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Russian-Speaking Media Space Anglicization in the Aspect of Linguoecology

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Abstract

For last two decades, it has become possible to speak not only about massive lexical borrowing, but about the real anglicization of the Russian-speaking communicative space, and this has become a factor of serious linguistic conflict, since, on the one hand, the process can be considered as inevitable and even beneficial, and on the other hand, negative and even catastrophic. If language activity is considered to be not external to a person, but essential, forming a person as a social being, then it is obvious that the language code participates in this formation. Public language practice influences the peculiarities of human phylogeny, the system of existential guidelines and value parameters, individual and social cognition. Therefore, it is extremely important to define how the very concept of anglicization is correct in relation to the modern Russian language and to evaluate the impact of cultural and linguistic contacts on the modern Russian language. The purpose of the article is to study the phenomenon of Russian-speaking media space anglicization as a linguistic conflict, taking into account the functioning of anglicisms in various communicative spheres. The source of the language material was text fragments containing multilevel anglicisms. Since the article deals with the current state of the Russian language, relevant media texts were involved in the analysis. To solve this problem, the methods of linguopragmatic and sociolinguistic interpretation of linguistic facts were used. This article contains an attempt to answer these global questions (in the context of modern ecological linguistics).

Keywords: language contacts, language functions, globalization, borrowings, anglicization, linguoculture, social and verbal conflicts, ecological thinking, linguoecology.

1. Introduction

A lot of scientific works are devoted to the problem of borrowing Anglo-Americanisms into Russian and other European languages in the context of globalization (Gutorova, 2016; Ismagilova, 2018; 2020; Kotlyarova, 2020; Sarkisyants, 2019; Solnyshkina, 2015; Solnyshkina, Ismagilova, 2016 and others). A new perspective of this problem is presented in the works of many researchers (Bondarenko, 2020; Boyko, 2016; Kravchenko, 2013; 2014; Voronina, 2016, where the authors investigate the influence of anglicisms on the state of the host linguoculture as a whole. In a number of works (Artemyev, 2019; 2020; 2021; Boyko, 2014; 2015; Fakhrutdinova, 2019; Kravchenko, 2014, etc.), the process of anglicization is described both traditionally (with reference to the lexical level) and as “the introduction of orthoepic, spelling, word-formation and grammatical standards and models into modern Russian language practice, typical for the Anglo-American linguoculture” (Boyko, 2016: 4). The lexical borrowings themselves in this approach are

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only the part of this global phenomenon. According to K.S. Zakhvataeva, English gets a new status and it starts carrying out in the Russian communicative space “the function of a perstratum, has become an important donor of neolexems in the field of spiritual culture, science and technology” (Zakhvataeva, 2013).

Anglicization as a communicative phenomenon seems to reflect cognitive processes determined by the dynamics of modern Russian society. Even if the process of ordinary lexical borrowing causes today (as a rule, due to its special globality) contradictory opinions, then anglicization often seems to be a phenomenon threatening the entire Russian linguoculture, disturbing the ecological balance (about the categories of ecological linguistics and ecological thinking (Hodges, 2013: 93-103; Steffensen, 2014: 6-25).

2. Materials and methods

The source of the language material was text fragments containing multilevel anglicisms. Since the article deals with the current state of the Russian language, relevant media texts were involved in the analysis. To solve this problem, the methods of linguopragmatic and sociolinguistic interpretation of linguistic facts were used.

3. Discussion

Thus, the English language influence is considered to be either as fruitful borrowing, or as pernicious anglicization. The current state of the Russian language can be presented by two diametrically opposite opinions: 1. Russian is still one of the most prosperous languages in the world today, and as for massive borrowing from English, in the era of globalism (Langer, Gruber, 2021; Van Duyn, Collier, 2019), all the languages face this, except English itself; 2. the Russian language is suffering a catastrophe, a disaster due to the influx of Anglo-Americanisms. The most radical is M.A. Artemyev, according to his point of view the Russian language is “dead” (Artemyev, 2021; 2020; 2019). Of course, it is a metaphor (moreover, used not in scientific, but in publicistic media texts), and it most accurately conveys the author's evaluation.

So, let's take a closer look at the arguments of the second position (because the first one is more or less traditional). First of all, it is necessary to analyze various “sublanguages” from the point of view of anglicization, since it is not correct to draw general conclusions based on the material of one style or speech genre.

