

English-Russian Interaction: Refashioning Cultural Values and Assumptions

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English language globalization theory, being a relatively new branch of linguistics, has yielded a number of approaches or paradigms, each with its own models and extensive terminologies. One of the approaches, the so-called “global English” or “world English” approach, is more concerned with standards in the form of “English as an International Language” (EIL) or “World Standard (Printed/Spoken) English” (WSP/SE). The second approach, the so-called “World Englishes” approach, stresses the idea of pluricentricity and diversity of English in its regional varieties, represented in Braj Kachru’s model of three concentric circles: Englishes of the Inner Circle (ENL/English as a Native Language), Englishes of the Outer Circle (ESL/English as a Second Language), and Englishes of the Expanding Circle (EFL/English as a Foreign Language). A concise comparison of the two paradigms is given in [Jenkins 2007: 19] (with reference to R. Phillipson):

Global English paradigm	World Englishes paradigm
Assimilationist	Celebrates and supports diversity
Monolingual orientation	Multi-lingual, multi-dialectal
‘International’ English assumes US/UK norms	‘International’: a cross-national linguistic common core
Anglo-American linguistic norms	Local linguistic norms, regional and national
Exonormative English	Endonormative Englishes
Target norm the ‘native speaker’	Target norm the good ESL user
Teachers can be monolingual	Bilingual and bicultural teachers

Each paradigm today is considered to have its own strengths and its own shortcomings; each has its own proponents and its own opponents. The opponents of the former approach accuse it of imposing Inner Circle norms, ignoring the notion of “national identity” as expressed by English and perpetuating the “imperialistic” idea of homogeneity. The latter approach is criticized for overemphasizing the local, ignoring the demands of “intelligibility” and the potential triggering of “nationalistic” responses. Extremely interesting are numerous attempts to move beyond the debate over globalization versus localization, homogeneity versus heterogeneity, “global English” versus “World Englishes”. The “global Englishes” approach, suggested by Alastair Pennycook, is based on the idea of “transculturation”, emphasizing the fact that all varieties of English are becoming increasingly multicultural; the “English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)” approach, promoted mainly by Jennifer Jenkins, shifts the discussion from regional subdivisions of English into establishing a “common core” of language units used by a “competent ELF speaker” in international ELF communication; Claire Kramsch develops the notion of the “third place” opened up by cultural exchange in the dialogue of two cultures, this “third culture” being neither one or the other, but something else besides, a culture in its own right; the “glocalization” idea, suggested by Anne Pakir, presents the “unity-in-contrast” approach, according to which today’s English manifests both global and local features; etc. (see the discussion in more detail in [Прошина 2007, Crystal 2000, 2005, Jenkins 2006, 2007, Kachru & Nelson 2005, Kramsch 2007, McArthur 2003, Pennycook 2007]).

Some aspects of the globalization of English are relatively less covered and theorized about than others. Most of the research outlined above concerns two spheres: the structural-linguistic features of world English/Englishes and their socio-linguistic features. The global, international and local, nativized varieties of English as well as the so-called “Englishized” vernacular languages are described from the point of view of various phonological, lexical, grammatical and other structural deviations/ innovations and from the point of view of what functions these varieties perform and what attitudes they elicit in the socio-political contexts of various

ENL/ESL/EFL communities. Stated, but largely ignored is the fact that most of the linguistic transformations and innovations emerging in the process of the interaction of local languages with global English are sifted through the culture filter. The problems of culture-through-language contact are often reduced to mere lists of borrowed “exoticisms”, such as Russian *samovar* or *perestroika*, and culture-specific communicative strategies. A more in-depth linguacultural analysis of contact varieties of English would not only contribute to a more accurate picture of the English language globalization, but can also relieve some of the attitudinal tensions which accompany it.

