</i></p> <p><i>'I am in such a bad mood, what a merp day.'</i></p>
'crapplet'	A Java applet that is badly done, broken, or useless.	Blending ('crap' + 'applet'), Nonce word	Narrowing (bad application)	<i>'I'm not going to that site - it has a hundred crapplets on it!'</i>
'EOM'	<p>'End Of Message', used in message threads. If you see this you don't need to click on the post/message as there's no further information.</p> <p>New updates coming soon <EOM></p>	Abbreviation	-	<i>'New updates coming soon <EOM>'</i>

'to grass'	To smoke 'marijuana', used in the Internet or SMS chat.	Conversion	Taboo replacement / avoidance of obscenity, Narrowing	1) <i>'Let's grass this party.'</i> 2) <i>'We could grass a bit.'</i>
'10q'	'Thank you'	Shortening	-	<i>'10q guys!'</i>
'BRB'	'Be right back'	Abbreviation	-	<i>'Ok, wait... 'll BRB.'</i> (or just <i>'OK, BRB')</i>

2.2 English Internet memes (Internet Meme Database)

1) **'Forever alone'** is a comic character that is used to express loneliness and disappointment with life. The phrase is also written as '4alone', which is the shortened variant. The phrase is very widely used among the Internet users (see Appendix 4).

2) **'LOL'** is a comic character that is often used to indicate laughter and general amusement. The word is an abbreviation of 'laugh out loud'. The meaning is now widened and may be both direct and sarcastic, but sarcastic is used more often (see Appendix 5).

3) **'Trollface'** is a black and white drawing of a face with a large mischievous grin that is meant to portray the expression someone makes while making a fool of someone else. Posting a Trollface image into a forum thread is often used to claim that someone was being fooled or intentionally angered. The face commonly appears in the Internet indicating that someone is being mischievous in some way. 'Trolldad' is a meme depicting a father asking his son or daughter a question and setting them up to make a stupid pun or lame joke. Upon realizing that he/she has been 'trolled', the child goes into 'rage mode' (or 'FFFFFFFUUUUUUUUUUUU') (see Appendix 6).

4) **'FFFFFFFUUUUUUUUUUUU' or 'Rageguy' or 'F7U12'** portray situations which can bring rage and exasperation, with the main character screaming with anger as a result. Due to its simplicity and exploitability, Rageguy has become popular. The

name 'F7U12' is the shortened variant (7 letters 'F' and 12 letters 'U') and is used mostly in SMS and chat rooms. The meaning is also both sarcastic and direct. The word may be used as a taboo replacement for the word 'fuck' or any other abusive expression of anger (see Appendix №6).

5) **'Okay guy'** is a sullen-looking character who is accompanied by the word 'okay'. The meme is often used to convey a feeling of hopeless resignation. The process of narrowing can be seen: it is not the OK we use every day to agree with someone or to depict a sarcastic negation. The meaning is changed and became more degraded. The meme is also an eponym, because it was created after a man on Serj Tankian's concert (see Appendix 7).

6) **'Yao Ming face'** is a contour drawing of the professional basketball player Yao Ming wearing a hearty smile. The meme is an eponym. The image is typically used as a reaction to convey a dismissive attitude towards someone else's input in online discussions. The meaning is diffused and depends on whom it is used by (see Appendix 8).

7) **'If you know what I mean'** is a meme based on a still frame of actor Rowan Atkinson portraying the fictional character Mr. Bean. It is used to point out a double entendre in a post, commonly in the form of sexual innuendo. The meaning is very interesting: the adding of the eponym 'if you know what I mean' at the end of a sentence makes the whole sentence sound sexual (usually with an abusive sense) (see Appendix 9).

8) **'True story'** is a comic character based on a black and white contour drawing of 'How I Met Your Mother' character Barney Stinson (played by actor Neil Patrick Harris) smiling smugly while holding a wine glass. Often accompanied by the text 'true story', the meme indicates or falsely claims that a statement based on a true story. The meme is also an eponym (see Appendix 10).

9) **'You don't say?'** is a meme based on a contour drawing of Nicolas Cage that is used as a sarcastic response to an obvious observation or statement, with similar meaning as 'O, really?' The phrase "you don't say" is an idiomatic expression used to convey surprise or astonishment but it can be also used sarcastically in response to an obvious statement. The image of Nicolas Cage was taken from a scene in the 1988 black comedy film Vampire's Kiss. The meme is an eponym (see Appendix 11).

10) **‘Me gusta’** is a meme that is typically used to express one’s approval of an awkward or perverse situation. The caption ‘Me gusta’ is borrowed from Spanish and translates to ‘I like it’. In its beginning, the phrase conveyed an odd sense of pleasure in sexually perverse contexts, but the meaning has since broadened to describe a more general state of being disturbed and pleased at the same time (see Appendix 12).

The aim of the analysis above was to find out which word-formation processes and semantic mechanisms are mostly used in creating English Internet slang and memes. The results are expected: the processes of abbreviation (30-40%), shortening (20-30%) and semantic shift (in 70% of the cases the meaning is changed) are predominantly used. It is logical as the processes above are probably very simple to use and do not take a lot of time and linguistic skills to be applied.

CHAPTER III

THE IMPACT OF ENGLISH INTERNET SLANG AND MEMES ON THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

There is an opinion that the youth makes the language. Maybe it is not completely right, but no doubt the young have a very big impact on it. The popularity of English Internet slang has become quite influential not only for Russian slang but for the Russian language as well. Many English Internet slang words have been adopted by the Russian Internet community which mostly consists of young people. It is very interesting how people reconstruct word forms and invent new words on the basis of the English Internet slang and use them as their native ones (American Speech 2000).