Indeed, media texts abound with anglicisms, first of all, from which it is concluded: this is a large-scale process in which “elements of the Russian language of different levels and different complexity are being replaced by English analogues for no apparent reason” and “this process can be considered as the initial phase of hybridization of language and culture” (Kravchenko, Boyko, 2014: 31-37).

It should be admitted, however, that the appearance of annoying anglicisms is most often motivated, and the proposed Russian analogues have a different, if not semantics, then pragmatics. As for the words *tvorchestvo* (creativity), *tvorcheskii* (creative), it has long been noticed: the “high” halo (in Russian) prevents its everyday use, and that is why anglicisms *kreativ* (noun), *kreativnyi* (adjective), devoid of such a halo, have become so in demand. Victoriya Tokareva wrote: “I don't like the word *tvorchestvo* (creativity), but I don't know how it can be replaced” (Tokareva, 2015: 4).

It is not easy for a person with a developed linguistic flair to say: “In my work ...”, but it can easily say an individual with exaggerated opinion of his own importance, while lacking sensitivity to the word, to the pragmatic components of speech.

It has been said for many times that anglicism *shopping* in Russian is not just shopping, and a *killer* in Russian is not identical to a Russian *ubiitsa* (killer). *Cleaning* in Russian is not usual cleaning, but a complex of cleaning services provided by a special organization, etc.

Anglicisms are necessary as laconic and capacious designations of concepts at the same time:

“*Most chaildfri (childfries) have higher education, do not have brothers and sisters*” (Terentyev, 2021a).

“*Konstantin Kinchev received an advance of 23 million rubles. Having broken his own record of 17 million (kraudfanding (crowdfunding) of the previous album, “Posolon”, 2019)*” (Moskvina, 2021c).

“*People suffering from pathological hoarding are called khordery (chorders) (from the English “miser”, “hoarder”), but the old definition of “Plyushkin” is also in use. All the khordery*

(chorders), *like Plyushkin, are very lonely people. Khording (Hording) is not funny, it is always scary and tragic*" (Kuznetsova, 2021: 10a).

The anglicism *fastud* is shorter than *setevoi restoran bystrogo pitaniya* (fast food chain restaurant) or the products of such a restaurant.

"*In the USA, it is called reshoring (reshoring) (from the English reshore as an antonym of offshore "withdrawal of production from the country")*" (Chuikov, 2021)

The title of the article "*Is there a kharassment (harassment) in the Bolshoi Theater?*" (Yashchenkov, 2021: 7). The text does not explain that anglicism means '*domogatel'stvo*' (harassment) at all; it is assumed that the word has already been sufficiently mastered semantically.

"*The "Interlocutor" collected stories in which the victims of the ab"yuz (abuse) are men. An ab"yuzer (abuser) is a person who systematically uses violence* (Kuznetsova, 2021: 10). After all, the Russian word *nasil'nik* (rapist) has a narrower and more specific meaning.

Anglicisms can carry in themselves an evaluation of the significance of the referent, and therefore a *laifkhak* (life hack) (ad litteram 'hacking life') is more and more significant than just 'useful advice' or a 'little trick' (these Russian words are sometimes suggested to replace anglicism).

If a word is rapidly conquering the communicative space (despite the fact that, at first glance, it is not connected with eliminating conceptual lacunae), this definitely has a reason. It can be presented by the example of the word *khaip* (hype), which seems to have an old analogue – galicism *azhiotazh* (hype). The popularity of the new anglicism is due to important cultural shifts and changes in the information space.

According to I. Levontina (Levontina, 2017), *khaip* (hype) is in whole the same as galicism *azhiotazh* (hype), but only as a result of the greatly increased speed of information exchange, this word reflects a new situation. In addition, we think that in semantics these words are not completely identical, because *khaip* (English *hype*) first of all is associated with aggressive advertising, it is a kind of trick used to attract attention to an event or to a person whose popularity is being inflated by artificial means. The chief director of the Moscow Art Theater after M.Gorky, E. Boyakov, explaining why Olga Buzova appeared on the famous stage of the venerable theatre, he needed the word *khaip* (hype) and its derivative: "*We khaipanuli (hyped it)*". The galicism *azhiotazh* (hype) would be completely off topic.

The Russian word *neudachnik* (loser) is replaced by *luzer* (loser), because, according to I. Levontina (Levontina, 2017), in the Russian word "sympathy is superfluous", and to express the idea "*I did not achieve and I am to blame, very bad*", *luzer* (loser) is more suitable.