For example, the influences of global English on local languages in non-native-English communities have always been welcome, on the one hand, as a symbol of modernity and opportunity, and at the same time resented as potential threat and “pollution”. Russia has had its share of such “attitudinal schizophrenia” (to use the words of V. Kachru and C. Nelson [Kachru & Nelson 2005: 15]) connected with the process of its Englishizing [Карасик 2004: 223-224; Леонтович 2007: 164-165; Палажченко 2004: 41-43; Тер-Минасова 2000: 105-106; Rivlina 2005 (b)]. One of the major concerns in “non-native-English” countries, including Russia, is that English inundates national languages with concepts imposing “Western” values of individualism, pragmatism, aggressiveness, consumerism, etc. This approach is based again on the “globalization-as-imperialism” reasoning and on seeing languages and cultures as given entities; it fails to deal with language and culture contact as a dynamic interactional process of refashioning and reinterpreting of local linguacultural identities. The same concerns and generalizations can be traced in the professional linguistic rhetoric of globalization. Alastair Pennycook writes: “Both the World Englishes and linguistic imperialism frameworks are predicated on distinctive national linguistic identities. If we are to take globalization seriously, we have to think beyond these frameworks of national or local identity as fixed” [Pennycook 2007: 94]. He stresses the idea that globalization of English does not necessarily or even frequently imply Westernization, or Americanization, engendering homogenization and passivity, but is rather “a part of reorganization of the local” [ibid.: 7], highlighting the differences and releasing cultural semiotic activity. It is probably not too risky to assert that today’s global English functions in a way as the “global Other”, in opposition with which local communities in non-inner-circle countries redefine their own linguacultural identity.

It must be noted that in order to avoid the controversies of making assertions about Russian or Anglo-American cultures and “national characters”, or repeating repeatedly criticized cultural stereotypes, the description of English-Russian interaction should follow the principle of linguistic evidence and its rigorous semantic analysis for the postulated cross-cultural hypotheses, the principle which is the basis of cross-cultural linguistics as developed in the Russian academic tradition (what in Russian linguistics is called «лингвокультурология» - “linguaculturology” [Карасик 2004, Кулинич 2002, Маслова 2001, Хроленко 2006, etc.]). The linguistic evidence in this fully explicit linguistic approach takes the form of certain language-specific “key” words, recurrent colloquial phrases, phraseological units, conversational routines, and other culture-revealing lingual units and forms which together build what in Russian linguistic writings is referred to as “linguaculture” or the “lingual picture of the world”, terms which are regrettably absent in the international globalization of English research¹.

The traditional object of study in contact linguistics, borrowings or loan-words, trivial as they seem, make an ideal object of cross-cultural analysis if we move from mere cataloguing of loans to studying how they are appropriated in local linguacultural contexts. English-Russian interaction often results in drastic reconceptualization of many borrowed lexical units. As A. D. Shmelev puts it, “borrowings, when placed in the Russian language environment, often adapt to it and start correlating with the framework of ideas which are non-existent in the source language, but are imposed by the Russian worldview” [Зализняк et al. 2005: 438]. Even those

¹ It should be noted, though, that Jennifer Jenkins used the terms “linguaculture” and “linguacultural context” in her latest book [Jenkins 2007: 2, 4], but she did not expatiate on them.

borrowed concepts which are sometimes labeled with a purist slant as “alien”, “empty”, and even “parasitical” by Russian linguists [Карасик 2004: 212-213], perform an extremely important function in accentuating, developing, specifying, and nuancing meanings, which are significant for the Russian linguaculture, but do not exist or are not as important in English.

