English as Lingua Franca

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Abstract
The article highlights English as **Lingua Franca** and emphasizes the importance of teaching Language for Special Purposes (LSP). The content of the notion "lingua-franca" is analysed on the basis of a number of linguistic works devoted to the English language status. English as **Lingua Franca** refers to the use of English as a medium of communication between speakers of different languages. Nowadays, contacts between people with different cultural backgrounds are becoming more frequent and much closer. Highly developed skills in intercultural communication have a significant bearing on the quality of relationships between people of various nationalities and cultures. In recent years ELF has been studied by many linguists interested in how its pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar are different from other varieties of English. ELF has now established itself as a major and expanding field of academic research. Its interconnections with teaching and other disciplines are being currently discussed, acknowledged and investigated.

Key words: Lingua Franca (ELF), Language for Special Purposes (LSP), General English, scientific communication, language acquisition.

Introduction

The present epoch of our life on this planet is something specific. It is specific because we face an unprecedented increase in the political and economic, scientific and technical, as well as cultural relations between different countries, in fact, a reality which requires improvement and optimization of all possible means of communication between people. And it is here that the role of Lingua Franca cannot be overestimated (Gasparyan, Knyazian 2002). It has been established that Lingua Franca is an auxiliary language used to enable routine communication to take place between groups of people who speak different native languages (Crystal 2001:224). We are well aware of the fact that the lack of a global Lingua Franca is a very serious obstacle on our way to consolidation of the human race on this planet. Thus, it is not by chance at all that the problem of language acquisition, particularly that of English, which has, in fact, settled itself as the most commonly used Lingua Franca of the world, has always concerned humanity, let alone become the focus of linguists' attention at all times.

LSP as a Means of Scientific Communication

The sphere of our particular interest is Lingua Franca for professional scientific, academic communication, for today the need for scholarly exchange of ideas is getting increasingly evident. Thus, the imperative of the current day requires search for new ways and approaches to language teaching, since today language acquisition problems are viewed in a different light. This presupposes the learning and teaching of not only

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General English (for everyday communication), but also language teaching based on the specific goals of learning. In this case the learner needs to master only this or that style, this or that genre or variety of language. In other words, it is necessary to plan and realize professionally-oriented language teaching.

Academic English, which is currently used as Lingua Franca in the international scientific community, serves a special need, and consequently can be regarded as a variety of LSP. We should hasten to note that LSPs are natural human languages, so they undergo all the developmental laws of human languages at all levels.

The Pre-History of LSP

There had been numerous attempts to create an international language of communication long before the coinage of the term LSP, which came into use based on the exigency for possible improvement and settling of the specific features of language use, and was directed to improve the problems connected with communication in English. Since ancient times, both linguists and specialists in other domains have been interested in making the scientific speech more efficient, and in this regard, they studied the ways and modes of perfecting international, specifically scientific communication via conscious human influence on the language.

We do not hesitate to repeat that it is the natural human language that is the main and important means of communication for the members of this or that society, and in the course of its development it has also served and continues to serve as a mechanism for transferring cultural and historical traditions from generation to generation. Thus, it is not a mere chance that natural human language also tends to meet the newly-emerging needs of humanity. For example, the period of predominance of Greek and Latin was marked by the existence of special criteria of acceptable written speech, i.e. general principles of linguistic system construction, which were not confined to the art of grammar. The formulated principles of correct speech predetermined and instigated the elaboration of the general principles of classical grammar. Thus, the philologists of the classical world, relying on the construction laws of correct speech, attempted at creating a unified standard language, making it as close as possible to the use of everyday speech by means of analogy. As a result of the formation of new social and economic systems, two domains of language came into being: ecclesiastical and classical languages, i.e. correct languages of ancient civilizations; and vulgar or incorrect languages, which did not have writing systems and were considered as incorrect languages in the linguistic practice and theory of those days.

