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CONTRADICTIONARY VIEWPOINTS ON BECOMING ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The paper presents the material on rather a contradictory problem whether to consider the English language as a language of intercultural communication or not, whether it is necessary to use the standard variant of English or it is useful to take into account the cultural peculiarities of non-native speakers of English. The paper represents the information on the history of becoming English the language of international communication. It should be noted that the paper data are based only on the works by the native speakers of the English language (English and American scientists, scholars, investigators). The process of transforming international English into a means of global communication at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries has taken place so rapidly that the academic community has been unable to reach a consensus on the global standard of the English global language due to insufficient research of the issue. The thesis about the need to recognize for the language of worldwide communication the right to develop its own norms based on studying research material contained in the database of using international English those who speak English as the second language, is not sufficiently convincing at this stage of the transformation of the world system of languages, since it contradicts both the theory and practice of the origin and development of languages. The issue of turning the English language into a language of international communication is still open for discussion. English, being the language of global distribution, is a secondary means of cultural and linguistic identity, allowing each ethnical community to share its cultural heritage with representatives of other nations. It is necessary to note that English continues taking place in the language of world communication since no other language is spoken by so many people in the modern world. However, one should not forget about the literary norm, which is a significantly differentiated complex of language means, which preserve a number of variants and synonymous ways of expression. It is proved in the paper that spreading English is not a process of eliminating illiteracy but vice versa it is the process of the interconnection of cultures and cultural heritage.

Key words: *cultural heritage, English as a lingua franca (ELF), English as a foreign language (EFL), English as a second language (ESL), globalization, interlingual, literacy.*

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СУПЕРЕЧЛИВІ ПОГЛЯДИ НА СТАНОВЛЕННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЯК МОВИ МІЖКУЛЬТУРНОЇ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ

У статті представлено матеріали про досить суперечливу проблему, чи вважати англійську мову мовою міжкультурної комунікації, чи варто використовувати стандартний варіант англійської мови, чи корисно враховувати культурні особливості неносіями англійської мови. У статті також представлено інформацію про історію становлення англійської мови як мови міжнародної комунікації. Слід зазначити, що дані статті базуються тільки на роботах носіїв англійської мови (англійські та американські вчені, дослідники, учені). Процес перетворення міжнародної англійської на засіб глобальної комунікації на зламі 20-го та 21-го століть відбувся настільки швидко, що академічна спільнота не змогла досягти консенсусу щодо глобального стандарту міжнародної англійської мови через недостатнє дослідження проблеми. Теза про необхідність визнати за мовою світової комунікації право розробляти власні норми, засновані на вивченні дослідницького матеріалу, що міститься в базі даних міжнародної англійської тих, хто говорить англійською мовою як другою мовою, не є достатньо переконливою на цьому етапі трансформації світової системи мов, оскільки вона суперечить як теорії, так і практиці виникнення і розвитку мов. Питання перетворення англійської мови на мову міжнародного спілкування залишається відкритим для обговорення. Англійська мова як мова глобального розповсюдження на зламі 20-го та 21-го століть є другорядним засобом культурної та мовної ідентичності, що дозволяє кожній етнічній спільноті ділитися своєю культурною спадщиною з представниками інших націй. Необхідно відзначити, що англійська мова продовжує ставати мовою світової комунікації, оскільки в сучасному світі не так багато інших мов, за допомогою яких спілкуються так багато людей у сучасному світі. Проте не слід забувати про літературну норму, яка є значно диференційованим комплексом мовних засобів, які зберігають ряд варіантів і синонімічних способів вираження. Доведено, що поширення англійської мови не є процесом усунення неграмотності, а, навпаки, є процесом взаємозв'язку культур і культурної спадщини.

Ключові слова: культурна спадщина, англійська мова як лінгва-франка (АЛФ), англійська як іноземна мова (АІМ), англійська як друга мова (АДМ), глобалізація, міжмовний, грамотність.

