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Criteria for the Necessity of Anglicisms in Modern Media

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Abstract

One of the ecological criteria is a useful variety of linguistic means of expression and a plenty of synonymic rows. In recent decades synonymic rows have been actively replenished by borrowing anglicisms. References to 2025, when new high-quality dictionaries with a list of anglicisms that have no analogues in native linguistic means and therefore allowed to use are unlikely to be correct. If these are standard dictionaries formed by analogy with explanatory ones or dictionaries of foreign words, they will not help solve the problem, and it is also impossible to hope that a "small monograph" with a list of connotations, pragmatic co-meanings, etc., will be written about every anglicism.

Therefore, the urgent problem of the article is to identify in general criteria for the necessity of anglicisms. Of course, it is possible and necessary to talk about the benefits (or lack thereof) for each definite word, but some generalizations can be made. This is exactly what is done in this article. Based on the material of modern media texts, it is shown which types of anglicisms and why fully correspond to ecological thinking and can be considered not as a harm, but as a means of replenishing the Russian language. The methods of analysis were chosen based on the integration of deduction and induction, traditional for the humanities, with the methods of sociolinguistics, cognitive science and linguopragmatics.

Keywords: language contacts, language policy, borrowings, semantic, pragmatic content, ecological thinking, linguoecology.

1. Introduction

The consideration of anglicisms in Russian and other European languages is devoted to voluminous literature that an exhaustive bibliography becomes simply impossible. There are some works where the problem of borrowing is directly connected with the principles of ecological linguistics (Brusenskaya, Kulikova, 2018; Kulikova, 2022; Kulikova et al., 2023; Skovorodnikov, 2019); for more information about the categories of ecological linguistics and ecological thinking, it would be useful to see: (Hodges, 2013: 93-103; Steffensen, 2014: 6-25).

The discussion of the problem of foreign language influence on the Russian language got a new impulse after amendments to the law "On the State Language" adopted by the State Duma in the second and third readings in February 2023. The article attempts to generalize the analysis of this problem in the light of the new Russian legislation on language.

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2. Materials and methods

Based on the material of modern media texts, it is shown which types of anglicisms and why fully correspond to ecological thinking and can be considered not as a harm, but as a means of replenishing the Russian language. The methods of analysis were chosen based on the integration of deduction and induction, traditional for the humanities, with the methods of sociolinguistics, cognitive science and linguopragmatics.

3. Discussion

According to our observations, the prevailing trend of recent times in the “eternal” discussion about the measure of foreign-language words has become an indication of the undesirable redundant number of anglicisms.

For example, this thought: “... Could you explain to me why totally in our cities it is necessary to write on the signs “café” in English instead of “kafe” in Russian and such a discordant word “shop” instead of “magazine” (shop in Russian)? Not to mention the hordes of *franchaizingi* (in Russian – plural form of *franchising*) and *merchendaizingi* (in Russian – plural form of *merchandising*) occupied our media” (Agranovsky, 2023: 3). Also, about this phenomenon: “Unrestrained borrowing (mainly from the English language), which was characteristic until recently, contradicts the ideas about the optimal development of the national linguistic culture ... “import substitution”, which should be understood not as a global rejection of everything foreign, but a more balanced, functionally substantiated use of these resources” (Brusenskaya, Kotaeva, 2022: 24).

Therefore, the acute question arises: what are these reasonable criteria for the use of foreign language resources in the Russian language?

One of the criteria is well known, and in the terminology of the lacunarity theory it is designated as the elimination of conceptual lacunae. In this logic, the avalanche-like influx of anglicisms into, for example, the sphere of economics is the elimination of lacunae, since the traditional terminological apparatus was not adapted to express the new conceptual content, that is the categories the market economy. Of course, there were also costs: a lot has been said about using foreign language terminology without reasonable necessity, only for reasons of fashion and prestige, but in general it was a necessary and beneficial process of creating a terminological base for a new science.