3.1 Russian word-formation of English Internet slang words

According to E.M. Beregovskaya, Russian slang has a great quantity of borrowings from English. Before a word gets its rusified form it usually has to change. The ways and means of slang formation are varied, but they all help to adjust any English word to Russian reality and make it suitable for using. The following methods include principle means of slang formation (Стилистика в подробностях 2009):

1) **Calk.** This method describes the way of borrowing, when a word is taken from English to Russian without rusification, so the pronunciation, writing and meaning stay unchanged. These borrowings are usually assimilated; each sound in the borrowed word is substituted by appropriate sound in Russian with phonetic regulations and the letters are written in Russian.

Examples:

- 'lmao' – 'лмао'.
- 'kmp (kill me please)' – 'кмп'.
- 'lol' – 'лол'
- 'OMG' – 'ОМГ'
- 'wtf' – 'втф'. The word is usually written in capitals 'ВТФ?', or some vowels are added 'ватафа?'

- ‘gg’ (‘good game’) – ‘гг, гэгэ, гггг’. The word is used in online games by a winning team. In Russian some letters are usually duplicated to show the superiority of the winning team.
- ‘imho’ (‘in my honest opinion’) – ‘имхо’. The meaning stays unchanged.
- ‘to luk’ or ‘to l8k’ (‘to look’) becomes ‘лук’, which means ‘to look’ (‘смотреть’) and has nothing similar with original Russian ‘лук’ (‘onion’). In Russian can also transform into ‘лукай’, ‘лукать’, ‘лукнуть’.

2) Semi-calk. This method takes place, when a word is borrowed from English to Russian and is changed according to its norms of grammar and spelling. Most borrowed words undergo this method after they have got used to. Nouns, for example, acquire case endings: ‘application’ – ‘аппликуха, аппликуху, аппликухи.’

Examples:

- ‘app’ – ‘аппа, аппу’.
- ‘apps’ – ‘аппсы’
- ‘to friend’ – ‘зафрендить’. It is seen, that the Russian affix is added.
- ‘to unfriend’ – ‘отфрендить’. Here the affix is added.

3) Translation. Sometimes words are translated from English to Russian. Translation of the words using unassociated Russian words gives a new connotation.

Examples:

- ‘tunes’ from ‘iTunes’ (Apple software for devices) transforms into Russian ‘тунец’ which is the name of the fish (tuna in English). There no similarities between Apple iTunes and tuna, so it becomes harder to understand what a Russian person speaks about. It is already a matter of context.
- ‘arphone’ from ‘Apple phone’ becomes ‘яблофон’ (from Russian ‘яблоко’).
- ‘facepalm’ turns into ‘рукалицо’
- ‘to troll’ – ‘троллить, затроллить, оттроллить’. Different Russian affixes may be also added.

4) Phonetic mimicry. This method is based on phonetic coincidence of words from English Internet slang with semantically dissimilar Russian words. Even without having anything in common, these words are used with similar meaning (Oxford University Working Papers in Linguistics, Philology & Phonetics: 9-20).

Examples:

- ‘obaminate’ (‘to cut out, to eliminate’) – абонемент
- ‘error’ – ‘Егор’
- ‘douche’ (‘an idiot’) – ‘душ’ or ‘душара’.

3.2 Factors of influence

Modern pop music culture

Everybody likes music. Modern pop music turns to be a mixture of different cultures, musical streams and styles. English music is one of the most popular among Russian people, especially the youth. It is very strange, but somehow Russian music tends not to be loved by many Russian young people.

English language and the development of computing and Internet

Russian youth is very attracted to computers. The social life of Russian-speaking young people is concentrated on web-resources, social networks, forums and other online sources. Due to this social development, many new Russian jargon, or slang words occur.

English is the language of the Internet. So it is very predictable that Russian is under the influence of English. It is interesting that even those who have never studied English understand the new Russian words adopted from English Internet slang. For example, not many Russian people may know what the word ‘lol’ (‘lots of laughs’ or ‘laughing out loud’) originally means. It is also borrowed into Russian (‘лол’) and probably every Russian youngster knows what it is. The other example is ‘np (no problems)’, which is ‘нп’ in Russian. This borrowing is very significant, because it is not only taken from English to Russian, but has a fully Russian meaning – ‘нет проблем’. It is strange, but there is no proof of using the abbreviation ‘нп’ in Russian before it came from English Internet slang (Словарь молодёжного сленга).

Russian youth uses English Internet slang words every day. For now most of them are used as slang, but with the development of the Internet and its integration into all aspects of our life, they get closer to standard Russian vocabulary. It is normal to hear ‘вчера был такой фан’ (‘it was so fun yesterday’) or ‘он так набузился, набузькался’ (formed from ‘booze’; means ‘he was so drunk’) (ibid)

3.3 Examples of English Internet slang used in Russian

The following Russian slang words were chosen for the example, because they originally come from English and are very popular among Russian Internet users.