The problem setting in general. An unprecedented phenomenon in the world language system, namely the transformation of English into a global language as a result of the information revolution and the process of globalization of all aspects of human activities, changes the generally accepted ideas about foreign languages and the concept of literacy. One of the first scientists who announced the change of linguistic and educational paradigm was the Brazilian webmaster Robert Schütz who developed the site “English Made in Brazil” and became head of the group of authors publishing linguistic, philosophical and educational materials and studies on the site. In the paper “English is an International Language” on the 20th of December, 2002, Schütz

drew the site visitors' attention to the social changes in history, which led to the fact that illiteracy being usual in the Middle Ages, when there were professional scribes to write letters, has been changing to the population literacy for several centuries. The level of literacy in Europe in the 1700s ranged from 30 to 40%. By the middle of the 19th century, the level of literacy had reached 55% and it was considered as the basic qualification in human society. Nowadays illiteracy in the developed countries has been virtually eliminated. The traditional education consists of skills and abilities to read, write, count, but today there is a growing tendency that the notion “elementary literacy” includes the ability to speak English as a second language. English can no longer be con-

sidered as a foreign language since possessing it as a means of universal communication is an obligatory part of education. "Having chosen English as the world language," says Schütz, "history sentenced monolingualism to illiteracy in the near future".

Analysis of the recent investigations and scientific publications. The implicit recognition of the new linguistic-educational paradigm, according to which English is actually considered not as "foreign", but as an indispensable condition for "ensuring the participation of all the Europeans in the new knowledge-based society", is also evidenced by the documents of the European Commission "Multilingual Framework Strategy of Mastering Language Skills and Abilities" of 2000 and "New Multilingual Framework Strategy" of 2005, which set the task for European educational systems to achieve mastering "practical skills and abilities in at least two languages other than their own" by the Europeans. Even more convincing is the tendency of changes in the attitude of linguists and the political elite to the status of the English language and their recognition of a change in the linguistic-educational paradigm observed on the basis of studies of the development of the English language by D. Graddol on behalf of the British Council and published in 1997 and 2006. In the first work titled "The Future of English", Graddol "analyzes the complex combination of material and cultural trends that will shape the global destiny of the English language", and concludes that "the future is more complex and less predictable than it has been expected" (Graddol, 2000: 1). The author of the study refers to the opinion of the scientific community about the offensive of a new "world order" in the 21st century in which the Internet and information technology can lead to changes in traditional ways of communication. Graddol believes that in the new "world era, in which humans have entered, language and communication will play a more central role than before in economic, political and cultural life "just at that historical moment when a global language has emerged" (Graddol, 2000: 3). The study emphasizes the role of English as an important element of global scientific, technological, economic and cultural development, but gives a careful assessment of the tendency of language dominance of English in the future, "We cannot simply extrapolate on the basis of recent decades and assume that this trend will continue without change" (Graddol, 2000: 4). Over the next decade, the pace of globalization of the English language has not only not decreased, but even increased.

The following study by D. Graddol, published by the British Council in 2006, presents the development of English for the next decades as the period

of its unconditional triumph as a global language in virtually all the spheres of human activities. According to the forecast of this study, by the end of this period, four billion people will speak English, which is almost five times the population of countries where English is the official language (Graddol, 2006). On presenting the above-mentioned data, documents and materials one can confirm that studying the role of the English language as a global language of international communication is still **relevant**.

The purpose of the paper. The purpose of the paper is to make an attempt to analyze some contradictory viewpoints on the English language as a language of international communication.

The purpose needs solving the following **objectives**: 1) to show the dominant position of the English language since the 16th century; 2) to present viewpoints by different scientists and scholars on the problem; 3) to prove that spreading English is not a process of eliminating illiteracy but vice versa it is the process of interconnection of cultures and cultural heritage.

Presentation of the main research material. The transformation of English into a global language of universal communication and the ubiquitous transition to studying it not as a foreign language (English as a foreign language, EFL), but as a second language (English as a second language, ESL) also require the abandonment of the traditional model of distributing and using English in the world in the form of three concentric circles, first proposed by an American linguist of Indian origin B. Kachru in the fundamental article "Standards, Codification and Sociolinguistic Realism: English in the Outer Circle" (1985) (Kachru, 1985). According to the model by Kachru, the three concentric circles, internal, external and expanding, represent "types of distribution, models of assimilation and functional areas (domains) in which English is used as a means of intercultural and interlingual communication". In the internal circle, which includes the main English-speaking countries (the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, etc.), English is native to the majority of the population (L1). In the external circle, which includes countries in which English is not native to the majority of the population, but due to the particular importance of this language in government, education and economics, it has the status of a second language (L2) and is studied as ESL (English as a Second Language). The external circle includes India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Nigeria and other countries in which English is the state language. The expanding circle includes all the countries in which English is not native or second to the majority of the population, is

