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The Factors of British and American English Development under Globalisation

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The paper studies the processes which arise during language contacts between the most influential varieties of the English language, British English and American English (BE and AE), and various autochthonous languages of the world under globalisation. The aim of the paper is to reveal the factors determining the development of BE and AE, which currently act as a means of international communication. Diverse multilingual communities use BE and AE to attain their socioeconomic objectives. In this respect, the global language situation was divided into several levels of interaction, depending on the possibility of language communities to use in their socioeconomic activities one or another language. This allowed the author to define the factors and mechanisms of the English language diffusion and to conceptualise the whole diversity of its varieties within a field model that made it possible to forecast the consequences of its future development.

Keywords: globalisation, international language, language contacts, language maintenance, language planning, language policy, language revitalisation.

Point

In the modern globalised world people relationships become multidimensional while human communication, more complex and universal. This leads to the extension of contacts between the world languages and the varieties of the English language. Its most influential varieties are British and American English (BE and AE) that account for the borrowing of large vocabulary layers from these varieties by the languages contacting with them. In these languages the layers of borrowed vocabulary receive further semantic development. The interest to the functioning of international languages, their present state

within globalised communication and their mechanisms of reality reflection in the regions of their diffusion is constantly growing. Thus the theoretical problems of unity and variation of BE and AE as the most influential varieties of the English language become absolutely topical.

Under globalisation the English language exists as a set of varieties determined by individual, social and regional language variation (Crystal, 1995: 3). Regional variation appears in language as a consequence of language contacts and enables the existence of various regional languages, dialects, territorial and national varieties of the English language, pidgins

and creoles. In connection with the studies of language variation and language contacts there arise some issues connected with the language contacts between BE and AE and other languages of the world. Some of them are as following: How can these language varieties fulfil the function of communication despite their semantic variability? What are the structure and mechanisms of the contacts between BE and AE and other languages? What can be the consequences of such language contacts? Why are certain speech communities affected by BE and AE and others are not? What are the forces that determine the development of a language influenced by BE and AE? What are the main trends in the development of such languages? Sociolinguistic study of these problems must include not only personal but also impersonal written forms of communication. The study of written language is relatively new to modern sociolinguistics, which was more interested in the informal types of speech such as vernacular conversations between friends or the members of a family. However, the analysis of the language contacts between BE and AE and other languages demands that we concentrate on the factors of their diffusion and maintenance in the globalised environment. At present the main factor of their diffusion is the modern means of communication aggregated within the Internet. They imply mostly impersonal written communication and are the main sources of BE and AE influence on other languages nowadays. Such approach allows us to get the complete idea of BE and AE diffusion and to make predictions of its future development on this basis.

Example

Being used for international communication, English is included into the global political activity and, to some evidences, is used under globalisation as an agent of western linguistic imperialism. When languages come into

contact with these standard varieties of English (BE and AE), the varieties appearing as a result of such interaction, such as Denglish in Germany, Franglais in France, Spanglish in Spain, Stadinkieli in Finland, Hinglish in India, Chinglish in China etc., are thriving due to the influence of BE and AE through the media, the Internet and modern means of communication. The interaction of BE and AE with other languages is complex and may have various consequences. Socioeconomic changes such as economic crises, military conflicts and globalisation may lead to the instability of the demarcation line between different language varieties under the situations of language contacts and can result in the language shift when a speech community tends to substitute their common language with another one. This can affect language vitality and become the cause of language death, as it happened with some indigenous languages of the world (Swann, 2009: 157).

According to Mikhail Bakhtin, language develops under the influence of two types of sociocultural forces: centripetal and centrifugal. Centripetal forces determine unification and standardisation in language. These processes involve the creation of language standards to overcome heteroglossia, which is a differentiation of dialects and registers within language. Centrifugal forces, however, determine variation and differentiation in language (Bakhtin, 2012: 24–25). In conditions of language contacts these forces direct the development of language. In such language situations the processes of borrowing, influenced by centrifugal forces, determine the variation of the borrowed vocabulary within the process of assimilation. On the other hand, purism (determined by centripetal forces), operating within language policy, restricts the usage of the borrowed vocabulary in language (Deumert, 2009: 378). The diffusion of BE and AE when they contact with other languages and