- ‘джихад’ from English slang word ‘jihad’ (originally an Islamic term), which is used when a teacher asks hard questions or someone is not in the mood. For example, ‘When I finally got home, she started to jihad me’. The same sentence will be normal in Russian slang: ‘Когда я вернулся домой, она устроила мне джихад’ (Словарь молодёжного сленга).
- ‘нобрэйнер’ from English ‘no-brainer’, which is a synonym for ‘stupid’: ‘My wife is no-brainer, but I love her’. In Russian a word ‘безмозглый’ is native and should be used instead of ‘нобрэйнер’, but we can still hear such sentences like ‘Как можно быть таким нобрэйнером?’ or ‘Ты такой нобрэйнер!’ (ibid.)
- ‘брэйн-дэд’ from ‘brain-dead’, a strong synonym of ‘no-brainer’ can also be found in Russian speech. ‘Этот парень брэйн-дэд’ for ‘This guy is stupid’ (ibid.)
- ‘талибан’ for ‘taliban’, or ‘a weird man, a geek’. If someone thinks that you are weird, he will say ‘ну ты и талибан’ (ibid.)
- ‘Osama’ or ‘a bad guy’ transformed into phonetically similar Russian ‘усатый’, which is also an example of phonetic mimicry. Both ‘taliban’ and ‘Osama’ words came from ‘terrorist humor’, which is a big problem in modern English society. ‘Osama’ is also used instead of ‘Obama’ when one wants to blame the US government for something. In Russian the phrase ‘Обама виноват’ is also used, but ‘усатый виноват’ is more frequent (Klimenko 2012: 2).
- ‘true story’ – an Internet meme. The picture of it or the phrase itself is used after any statement to convince a person. The meme is also translated and used in Russian: ‘тпру стари’. The process of borrowing is seen. The meaning stays unchanged.

- ‘куш’ – from English ‘kush’, a strain of Cannabis. In Russian slang the meaning stays unchanged: ‘Куш что надо’ or ‘отличный был куш’.
- ‘made in China’ or ‘madeinchina’ or abbreviation ‘MiC’ or ‘MiCh’ (indicates the poor quality of something, like in ‘He is a madeinchina friend’ which means ‘he is a bad friend’) – ‘мэйд ин чайна’. Sometimes the phrase is mispronounced (‘сделано в чине’) to put a stress on bad quality. The other variant is ‘зроблено в чине’ from the word ‘зроблено’ (from the Ukrainian ‘made’), which means the worst quality ever. The use of the Ukrainian word is explained by a negative attitude of some Russians towards the Ukraine and a poor quality of its products.

CONCLUSION

The present research was aimed at studying English word-formation and semantic mechanisms, to analyze word-formation processes and semantic mechanisms used in English Internet slang and memes creation and to find possible connections between English Internet slang and Russian Internet slang to either proof or refute the hypothesis that English Internet slang and memes are predominantly created by the processes of shortening, abbreviation and semantic shift and that English Internet slang and memes have an impact on Russian language and culture.

The first chapter was focused on the subject of English word-formation and semantic mechanisms, introducing the processes of creating new words and meanings. It has been aimed to show that English slang words are created on the basis of the rules of English lexicology, which makes slang a part of the English language. The processes and history of English word-formation were described in detail to show the size of slang's area and its importance. There are 11 most known processes of word-formation (coinage, borrowing, nonce words, calquing, compounding (composition), blending, clipping (shortening), back-formation, abbreviation, eponyms, conversion, derivation) and 9 standard semantic mechanisms (extension, narrowing, metonymy, metaphor, meiosis, hyperbole, taboo replacement, amelioration, degeneration) in English. The combination of these tools makes English very rich and unique.

The empirical part of the research consists of analysis of 30 most popular (Urban Dictionary) English Internet slang word and 10 most popular (Internet Meme Database) English Internet memes. The aim of the analysis is to find out which word-formation processes and semantic mechanisms are mostly used in creating English Internet slang and memes. The results are expected: the processes of abbreviation (30-40%), shortening (20-30%) and semantic shift (in 70% of the cases the meaning is changed) are predominantly used. It is clear as the processes above are probably the simplest and every single person can use them without any linguistic knowledge. This information allows us to prove the first hypothesis which is 'English Internet slang and memes are predominantly created by shortening, abbreviation and semantic shift'.

The third chapter takes an aim at studying the impact of English Internet slang and memes on Russian. The chapter includes examples of different popular English Internet slang words and their variants or forms in Russian. It is seen that many words of

English Internet slang come to Russian and take roots in Russian culture and everyday life as well. The examples given allow us to prove the second hypothesis which is ‘English Internet slang and memes have the impact on Russian.’

As it can be seen, the most popular English Internet slang words are created by means of different word-formation processes. As it can be seen, English Internet slang and memes appear mostly due to the processes of abbreviation and shortening (see Appendix 2). Having been created after pictures of famous people, the most popular Internet memes are eponyms. The process of forming new Internet slang words becomes simpler, because the Internet is a multicultural phenomenon and many Internet users are not that proficient in English. The words used in the creation of memes are very simple too and usually have only one meaning in the Internet community.

Most of the words and memes analyzed above are humorous; some are, however, offensive. The sarcastic meaning of some English Internet slang words and probably all the memes is very strong: people try to express thoughts more colourfully and unusually to draw attention. Due to fast developing and extremely unstable Internet environment life, where everything is possible, the processes of abbreviation and shortening are mostly used – the words made by shortening and abbreviation are shorter, more simple and do not take long to remember. The other reason of using abbreviation and shortening is accessibility. These processes are simple to apply and do not need any special preparations, training or linguistic skills. The correlation is almost equal. Abbreviation is used in 30-40% of the most popular Internet slang words, shortening takes about 30%. Other 10-20% are spontaneous words or created not by abbreviation or shortening.

English Internet memes are widely used among Russian Internet habitants. Moreover, the memes are the same; the only difference is that in Russian the memes are translated from English. It is very interesting how two different cultures share an understanding of humorous pictures, facts and events. The points of view and the humour itself are different and it is not just a coincidence that they are understood in the same way. The reason of such an integration of two cultures is the Internet. It can be seen that the most popular English Internet memes have their twins in Russian Internet community (see Appendix 3). The influence is remarkable: the Russian youth becomes more attracted to English culture and language, the use of Internet memes is a ‘passive’ language study for Russian youngsters. The final result of this integration may be enormous: in future

we may witness a total symbiosis of two Internet environments. It would probably be the most optimistic forecast (Melnyk 2010: 1).