It has long been noted that anglicisms have a special pragmatism of modernity and globalism, but they are also good for characterizing phenomena and events of the distant past, for example:

"*In the "Union of Salvation" there is one female role: a certain noble maiden shown by Sophia Ernst flaps her eyelashes for several times, in order to soften the image of Muravyov-Apostle (and in vain: the hero remains an inarticulate luzer (loser))*". (Moskvina, 2020a).

High-quality media texts don't contain overabundance of anglicisms, they often have various kinds of comments, including references to the prevalence of some designation:

"*The fact that Menshikov became, as they say, a frontmen (frontman) and a khedlainer (headliner) for his theatre, being engaged in seven performances, it is difficult not to recognise a public good: Menshikov is a star and a favourite of the public, an actor of the highest rank, and his name in the poster provides a full house for more than one decade*" (Moskvina, 2021b).

Anglicisms have become a powerful means of creating irony (Brusenskaya et al., 2022) in the media language: "*But then neighbours come to the rescue: services for upgrading old worn out shoes and jeans torn on the ass are in great demand*" (Terentyev, 2021: 9b). *ApgrÉid* (from English *upgrade*) – '*adding or replacing individual computer components with more advanced or faster ones, which together with the modular device of computers makes it possible to provide modernization and obtaining a more productive solution*'.

Media anglicisms filled conceptual or pragmatic lacunae demonstrate word-formation activity, quickly acquire derivatives: for example, a fragment of the traditional rubric in "Arguments and Facts", where individual statements of politicians, media characters are commented on:

"*A. Balkhi, member of the Taliban leadership: "We have an opportunity to unite to solve the problems facing all of humanity, in particular climate change"*.

Make no mistake, this is how the Taliban trollyat (troll) the West. Adjusted for the East – dzhinnyat” (from Eng. genie) (Repov, 2021).

“If we turn to history, the words “churchly” and “humanly” have never been absolute synonyms, for example, in the Middle Ages heretics and witches were burned at the stake. In retrospect, eviction from the school looks even laitovo” (light) (Kuznetsova, 2021: 7b)

Headline *Frikokratiya* (Freakocracy)

“Moral tuning forks are not easy for anyone in our fatherland – always, and especially today, in the era of the dictatorship of likes. He (Pavel Lobkov) united fresh guardians for the people, from the singing actor Pevtsov to the singing stylist Zverev, with the neologism “frikokratiya” (freakocracy)

... Frikokratiya (Freakocracy) is the realm of interchangeable kreativ (creativity) ... The community of frikokraty (freakocrats) from the box is a separate phenomenon of social nature” (Taroshchina, 2021).

Anglicisms of all the types, including macaronic inclusions, is an inexhaustible source of game texts:

The title: *“Kasparov – Star* (author’s note: pun intended based on English word *star* and writing in Latin the Russian word *star* (short adjective), *too star* (old) (Nikolaev, 2021) – *we are talking about the fact that the 58-year-old ex-world champion scored only 2.5 points out of 18 at the blitz tournament in Zagreb, and current chess is rapidly getting younger, old people are not able to rapidly calculate options in the era of computers for a board”.*

We think that none of the features that media texts (Boulianne, 2019) owe to anglicisms (and this is the conciseness and capacity of semantic content, subtle nuance of lexical semantics and pragmatic clarity, the ability to become a source of subtle stylistic effects and a word-formation base for replenishing the dictionary with derived units) can be abandoned without damage to the Russian language, the prosperity of which opponents of borrowings care so much. Therefore, it is hardly possible to classify such an “anglicization” of the media space as an ecological catastrophe (and such a tradition has already developed: diverse phenomena such as invectives, obscenisms in public speech and anglicisms are referred to “disasters” that the Russian language undergoes).

It must be admitted, even media directly specializing in anti-globalist rhetoric, for obvious reasons, cannot do without the latest anglicisms. Thus, in the newspaper “Soviet Russia” (where for the past thirty years hundreds of materials about the pollution of the Russian language with anglicisms, in particular, have been published. M. Zadornov published his resonant article “Anglovirus” there (Zadornov, 2015) we read: “One more such political technology is “partii-spoilery” (spoiler parties). (Vakhitov, 2021: 2).