No one denies anglicisms as short names (there is only a cumbersome descriptive name in native language) for new realities that have come into life together with the established name of English origin (about this: Shilina et al., 2023). But we will focus on less obvious examples when the benefit of borrowings is not so obvious, but, in our opinion, very significant.

Thus, there are so many anglicisms in the usual media practice (Boulianne, 2019; Deligiaouri, 2018; Fitzpatrick, 2018; Jang, Kim, 2018; Kang et al., 2022; Kayal, Saha, 2023; Lane, 2020; Langer, Gruber, 2021; Osipovskaya, Savelyeva, 2023; Shin et al., 2022) that it contradicts reasonable ideas about the measure of all things, for example: “*Kreativnoe kom'yuniti ehkspatov na Bali (The creative expat community in Bali) has been developing for decades*” (Dovger, 2023: 10). It is a plenty of anglicisms that has given rise to numerous Internet wits to compose texts just with English words but only prepositions and conjunctions (and even not always) represent the original units.

And after the adoption of amendments to the law on language, media personalities amicably drew attention to this. Political expert Dmitry Drobnitsky in the broadcast “Evening with Vladimir Solovyov” (TV channel “Russia”) on May 15, 2023 expressed his opinion as follows: ...*this, as they would say recently, is messedzh* (message)...(Drobnitsky, 2023).

That is, the word that V. Novikov included in his first “Dictionary of Buzzwords” (Novikov, 2005: 70-71), is being displaced as undesirable. Meanwhile, V. Novikov noted that this word has a “vast semantic range: from a household remark to a spiritual message to humanity” and even in the everyday meaning of ‘message’ it is useful as enriching the synonymic raw, creating speech flexibility and variability, increasing the degree of communicative freedom.

Using a metaphor, “this is the main essence that needs to be isolated from an extensive text”, and this is a new and relevant meaning, however, as V. Novikov writes, “it used to be called an idea, but the poor Greek word in our country has been greatly vulgarized, so it's better to give it a rest” (Novikov, 2005: 71). So, we think, the political expert Drobnitsky hastened to get rid of this useful acquisition of the Russian language. For example, a more successful replacement:

“Exchange of sofas” is the Russified name of kauchserfing (couchsurfing). This is a kind of independent tourism in which, through a special online service, you can exchange housing for a while or find a free overnight stay (Barannikova, 2023: 12).

“I think it is unnecessary to erect an “iron curtain” between Russian and other languages, but excessive lexical import sometimes causes irritation. I just want to cry out: my native Russian, why do you need to become so English. It is impossible to live from any “developer” (developers), and even the usual produktsiya (the word of Latin origin, in English – production) are now being converted into “prodakshn” (production) in the Saxon manner. I hope that over time there will be a natural deportation of illegal migrant words. And first of all, with the wish “good riddance to bad rubbish!”, I would say to such words as “selebriti” (celebrity)” (Novikov, 2016: 243)

In the newspaper *Soviet Russia* under the heading "I read in the “SR”, which presents readers' responses, there is a note “Yaroslavl deputy proposed replacing the word “mayor” with “gorodnichii” (archaic synonym for mayor)” (Yaroslavskij..., 2023: 4), which indicates the strong associative links of the name “gorodnichii” (archaic synonym for mayor) with Gogol's Skvoznik-Dmukhanovskii in the *Revizor* (inspector in tsarist Russia). Thus: a foreign word turns to be more acceptable than our own one. It is known that any word existing in the language for a long time inevitably acquires connotations and pragmatic co-meanings, and “gorodnichii” for a person of Russian culture is a collective character of the state power of Gogol's Russia. It is a very unpleasant character.

Jokes on the topic of linguistic import substitution have become common: Within the framework of linguistic import substitution, the “Comedy Club: will be renamed “Smeshno – I tochka” (“Funny – period”) (V ramkakh..., 2023: 1).