not used in government and education, and is studied in the school system as a foreign language (EFL). The changes that occurred in the world by the end of the 20th century led D. Graddol to the conclusion he expressed in the study of the development of the English language (1997) that Kachru's concentric circles model "will not be the most useful model for describing the use of English in the 21st century. According to Graddol, with an increase in the number of English speaking people as their second language, the future of English will be determined largely by them, and not by "native speakers". Accordingly, instead of the concentric circles, Graddol offered three partially overlapping circles. In the given study, Graddol still considers the use of terminology in terms of English to be consistent, according to which all the English speakers are divided into three groups: those who speak a language like the first (L1), speak a language like the second (L2), and a foreign language (EFL). Explaining the difference among the English speakers both as the second language and a foreign language, he writes, "The main difference between those speaking English as a foreign language fluently and speaking English as the second depends on whether English is used in the country and in the family of speakers and, thus, whether it determines the language repertoire of his/her personality" (Graddol, 2000: 11).

However, the criterion of the presence in the country or in the region of a national version of the English language to identify speakers as using L2 loses its force with the emergence of a global language. In the age of globalization, countries that until recently, according to Kachru's language model, have been outside the internal and external circles of using English, as a result of the rapid growth of international contacts and increased demands for language skills in the international English language have appeared to be involved into the external circle in which English is used so widely that it can no longer be regarded as a foreign one. Japan, South Korea, Latin America, and China, which until the acceleration of globalization processes have not been included in the zone of the "English-speaking world", no longer treat English as a foreign language along with other "international languages". The demand for language skills has led to appearing the global community of ESL lecturers (English as a second language), which has become possible as a result of the information revolution and the emergence of the World Wide Web, which makes it possible to ensure supply and demand in organizing the English language learning in any around the globe based on dozens of sites promoting the ESL training and providing the necessary support.

With the transformation of English into a global language, native speakers in the mainstream countries of the English-speaking world, according to Graddol, lose their absolute control over the use and development of their language, which becomes the heritage of the whole world as the number of English speakers grows. In the second study of the prospects for the development of English, Graddol (2006) describes the peculiarities of English as a foreign language and its study, which is now becoming part of the heritage of history.

In connection with the acquisition of the global status of the English language, the most urgent issue is what is the language of world communication and how it differs from the national variants of English. One of the characteristic features of the English language is its variability, which is not limited to the differences in the grammatical and lexical structure of the two main variants of the English language that have developed historically as a result of the independent political development of the United States, which led to the emergence of the North American English version. The British variant, however, has retained its influence on all other countries that were British colonies, and then – the countries of the Commonwealth (until 1947 – the British Commonwealth of Nations). Both the basic versions of English – American English and British English, despite a number of characteristics that separate them from each other, are not homogeneous. British English in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, etc. has its own characteristics that allow considering the English languages in these countries as separate variants. The variability of the American version, in its turn, is evident not only from certain differences between the USA's and Canada's variants but also from the considerable variability in both in the USA and Canada. The variability of the English language is often viewed by linguists, according to the American researcher, J. Milroy, as "the result of purely language development regardless of the activities of people using the language in a social and situational context". J. Milroy points out that variability is determined by social processes, and draws attention to the significant variability observed in synchronous language studies in the linguistic communities of our time, which are often underestimated when describing standard forms of the language (Milroy, 2005: 2).

The concept of "English as a language of world communication" reflects a completely new phenomenon, although many researchers of use of English for international communication even long before turning English into a global language conducted a series of investigations of the English language

as a “lingua franca” (English as a Lingua Franca, ELF), in contrast to studying the use of the language as the national one by the very native speakers. At the beginning of the 21st century, in the opinion of A. Mauranen, in the preface to the scientific collection “English as a Lingua Franca”, published in 2009, investigating the use of English as ELF became one of the most “burning areas of research”. A. Mauranen describes the changes that have occurred in less than two decades since the beginning of the study of using English in international communication underlying that the English language without any doubt has established itself in the position of the global lingua franca. Together with this status, it has become a symbol of our time along with the processes of globalization, social networks, economic integration and the Internet (Mauranen, 2009).