This point can be illustrated with the lingual unit which seems to be one of the most emblematic examples of today’s English-Russian linguacultural interaction: it is one of the recent English borrowings in Russian - the word *нуар* (*‘piar’*). The way this borrowing has been adapted by Russian makes it in many ways different from its English prototype both linguistically and culturally. In English, **PR/public relations** means “the work of forming in the minds of the general public a favourable opinion of an organization” or “good relations between an organization and the public” (according to *Longman’s Dictionary of English Language and Culture*). In Russian, this lexical unit was borrowed in the four following forms: it is used as an English insertion, e.g.: *вопросы коммуникационного менеджмента и PR – issues of communication management and PR; PR-менеджер – PR manager*; as a calque translation – *связи с общественностью (public relations)*, e.g.: *специалист по связям с общественностью – public relations specialist*; as a transcribed word-combination - *наблик рилейшнз*, e.g.: *агентство рекламы и наблик рилейшнз – advertisement and public relations agency*; and as a transcribed abbreviation - *нуар* (*‘piar’*), e.g.: *нуар и реклама – PR and advertisements*. All these forms are used in the same professional-oriented meanings as in English. However, the last variant, *нуар* (*‘piar’*), has undergone deeper adaptation in Russian. First of all, it has developed a wide range of derivatives, e.g.: *нуарщик* (*‘piarschik’*, *PR specialist*), *нуарить(ся)*, *пропиарить(ся)*, *распиарить*, etc. (*‘piarit’(sia)*, *propiarit’(sia)*, *raspiarit’(sia)’*, etc.), verbs of perfective and imperfective aspects, denoting roughly speaking “to PR (oneself)” or “to promote (oneself)”, *распиаренный* (*‘raspiarennyi’*, an adjective denoting roughly speaking “PR-ed” or “widely advertised”), *нуар-ход* (*‘piar-khod’*, “PR move”), and others. Semantically, in many contexts, the word *нуар* (*‘piar’*) has been disengaged from the expression *public relations*: it is no longer perceived as an abbreviation, it has left the sphere of professional discourse, it is widely used in everyday communication (it is so highly frequent that it is often commented on as a so-called “buzz-word”, “vogue-word”, or “catch-word”), and it has acquired connotative meanings which make it different from English *PR/public relations*. In English, *PR* or *public relations* as well as other cognate words and expressions, have either neutral or positive evaluative connotations, cf.: *to do good public relations for one’s town; to maintain good public relations; to publicize new policy; he is a good self-publicist*; etc. Derogatory meanings in this lexical field are expressed by several relatively infrequently used set expressions, such as *public relations exercise* – an action that is done only to gain favour with the public and not because of any real feeling or interest: *The parades come down to one thing: a public relations exercise for the Bush Administration (Longman’s Dictionary of English Language and Culture)*; or, *publicity hound* – (unrecorded in most dictionaries) used either derogatorily or humorously, about a person who strives to see his or her name in print. It is exactly this shade of meaning – of negatively assessed, aggressive efforts made to impose a positive, though not obligatory true, image of someone, especially, of oneself – that dominates the semantics of Russian *нуар* (*‘piar’*). The Russian word *нуар* (*‘piar’*) has the derisive connotation of the English word *hype* – attempts to get a lot of public attention for things or people by saying often and loudly that they are very good, or better than they really are. In spite of the numerous derivatives of *нуар* (*‘piar’*) mentioned above, they are seldom used in Russian translations in the contexts where positive attitudes are rendered by English *PR/public relations* or related lexical units, cf.: *to do good public relations for one’s town – пропагандировать свой город/ to popularize one’s town; to maintain good public relations – поддерживать репутацию/ to maintain a good reputation; to publicize new policy – информировать общественность о новой политической инициативе/ to inform the public about new policy; he is a good self-publicist – он умеет себя правильно подать/ he knows how to present*

himself; etc. And vice versa, English translations of Russian *пиар* and its derivatives require lexical substitution by units with negative connotations; cf.: *Кремлевские пиарщики – the Kremlin spin-doctors, ... он активно «пиарит» свои проекты на ТВ-6 – ... he is going out of his way to promote/plug his own projects on TV-6*, etc. [Палажченко 2004: 90].

Derogatory connotations of this Russian concept are especially evident in a phrase, in which *пиар* ('*piar*') is used in an evaluative-predicative function: *Это (просто, чистый, откровенный) пиар. – This is (just, sheer, undisguised, etc.) piar*. This phrase has become a cliché which is usually employed to dismiss various rumours and scandals involving celebrities, who aim to use all possible pretexts and all available means, even ugly ones, to attract the attention of the public. This meaning is further stressed in recurrent, conventional collocations, such as *лживый пиар (deceitful piar), грязный пиар (dirty piar), черный пиар (black piar, denoting "smear campaign")*, etc. Most of the derivatives of *пиар* ('*piar*') are used in contexts which reveal their derogatory or dismissive connotations. Cf.:

Что это, очередной пиар-ход или действительно благие намерения? (Пограец.ru, June 2007) – Is it yet another "piar move" ('piar-khod') or really good intentions?

Все недоумевали – правда или снова пиарятся? (about the divorce of pop-singers Phillip Kirkorov and Alla Pugacheva; NTV channel, Maxim, February 2008). – Everyone was at a loss whether it was true or whether they "piar themselves" ('piariatsia') again.

... может хватит пиариться под именем Путина – под ним уже старшие товарищи последние месяцы так отпиарились, что еще долго будет аукаться (about a political youth organization Nashy, Komsomol'skaia Pravda, December 2007). – ... probably it is about time to stop "piarring yourselves" ('piarit'sia') under the name of Putin; your older comrades have "piarred themselves" ('otpiarilis') under his name for several months so much that it is going to re-echo for a long time.

... наши лидеры не должны «пиариться по майданам», а собраться дружно вместе и поговорить... (Businessinform, November 2007). – ... our leaders should not "piar themselves" ('piarit'sia') on the squares", but should get together as friends and have a talk...

Немолодая и не слишком привлекательная женщина оказалась гораздо привлекательнее самонадеянной и распиаренной красотки (Komsomol'skaia Pravda, September 2005). – An aging and unattractive woman has turned out to be more attractive than a complacent and "piarred" ('raspiarennoi') beauty.