Of course, we can point out many cases when the Russian language do not need borrowings. For example: “...borrowed words began to grate on ears more strongly. Well, why do you need to go to the hospital for a chek-ap (check-up) if there is a well-understood medosmotr (medical examination)? Or why do you need to advertise a trip (trip) if it's an ordinary puteshestvie (travelling)? Or to prolongirovat' (prolong) the contract in the bank, if it can be simply prodlen (extended)?” (Arbatskaya, 2023: 10);

“And I would not trust firms that tempt customers with a low prais (price). Otherwise, you will lose both money and time, and that is important you will lose nerves, – commented realtor Nikita Ozerovskiy” (Berezina, 2023: 6).

These examples are akin to when, instead of “bilet” (ticket), it is unclear why, for example, young people say “tiket” (ticket), and instead of “stol” (table) – “tehibl” (table). If this is not for a language game, then, of course, such uses do not cause anything but bewilderment. Now we would like to analyse typical cases when borrowing should be recognized not only as appropriate, but also enriching the Russian language culture.

4. Results

We should note: it is difficult to wholly agree with the statement that «elements of the Russian language of different levels and different complexity are being replaced by English analogues for no apparent reason» (Kravchenko, 2021: 264; Baranova et al., 2022; Skvortsova et al., 2022). Of course, there are cases like “tiket” (ticket) and “tehibl” (table), but more often we just do not know how to determine the reason for the popularity of English analogues, because we do not pay enough attention not only to the pragmatic comeanings of new linguistic units, but also to the semantic nuances: “kheit” (hate) is not real, but Internet hate”, “feik” (fake) is not just lie, but a lie thrown into the Internet” (Krongauz, 2021 : 7), as well as (Van Duyn, Collier, 2019; Wenzel, 2019).

Only the lazy did not say that the word “kreativnyi” (creative) is not needed if there is a good Russian “tvorchestvo” (creativity).

Vl. Novikov wrote about the word “kreativnyi” (creative) “an adjective met with hostility by many» (Novikov, 2016: 127). Just few people saw the difference connected with the high pragmatics of the word “tvorchestvo” in Russian (creativity), which prevents its everyday use. It means, it is impossible for a person with good taste to say in Russian: *I am in my “tvorchestvo” (creativity)...* “Bulat Okudzhava, sensitive to the language, reacted ironically to questions about “tvorcheskii (creative) plans” in the last years of his life: “Tvorchestvo (creativity) is with Alena Apina, and I just work” (Novikov, 2016: 127). That is, the more mundane essence of the word “kreativnyi” (creative) (for example, “kreativnyi klass” (creative class), idiom “kreativ poshel”

(creative went) and so on) makes it necessary and important in the palette of appropriate designations.

The specifics of the pragmatic potential ensured the expansion of “ing forms”. Such forms are not characterized by fixed stylistic colouring and are not markers of the actual written speech. This differs them from Russian deverbatives, the more it applies to negatively evaluated clerical (that is why they have traditionally been used as a source of the comic – *neprileplenie marki* (the non-attachment of the mark) in the text by A. Chekhov, etc.). They are more dynamic than their Russian equivalents, and in some cases they much better express both semes – objectness and processality; there are several thousands of them in modern Russian, and therefore it is correct to say about the russification of the suffix -ing in words denoting the observed processality (*shopping* (shopping), *bullying* (bullying), *branding* (branding), *trolling* (trolling), *cleaning* (cleaning), etc.).

Anglicisms have a clear pragmatics of novelty, which is manifested in the system of their evaluations by the authors of texts: “*And now, in modern terms, we are waiting for an upgrade of performances. Every performance is a living matter. It gets either better or worse. We don't let the performances get worse. They should get better, including at the expense of the artists who are included in the production*” (Shablinskaya, 2021: 19).