their development goes within this dichotomic model. At present BE and AE are the main donors of vocabulary for a large number of languages, but in spite of their contacts with these languages and the influence of centrifugal forces, which try to increase diversity among the varieties and make them mutually unintelligible, BE and AE, acting as the languages of international communication or lingua franca under globalisation, remain relatively stable in their structures. Their relations with other languages contacting with them are based not only on the interaction with these languages but also on the direct influence on them. Thus such varieties as Denglish, Franglais, Spanglish, Chinglish etc. are not to be considered as the outcomes of BE and AE but as the outcomes of the local languages contacting with them (BE and AE). This development can be diverse and contradictory in its nature and depends on the social historical and socioeconomic development of native speakers and the territory where these languages are in contact. For example, the huge inflow of English borrowings, especially economic terms, into Russian in order to cover the shortage of the adequate Russian-rooted equivalents for the concepts existing only in BE and AE was an outcome of the massive changes in the socioeconomic structure of modern Russia after the collapse of the former USSR. Here the ordinary usage of the loan words from BE and AE is rather a result of the dramatic shifts in political and economic orientations and priorities than only a result of language contacts. Under such conditions language communities turn to the maintenance of their languages in the face of societal change. Some cultures may try to resist such influence of other languages, from which such terms are borrowed, as it is commonly associated with not only prestige and progress but also with the conquest and colonisation. Moreover, different social classes have distinctions in the access to socioeconomic benefits, political power

and prestige (Milroy, Gordon, 2003: 98). The use of the loan words which appear in language as a result of language contacts is meaningful and therefore constitutes the resource that can attract speakers. It can affect the speaker's language choice when different language varieties are used strategically as means of attaining various socioeconomic benefits and getting advantages in making career, receiving education, making business etc.

In the modern world due to the high level of Anglo-American socioeconomic development the power and prestige of English penetrated into a large section of the globe. The terms relating to banking, finance, management, accounting and other spheres of economics and forms of business communication occur as the borrowings from English in language after language. Under globalisation speakers choose a broader perspective – an opportunity of integration into the global economy. In this respect the global language situation can be divided into three levels of language interaction, depending on the abilities of people to communicate and use in their socioeconomic activity one or another language. On the local level the members of a monolingual community speak only the mother tongue within the borders of this community. Thus they can participate in the socioeconomic activities, e. g. be employed, operate a business and make business transactions, only within the borders of this language community. That is typical for the monolingual communities which speakers are able to use only one native subnational language, e. g. the various minority languages of the world. The national level includes the language situations when an official language or widely spread varieties of some subnational language are used by the majority of the population of a country or some region, e. g. such languages as Russian, Chinese, German and English which are the mother tongues for the majority of the population

of the countries where they are spoken. The possibilities for the members of such language communities to participate and to get benefits from different economic and social activities are therefore more diverse. The international level represents the language situation which is typical for the modern globalised world where the English language plays the leading role and gives an opportunity to its speakers to participate in the international level of economic and social activity. This view can be supported with the examples concerning the mass media and the Internet in particular as one of the main providers of globalisation. We can find the same stratification in the Internet with its division into national nets, mostly within national domains, where official national languages are used, e.g. Rунet and the global net which comprises the whole Internet where the English language and its varieties dominate. Such division allows us to make an inference that English, being an international language, functions not only as a means of international communication but also as a means of socioeconomic needs satisfaction.

In this sense the future of BE and AE will depend on the trends in the global socioeconomic development. The amount of speakers involved into the local level of language interaction, therefore, will decrease whereas it will continue to increase in the international level under the influence of global socioeconomic forces and globalisation. This statement can be supported with the fact that at present a lot of languages which, according to the above-mentioned, can be referred to the local level of language interaction, are rapidly dying out and many of such languages are under the threat of death. Moreover, some languages which previously could be referred to the national and international levels of language interaction are forced out to the local level as a result of the language contacts with BE and AE. In general, this process can be represented as

the proliferation of BE and AE on the traditional domains of the languages contacting with them or as their substitution with them. The number of the languages in each level decreases drastically from the international level where dominate only the regional varieties of the English language such as BE and AE to the local where the number of languages decreases as they die out. However, language is not a stable system, and new varieties of English or so called new Englishes appear at the international level of language interaction (Crystal, 2003: 142). Such new Englishes can be studied as a whole. We may conceptualise the whole diversity of the English language varieties by means of a field model (Fig. 1) where BE and AE constitute the central normative part of the field. The peripheral part constantly changes due to the contacts of BE and AE with other languages. The centre provides norms via teaching resources and literary materials. It is relatively stable and is not affected by the varieties which appear as a result of its contacts with other languages. This field model is based on the Three Circles Model of Braj Kachru, who suggested the concept of three concentric circles to represent the diffusion of the English language: the Inner Circle includes the regions where English is a mother tongue or the first language for the majority of the population, the Outer Circle includes the regions where English historically has an official or institutional status and the Expanding Circle, the regions where English is used as a foreign language and as a lingua franca (Kachru, 2005: 14–15). These models make possible to circumscribe the territories where English is the mother tongue (the UK, USA, Canada, Australia etc.) and the territories where it has spread under globalisation (Germany, Russia, China etc.).

