

Functional Domains of the Spread of English in Ukrainian linguistic environment

The reasons for the transformation of English into a linguistic means of international communication in the era of globalization are revealed. The pattern of its spread in the information and linguistic –political space of Ukraine is explained. Ukraine's joining global English speaking environment is supposed to facilitate the fulfillment of its strategic foreign policy task-integration into the European Union and NATO. The main functional areas of the spread of English in the life of Ukrainian society: geopolitical, economic, humanitarian are defined. The importance of improving the English speaking competence of Ukrainians for the country's further integration into global information space is highlighted.

Key words: spread of English, transnational communication, Ukraine's integration, linguistic-political space

ФУНКЦІОНАЛЬНІ СФЕРИ ПОШИРЕННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ В УКРАЇНСЬКОМУ ЛІНГВОПОЛІТИЧНОМУ ПРОСТОРІ

Розкриваються причини перетворення англійської мови у лінгвістичний засіб міжнародного спілкування у добу світової глобалізації; зазначено об'єктивну закономірність її поширення у інформаційному та лінгвополітичному просторі Української держави. Залучення України до світового англомовного середовища повинно сприяти вирішенню її стратегічного зовнішньополітичного завдання - інтеграції у Європейський Союз та НАТО. Визначено основні функціональні сфери поширення англійської мови у житті українського суспільства – зовнішньополітичну, економічну, гуманітарну. Підкреслено важливість підвищення англомовної компетентності громадян України для її успішного входження у світовий інформаційний простір.

Ключові слова: поширення англійської мови, транснаціональне спілкування, інтеграція України, лінгвополітичний простір, мовна політика.

In recent decades, globalization of international relations objectively leads to the fusion and interweaving of national areas into a unified global civilizational system, making further prospects of unique political, social-economic and cultural development of nation states and peoples impossible. This is the reason why the development and improvement of Ukrainian statehood

is going hand in hand with Ukraine's integration into the global system of transnational relations. The integration of formerly autonomous national state entities into global cooperation networks requires that they recognize and adhere to certain unified standards, universal moral law and principles of conduct in global political environment as well as *global* business.

The formation of such universal binding rules, for conducting foreign and domestic policy is a logical consequence of globalization. The global political and economic system is functioning in such a way that, that according to S.Huntington, «the *peoples* and *governments* of non-Western civilizations must share the Western *values* of *democracy*, *free markets*, *limited government*, human rights, individualism, the rule of law for implementing these values in their institutions»¹. Moreover, the extent of adherence of the nations and peoples to modern civilizational values, their willingness to follow democratic principles is considered as a kind of assessment measure of the aptitude of their development strategy for globalization requirements, the latter being associated with modern interpretation of civilization process.

Globalization of international relations foresees and requires a new level of cooperation between states and peoples of the world.

An integral part of sustainable development of global society is a constant exchange of information between its members, their increasing communication, which explains the functioning of modern communication. That is why, in the era of globalization it is particularly important to form and implement global means of communication, in particular, their linguistic forms.

The development of human civilization at its present stage determined the rise of a global lingua franca. Due to a lot of objective reasons English has all grounds to acquire a global status, in fact it has already become a global matter. As D.Crystal writes in this respect “the spread of English as a global language (which is recognized by practically all countries) has led to its unprecedented position in the world...*World English exists as a political and cultural reality.*”²

English holds powerful positions within all spheres of international cooperation: political, economic, cultural-humanitarian, informational environment of the globalized world. The fact that English is the most *widely spoken language worldwide*, with 1.8 billion speakers in 2000, serves as proof of the increased public recognition of the *global position of English.*³ [2, 113]. English is the official or working language in the activity of many international organisations. According to the estimates provided by the Union of International Associations, in 1995-1996, 85% of international organizations use English as an official language.⁴ Thus, every country which intends to take an active part in the work of international organizations must take into account the language as a decisive factor of their activity. According to a Polish researcher

¹ Huntington S.P. The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of the World Order. - New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996, p. 29

² David Cristal. English as a Global Language. – Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 5, 10

³ David Cristal. English as a Global Language. – Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 113

⁴ David Cristal. English as a Global Language. – Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 119

D.Mychalyk, the level of influence and authority of any state depends on its participation in such organizations as ASEAN, NATO, EU, OPEC, etc.⁵ Such participation is particularly important for the newly formed states, which, in historical terms have recently acquired state independence and have not integrated in *the fixed global system* of international relations.

Hence, the strategic task of the states which gained independence at the end of 1980ies, beginning of 1990ies, (Ukraine, in particular) is to find a dignified place within the international community, to establish a *foothold* in certain sectors of , global trade *market*, to promote the values of its own cultural identification in global humanitarian space.