Numerous researchers claim that taken the historical (medieval) conditions of the period in question the existence and use of the above-mentioned correct and incorrect languages were both inevitable and natural (Amirova, Ol'khovikov, Rozhdestvenskij 1975:109-115; 168). Texts with ideological, moral-aesthetic and historical-cultural content were necessarily checked and filled with religious meaning. In the Middle Ages new written texts were brought in accordance with ancient ecclesiastical texts, and any deviations from the criteria accepted by grammar schools were eliminated. The content of most important texts was followed by explanatory notes, and the background knowledge

referring to the interpretation of the texts comprised the main content of the linguistic research (Konrad 1966).

It is to be noted that the correct languages assumed the role of cultural and scientific information carriers and retainers, as well as initiators for the creation and accumulation of novelties and new knowledge. In Europe this language was Latin which was widely used in most parts of the world and successfully served as an international means of cultural and scientific communication due to its developed and elaborate nature. For almost 1500 years of the development of the history of European culture no other language has had such a significant role and impact as Latin. However, in the VII-XII centuries, professionals in numerous European universities and educational centres realised that the norms of Medieval Latin, as an international and live mediator of European culture and thought, differed drastically from those of Classical Latin. The ecclesiastical and scholastic Latin differed from the Latin used by humanists, since both the church and school aimed at simplifying the ecclesiastical dogmas and scholastic knowledge to make it as comprehensible to people as possible. As a result, a new variety of Latin, called classical, emerged. This language mainly preserved the vocabulary and the syntactic structure, whereas the conjugation and case systems of Latin were simplified. And it was this variety of Latin that came to be used in schools and universities as the language of international communication (Mal'yavina 1985:15). Opposing to this variety of Latin were the humanists, who, in the XV century fiercely fighting against the language simplifiers and purifiers, longed for writing like the classical authors and preserving the purity of their vocabulary and the style. However strange, in fact, the humanists themselves unconsciously caused damage to the natural process of the development of Latin. In an effort to ascribe the once exceptional role and significance to the patterns of antiquity, they did not realize the irreversible damage they caused to the world literature written in Latin, and thus seriously hampering the process of making Latin the means of business and scientific communication (Paul' 1969:479).

Later new attempts were made to restore the past role of Latin and make it the language of international and cultural communication. However, none of them was crowned with success. In the period of establishment and consolidation of nations and national identities, which ran parallel to book printing, new sciences and philosophical doctrines were formed. The struggle against Latin in Western Europe was thought of as a struggle for the equality of national languages. On the basis of national languages, literary languages were formed and developed along with ecclesiastical languages; not only spiritual, but also secular texts were composed. These written languages were regarded as *norm* in the linguistic theory and practice, and the situation stood out by profound differences among different nations in their historical and cultural development, philosophical doctrines, ways and means of literary language formation, as well as many other questions relating to the language traditions. All this, undoubtedly, had a negative influence on Latin, narrowing down the sphere of its use and weakening its once historical strength (Robins 1979).

The formation norms of literary languages of different nations were different. For example, literary English is known to have developed on the basis of the London dialect,

literary Spanish derives from Castile, and so on (Budagov 1967; Yartseva 1985, etc.). But not only accepted standard norms were a prerequisite, necessary for the formation of national literary languages, but also the functional universality of the latter, which would give a chance to use the literary language as a means of communication in all the spheres of the given society. In fact, since the onset of the national literary language formation the influence of specialists, writers in particular, on the elaboration of the norms of literary languages has been more significant and purposeful than in any other period. Nevertheless, this opinion does not underestimate the role of the society in the process of language formation, but rather evidences the fact that the role of writers, grammarians, academicians and political figures is more weighty in this respect (Zhuravlev 1982). Interestingly, in this period most authoritative "legislators" even put forward the idea that the issue of language standardization should be transferred to the legislative plane (Amirova, Ol'khovikov, Rozhdestvenskiy 1975:115-168)

Thus, in the second half of the XVII century a new tradition, referred to as the principle of universality in the history of linguistics, was formed. This fact suggests that even in those times there were certain ideas about the universal language.

Still in the XVII-XVIII centuries the problem of creating a so-called universal rational language in an artificial way was of special importance in the Philosophy of Language. Issues of human welfare and peaceful co-existence on the globe prompted people of different specializations to come up with the concept of international artificial, "purified" language which, as specialists believed, could give a chance to widen the scope of international communication (Drezen 1928; Akhmanova, Bokarev 1956:65-78).

