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EURO-ENGLISH: PECULIARITIES OF EVOLUTION

Summary. The article deals with the issues of operation and evolution of English on the territory of European countries (primarily EU member states) other than those where English is an official language. This language is frequently referred to as "European English", "Euro-English", "Eurish", etc. The changes, which have appeared in the process of its use as European lingua franca have been studied, the most notable appearing in the lexical system, although certain grammatical novelties may also be observed. Attempt has been made to classify the product of the English language's functioning in the European space, the key problem being whether Euro-English can already be regarded as a dialect. According to the authors, the answer to this question will have a far-reaching effect, primarily on the European countries' educational systems. Further, the prospects of Euro-English have been investigated. Attempts were made to predict the future of Euro-English. With this aim in mind, the authors involved and analyzed not only the linguists' viewpoints but also those by political and cultural analysts.

Key words: three circles model, increase in the number of English speakers, speakers of English as the second language, dialect, language variation (variant), Euro-English, lingua franca, grammatical peculiarities, Brussel's Eurish.

The fact that English occupies a very special place in the modern world is widely recognized by both researchers and the general public. Braj Kachru introduced the three circles model in the scientific turnover, which outlines the role of the English language in the modern world [1]. The number of the people who use English for communication is constantly expanding in the countries of all three circles, primarily at the expense of the outer circle countries (mostly former British colonies, where English is traditionally used in certain spheres of government, law, education, etc.) and the countries of the expanding circle, where English is taught as a foreign language. David Cristall lists 75 countries belonging to the inner and outer circles with 337 407 300 people using a variant of English as mother tongue and 235 351 300 people who study or have studied it as the second language [2, p. 94–98]. The increase in the number of English speakers there accounts primarily to the growth of population. However, the most sizable and rapid increase in the number of English speakers is being witnessed in the countries of the expanding circle where the boost occurs, firstly, due to the shift from the study of other languages to study of English as a foreign language in the course of secondary and higher education

in some countries, e.g. Algeria where traditional French was largely substituted with English [2, p. 116] and, secondly, due to improvement of quality of teaching, which in its turn is predetermined by accrued motivation of the students who realize the growing importance of English in the modern world. The statistics readily yields proofs to this statement: the number of English speakers as the second language in the Eastern European countries Poland, Czech Republic and Bulgaria in the category of 15–34 years old is 34.36, 20.28 and 27.65 per cent respectively, whereas the same figures in the category 35–54 years old comprise 17.28, 10.89 and 9.04 per cent respectively. The number of people in these countries over 55 years of age speaking English is already 5.93, 4.68 and 2.73 per cent – the tendency being evident [3].

Although the importance of the English language is growing worldwide, this process in Europe has its own peculiarities and is of special topicality both for Ukrainian researchers and practitioners – translators and teachers, since historically Ukraine maintains closer contacts – economic, political and cultural – with European countries than with the USA, although the latter factor has acquired additional role in the recent years.

Therefore, it appears expedient to view into the phenomenon of European English at the present stage of its evolution in order to define its nature and this article **aims** at formulating the definition of the phenomenon and, hence, the problem of attitudes to treatment thereof.

The English language spoken in European countries, particularly in the countries of the European Union, has been referred to as European English, EU English Euro-English or Eurish analogous to the names of other variants of English characterised by geographical extension, e.g. Indian, Scottish, Canadian, Nigerian, Pakistani, etc., English. However, it is generally implied or specified that this term excludes the language of the native speakers, i.e. English spoken in Great Britain and Ireland. It is in this sense that the terms "European English" and "Euro-English" will be used in this article. The wide spread of English in European, particularly EU countries, is the fact supported by the relevant statistics [3].

The analysis of research work and publications yields the following data: according to the report "Language policy and planning in Europe and Serbia", English holds "the first place among foreign languages offered in the curriculum in almost all Member States of the Council of Europe, not only in compulsory education (school level) but also in institutions for adult education and lifelong learning" [4].

Despite the wide use of the term it appears that the doubts as to the nature of European English persist. The question of whether European English can be referred to as a variety or dialect seems of not only theoretical but also of practical importance since in its Position Statement on English as a Global language, TESOL "encourages the recognition and appreciation of all varieties of English, including dialects, creoles, and world Englishes. In terms of language teaching, TESOL does not advocate one standard or variety of English over another" [5]. Therefore, if (or rather, when) European English is recognized as being a variety or dialect of the English language the issue of development and fixation of its standards and introduction thereof in the educational sphere may acquire practical prospects and, hence, the question is whether Euro-English actually possesses characteristics of a dialect.