The results of the activity, aimed at achieving such goals largely depend on the degree of the country's integration into global information space, where English makes up by far the larger share of the content. That is why the spread of English in the linguistic fabric of Ukraine is growing in importance considering the fact that Ukraine is currently shaping the principles of its language policy.

Ukraine's adjustment to English linguistic environment is supposed to facilitate the efficiency of its integration into global civilizational space. The main strategic task of Ukraine in the domain of foreign policy is *to gain* «full membership» of the *EU and NATO*. That is joining the Euro-Atlantic system.

However, until 1991 Ukraine was in the sphere of political influence and geopolitical gravitation, whose actors positioned themselves as the opponents of the West. That is why it may take a long time, psychological and organizational efforts to carry out radical reorganization of Ukraine's foreign policy.

One of the most important components of the process of changing foreign policy course is *integration* of *Ukraine* into the *political-linguistic* political environment dominated by the English language. This task is particularly important considering Ukraine's prospect of membership in the European Union.

The linguistic policy of the EU is based on the *formal equality* among the official *languages* of the Member States. The EU parliament *proclaims* and practices full multilingualism, emphasizing that *all the European languages*, in their spoken and written forms, are equal in value, yet, inside the European Union the use of different languages is one of the obstacles to the integration process. Hence, the integration processes require the introduction of a common language within the EU. A single language is supposed to strengthen European identity across the EU and enable all Europeans to participate in EU-wide political debates with their leaders, connect people and strengthen the sense of belonging together, make political discourse more natural and smooth. *Philippe Van Parijs*, a Belgian political philosopher emphasizes: «It is important that the EU should introduce English as the official "common language of Europe", the language of mutual understanding ...There is a convergence that is already going on and must be accelerated towards English as a lingua franca in which all Europeans should be able

⁵ Dariusz Michalik. Modelowanie i symulacja międzynarodowego układu sil. – Torun: DUET, 2012, s. 118

to communicate.»⁶ Since deepening of integration within the EU institutions requires standardization and unification of the parameters and principles of the development of all spheres of the EU countries together with its linguistic environment.

It should be mentioned that language policy of the Ukrainian government reveals contradictory and at times paradoxical trends, which are hardly coherent with the EU priorities in the sphere of its *language* policy and *planning*. On the one hand it is necessary and historically justified to give Ukrainian the status of a state language at the legislative level, i.e. the only *legitimate language* in practically all spheres of life. A privileged position of the Ukrainian language will enhance its development and qualitative improvement, necessary for consolidating its position in the world linguistic community.

A cardinal change of geopolitical orientation of the country requires a fundamental world-view transformation of spiritual and mental spheres of society. In particular, it can be achieved by means of elimination of old stereotypes, images, priorities, which used to be implanted by ideological tools of influence in the Russian language. Therefore, during the period of formation of modern Ukrainian *statehood* unilingualism as an instrument of linguistic policy of the state must objectively serve the goal of uniting people and enhancing *the national identity* of the population, embracing General European socio-political, spiritual and mental values.

On the other hand, the monopoly of the Ukrainian language in the linguistic environment of the country would limit the right of national minorities to freely use their own languages, which contradicts the European principles of multi-lingualism. Because «linguistic diversity is a key feature of the European identity. The EU institutions ... and the Council of Europe ... are actively engaged in promoting multilingualism»⁷. Thus, the linguistic policy, based on the officially proclaimed monolingualism, hinders the development and support of other languages, because it precludes the use of ethnic minorities languages in virtually all spheres of social communication. It is quite obvious that the strengthening of the policy of monolingualism in Ukraine will not gain understanding and will even encounter objections from its state neighbors: not only in Russia, but also in Poland, Romania, and Hungary. There is no doubt that aggravation of relations with these EU member states can not contribute to the *realization* of the European integration *aspirations* of *Ukraine*. Since human rights priorities, which proclaim, among others, the right of people to freely use their native language is one of the *European Union's fundamental values*.

From a formal point of view the policy of monolingualism, enforcing a national language over others, may become an obstacle on the way to spreading English as a means of transnational communication. Though radicalism of the opponents of bilingualism is mostly

⁶ Philippe Van Parijs. *Linguistic Justice for Europe and the World*. – Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2011, p. 4

⁷ Гуус Екстра та Куталай Йагмур. Європейські інституції, що сприяють ро-звитку мульталінгвізму та плюралінгвізму / В кн.: Європейський мульт-алінгвізм та англійська мова : хрестоматія / ред.. кол.: Ф.І.Анісімова, І.С.Попова. – Д.: ЛПА, 2016, с. 5

directed against the Russian language in Ukrainian linguistic space, at socio-psychological level it can generate oppositional sentiments in the society in relation to English too.