KOKKUVÕTE

Käesoleva töö eesmärgiks oli uurida ja analüüsida inglise sõnamoodustus- ja semantilisi mehhanisme, mis on kasutatud inglise Internetslängi (Nettislängi) ja meemide loomiseks ning leida võimalikke seoseid vene Internetslängi ja inglise Internetslängi vahel. Kas tõendada või ümber lükata hüpoteese:

- 1) inglise Nettisläng ja meemid on peamiselt loodud tänu lühendile, lühendamisele ning semantilise nihkele
- 2) inglise Nettislängil on suur mõju vene keelele ja kultuurile.

Esimene peatükk keskendus teemal: inglise sõnamoodustus ja semantilised mehhanismid, sõnade ja tähenduste moodustamise protsessid. Eesmärgiks oli näidata, et inglise slängi sõnad on moodustatud inglise keele reeglite järgi, mis teeb ka slängist keeleosa. Selleks, et näidata inglise slängi tähtsust, olid kõik sõnamoodustus protsessid ja semantilised mehhanismid detailselt kirjeldatud.

Inglise keeles on olemas 11 tuntuimat sõnamoodustus protsessi (sõnade loomine, juhuslik loomine, tõlkelaen, liitsõna, segamine, lühendamine, taga-moodustamine, lühend, eponüümid, konversioon, tuletamine) ja 9 semantilist mehhanismi (laiend, ahenemine, metonüümia, metafoor, meiosis, hüperbool, tabu asendamine, leevendamine, degeneratsioon). Tänu nende tööriistade kombinatsioonile on inglise keel nii rikas ja unikaalne.

Antud töö empiiriline osa koosneb analüüsist (30 kõige populaarsemat inglise Nettislängi sõna (Urban Dictionary) ja 10 kõige populaarsemat inglise Interneti meemi (Internet Meme Database) olid läbi vaadatud ning analüüsitud). Analüüsi eesmärgiks oli välja selgitada, milliseid sõnamoodustus protsesse ja semantilisi mehhanisme kõige enam kasutatakse inglise Nettislängi ja meemide loomiseks.

Analüüsi tulemused on ettearvatavad: peamiselt kasutatakse lühendit (30-40%), lühendamist (20-30%) ja semantilist nihet (täendus muutub 70% juhtudest). Tulemus on loogiline, kuna need kolm protsessi on ilmselt väga lihtsad ja igaüks saab ilma probleemideta neid kasutada. Saadud informatsioon võimaldab meil tõestada esimest hüpoteesi, mis väidab: "inglise Nettislängi ja meemid on peamiselt loodud lühendamise, lühendi ning semantilise nihke alusel".

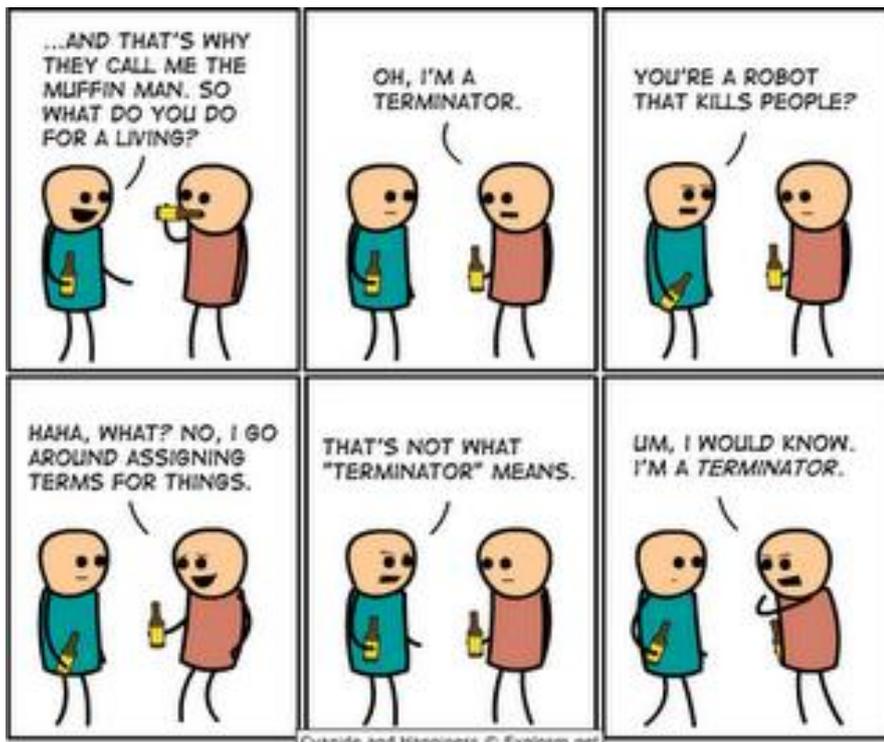
Kolmas peatükk võtab eesmärgiks inglise Nettislängi ja meemide mõju vene keelele. Peatükis on erinevad inglise Nettislängi sõnad ja nende variandid vene keeles. On näha, et paljud inglise Internetislängi sõnad tulid vene keelde ja neid kasutatakse vene kultuuris ja igapäevaelus. Näited võimaldavad meil tõestada teist hüpoteesi, mis väidab, et "inglise Nettislangis ja meemidel on mõju vene keelele."