One of many definitions of a dialect reads: "a regional or social variety of a language characterized by its own phonological, syntactic, and lexical properties" is referred to as a dialect [6]; a variety spoken in a particular region is called a regional dialect. The biggest deficiency of this as well as other definitions of dialects and variations is that they fail to specify the quantity and nature of such phonological, syntactic, and lexical properties sufficient for the language spoken by a group of people to be regarded as a dialect since, on the other hand, English spoken by Europeans in that part that deviates from standard – for example British variant – may be (and quite frequently is) regarded as a set of errors.

These errors may or may not be repeated by interlocutors depending on the level of their language proficiency. Where both speakers encounter a similar linguistic problem, e.g. they do not know the correct word or grammar construction, they may develop a way out, which would be comprehensible for them and since it would most likely be based on the norms of their native language(s) it might be understood by other non-native speakers. However, such "inventions" generally remain within a small group and are limited to this particular situation although social networks are capable of rapid introduction of these novelties into everyday use and, later, a norm. One of key stages in this process is fixation in writing.

Obviously, European English does not have "its own phonological <…> properties" [6] since the European region is home of languages of various phyla of Indo-European languages and even languages of other families. Germans, Italians, Spaniards, etc. do not have any common accent when they speak English; rather they would demonstrate their traceable national accents.

Nevertheless, there is one group in Europe where English came to occupy the leading position, and the group convenes officials and clerks of European organizations. David Cristal mentions that out of 440 organizations, the names of which start with *Euro*-435 (i.e. 99 per cent) name English as at least one of their working languages, whereas French is used for this purpose by 278 organizations (63 per cent) and German by 176 organizations (40 per cent) [2, p. 133]. Objective difficulties in organization of conference translation at the EU organizations' meetings and forums, excessive bulk of translation work of the documentation of EU bodies and the related expenses have inevitably resulted in the search for *lingua franca*. Although Great Britain has never been among the most active advocates of European Union and besides it only Ireland and Malta use English as an official language, it was the English language that stepped forward to fill the vacancy. Although political, economic and military reasons are generally mentioned among the key factors for this, it appears that other incentives should be added, namely purely linguistic (rich vocabulary, relatively easy grammar – especially for the beginners, etc.) and cultural reasons.

In the preface to the guide of "Misused English words and expressions in EU publications" Jeremy Gardner notes, "Over the years, the European institutions have developed a vocabulary that differs from that of any recognized form of English. It includes words that do not exist or are relatively unknown to native English speakers outside the EU institutions and often even to standard spellcheckers/grammar checkers ("planification", "to precise" or "telematics" for example) and words that are used with a meaning, often derived from other languages, that is not usually found in English dictionaries ("coherent" being a case in point)" [7, p. 1].

In fact, this did not happen overnight; rather it was a long process. Kady Potter notes that English has not occupied the primary position in Europe until as late as 2001; this was the year when more documents were drafted in English that in French for the first time according to the European Commission's research. She further insists that "By 2009, 90 per cent of officials were making English their primary language for documentation" [8]. This large group of people including European decision-makers, judiciary, officials and clerks pose as medium for the creation of a new dialect – European English (AKA Euro-English, EU-English or "Eurish"). For the overwhelming majority of them, English is the second or even the third language and, therefore, it inevitably falls under the impact of their mother tongues. Unlike most other regional dialects it does not have distinct phonological properties since it is influenced by various phonetic systems, although it can be expected to preserve pronunciation comprehensible by the majority of speakers, including the native speakers. Original English intonation is most likely to suffer the heaviest loss.

The changes in the lexical system are reported most frequently. In particular, words acquire new meanings under the influence of other European languages, e.g. "control" came to mean "verify" rather than "hold power over"; "assist" – "attend, be present" instead of "help" (under the influence of French); "derogate" – "repeal" rather than "make something seem less important, detract from". Euro-English also uses words like "actor", "axis" or "agent" well beyond their narrow range in native English. The abovementioned examples are most frequently cited, although the list goes far beyond. Jeremy Gardner, an official at the European Court of Auditors, compiled a guide of "Misused English words and expressions in EU publications" listing well over a hundred entries [7].

Many of the examples occur so frequently in publications that they are perceived and treated by non-native speakers in European countries as an absolute norm, e.g. the word "adequate" in the overwhelming majority of instances would be understood as being synonymous to "appropriate" rather than in its actual meaning of "satisfactory" or ever "barely satisfactory"; or the word "actual", which is sometimes used to refer to something that is happening now [7] (this meaning is characteristic of Ukrainian among other languages and is only too often misused by Ukrainian speaking users of English). However, in English it means "real" or "existing".