Ukrainian national patriotism interprets bilingualism as a conflict and even confrontation between two national languages. That is why the formation in the mass consciousness of Ukrainian society the attitude towards English as a means of international communication, the main tool of globalization, which is *devoid of any specific cultural* features or national identity (i.e. devoid of specific national identity) is of such importance.

In recent years, the conceptual views expressed by the ELF researchers (abbreviation for English as a Lingua Franca, the language of transnational communication) have gained widespread popularity with the global community of linguists. A. Firth, who became one of the first linguists to use the concept of ELF, defines it as a «contact» language for people who do not have a common language or a common culture and for whom English is a foreign language chosen for communication⁸.

It is noteworthy that in the EFL version English is most appropriate for its unhampered spread in the linguistic environment of Ukraine. In recent decades the amount of communication between Ukrainians and the citizens of other countries has been constantly increasing (primarily with the EU member states) not only on the state level but also in the sphere of interpersonal communication. The introduction of a visa free regime was the factor that contributed to this phenomenon.

At the same time the *labor migration processes from Ukraine to the EU* got intensified (mostly to Italy, Poland, the Czech Republic).

Since in the era of globalization and, in particular, European integration the labour market extends far beyond traditional boundaries of the *state and is becoming international in scope*. According to the official estimates, in 2014 more than 602, 5 thousand Ukrainian citizens received *work* permits, permanent residents permits and worked in the EU countries on a permanent basis. The figure made up 51% of all labour migrants from Ukraine⁹. It is easy to assume that the number of illegal, seasonal and temporary employers from Ukraine is much higher than that of legal migrant workers.

The search of work and prospects of moving *abroad* to find a job or widen career *prospects*, motivate the citizens of Ukraine to learn foreign languages (starting with English, mostly as a means of transnational communication), since the knowledge of languages gives individuals a competitive advantage in European labor markets.

It should be noted that the motives for studying English have purely economic grounds not only among Ukrainian citizens, but also all over the world. For example, Anne Johnson, who explores the historical background and current situation with the spread of English in the EU

⁸ Firth A. The discursive accomplishment of normality / On "lingua franca" English and conversation analysis. - Journal of Pragmatics, 26, 1996, p. 240

⁹ Безрукова Н.В., Січкач В.А. Міграція робочої сили з України до ЄС: аналіз особливостей та наслідків / 9/xmlui/bitstream/handel/PolNT0...pdf

and China, states: «in order to have a competitive advantage in global market one should have a good knowledge of English. The respondents to the survey answered that they were learning English primarily for economic reasons»; according to A. Johnson, the knowledge of English is «a form of cultural capital, ... one of the most essential life skills to thrive in the modern world, which can be compared with the ability to drive a car or use a personal computer», also «English ... is becoming more and more necessary in order to attain job success, and this language leaves behind those who do not have a good command of it. <¹⁰.

For Ukraine to enhance the *knowledge* and *skills* of English is particularly important for economic reasons. The integration of Ukrainian society into the English-speaking civilizational environment can *help Ukraine* in its efforts to join the group of most *prosperous and advanced countries* and accelerate its socio-economic development. The spread of English in Ukraine, an *increase in* the numbers of users of the language may act as a powerful tool, necessary for finding effective solutions capable of making strategic tasks of the national economy attainable. For the government, and for the business sector as well, English proficiency is clearly seen as a key for national growth, and a skill needed for the country to engage with the globalised economy and to allow the international community to invest in Ukraine.

The knowledge of English will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of government and public organizations of Ukraine, its national producers and entrepreneurs, the activity aimed at achieving the following economic goals:

- integration into a single *global* economic space and a multinational business *environment*, closer cooperation with *International Organizations* and higher level of *professionalism* of Ukrainian representatives in international organizations, whose decisions establish and regulate trade and economic relations between national economies;
- assertion of national economic interests of Ukraine in certain sectors of international economic relations (“common markets demand a common language”);¹¹
- building relationships and partnerships with foreign corporations, attracting investments, using advanced experience in organization and management of economic activity, establishing joint ventures (in D.Graddol’s words “joint ventures use English as ...functional language”)¹²;
- loaning and applying advanced technologies (manuals, technical documentation, agreements, contracts are mostly written in *English*);
- using world information resources, with mostly English content. The advertising of Ukrainian made products also needs to be translated into English;

¹⁰ Jonson Anne. The Rise of English: The Language of Globalization in China and the European Union / Macalister International. Vol.22. Article 12, winter 2009, p. 147, 149

¹¹ Barber B. Jihad vs McWorld. – New York: 2001, p. 51

¹² Graddol David. The Future of English? – London: The British Council, 1997, p. 29

- training and retraining programmes for employed *workers* in the economic sector in accordance with modern requirements;
- a considerable expansion of tourism contacts of Ukraine with foreign countries (improving tourism service quality in Ukrainian service institutions requires the knowledge of English too).