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Appendix №1. Semantic widening



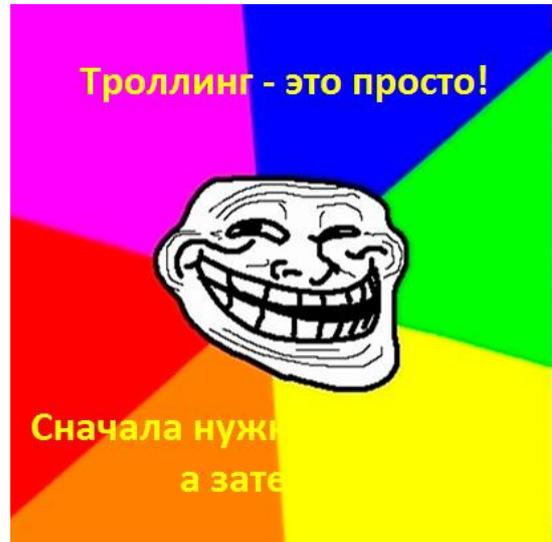
Appendix №2. English Internet slang words

- AFAIC — "as far as I'm concerned", or "as far as I care", or "as far as I can..."
- AFAIK — "as far as I know"
- AFAIR — "as far as I recall", or "as far as I remember"
- AFK — "away from keyboard"
- ASAP — "as soon as possible"
- BBL — "be back later"
- BBS — "be back soon"
- BFD — "big fucking deal"
- BRB — "be right back" (usually used in chats and on an instant messenger service).
- BTW — "by the way"
- B2B — "Business to Business"
- C&V — Chapter & Verse. Used in newsgroups.
- C|N>K — a Unix -ism meaning "coffee through nose into keyboard"
- cya — "see you", used as a goodbye.
- CU — "see you", used as a goodbye.
- CYS — "Check your settings". A phrase often said by technical support staff of a certain Australian ISP.
- FAQ — "Frequently Asked Question"
- FFS — "for fuck's sake!"
- FOAF — "friend of a friend", i.e. the dubious attribution given to urban legends
- FYI — "for your information"
- G2G — "got to go". Used in chatrooms.
- GAGF — "go and get fucked"
- GFY — "good for you" or "go fuck yourself". The use of this acronym is ambiguous and not recommended.
- GG — "good going" or "good game". Used sincerely in online games such as trivia, but more often used sarcastically when someone has done something foolish. Also, it is now becoming customary for all players to say "gg" when the game is over in such games as Counter-Strike , unless a player is profoundly displeased with the outcome.
- GJ — Good Job
- HAND — "have a nice day"
- HTH — "hope this helps"
- IANAL — "I am not a lawyer". Usually used before a non-lawyer gives legal advice, as a humorous disclaimer.
- IANARS — "I am not a rocket scientist"
- IC — "I see", also, "in character" in MUDs and role-playing games .
- ICYDK / ICYDN / ICUDK -- "In case you didn't know."

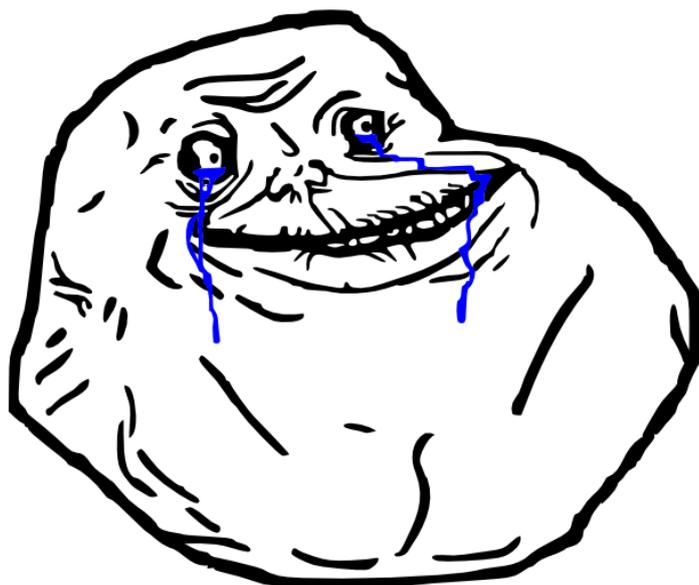
- IIRC — "if I recall correctly" c.f. ISTR
 - IMHO — "in my humble opinion" / "in my honest opinion"
 - IMO — "in my opinion"
 - IMNSHO — "in my not-so-humble opinion"
 - IRC — "Internet Relay Chat"
 - IRL - "in real life". Used in MUD settings.
 - ISTR — "I seem to recall" (i.e. I'm not really sure) c.f. IIRC
 - IYDMMA — "if you don't mind me asking", for ex., "IYDMMA, are you a virgin?"
 - JJ or JK (j/k) — "just joking", "just kidding"
 - Joo — synonym of you. Also spelled j00 with a lower case j and two zeroes rather than two O's.
 - JOOC — "just out of curiosity"
 - k — short for "OK"
 - l8 — a shorthand spelling of "late".
 - l8r — a shorthand spelling of "later", meaning "see you later" (see leet)
- LIEK — synonym of like, as in "I like that website".
- LMAO — "laughing my ass off"
 - LOL — "laughing out loud", or "lots of laughs" (a reply to something amusing)
 - MYOB — "mind your own business"
 - NM (n/m) — "never mind" or "not much"
 - NOYB — "none of your business"
 - NP — "No Problem"
 - NSFW — "Not safe for work." Material (pictures, webpages) not suitable for the office, but for the home instead. Used by Fark . See SFW.
 - NT — "No Text", used on Internet forums or Usenet to indicate that a post has no content
 - O — "oh"
 - OIC — "oh, I see"
 - OMG — Exclamation, "Oh my God!!"
 - OMFG — Exclamation, "Oh my fucking God!!"
 - OMFL — Exclamation, "Oh my fucking lag!"
 - OOC — "out-of-character". Used on MUDs and other role-playing games . Also, "out of curiosity."
 - OT — "off topic"
 - OTOH — "on the other hand"
 - own - to defeat someone (used commonly when playing Counter-Strike) or to humiliate someone tactically in a debate; something that is extremely cool (ex. BMWs totally own).
 - PFO — "please fuck off"
 - PITA — "pain in the ass"
 - PO (PO'd) — "piss off" ("pissed off")
 - prog — "computer program" (progz in plural)
 - prolly — contracted form of "probably"