However ample the history of international artificial languages may be, there is one obvious fact – artificial languages were not flexible enough to replace natural human languages in the sphere of international scientific communication, and all the efforts in this direction failed, whereas the natural human language proved to be the most reliable and perfect means of international academic communication (Budagov 1976:289).

Human Influence on Language

In the XIX century when Comparative and Historical Linguistics already existed as an established research methodology, most of the researchers focused their attention on the problems of laws of language development, as well as the study of the different spheres of its application. All this resulted in the strict differentiation between the study of scientific proper and normative linguistic descriptions and investigations and the contrast of the latter. On the basis of this, some linguists later claimed that language cannot be influenced. According to certain standpoints, the concepts of "scientific" and "normative" were thought to be incompatible, since if something was dictated to the language, science had nothing to do there. In other words, only works which were completely deprived of any signs of normative, dictating directions, were regarded as scientific (Budagov 1980:287). In this respect, researchers offered to 'leave language in peace' (Hall 1950:1).

In connection with the linguistic investigations of this period R.A. Budagov mentions that the two directions of language study, i.e. the study of the objective laws of language

development and the human influence on language cannot be contrasted for when language functions it is independent and at the same time dependent on the activities of people who use this language to communicate. For this reason linguistic investigations can be conducted in parallel, both in terms of human influence, and the natural process of language development. In other words, language investigations can be both objective and normative (Budagov 1980). Therefore, human influence on language does not run counter to the natural development of language. However, it is to be noted that the ways and modes chosen by people to influence language have their own restrictions, especially in terms of literary languages (Budagov 1979; Budagov 1983).

The problem of human influence on language becomes especially urgent in the periods when national languages, as a result of certain historical developments, are used as international languages, i.e. languages for international communication. A case in point is English. It is well-known that different varieties of English, with their own norms of use and stylistic and social variants, are formed in English-speaking countries. All this impedes the mutual understanding of various English-speaking nations, since in the course of development of these varieties the differences of the corresponding norms deepen to such an extent as to jeopardize the efficiency of communication. Naturally, this situation brings about the necessity to define the acceptable limits of the changes mentioned above.

In the century of industrial revolution, when the scope of social functions of language was broadened, the urgency of human influence on language became more obvious. The modes and ways of realizing this influence being different, it was essential that this influence was aimed at contributing to the perfection of the national language (Budagov 1977).

Thus, in order to make the international, particularly scientific communication more efficient, the human influence on language was realized via different methods:

a) new programmes elaborated for creating artificial languages;

b) attempts made to restore the past role of classical languages, especially that of Latin, and to create general simplified Latin on its basis;

c) suggestions put forward to use one of the modern living languages as an international language for communication and to develop various simplified versions of the language.

As has already been mentioned above, the problem of human conscious influence on language is within our immediate interest in terms of using English as an international language of science. And of course it is crucial to take into consideration the results, principles and approaches of various linguistic investigations within different historical periods, particularly that all this acquires special importance in modern times, when it is necessary to concentrate on English as the only means of international scientific communication. Hence, the necessity of teaching it as effectively as to give the learners a chance to convey the corresponding scientific information, overcoming the national boundaries and making scientific communication more efficient.

However, life itself and the necessity for everyday communication, give rise to the spontaneously formed varieties of international communication, different restricted lan-

guages, pidgins, creoles, etc. But without expanding the discussion of investigations along the lines of these varieties of international communication, I would only like to enhance the idea that the application of artificially restricted sign systems is not capable of providing natural full-fledged international communication, including communication in the world of academia. This is borne out by a retrospective theoretical look at the language use.

In order to bring out the main function of the informative style in ESP, i.e. the function of conveying information, it is necessary to carry out a philologically-oriented investigation, wherein the analysis of language material is to be conducted along the principles of the linguostylistic method (Akhmanova, Idzelis 1978). The latter gives us a chance to perceive and identify ESP as a functional-generic variety of scientific style which is domain-specific and, while in use, requires a lot of attention to the choice and arrangement of domain-bound linguistic elements.