The EFL global researchers are opposed to the ongoing practice of using two leading variants of English – American and British when teaching English as an international language. The EFL researcher of phonetic features, J. Jenkins, speaking at the First EFL Conference in Helsinki in 2008, offered to take into account that very sociolinguistic fact that languages are formed by their speakers and nowadays the native English speakers appear to be in the minority among users of the English language, and it would be more sensible, when teaching English, to abandon the almost exclusive concentration on national varieties of English. As an example of the inconsistency of promoting the use of national pronunciation standards to new sociolinguistic realities, J. Jenkins uses the continued support of British normative pronunciation RP (Received Pronunciation) in the English language learning systems as a model of the pronunciation norm.

There are, for sure, the opponents whose basic arguments concerning the use of the national variants of the pronunciation skills including a new argument based on the fact that the native speakers have lost their right to possess the English language because the number of people speaking English as their second language has far exceeded the population of any of the major English-speaking countries, they (these opponents) are not supported not only by teachers and headmasters of language schools but also by sociolinguists who advocate compliance with the existing language standards. The opponents consider that if the native English speakers “do not possess” English, the important is that it comes from them, especially historically, and abides in them. P. Trudgill defines Standard English as “a kind of language that is used in the written and spoken forms in the English-speaking countries around the world, and therefore the language that “educated people” speak and which is used

in teaching all those for whom English is not native” (Trudgill, 1999: 117–128).

The process of transforming international English into a means of global communication at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries has proceeded so rapidly that the academic community has been unable to reach a consensus on the global standard of the English global language due to insufficient research of the issue. The thesis about the need to recognize for the language of worldwide communication the right to develop its own norms based on studying research material contained in the database of using international English those who speak English as the second language, is not sufficiently convincing at this stage of the transformation of the world system of languages, since it contradicts both the theory and practice of the origin and development of languages. The number of speakers is undoubtedly important in the value of the language as cultural capital, but control over the development of the language and its standard forms is determined by the political, economic and cultural influence of the main countries of the English language, even if the number of native speakers in these countries is inferior to the total number of users of the language as the second in the world.

It is also necessary to note a certain limitation of the concept of a new, independent standard of world English in terms of the application of information theory to language communication. The main ideas of the theory of information were originally presented by C. Shannon in the classic article “Mathematical Theory of Communication”, published in 1948 in the “Bell System Technical Journal”, and then in the book of the same name, published in 1949. The communication process is one of the most typical processes for transmitting and receiving information, to which the basic ideas of information theory are applicable. In the course of the exchange of information, there are four basic obligatory elements: the sender of the message, the message itself, the channel for transmitting information and the recipient to whom the information is intended and who interprets it. An important problem of the communication process is the identification of possible sources of noise, understood as anything that distorts the meaning of the transmitted information, and finding ways to eliminate them. When implementing interlingual and intercultural communication, encoding and decoding information occurs on the basis of the English language, while any deviations from the standard language form associated with phonetic, grammatical or lexical phenomena lead to noise in the information channel and, at a certain level of violation, lead to communication failures. Typical errors in the speech of users

of English as the second language, which the followers of the concept of independence of the standard of the global language, offer to be fixed as normal, significantly increase noises in the information channel and with increasing the quality and scope of language training can be minimized.

In connection with the statements of leading linguists (for example, D. Graddol) that native speakers of English have lost their ownership of English and, therefore, their main standard variants should not be considered as a world standard, and also in connection with attempts to develop a new world standard for the global language on the basis of the “characteristics” of the English language being used by non-native speakers, whose number exceeds the total population of the main English-speaking countries, it is noteworthy that in the activities of the multi-billion dollar industry of learning the English language in the world has shifted from reliance on native speakers and use in teaching the two main language versions – British English and American English – to non-native speakers and a new global standard.