- plz — shorthand spelling of "please"
 - Pwn — step up of the word own. To "Pwn something" means to have complete control over it, and to be "Pwned by something" means to be dominated by it. (see leet)
- P2P — Person to Person
- qoolz — something that is "cool" in the American sense.
 - R — shorthand spelling of "are"
 - RL — "real life". Used in MUD settings.
 - ROFL (or ROTFL) — "rolling on the floor laughing" (a reply to something extremely amusing).
 - ROFLMAO (or ROTFLMAO) — "rolling on the floor laughing my ass off"
 - RTFA — "read the fucking article" applies mostly to Slashdot threads, for users who make comments on a story without having read it first.
 - RTFM — "read the fucking manual" (often sanitized to "read the fine manual"). The frequent reply to a request for basic help from newbies who have not attempted to find the answer for themselves.
 - R8 — right
 - SFW — "Safe for work." Material (pictures, webpages) that is safe for the office. Used by Fark . See NSFW.
 - STFU — "shut the fuck up"
 - sux0rs — leet speak for "sucks"
 - TBH — "to be honest"
 - thx — shorthand spelling of "thanks" - this can be combined into "kthx" (OK, thanks), "plzthx" (Please, OK, thanks), and "kthxbye" (OK, thanks, goodbye)
 - TTFN — Ta Ta For Now
 - TIA — "thanks in advance"
 - TTYL — "talk to you later"
 - U — a shorthand spelling of "you"
 - ur — a shorthand spelling of "you're"
 - w/e — slang/abbreviation for whatever
 - w/o — without
 - WDUWTA — "what do u wanna talk about?"
 - WTF — "what the fuck?"
 - YMMV — "Your mileage may vary " (you may see different results)
 - w00t — exclamation of excitement or happiness; closely related to, "hell yea!" (short for woohoo) or We Owned the Other Team
 - w8 — shorthand spelling of "wait".
 - X > * — definition of something [X] is better than everything [*].
 - <3 — "love" (made from the ASCII-art heart between the less than symbol and the three). Ex: I <3 you.
 - 2B - To be
 - 4 - for

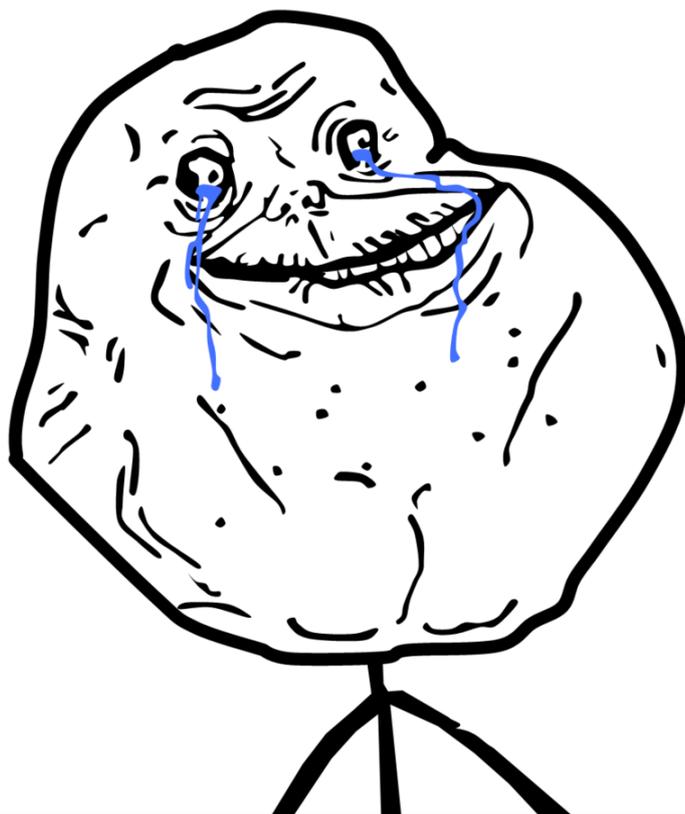
Appendix №3. Twin memes



Appendix №4. 'Forever alone'



FOREVER ALONE



Appendix №5. 'LOL'



Nurse. What's the status on the boy who swallowed all the quarters?



Still no change.