Journalist Lidia Moniava strongly expressed: “borrowing is in some sense a betrayal”. But in the same text she was forced to stipulate: “I can write what means of expression I see in the *fandraizingovaya* (fundraising) area (the Russian word, unfortunately, does not exist) that I know well – journalism” (Moniava, 2016: 298-299).

In general, judging by the Proceedings “Journalists about the Russian language” (2016), most of them take a balanced position on anglicisms in the media, and the main points are as follows. Problems exist: we began to respect and appreciate our language less, which leads to separation; our words are “clearer to the audience, closer, kinder, warmer” than anglicisms (Popova, 2016: 330), but you can’t do without anglicisms, especially assimilated ones (but it is stupid to say *tiket* “ticket” instead of *bilet* (ticket). Borrowing is “a natural process, and what can be the attitude to a natural process?” (Lipatov, 2016: 250).

The overwhelming number of statements are about a sense of proportion and relevance (Deligiaouri, 2018; Fitzpatrick, 2018; Jang, Kim, 2018; Lane, 2020), for example: “We are in a free information space. The appropriate use of borrowings is a matter of taste and proportion” (Sapgir, 2016: 363); it is necessary to use “no more than 5-6 foreign words per newspaper spread” (Posina, 2016: 330); “it is not good to say a *kreativnyi* (creative) conceptual *trendsetter* (trendsetter)” (Gorshkova, 2016: 141). Thus, they speak on a balance between native words and new borrowings, which provides linguistic and ecological parameters of communication.

The “strong zone” of foreign language influence is advertising, artificial onomastics (urbanonyms and ergonyms). This is what is called the linguistic landscape of the city. In addition to transnational names such as Macdonald’s, signages are decorated with countless creations of “creative nominees” who tend exclusively to foreign languages: for example, Russian trademarks patented in English such as Savage, Polaris, Kanzle and so on. “Anglicized names of Russian

companies are the result of deliberate actions of advertisers, which, in their opinion, contributes to the success of the organization” (Boyko, 2016: 137). It is the names of commercial objects that contribute to the active penetration of foreign language words, especially in a non-transliterated version (Golan et al., 2019; Kang et al., 2022), and in a non-transliterated version.

Of course, this is an old problem, it is enough to recall the signage “A foreigner from London and Paris” (by N.V. Gogol).

In Russian journalistic texts there were a lot of emotional statements about the foreign-language appearance of our cities. Foreign-language graphics in the urban landscape also seem dangerous to researchers: “From the standpoint of linguistic ecology, a foreign word written in Cyrillic is less of a threat than a Russian word written in Latin graphics, since the first one is understood only by those who know a foreign language, and most of the people perceive it simply as exotic. But a Russian word written in Latin is understood by everyone, creating the illusion of “understanding in English” and teaching native Russian speakers to write Russian text in someone else's code. ...the preservation of the Cyrillic script is one of the indispensable conditions for maintaining the viability of the Russian language and Russian-speaking identity” (Bondarenko, 2019: 32).

Analyzing modern advertising, S.A. Boyko made the following conclusion: “The massive influx of anglicisms leads they become “models” for further linguistic behaviour not typical for Russian cultural and linguistic tradition” (Boyko, 2016: 10).

Based on the works on neorelativism (actualizing the hypothesis of linguistic relativity or language determinism by Sepir-Whorf), the author writes about the biosocial language function responsible for the formation and development of the language community, and concludes that in modern conditions of total anglicization, the domestic language community is under threat. One of the provisions for the defence in master theses by S.A. Boyko states: “the main reason for the spread of anglicisms in advertising texts is their perception as more prestigious value orientations” (Boyko, 2016: 4).

It is difficult to disagree with the latter, but the advertising (even if advertising is considered not to be a speech genre, but a separate functional style of a modern language) itself does not make it possible to draw global conclusions about the entire language, and especially linguoculture. There are other sublanguages, styles and genres that are more important for communication, where the number of anglicisms are not so significant and they are represented mainly by long-ago and firmly assimilated borrowings. First of all, it is a spoken language and an artistic and fictional style with a lot of its genres.

“The anglicization of the Russian language today is characterized by the scale, intensity and avalanche, while the underlying cognitive processes are specific and hardly connected with the objective need to replenish the vocabulary of the Russian language due to the arrival of new realities in the life of Russian society, as it usually took place” (Boyko, 2016: 177).