Here are some further examples from various Internet chats and forums:

Считаю Линдсей Лохан очередной хорошо распиаренной пустышкой-однодневкой под названием "made in Holliwood"... – I consider Lindsey Lohan to be just another "well-piarred" ('raspiarennoi') good-for-nothing "made in Holliwood"...; Полузащитник Баллак – обыкновенная распиаренная посредственность. – Halfback Ballack is an example of mere "piarred" ('raspiarennaia') mediocrity; ... Скорее всего, темы создаются беспорядочно, каждый пытается себя пропиарить. А на форуме надо общаться, а не пиариться. – It looks as if the topics for discussion are created slovenly, with each person trying "to piar themselves" ('propiarit'). But you should communicate in the forum and not "piar yourself" ('piarit'sia')...; Задача психолога – пропиарить и нагать народу, защищая обанкротившуюся власть... – The goal of the psychologist is to "piar" ('propiarit') and to lie to the people...

Besides high frequency, high derivational and collocational activity, the salience of the *piar* concept for the Russian linguaculture is indicated by such important linguistic evidence as an emergence of a new phraseological unit (in addition to *black piar* for *smear campaign* mentioned above), a new negatively connoted idiom (*делать пиар на костях (на крови, на слезах, на смерти, etc.) – to make piar on someone's bones (blood, tears, death, etc.)*, on the analogy of

the Russian expressions *танцы на костях*, *от веселье на крови* – *dances on the bones*, *merry-making on blood*, etc. Cf.:

Делать пиар на костях, крови и поте собственных товарищей, как бы ты к ним не относился, - гнусно (Argumenty i Fauty, February 2006). - To make piar on the bones, blood and sweat of your comrades, no matter what you think about them, is mean.

После «Курска» и Беслана появились политики, не стесняющиеся делать пиар на жертвах и их родственниках (Komsomol'skaia Pravda, September 2005) – After the “Kursk” submarine and Beslan catastrophes there are a lot of politicians who feel no shame about making piar on victims and their families.

Пиар на костях... Эх, как метко сказано... Почему, когда на Красной площади устраивается очередной концерт, никто из «гуманистов» не говорит о танцах на костях? Мало ли костей под кремлевской брусчаткой... Но это не мешает никому... Господин доллар шепнет на ухо, что неплохо бы подзаработать - и нет костей, нет истории, а лишь концертная площадка «Красная площадь»... (from the article entitled «Пиар на костях» - “Piar on the bones”, Sovetskaia Rossiia, October 2005). – Piar on the bones... Well, the expression is so right to the point... Why is it so that when another concert is organized on Red Square none of the “humanists” says anything about dancing on the bones? There are lots of bones under the Kremlin cobblestones... But it does not bother anyone... Mister Dollar will whisper lightly that it would be nice to earn some money and there are no bones, no history, there is just a huge concert site called “Red Square”...

S.G. Ter-Minasova, V.N. Teliia and many other linguists maintain that culture is especially graphically represented linguistically in the idiomatic stock of the language - in set phrases, idioms, proverbs and other fixed lexical units, which reflect and register through their imagery the most characteristic features of the worldview of the speakers, the accumulated wisdom and cultural experience of the people [Ter-Минасова 2000: 147; Телия 1999: 9; Маслова, 2001: 82-88]. The fact that the word *пиар*, ‘*piar*’ in the Russian language developed a related idiomatic unit, which does not exist in the source English language, and that this idiom is used recurrently, shows once again that the concept of *пиар*, ‘*piar*’ is linguistically specific and unique for the Russian linguaculture.

The way the Russian *пиар*, ‘*piar*’ is entrenched in Russian linguaculture can be further illustrated by numerous examples of its use in Russian word play in various puns, allusions, deliberately maimed quotations, proverbs and clichés, in jokes, etc. For example, the fact that *пиар*, ‘*piar*’ is partially homophonous with the Russian word *пир*, ‘*pir*’ – *a feast* has triggered a facetious transformation of the title of the famous drama written by A. S. Pushkin *Пир во время чумы* (*A Feast in the Time of Plague*) – *пиар во время чумы*, *piar in the time of plague*. In Russian culture, this drama is a part of the so-called intertextual cultural common stock, a unit of obligatory or textbook reference selection known by all speakers. The expression *пир во время чумы*, *a feast in the time of plague* is used as a set phrase to denote unbridled, unthinking revelry in hard times. The expression ‘*piar in the time of plague*’ demonstrates an unequivocally negative attitude of Russian speakers to this phenomenon. A detective novel by N. Leonov and A. Makeev about unscrupulous spin-doctors (‘*piarschiki*’) is titled *ПИАР во время чумы* - *PIAR in the Time of Plague*; ‘*piar in the time of plague*’ is used as a provocative slogan by one of the advertisement agencies (*Нейродюбель* – *Neirod’ub’el*’); this pun has become a cliché which migrates from article to article in different newspaper and magazine publications about advertisement and public relations issues, most of them dealing with the ills and the downside of this business sphere in today’s Russia. (More about English-Russian language play in [Rivlina 2007].)