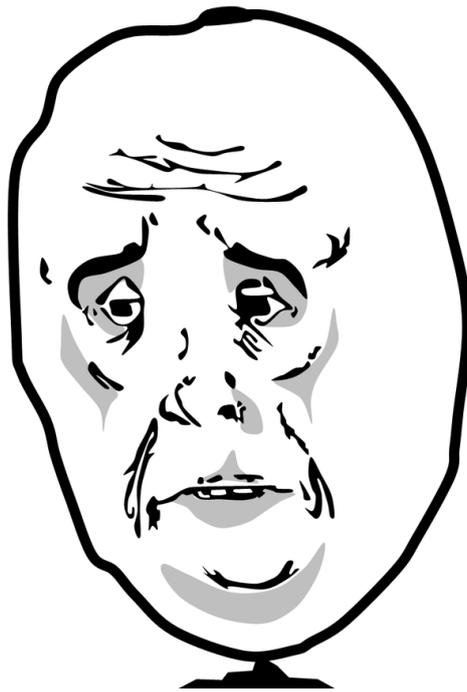
LOL JOJ



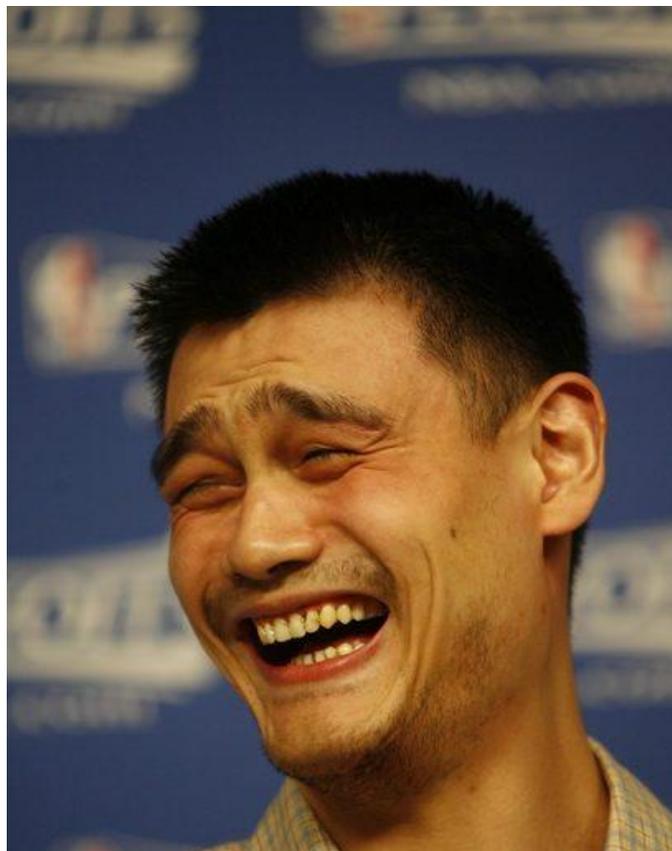
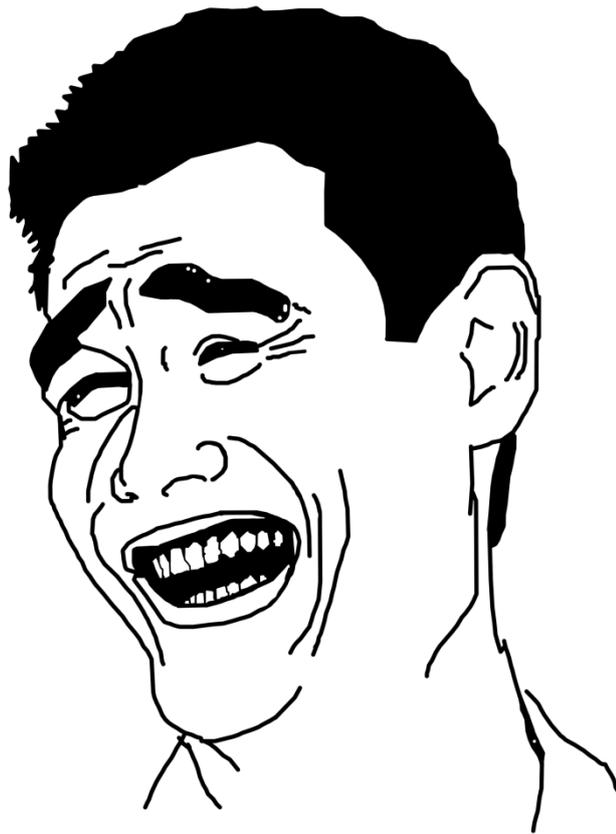
Appendix №6. 'Trolldad' and 'FFFFUUUUU'



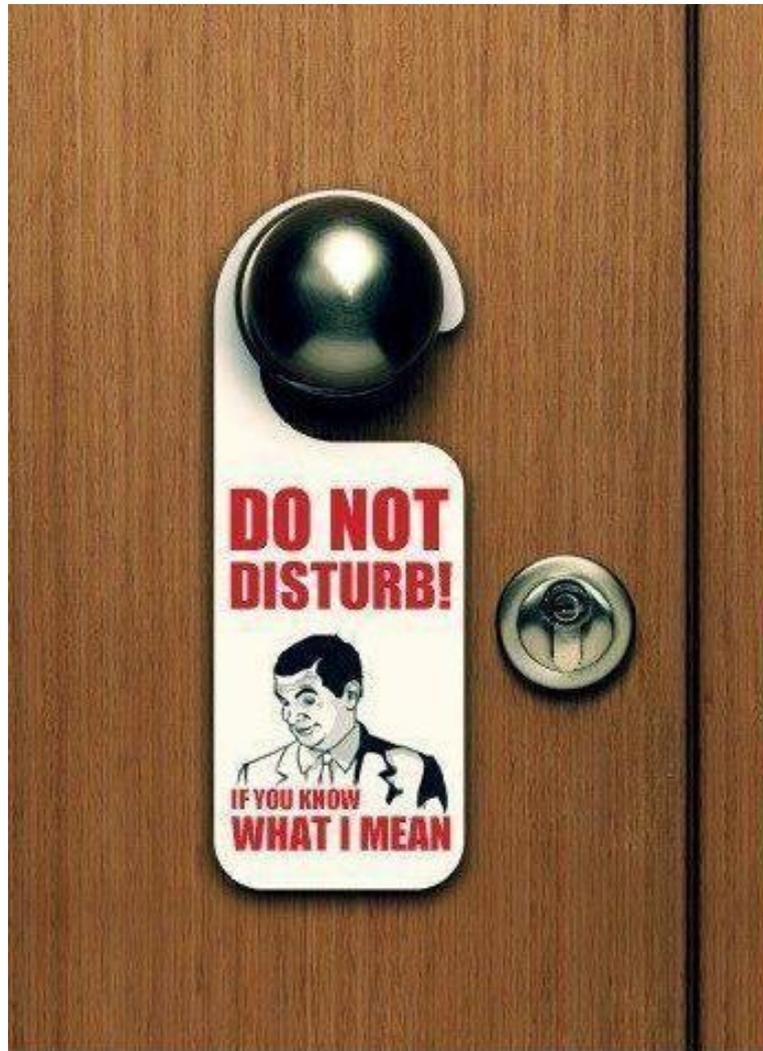
Appendix №7. 'Okay guy'