Less pronounced, although noticeable are grammatical peculiarities of European English that are frequently found in the use of plural forms since words that are countable in English can be uncountable in other languages and vice versa, which is the reason of the unconventional use of words like "action", "aid", "competence", "conditionality", "training", "screening", and "precision" [9].

Of interest is the omission of the ending –s in the third person singular even by those European English speakers who know

the correct form [9]. This may be compared to tag questions in the Indian variant of English. It is reported that *"Isn't it?"* has been frozen into an idiom in India, and it no longer varies the auxiliary verb or the subject of the tag question. In this respect it's the same as French *n'est pas?* or German *nichtwahr?*, which have the same meaning and also don't vary" [10]. It could further be presumed that European non-native English speakers would use a narrower range of English grammar tools. In the article "English becomes Esperanto" Johnson predicts, "One effect may be that this dialect would lose some of the tricky bits of English, such as the future perfect progressive ("We will have been working") that aren't strictly necessary" [11].

Thus, the emergence of a new variety of English is most easily observed in the language of European bureaucracy (Eurocrats) that is already referred to as "Brussel's Eurish" [12] since it has written fixation whereas most other instances of the use of Euro-English remain oral and, therefore, it may seem that the subject of this research could be classified as a professional jargon. However, the sphere of application of written Euro-English covers the area wider than one profession including politics, law, business and humanitarian sphere. What was written in the documents by members of numerous European organizations had been uttered many times and had been used and understood by people other than the members of the profession. Moreover, most of EU documents in this or other way affect the EU citizens and although it is possible to get acquainted with these texts through the official translation many readers, both professionals and general public, would prefer to do it directly, provided they have sufficient language proficiency. Therefore, the fact that Euro-English is actively generated by "Eurocrats" does not contradict the definition of a dialect.

The other approach to the phenomenon is treatment thereof as a set of errors, which is in particular supported by Jeremy Gardner. He argues that where pieces of EU publications do not correspond to the linguistic norm of the native speakers, i.e. "UK and Irish native-speaker norms" they should be regarded as incorrect and may be accepted only for "internal consumption" or where "it is not necessary for the "European citizen" to be able to understand it". Moreover, he tends to regard Euro-English as "in-house jargon", which should be avoided [7, p. 2].

However, all dialects and language variants initially appeared as a set of errors, which were not corrected for certain reasons subsequently becoming a norm for a new variation. In this respect, it would be sufficient to remember heated debates concerning American variant of the English language. Languages are developed by their speakers and the number of people speaking Euro-English largely outnumbers native English speakers in Europe. Losing monopoly or exclusive rights on their language is a source of constant irritation for some members of linguistic community and general public in the inner circle countries.

For example, Jeremy Gardner puts forward one more argument in favor of his viewpoint – that of comprehensibility of Euro-English, which should be understood "by people outside the European institutions, particularly in our two English-speaking member states" [7, p. 3]. It appears very likely that most of the novelties of Euro-English would be easily understood by most Europeans since they are the product of interrelation of European languages and English. Similarly, it may hardly pose any serious difficulties for the native speakers since English is still the basis for the formation of the new dialect. For example, drafters of the judgment by the European Court of Human Rights wrote "first generation heir"

when they needed to describe a person who is the first to inherit after a deceased person [13, p. 7] obviously being unaware of the relevant legal term – "first-in-line heir". Although the former term has not been included in either general or professional dictionaries it appears absolutely transparent; it may seem alien to a lawyer speaking English as a mother tongue but would hardly remain unclear.

Interestingly, the other J. Gardner's argument, that one concerning the necessity of being clearly understood by two native speaking Member Countries has been losing its weight since the referendum in Great Britain giving way to Brexit. Moreover, this fact opened the avenue to speculation as to the possible decline in the further importance of English in the EU countries. This may especially concern the possible substitute of English by French taking into account the fact that Brussels is largely a French speaking city. The rivalry between France and Great Britain, which has had a long history, is only one reason for that, the other being never dying fears of language imperialism. The report on Language policy and planning in Europe and Serbia reflects these fears, "This dominance of the English language represents a danger to the concept of European language policy." [4, p. 2] The author proposes limiting the time for learning English and allocating the rest of the time for foreign language learning to other languages. [4, p. 3] These attitudes may weaken the future position of the English language in Europe following Brexit.