The issue of standard English is of controversy even in the case of national variants. The wide spread of English in the post-war period and the acquisition by English of the global status at the turn of the 20th – 21st centuries. make this question even more difficult. The fact that the issue of global standard English is far from being resolved is clear from the fact that, unlike other European languages, English is not codified and the concept of “standard” does not include prescriptive language forms, but is accepted as a status-functional type of language, associated with state-owned, based on the choice of one of the most influential national variants – the British Standard English, which they call “English English (EngEng)”, or the American standard variant, which they call “North American English (NAEng)”.

The tendency of emerging numerous national variants of the English language was noted by D. Crystal in his works on the transformation of the English language into a global means of universal communication. The natural, in his opinion, the process of converting the standard English variant into local language variants expressing national identity will not lead to the fragmentation of the English language into obscure English variants and will not interfere with the process of forming English as the language of world communication. He believes that as one of the consequences of globalization, the means of global communication allow providing for immediate access to other languages and variants of the English language. Satellite communication, in his opinion, will lead to the creation of a “system

of interconnection and inter limitation”, which will balance the desire to form national variants that differ from standard English, the desire for comprehensibility on a global scale, which will contribute to the convergence of national variants with standard English.

There exists a critical attitude towards deviations from the standard variants of English. This critical attitude towards deviations from standard English in the process of creating new language variants in the countries where English traditionally served as a means of interlingual communication is reflected in the disparaging use of the expression “broken English” in relation to numerous forms of English originated in the former colonies of the British Empire and in the countries actively participating in world trade. In 1994, P. Blanche, in the article “Is the international language “broken English?”” analyzed the reasons for the success of the widespread use of English and the emergence of its many forms and concluded that with the increase of international communication throughout the world it should be recognized that the phrase “broken English” became obsolete. In support of his thesis about the gradual transformation of English into a universal language, he cited evidence that more and more non-native speakers of English accept it “from within” as their own language and that the amount of fiction in English created by authors from many countries especially on the Indian subcontinent, in Eastern and Southern Africa and on the islands of the Caribbean, is constantly growing (Blanche, 1994). P. Blanche pointed out the importance of preserving local languages and cultures in order for English to fulfill its role as the language of world communication most effectively, “Peoples strive for harmony without losing their identities, and ... want to establish better relationships without losing their values and cultural heritage” (Blanche, 1994: 11). It should, however, be noted that R. Quirk and P. Blanche, condemning the unjustified arrogance of defenders of the standard English language regarding numerous national forms in countries where English has been widely used as a means of interlingual and intercultural communication, advocate national and regional options that appear in colloquial speech and vocabulary, reflecting the local flavour in cultural realities. Indian English, Pakistani English in Asia, Nigerian English, Ghanaian English, and others, with all their minor differences from the standard variant, are manifestations of the standard British variant under local conditions.

In all the spheres of formal communication in the countries in which English is the official or one of the official languages, it is the standard variant of the English language that is used, and deviations

from the standard form are observed mainly in pronunciation. In the spheres of unofficial use of English, Pidgin and Creole languages are widely used. They are formed on the basis of English and serve as a means of interlingual communication among people who do not speak the standard form of the language used in education and government administration.

Conclusions. Thus, it can be concluded that today English has become a truly global language for intercultural communication. However, today in most countries of the world, the strategy of perfectionism in learning English gives way to the strategy of developing communicative competence for communicating not only with native speakers but mainly with bilingual users. English, being the language of global distribution, is a secondary means of cultural and linguistic identity, allowing each ethnical community to share its cultural heritage with representatives of other nations. The above indicates that the influence of English in the world is quite large and continues growing

with each passing year. It is safe to say that English will continue to take the place of the language of world communication since no other language is spoken by so many people in the modern world. However, one should not forget about the literary norm, which is a significantly differentiated complex of language means, which preserve a number of variants and synonymous ways of expression. Multilingualism does not take into account or does not wish to take this into account, and in this one can consider the impending threat to the language norm, because the variability of language means provides functional and stylistic differentiation of the literary language, and that, in its turn, ensures its richness and expressiveness. Without this, the language becomes lean and emaciated. Based on the above, the most effective is the combination of globalization processes and the preservation of local elements, i. e., close communication of world cultures in all spheres of life, carried out with close attention and constant consideration of such factors as the national mentality.

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