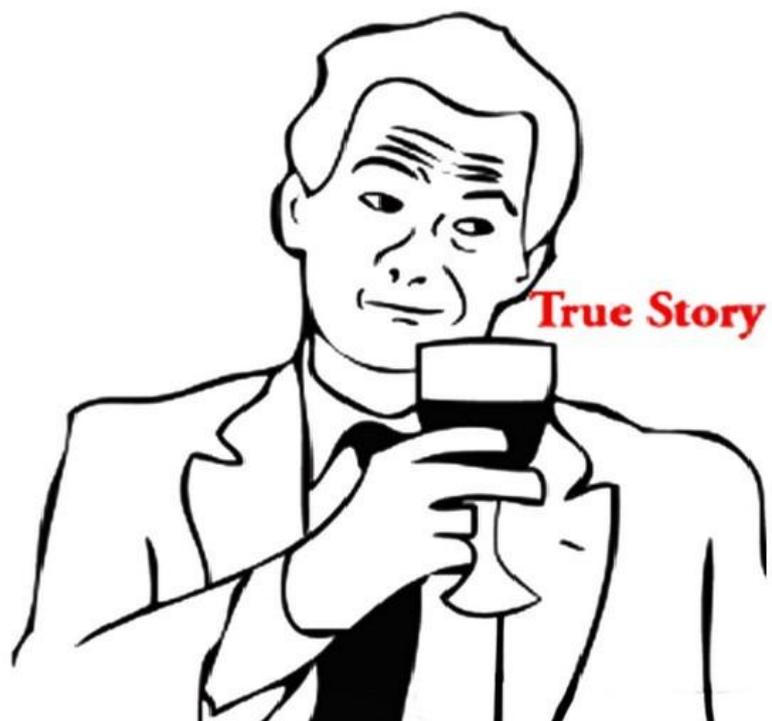
Appendix №8. 'Yao Ming face'



Appendix №9. 'If you know what I mean'



Appendix №10. 'True story'



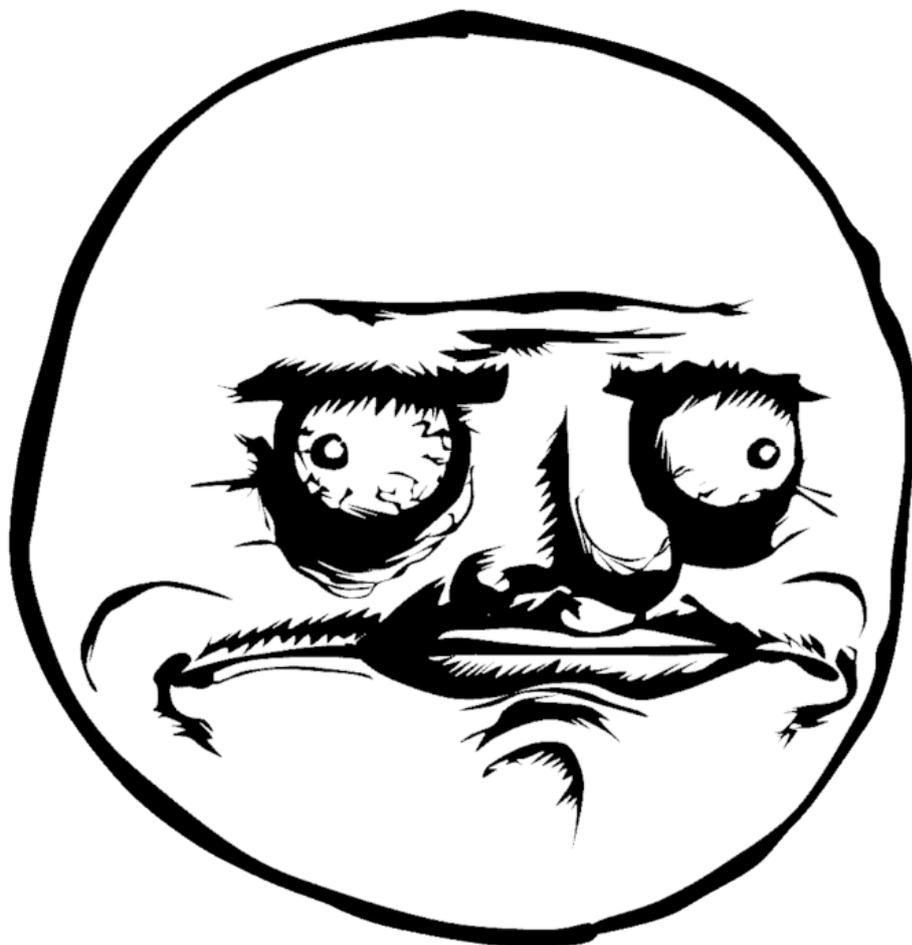
Appendix №11. 'You don't say?'



YOU DON'T SAY?



Appendix №12. 'Me gusta'



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