The borrowing *piar* features in a series of jokes, which also contribute to disclosing the attitude of the Russian public to this concept. For example:

Отец приходит домой: «Вот тебе, сынок, мороженое». – «Папа, ты это на самом деле или это пиар?» (example borrowed from [Карасик 2004: 217]) – *The father comes home and says: “Here’s some ice-cream for you, son.” – “Daddy, do you really mean it or is it piar?”*

Спросила как-то крыса хомяка: «Почему тебя люди любят, дома держат, вкусно кормят, а меня - ненавидят, травят и боятся?» Хомяк подумал и отвечает: «Просто у меня пиар лучше.» - *Once a rat asked a hamster: “Why do people love you, keep you as a pet, give you good food, and why do they hate me, poison me and run scared of me?” The hamster thought for a while and answered: “I have better piar.”*

Jokes (to be more exact, the popular genre of short humorous stories called in Russian «анекдоты» - “anecdotes”) are often analyzed in cross-cultural studies, because, “being a subtype of criticism, humour is based on a certain system of values” [Карасик, 2004: 190]. Cross-cultural studies involve primarily jokes which reflect so-called “national character” features and various ethnic stereotypes [Тер-Минасова 2000: 138-142, Карасик 2004: 190-210, Кулинич 2002: 72-105, Holliday et al. 2006: 202-204]. As the jokes with the word *пиар*, ‘piar’ show, texts of this genre can be also used as a source of information about speakers’ attitudes to culturally marked linguistic units, specifically, about borrowed concepts and the ways in which they are appropriated by the recipient linguaculture. The fact that *пиар*, ‘piar’ has entered the sphere of demotic “laughter culture”, of truly popular cultural activity, demonstrates the awareness of the wider public about the concept of *пиар*, ‘piar’, the actuality of the general negative attitude to it and an attempt by the Russian linguacultural community to protect itself and to distance itself from this phenomenon through laughter.

Another type of vital linguistic evidence, which needs to be considered in cross-cultural analysis of borrowings, is so-called “popular linguistics” or “folk linguistics”, also known in Russian language publications as “naïve linguistics”. It includes “meta-linguistic comments” dealing with folk beliefs or speculations about language (see more about “popular linguistics” and its relevance to cross-cultural studies in [Rivlina 2005 (a)]). Since the influx of English borrowings is a visible trend in everyday Russian discourse, they provoke numerous comments on the part of common Russian language speakers. Here is an example of a half-joking meta-linguistic observation about the borrowing *пиар*, ‘piar’, which shows that Russian speakers see it as fully appropriated by and formally and semantically transformed in Russian:

«... я считаю, у Россия потрясающая история, но западный мир лучше пиарится. «Пиарить», кстати, слово русское. Это когда-то оно произошло от английского «паблик рилейшнз». Но сейчас оно русское. Можно попиарить, можно отпиарить. Чувствуете?..» (interview with Mikhail Zadornov, Russian comic writer and comedian, *Komsomol’skaia Pravda*, April 15, 2008) – “... I think that Russia’s history is breathtaking, but the West is better “piarred” (‘piaritsia’). Incidentally, “to piar” (‘piarit’) is a Russian word. It used to be related to English “public relations”. But now it is Russian. We can “piar for a while” (‘popiarit’), we can “piar away” (‘otpiarit’). Do you feel it? ...

Now that the salience of *пиар*, ‘piar’ and its obvious transformation in the Russian language have been established, it can be hypothesized that the direction of its semantic shift has been determined by what A. D. Shmelev (as quoted above) calls “correlation with the framework of ideas which are non-existent in the source language, but are imposed by the Russian worldview”. In linguacultural studies, the Russian worldview is characterized by a tendency to distinguish between the two spheres of life - the spiritual, the “internal”, the sublime, on the one hand, and the everyday, the earthly, the “external”, the “material”, on the other hand. These two spheres are seen in Russian culture not only as diametrically opposed, but also as morally charged. M. Yu. Lotman and B. A. Uspenskij define this specific feature of Russian culture as “fundamental polarity”; they write that basic cultural values (ideological, political, religious) in the Russian worldview “are arranged in a bipolar value field divided by a sharp line and without