Therefore, the government policies of many countries of the world demonstrate that their governments realize the importance of integration into English speaking *environments worldwide*. Moreover, this understanding is based mostly on economic considerations, which induce the governmental institutions of many countries to encourage the citizens to learn foreign languages, (primarily English). According to A.Johnson, first and foremost “the newly formed states realize that English speaking labour force can help their economies to integrate into and become more competitive in the global market; more and more financial recourses are allocated by governments to the language teaching programmes”.

The current period is marked by the significant spread of English in Ukrainian humanitarian society. *English language learning* market in the *country* is growing. *The population of English learners has expanded over the past decade due in part to national programmes aimed at boosting English proficiency*. It primarily concerns such spheres of social life as culture, education, science, but the sphere of leisure and entertainment as well. English is acquiring particular importance in the cultural *sphere of higher* education. As confirmed by the account of Organization of economic cooperation and development (OECD) “Higher education to 2030, volume 2, Globalization”(2009)” “English is the dominant language in business sphere as well as the sphere of professional development. It is also used almost exclusively as the *language of science, research, academic literature*.¹³ The language is *integrated into* the broad *curriculum*. *English is becoming a medium of teaching other subjects in universities all over the world, thus helping them to integrate into* the international *academic* community. It has gained particular importance in the EU countries. Since European universities enroll students from all the European countries, *introducing English-taught* programs is aimed at removing *language* barriers and improving the international competences of domestic students. Germany tops of the list, and is followed by Great Britain and France, offering almost *all courses* in English. Moreover, “the statistics of World Bank shows a significant advantage of English speaking countries in teaching students according to individual academic mobility program...More than 50% of foreign students from all over the world are recruited to Universities.”¹⁴ In recent decades studying in English speaking countries is gaining popularity among Ukrainian young people. The demand for studying abroad is being driven both by concerns about the quality of education at home,

¹³ OECD. Higher education to 2030: Globalization. – Paris: OECD, 2009, p. 32

¹⁴ Авшеник Н. Виклики домінування англійської мови в транснаціональному освітньо-науковому просторі / Інформаційно-комунікаційні тех-нології в сучасній освіті: досвід проблеми, перспективи. Збірник матеріалів III Міжнародної науково-практичної конференції. Вип.3, Частина 2. – Київ-Львів, 2012, с. 227

and a strong interest in learning English and in exploring work opportunities abroad. Ukrainian students find the US, UK, Poland, Germany, Canada, Spain to be the most attractive study destinations. According to ICEF monitor more than 1,200 young Ukrainians find a high degree of optimism for the country's future as well as a strong international outlook, which makes the question of language proficiency more relevant. The information field is closely connected with the education sphere. Of special significance is the ability of Ukrainian citizens to use *Information and communication technology innovations*, which, in turn, is impossible without a good knowledge of English. D. Crystal quotes Michael Specter's article headed 'World, Wide, Web: 3 English Words': "if you want to take full advantage of the Internet there is only one way to do it: learn English"¹⁵. So the creation of optimal conditions for a wider involvement of Ukrainian users into world information-communication order requires massive organizational measures, aimed at *promoting* the *study* of English knowledge among the Ukrainians.

In the first turn it concerns the legal justification of the principles of implementing English into the *teaching process* in educational institutions, improving the level of English teachers' and linguists' level preparation, introducing innovative methods of teaching school and university students.

Thus, the objective processes of globalization and European integration determine the *presence* of English speaking factor in *all spheres of life* of the *Ukrainian society*. The need for all round social-political and economic development of Ukraine, the need for expansion of international cooperation logically require further integration of Ukrainian society into global English speaking space. Therefore the increase of English speaking competence of the citizens of Ukraine is acquiring the national importance and must be in the center of attention of the *Ukrainian government* language policy.

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¹⁵ Авшєнєк Н. Виклики домінування англійської мови в транснаціональному освітньо-науковому просторі / Інформаційно-комунікаційні технології в сучасній освіті: досвід проблеми, перспективи. Збірник матеріалів III Міжнародної науково-практичної конференції. Вип.3. Частина 2. – Київ-Львів, 2012, с. 143

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