The development of the English language depends on a set of language policies applied in both groups of the countries. On the whole, the trend of these language policies is determined

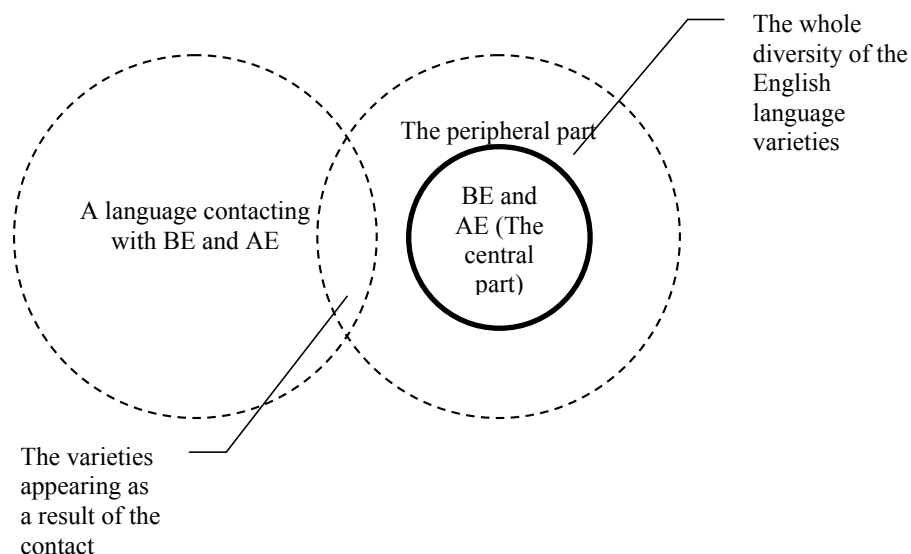


Fig. 1 The field model of the contact between BE and AE and other language

by globalisation where BE and AE function as means of global communication. Such diffusion of BE and AE usually produces negative reactions of the countries which languages are influenced by them under language contacts. That leads to the spread of puristic trends in their language policies and the appearance of the socio-political movements which advocate the purification of their mother tongues and the restoration of their previous condition which they consider to be exemplary or demand that the influence of the English language on their mother tongues should be reduced. The recent growth of nationalist sentiment in the world as an indirect reaction to globalisation contributed to the spread of puristic trends in many countries, especially in monoethnic ones. At the same time while the activity of nationalist movements leads to the increase in the number of monoethnic countries, globalisation removes cultural characteristics which are commonly aimed when creating such states. This type of language policy proved to be extremely ineffective because the puristic approach to language is one-sided as it does not consider the socio-cultural forces which operate

within language. A sociolinguistic approach must be wider and should include not only the artificial methods of language maintenance, such as purism, but also the natural processes which exist in language in order to support its unity and mutual intelligibility for its speakers. Moreover, it should be noted that variation in language is not only the impurity of language but also the resource for its development. This means that isolation for a language is even more dangerous than the contacts with other languages and borrowing of vocabulary from them. Accordingly, one of these natural processes can be the proliferation of language functions. The proliferation of language functions supports the stability of its form and the subjective attitude of speakers to the idiom as their own language (Weinreich, 1979: 174–175). From the sociolinguistic point of view, language exists when it is used by language communities. For example, when in monolingual communities under the conditions of sociocultural isolation the mother tongue loses its vitality and is replaced with a more valuable language from the sociocultural and economical point of view. Another important factor which

provides the implementation of language policy under globalisation is the Internet. At present the English language is the most widely spread language in the Internet, both in the number of users speaking it and in the amount of information content provided in it. Very often a language may not be represented in the Internet not only because it is not popular among Internet users but also because the Internet is not developed in the territories where this language is spread. Such situation is common even in some densely-populated territories of the world and many speakers of minority languages still do not have any access to the Internet. The same situation was in Russia where the Internet was not widely used in the 1990-s and early 2000-s for it was rather expensive for the majority of the population. On the contrary, BE and AE have considerable basis for their diffusion due to the accessibility of the Internet among the wider population in highly developed western countries. In modern conditions one of the main elements of language policy directed on the maintenance of a language can become the expansion of the Internet access for the speakers of this language and increase in the amount of the Internet resources in it. Thus the function of the Internet in the diffusion of BE and AE is not definite. On the one hand, the Internet is the main means of BE and AE promotion, but, on the other hand, it can be an element of the language policy directed to the maintenance and revitalisation of individual languages as well as language diversity as a whole, providing accumulation and access to the information in the mother tongue and allowing the consolidation of its speakers, e. g. by means of social networks and other modern means of communication which are available in the Internet.