It goes without saying that scientific terminology is constantly being updated due to anglicisms (Manca, 2020; Shin et al., 2022; Wenzel, 2019). And when it is connected with the elimination of conceptual lacunae (as, for example, in the terminology of economics and finance in the post-perestroika period), the process is objective and positive. Another thing is anglicisms only as a marker of incorporation into the international scientific community and “camouflaging of emptiness” with the help of foreign terminology. The internationalization of terminology is fruitful while maintaining a terminological balance based on the principle of a reasonable combination of traditional terms and anglicisms conveying new concepts.

4. Results

Thus, it is possible to talk about the current trend of rapid introduction of anglicisms “into the Russian-speaking communication” (Bondarenko, 2020: 7). This process is evaluated from diametrically opposite positions: either as a threat or as a natural and even beneficial phenomenon. We believe that all the previous arguments in this article confirm just the opposite idea (although, of course, it is impossible not to agree with some of the problems, connected with the penetration of anglicisms, and it is in the advertising sphere).

As we tried to show, there are good reasons for the use of anglicisms that may seem unnecessary, redundant, even harmful from a linguoecological point of view, and these reasons are not connected only with fashion or prestige.

Of course, it is important to understand that language problems are often connected with other spheres. In the work: (Kireeva et al., 2020) there is a recommendation to minimize resources outside the native language system. S.A. Boyko (Boyko, 2014, 2016) writes that the problem of anglicization should be solved both by professionals in the field of philology, sociology and the whole society, including the government, without this it is impossible to preserve and to develop the Russian language.

The opposite point of view is that there is no need to regulate anything in the language (and it is impossible), the language will solve all its problems itself and only really necessary words will stay in the language, and unnecessary words will be eliminated by itself (Krongauz, 2021).

We believe that conscious influence on many aspects of language functioning is not only possible, but also beneficial in many cases, as evidenced by the experience of ‘language construction’ in the USSR. Perhaps, discussions about each specific anglicism, its usefulness/uselessness in the language can be productive (general judgments, without specifics, about all the anglicisms are unproductive), efforts to promote useful words and inhibit useless ones are also beneficial.

An important argument of the supporters of the view about anti-ecological essence of anglicization is the impact extends not only to the lexical level, but also to grammar, and this is already ‘undermining the foundations’. The most striking example is the expansion of the English suffix *-ing*.

But it is quite obvious: *-ing* forms fill the system cells and should be qualified as the elimination of grammatical-word-formation (and often emotive) lacunae (Belyaeva, Kulikova, 2019; Dyakov, Skvoretzkaya, 2013). Russian deverbatives are most often heavy, it is not for nothing that this is an attribute of the official-business style of bad quality; *ing* forms convey the observed procedural continuity much more elegantly. No wonder V.P. Grigoriev wrote about the ‘bright future’ of *ing* forms (Grigoriev, 2005), which for the past decade have shown persistent vitality.

‘Undermining grammar’ is also constructions with analyte adjectives, which have really become super popular today, since any noun in the function of a prepositive definition acts as an unchangeable adjective.

But M.V. Panov wrote about analyte adjectives back in the 1970s as an extremely productive class. Life has confirmed his rightness: it is hardly possible to say *biznesovyi* (adjective from *business*) *plan* in Russian, but in Russian it is possible to say only *biznes-plan* (noun or analyte adjective *business*). And the point here is not only (and not so much) in anglicization. The process of loss of inflectivity affects to a greater or lesser extent all the European languages. In Russian, for example, there is an obvious tendency to simplify the declension of numerals, which is hardly directly related to the English influence.

5. Conclusion

Thus, the basis of the modern linguoculture has become, on the one hand, xenophilia, manifested in a tolerant attitude to the influence of the English language, and, on the other hand, negative perception, rejection of anglicisms, and the whole linguistic situation is evaluated as an aggressive linguistic intervention of the English language in the cultural and linguistic practice of modern Russian society. The linguistic conflict is caused by the divergence of ideas about the ways of the Russian language development and improvement in the era of globalization. The linguistic conflict finds its expression in rather harsh publications both within the framework of scientific and publicistic discourses.

The spread of English gives mutual understanding in many areas of intercultural communication which has always been lacking (Halliday, 2020), but it can also lead to conflicts in cases where the functions of other languages are infringed. We believe that the Russian language has not lost its cognitive, socio- and personality-forming functions even with the influx of anglicisms of the XXI century, it remains a means of forming the matrix of cognition and an instrument of personality development.

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