any neutral axiological zone” (as quoted in [Wierzbicka 2002: 416-417]). This aspect is defined as one of the “key ideas” or “key themes” of the Russian “lingual picture of the world” and is covered in detail in [Зализняк et al. 2005: 175-202]. It is linguistically revealed, besides other linguistic evidence, by the fact that many lexical units correlating with the “inner”, the spiritual are evaluated positively in Russian, while units associated with the “material”, the everyday are evaluated negatively. The latter include a whole range of untranslatable Russian words, such as *пошлость* (*poshlost'*), *мещанство* (*meschanstvo*), *быт* (*byt'*), *обыватели* (*obyvat'el'i*), etc. which have no equivalents in other languages. *Poshlost'* is explained as the word encompassing triviality, banality, sexual promiscuity, and a lack of spirituality. Vladimir Nabokov romanized it as “poshlust” (a pun: “posh + lust”) and explained it as “smug philistinism”, and “not only the obviously trashy but mainly the falsely important, the falsely beautiful, the falsely clever, the falsely attractive”. *Poshlost'* is seen as the core attribute of *мещанство* (*meschanstvo*) which is roughly translated as “philistinism” or “petty bourgeoisie”, but unlike its approximate English equivalents is widely understood and used on everyday discourse in Russian. *Быт* (*byt'*) is roughly translated as “everyday life”, but is seen in Russian culture as opposed to the “high” spheres of art, science, religion, spirituality, etc. *Poshlost'*, *meschanstvo*, *byt* and other related concepts are seen as the root of many evils in literary works by such writers as A. Chekhov, M. Tsvetaieva, V. Maiakovskij, M. Bulgakov and others [ibid.]. Axiological opposition of the spiritual/ the mundane is also connected with what in linguacultural studies is defined as “non-agentivity” in the Russian cultural outlook: it is a tendency to resignation and submissiveness, lack of emphasis on the individual as an “achiever”, especially in the material, “external” sense. Western ethical ideology which places a great emphasis on individual success and on competition is assessed negatively in negatively connoted Russian words, such as, for example, *chestol'ubiie* - *ambitions* [Wierzbicka 1992: 198-199, 395-441; Леонтович 2007: 185-187, 189-190].

Thus, attempts to get a lot of public attention for individual achievements are unequivocally placed in the Russian worldview into the negative axiological zone of the “earthly”, the “external”, or the “non-spiritual”. The deep antipathy towards any striving for public recognition was artfully delivered in a brilliant, widely quoted poem of Nobel-laureate Boris Pasternak *Быть знаменитым некрасиво...* - *It is not seemly to be famous...* (the first line of this poem is also a unit of intertextual Russian cultural stock, known by all Russian speakers):

*Быть знаменитым некрасиво.
Не это подымает ввысь.*

*It is not seemly to be famous:
Celebrity does not exalt*

...
*Цель творчества — самоотдача,
А не шумиха, не успех.
Позорно, ничего не знача,
Быть притчей на устах у всех.
Но надо жить без самозванства,
Так жить, чтобы, в конце концов,
Привлечь к себе любовь
пространства,
Услышать будущего зов...*

...
*Creation calls for self-surrender,
Not loud noise and cheap success.
Life must be lived without false face,
Lived so that in the final count
We draw unto ourselves love from space...*

(Translation by Lydia Pasternak Slater)

At the present stage of Russian society, *науп*, ‘*piar*’ epitomizes this negatively assessed idea of “celebrity”, “false face”, “loud noise and cheap success” and its pejorativization is culture-bound and culture-revealing.

Another important feature of the Russian linguaculture is its emphasis on emotions and sincerity in relations between people. Anna Wierzbicka compares the Russian concept of *iskrennost'* (roughly speaking, “sincerity”) with its English counterpart and comes to the