The Russian word *neudachnik* (loser) is replaced by a *luzer* (loser), because, according to I. Levontina (Levontina, 2017), in the Russian word “sympathy is superfluous”, and to express the idea “You did not achieve and it's your own fault, very bad” a loser is more suitable. “*Klining* (cleaning) is sold at exorbitant prices compared to national *uborka* (cleaning), that is, anglicism precisely sounds stylish. It is already a pragmatic co-meaning” (Gutorova, 2016: 11), in this case we can talk about differences between borrowings and native Russian lexemes in linguistic and pragmatic characteristics, which provides some commercial effect. For example:

- *I have been using the services of this agency for a long time, – said Fedor ...the agency always supplies us with good women. Excellent wording: “postavlyayet zhenshchin” (supplies women). Such a light-version of a brothel (Stolyarova, 2022: 9). It is difficult to imagine a Russian equivalent here. Of course, the fact that many anglicisms today have the pragmatics of novelty and emphasized modernity does not provide them with eternal life in this quality. For example: “...we must not forget that every fashion is fraught with overkill, tastelessness, and a person should use a buzzword, especially a foreign one, not in order to be distinguished, but only in order to better express his/her thoughts to the interlocutor. It should be done with sense and taste, just as it is necessary to be able to wear fashionable clothes” (Interview..., 2023: 10).*

Another important sign of the relevance of anglicism is formed figurative meanings. Taking into consideration only the initial conceptual meaning, a “*khot-dog*” (hot dog) is a typical balast, since there is a Russian analogue – *sosiska v teste* (a sausage in the dough). But in Russian, the word has got the meaning of ‘second-rate, low quality’, and not only in relation to material objects, but also in relation to works of art:

“*As “Anna Karenina” for dummies, the book by Basinsky is impeccable, but it is not necessary to pass it off as a special investigation by a wise detective of non-existent riddles. ... So, the true story of Anna Karenina was written by Leo Tolstoy. And Pavel Basinsky presented some information about that, which, of course, cannot be blamed, unless, of course, not to give out “khot-dog” (hot dog) for fua-gra (foie gras)*” (Moskvina, 2022: 15).

The word *fast-fud* (fast food) has undergone similar semantic transformations. In its direct meaning, it had the reasons that it is shorter than *setevoi restoran bystrogo pitaniya* (a fast food chain restaurant) or the products of such a restaurant. For example, figurative meaning: “*Sometimes so-called modern look can turn art into fast-fud (fast food)*” (Babalova, 2023: 11).

There are also figurative meanings that have a chance to become regular: “*Hamlet*” is an inexhaustible play, every time and every scene offers its own version of reading, and this “*kvest*” (quest) has been for many centuries” (Moskvina, 2021: 15);

- If a woman in such a situation keeps her head, then she will help you in difficult situation! – Malosoltsev appealed to head before *sdats' v lizing* (to give in lease) his hand and heart (Kolomeysky, 2021: 32);

And, at last, another feature of the usefulness of borrowing is its word-formation productivity (*laitovyi* (light – adjective), *laitovo* (it is light – state category word), *feikovyi* (fake – adjective), *draivovyi* (driving), *kreativchik* (diminutive from creative with suffix -chik), *frikokratiya* (freakocracy), etc.)

Aspiring to the periphery of the Russian language, the word *tineidzher* (teenager) has a derivative expressing a very important notion concerning the spiritual life of the country in the texts by Yu. Polyakov. It is *tinehidzherizatsiya obshchestva* (the tastes and habits of teenagers dominate in society), and it is impossible to choose any Russian analogue here.

5. Conclusion

It is known that the modern media discourse is a dominant communicative sphere in which different linguistic innovations fixing the world picture dynamics are presented. Media texts clearly demonstrate how diverse modern anglicisms included in all these processes are used. The different means of expression created at the expense of them does not contradict, but, on the contrary, correspond to the parameters of ecological thinking. The opinion that “borrowing is in some sense a betrayal” (Moniava, 2016: 299) “borrowing is in some sense a betrayal” is true only in relation to a very limited number of uses.

Neologization of the language due to anglicisms is carried out rapidly, but several factors can ensure a long life in the host language: elimination of conceptual and pragmatic lacunae with the help of anglicisms (and the pragmatics of novelty and modernity is especially important), the development of stable figurative meanings based on the Russian language, word-formation productivity. An extra tolerant attitude towards anglicisms will give way (under the influence of social factors, including as a result of the adopted amendments to the law on language) to a more balanced, deliberate and functionally motivated use of anglicisms, wholly corresponding to ecological thinking.

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