However, very strong remain the arguments that "Mastering a foreign language is a lifetime's work. People do not lightly give up one to learn another" and that "In the EU's institutions, a Dane is not going to start speaking to, or emailing, a Pole in anything other than English, whatever official policy says" [14]. Moreover there are opinions that Brexit will give new momentum to the development of English in Europe as a distinctive variety. M. Modiano holds that "Brexit will give English a surprise boost by making it the neutral option. Without the UK's 60 million native English speakers, the five million native speakers from Ireland and Malta will make up only one per cent of the total EU population. This will leave almost everyone else who speaks English in Europe on an equal footing, all using their second language to communicate" [15]. With over 38 per cent of Europeans speaking English as a second language it remains the most widely-spoken language. Further, with the weakening of authority and control on behalf of the standard British variant it is expedient to expect faster evolution of Euro-English.

Therefore, it may be **concluded** that:

a) There is sufficient evidence to believe that European English (Euro-English) is a developing territorial dialect of the English language rather than a set of errors or a professional jargon. Although it can be most clearly observed in the speech of officials of EU organizations, it will eventually find way to the wider audience.

b) It is reasonable to expect that Euro-English will preserve or even consolidate its importance in Europe despite the Brexit. In this case it may become neutral lingua franca for the Europeans, which in its turn will promote its further evolution.

c) Since this distinctive European variety of English functions as a lingua franca among linguistically diverse peoples, there are strong arguments for promoting such English as an educational model.

This opens interesting prospects for researchers since the formation of a new dialect can be observed in "real time" regime. Of special interest is the question of whether the new dialect will develop its distinct phonological form (so far it has not). The evolution of grammar norms peculiar to the new variation (if such evolution occurs) may also pose a challenge for the researchers.

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Алєксєєв М. Є., Алєксєєва Л. І., Синьова Т. В. Євро-англійська мова: особливості розвитку

Анотація. У статті розглядаються проблеми використання та розвитку англійської мови на території європейських країн (у першу чергу, країн-членів Євросоюзу), крім тих країн, у яких англійська є офіційною мовою. Таку мову часто називають європейською англійською, євро-англійською, єуріш і т. п. У статті досліджено зміни, які з'явилися у процесі використання євро-англійської в якості lingua franca, найбільш помітні з яких спостерігаються в лексичній системі, хоча є й граматичні новітності. Було зроблено спробу класифікації продукту, що виник внаслідок функціонування англійської мови на європейському просторі. Основна проблема – чи слід уже розглядати євро-англійську в якості діалекту англійської мови. Автори вважають, що відповідь на це питання матиме серйозні наслідки, в першу чергу, для освітньої системи європейських країн. Крім того, було розглянуто перспективу існування і розвитку євро-англійської. Було зроблено спробу прогнозування майбутнього євро-англійської. З цією метою автори навели і проаналізували думки не тільки лінгвістів, а й політичних аналітиків і культурологів.

Ключові слова: модель трьох кіл, зростання кількості англомовних, ті, хто розмовляють англійською як другою мовою, діалект, варіант мови, євро-англійська, linguafranca, граматичні особливості, брюссельська євро-англійська.

Алексеев Н. Э., Алексеева Л. И., Синёва Т. В. Евро-английский: особенности развития

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются проблемы использования и развития английского языка на территории европейских стран (в первую очередь, стран-членов Евросоюза), кроме тех стран, в которых английский является официальным языком. Такой язык часто называют европейским английским, евро-английским, юариш (еуриш) и т. п. В статье исследованы изменения, которые появились в процессе использования евро-английского в качестве lingua franca, наиболее заметные из которых наблюдаются в лексической системе, хотя есть и грамматические новеллы. Были предприняты попытки классификации продукта, возникшего в результате функционирования английского языка на европейском пространстве. Основная проблема – следует ли уже рассматривать евро-английский в качестве диалекта английского языка. Авторы считают, что ответ на этот вопрос будет иметь серьезные последствия, в первую очередь, для образовательной системы европейских стран. Кроме того, были рассмотрены перспективы существования и развития евро-английского. Были сделаны попытки прогнозировать будущее евро-английского. С этой целью авторы привлекли и проанализировали мнения не только лингвистов, но и политических аналитиков и культурологов.

Ключевые слова: модель трех кругов, рост количества англоговорящих, говорящие на английском как втором языке, диалект, языковой вариант, евро-английский, lingua franca, грамматические особенности, брюссельский евро-английский.