conclusion that *iskrennost'* is culturally specific, because it indicates “a spontaneous outpouring of the heart”, “opening, or revealing one’s soul (*dusha*)” to another person. Numerous examples from various literary sources and everyday discourse disclose “the Russian need for intimate, ‘emotional’, ‘soul-to-soul’ communication with other people” [Wierzbicka 1992: 62]. *Iskrennost'* is closely connected with *neposredstvennost'* (“childlike sincerity”) which can be considered in Western traditions of thought as immature and irresponsible [Wierzbicka 2002: 417]. The same set of values makes the Russian *obscheniie* different from its closest English equivalent “communication”: *obscheniie* is not just “an exchange of messages”; the level of sincerity makes it closer to the word “communion”. Anna Wierzbicka stresses that “the English words *communication*, *message*, and *mean* (which do not have exact equivalents in Russian) all focus on what people “want to say” rather than on what they think or feel” [ibid.: 426]. English “sincerity” is about being “outspoken” (another word with no Russian equivalent), which implies being sincere about one’s opinions, while the Russian *iskrennost'* is all about feelings and emotions [Леонтович 2007: 193-194]. *Iskrennost'* implies close, intimate, long-lasting relationships between people. There are frequent attacks by Russian writers and common Russian speakers on “artificial”, “external” Western friendliness and politeness, and Russian satirical depictions of Western European “superficial civility”, “portrayed as untrue and insincere, or accused of affectation” [Wierzbicka 2002: 427]. The importance of *dusha* (“soul”), *iskrennost'*, *obscheniie* is also reflected in the concept of *pravda* (“truth”): it is “not an abstract and impersonal truth but “pravda”- “pravda” that flourishes in human talk, in sincere “obšcenie” among people, in communing with other people through speech - not with an “open mind” (that is, a mind open to ideas, the phrase which has no equivalent in Russian) but with an “open *dusha*” - that is, a “soul” (or self) open to other people” (the phrase which has no equivalent in English) [ibid: 428].

Пиар, ‘*piar*’ in Russian is influenced by and involved in this “framework of ideas”. As the examples above show, *piar* is conceptualized as opposed to ‘*pravda*’, “truth” (see above: *Все недоумевали – правда или снова пиарятся?* - *Everyone was at a loss whether it was true or whether they “piar themselves” (‘piariatsia’) again; Задача психолога – пропиарить и налгать народу ... – The goal of the psychologist is to “piar” (‘propiarit’) and to lie to the people...*), as opposed to ‘*iskrennost'*’, “sincerity” (*Что это, очередной пиар-ход или действительно благие намерения?* - *Is it yet another “piar move” (‘piar-khod’) or really good intentions?*; «Папа, ты это на самом деле или это пиар?» - “Daddy, do you really mean it or is it *piar*?”), as opposed to ‘*obscheniie*’, “communion/ communication” (... *на форуме надо общаться, а не пиариться. – ... you should communicate at the forum and not “piar yourself” (‘piarit’sia’)...*; ... *наши лидеры не должны «пиариться по майданам», а собраться дружно вместе и поговорить... - ... our leaders should not “piar themselves (‘piarit’sia’) on the squares”, but should get together as friends and have a talk...*). V. I. Karasik writes that the idea of a professionally organized intentional formation of a positive public image for a company or a person contradicts the accepted stereotypes of social behavior in Russian culture, with its high value of sincerity and emotional ties between people and its negative attitude to formalities and to open demonstrations of friendliness to strangers; the concept of *piar* is seen as replacing sincere emotional ties between people with an artificially friendly communicative climate, alien to the traditional dominant Russian values [Карасик 2004: 217].

The continuity of “axiological dualism” and “moral extremism” in the Russian culture, of its emotional, “*dusha*” orientation is further supported by the fact that, in the last decade, quite a number of lexical units, most of them borrowed by Russian from English, have undergone deep linguacultural reconceptualization similar to that of *piar*: this list of new negatively coloured “vogue-words” includes *гламур*, ‘*glamur*’ (“glamour”), *креатив*, ‘*kreativ*’ (“creativity”), *нафос*, ‘*pafos*’ (“pathos”), plus some other words and their numerous derivatives, which, on the one hand, encapsulate for the Russian speakers the idea of Russia joining the global English-speaking community, and, on the other hand, echo specifically Russian linguacultural resistance

“to the falsely important, the falsely beautiful, the falsely clever, the falsely attractive”, the “non-spiritual”. (Each of the Russian concepts enumerated deserves a separate linguacultural study; see, for example, [Ривлина 2007] about the Russian concept of *гламур*, ‘*glamur*’). It looks as if, more often than not, borrowings help refashion and sustain national-cultural identities rather than disrupt them.

