



The Development Of Orthographic Norms In Contemporary Russian: Trends And Challenges

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ABSTRACT

The article analyzes the dynamics of orthographic norms in contemporary Russian and identifies key trends in their development. It examines linguistic and extralinguistic factors that contribute to spelling instability, as well as challenges in implementing the norm in writing practice. Particular attention is paid to the orthography of loanwords as one of the most variable areas of modern written usage.

Keywords:

orthographic norm, spelling, loanwords, variability, codification, language usage.

Orthographic norms constitute a core component of linguistic culture and ensure consistency in written communication. In the contemporary development of the Russian language, the processes of globalization, the active borrowing of vocabulary, the spread of online communication, and the transformation of speech practices significantly affect the stability of spelling conventions. As a result, orthographic variability is increasing, and fluctuations in the spelling of words are becoming more frequent.

The relevance of this study is determined by the need to conceptualize the patterns of orthographic-norm development, identify the causes of its instability, and outline ways to improve codification.

Orthographic norms are traditionally understood as a type of linguistic norm that regulates the choice of a word's graphic form. They constitute a system of generally binding rules *закреплённых* in dictionaries and reference works and ensure uniformity in written language.

As S. Yu. Kharchenko notes, the orthographic norm has a two-component nature and includes

the orthogram and the rule governing its realization. At the same time, the norm is dynamic and subject to change under the influence of both internal linguistic processes and external factors [2]. Consequently, orthography cannot be regarded as a static system: it evolves together with the language.

An important feature of the orthographic norm is its secondary nature in relation to other levels of the language. Changes in phonetics, morphology, word formation, or vocabulary inevitably find reflection in writing. Therefore, the codification of spelling consistently lags behind actual language use.

The current stage in the development of Russian orthography is characterized by several stable tendencies.

First, there is an increase in spelling variability, especially in the domain of new words.

Second, the boundaries between the norm and usage are becoming blurred, as actual practice increasingly influences dictionary codification.

Third, the role of the digital environment is growing, where adherence to orthographic standards is often relaxed.

S. Yu. Kharchenko emphasizes that errors in the realization of the norm have both intralinguistic causes (changes in the language system, the complexity of rules, and the mismatch between codification and the current state of the language) and extralinguistic ones (a decline in reading culture, the influence of Internet communication, and language play in advertising) [2].

Thus, the orthographic norm exists at the intersection of two forces-codification and usage.

The dynamic nature of the orthographic norm is most vividly manifested in the sphere of borrowings. I. V. Nechaeva notes that it is foreign-language neologisms that demonstrate the greatest graphic variability and can be regarded as “champions” in terms of the number of orthographic fluctuations [1].

This can be explained by several factors:

- the absence of an established spelling tradition;
- competition between transcription and transliteration;
- mismatches between the phonetic systems of the languages;
- the influence of analogical patterns within Russian.

In written usage, variants such as *brend/brend* (бренд/брэнд), *ofshor/offshor* (офшор/оффшор), *onlain/on-lain* (онлайн/он-лайн), *fitnes/fitness* (фитнес/фитнесс), and *pleer/pleyer* (плеер/плейер) coexist, which indicates the instability of the graphic form of such words.

According to I. V. Nechaeva, the written assimilation of borrowings proceeds in two stages:

- the graphic stage - a period of fluctuation and competition between variants;
- the orthographic stage - the закрепление of one spelling in codifying sources [1].

Therefore, variability should be regarded as a natural stage in the formation of the norm. The implementation of the norm in writing practice is complicated by a number of factors.

Intralinguistic factors include:

- the complexity of rules;
- delayed codification of changes;

- contradictions between tradition and contemporary usage.

Extralinguistic factors include:

- a decline in the level of linguistic culture;
- the influence of unedited Internet texts;
- the spread of language play and advertising spellings [2].

These factors lead to a situation in which even codified forms are not always perceived as obligatory, which weakens the normative status of orthography.

Researchers generally agree that orthographic policy should take into account real tendencies of usage. Norm-setting cannot be arbitrary; it must be based on actual language practice and linguistically grounded criteria.

According to I. V. Nechaeva, when selecting a normative variant it is important to consider not formal uniformity, but the linguistic foundations of spelling and frequency of usage [1]. This approach helps to avoid artificial decisions that contradict living speech.

Thus, the development of orthographic norms in contemporary Russian is characterized by dynamism and variability. The most unstable area remains the spelling of borrowed words. Norm formation occurs through the interaction of codification and usage, while its implementation depends both on internal linguistic processes and on the social conditions in which the language functions.

Prospects for further research are associated with monitoring written practice, improving dictionary codification, and developing flexible mechanisms of norm regulation.

References

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