David Crystal wrote in his book *English as a Global Language* that at present the amount of non-English-speaking Internet users is bigger than the amount of English-speaking

ones (Crystal, 2003: 119). This means that non-anglophone users may join the English-speaking Internet and give BE and AE the new source of development or they may contribute to the development of their national nets and domains in their mother tongues that will support language diversity. Minority languages in this situation can be maintained or revitalised only under the language policy directed on the multiplication of communicative connections inside a language community as well as with other communities outside it. Besides, it is important to take into account the fact that dialects and territorial varieties appear to support the identity of various language communities that is why one of the main elements of language policy should also become the maintenance of a language through preserving the national identity of its native speakers. However, it is almost impossible to maintain unity in the English language as its varieties are spoken by the communities which are too diverse culturally, and even if the English language becomes the language spoken by the majority of the world's population, it will differ considerably from the varieties that we know today. According to David Crystal's opinion, the most probable scenario is the formation of several new, mutually unintelligible for their speakers, varieties of the English language (Crystal, 2003: 124).

Resume

In the modern society the idea that under globalisation we are steadily moving to a common language as an international means of communication is a common stereotype, but language evolution is a multidimensional process involving both extralinguistic and intralinguistic levels of language. It is impossible to predict a unidirectional vector of language development, especially on the basis of its current state. Many factors, e. g. great changes in the balance of

global political forces, the appearance of the new economic, scientific and technological points of intensive growth in the world, global recession and other changes, can influence the direction of this vector.

The rapid development of the mass media, different forms of communication and means of transportation intensified the spread of Anglo-American culture, which became an example for the modern globalised world, in the era of post-industrialism (Grishaeva, 2006: 201). At present the mass media, the Internet and other modern means of communication are the main providers of global culture as well as global language. A country which aims to be among the leading countries of the world and to become a global player in the international community has to take into account this global trend. This general trend and the presented model allow us to forecast that in a long-term period the degree of borrowing by the languages contacting with BE and AE will increase that will contribute to the diversity and variety in these languages. However, the main approach to this will depend on the language policies and the language planning applied

within particular language situations. While trying to find the equilibrium point between the use of the varieties of English and their own languages, multilingual communities tend to protect their mother tongues from the influence of BE and AE. This type of language policy is not effective in the majority of cases as language maintenance depends on a number of natural factors (demographic, status and institutional support) and therefore cannot be operated mechanically but with consideration of these factors (Meyerhoff, 2006: 108). All these factors determine language vitality, which becomes the main factor in the situation when a person chooses a language. It forms the attitude of a speaker to his language that determines its diffusion and the proliferation of its functions on the international level of language interaction. This allows us to link the future trend in the development of BE and AE with the socioeconomic expansion of highly developed Anglophone countries, which are in the centre of the model suggested above. That will ensure the further proliferation of their functions on condition that the development of these countries does not cease.

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Факторы развития британского и американского вариантов английского языка в условиях глобализации

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В данной статье анализируются процессы, которые возникают в условиях языковых контактов между наиболее влиятельными вариантами английского языка, британским и американским английским (БА и АА), и различными автохтонными языками мира в условиях глобализации. Цель данной статьи заключается в том, чтобы определить факторы развития БА и АА, которые в современных условиях выступают как средство интернационального общения. Разнообразные многоязычные сообщества используют БА и АА для реализации экономических задач. В этом смысле глобальная языковая ситуация была разделена автором на три уровня взаимодействия в зависимости от возможности для языковых сообществ использовать в своей экономической деятельности тот или иной язык. Это позволило автору выделить основные факторы и механизмы распространения английского языка, а также концептуализировать всё разнообразие его вариантов в виде полевой модели и обозначить основные тенденции его дальнейшего развития.

Ключевые слова: глобализация, язык международного общения, языковые контакты, поддержка языка, языковое планирование, языковая политика, ревитализация языка.