There are interesting parallels between the semantic development of the borrowing *пиар*, *piar* and some of earlier borrowings into Russian. Until not so long ago, the borrowings *агрессивный*, ‘*agressivnyi*’ (“aggressive”) and *амбициозный*, ‘*ambitsiozniy*’ (“ambitious”) used to be textbook examples of culture-related “translator’s false friends” in English-Russian translation/interpreting studies. In English, the words *ambitious* and *aggressive* can be used in a neutral, derogatory, or appreciative sense: *ambitious* denotes “having a strong desire for success, power, wealth, etc.” or “showing a desire to do something that demands great effort, skill, etc.”; *aggressive* denotes either “belligerent” or “not afraid of opposition, determined and forceful, assertive”. In Russian until the last several years, ‘*ambitsiozniy*’ and ‘*agressivnyi*’ have been used to denote the same concepts, but only with strong derogatory connotations, which were seen as determined by the Russian cultural values of submissiveness, “non-agentivity”, personal modesty, etc. (see the discussion of *chestol’ubiie* – *ambitions* above), further aggravated by the Soviet ideology of ‘*uravnilovka*’, “levelling” [Юзефович 2000: 10-11, 111]. English-Russian translation manuals recommended substituting lexical units of this semantic field, e.g.: *an ambitious project* – *очень перспективный проект/ a project which has great potential, he is very ambitious* – *он стремится сделать блестящую карьеру/ he strives to carve out a career, he is not aggressive enough* – *ему не достаёт хватки/ he has a weak grip* [Виссон 2005: 168; Палажченко 2004: 142-143]. But in today’s Russian, these two concepts are increasingly often used with neutral or positive overtones, influenced by the extensive interaction with English, especially in business-related contexts, e.g.: *aggressive marketing strategy* – *агрессивная стратегия сбыта* [Палажченко 2004: 142], as well as various other spheres, cf.:

Я буду агрессивно поддерживать любого кандидата в президенты с центристской программой (the mayor of Moscow Yu. Luzhkov, April 2004). – *I will aggressively support any presidential candidate with a centrist program.*

У песни хорошая агрессия... Ритм в песне жесткий, она агрессивна, но агрессивна по-хорошему с музыкальной точки зрения... (Russian singer O. Gazmanov, September 2006) – *This song has good aggression... The rhythm of the song is rough, the song is aggressive, but aggressive in a positive musical sense...*;

Достижение лидерства в энергетике – это амбициозная задача (president V. Putin, April 2007). – *To become leaders in the sphere of power engineering is an ambitious goal.*

... нам, людям амбициозным (в хорошем смысле этого понятия), *желающим оставить свой след в профессии, в бизнесе и в жизни, даны в руки все карты, чтобы ставить новые смелые задачи и их выполнять* (*Samara Segodnia*, April 2005). – *... we, ambitious people (in a good sense of this notion), who want to make a difference in our profession, in business and in our life, have all the opportunities to set new challenging goals and to reach them.*

The examples show that the semantic shift of *агрессивный*, ‘*agressivnyi*’ and *амбициозный*, ‘*ambitsiozniy*’ is directly opposite that of *пиар*: they have been ameliorized, while *пиар* has been pejoratized in the process of on-going English-Russian interaction. However, the results of their transformation are strikingly similar: in today’s Russian, the semantic structures of all these borrowings include two basic lexico-semantic variants - one of them culture-neutral, international, common with the English language proper, and another one culture-specific and unique to Russian.

That brings us back to the major issue in the topic of the English language globalization: the issue of globalization opposed to localization, homogeneity opposed to heterogeneity,

international English opposed to national identity. The global spread of English calls for more complex presentations of global/local cultural dialectic which reflect all the complexities of the English language appropriation in local environments. It should no longer be seen as an either/or situation. From the cross-cultural perspective, to suggest that the national identity of the people in “periphery English” countries is defined or is drastically modified by global English or any other global product they appropriate “is at best simplistic and at worst racist” [Holliday et al. 2006: 73]. On the other hand, the overemphasis of cultural and national “uniqueness” which is to a certain degree implicit in pluricentricity models can be fraught with self-congratulatory national mythology. The globalization produces new forms of localization and of global identification [Pennycook 2007: 7]; special linguistic means emerge to reflect and to construct multicultural identities in an increasingly multicultural global society. In some cases, as was shown above, the intelligibility-identity controversy is solved by a new type of polysemy in English borrowings, whose semantic structures embrace both the international, culturally neutral and the local, culturally loaded variants. Thus, formally identical words in local “non-inner-circle” linguacultural contexts become semantically broader than their English prototypes. With a view to new tendencies in English language globalization theory, such lexical transformations generated by culturally-induced reconceptualizations of borrowings can be tentatively defined as the “glocalization” of lexis. Speakers of English in all international communication contexts should be informed about these developments and should be taught special ELF accommodation techniques, which should include awareness of the mutually complementary international and nationally-specific variants of the same concepts, as well as the ability to use the appropriate ones in ELF communication.

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