The Methodology of Lingua Franca

Our historical survey concerning the language use comes to prove the standpoint according to which problems of foreign language learning and teaching have been central to humanity since ancient times.

Coming to the question of the methodology of lingua franca, I would like to enhance the idea once again that prerequisite number one of effective domain-specific language teaching is the adequate choice of the content taught, which in its turn preconditions the use of lexical, grammatical, as well as communicative means. The proficiency in this register of language along with the general extralinguistic knowledge permits avoiding often encountered misunderstandings in communication and achieving optimal mutual understanding. Thus, this register of language is a special "shared code" between the speaker and the listener, the writer and the reader (Magidova 1989).[1]

In other words, the crucial prerequisite guaranteeing the effective teaching of this register of language is the appropriate selection of professional texts. Even though the concept "domain-specific text" implies certain restrictions and particularization in terms of language use, it is well known that in different texts from the same sphere general linguistic features are accompanied by the peculiarities specific of the author's individual style. (Chakovskaya 1990; Gasparyan 2013; Poghosyan 2014).[2] Hence, it is extremely important which elements of the text deserve utmost attention. Otherwise stated, the problem of "active" and "passive" command of the language comes forth. It is evident that only typical vocabulary and other general linguistic means from this or that professional domain can serve the purposes of active learning. This necessity has put forward the idea that the text for teaching ought to be modeled,[3] thus acquiring certain pragmalinguistic orientation. Active and conscious elaboration of the language correlates the language taught with the purposes of communication and makes it more accessible to learners.

The scientific principles governing text modeling have been the focus of interest of numerous researchers. Still at the turn of the 20th century Otto Jespersen suggested that natural languages are, in a sense, an unsurmountable obstacle, and that it was necessary

to create not only stylistically neutral, but also an accessible language for foreign learners (Ogden1928:13). In English there are certain achievements in this respect. A great volume of research suggests that it is possible to model a language via scrupulous analysis of different texts and subsequent synthesis of the results obtained (Akhmanova, Gvishiani 1979:161-164).

Thus, this variety of English is a unique type of intellective prose, characterized by the use of certain lexical, morphological, syntactic and phonetic units depending on the specific purport of the text. It is clear that the thematic restriction of this or that subtype of this variety of English (which is explicitly expressed in its vocabulary) is also preconditioned by its purposes. The teaching of texts, pertaining to this variety of English, must encompass all the aspects of language – phonetic, morphological, lexical and syntactic.

In other words, a step-by-step approach should be applied to the elaboration of scientific texts for the complete perception of the latter and the general scientific vocabulary used in them. It is noteworthy that, for example, the discussion of phonetic and phonological issues is not an end in itself and, therefore, it must not be separated from the other important aspect of the text, namely the vocabulary. In other words, the phonetic difficulties must be overcome in the process of the assimilation of words and word-combinations.

Since every text is an indivisible unity of form and content, its comprehensive analysis must cover the study of both aspects. The consideration of the psychological factor can guarantee the effective assimilation of the material taught. For this purpose (and I would like to stress this out specially) the participation of learners in the teaching process must be increased, and occasionally they must assume the teacher's role. In other words, the predominant method in this teaching-learning process is the learner-oriented method which provokes the learners' active thinking, let alone their active independent learning. The thing is that the students need to carry out a lot of independent work referring to the help of different dictionaries, theoretical books, internet sources, to approve or disapprove the answers offered by the other students, who, in their turn, also carry out a certain amount of independent work before coming to class. The application of this method stimulates the development of the students' creative critical thinking.

Thus, although in teaching and learning the guidance of the teacher is a necessary component of the process, the active participation and initiative of the students is always predominant.

The first stage in the teaching process deals with the vocabulary. The student, conducting this part of the lesson, suggests a number of expressions, particularly units of general scientific vocabulary, for we are all well aware of the fact that it is the general scientific vocabulary that is the carrier of the main scientific information of the text. The rest of the students provide equivalents to those expressions.

Having specified the appropriateness of the equivalents, the students revise these expressions in a group. The process goes on in the direction of "reverse translation" from the mother tongue into English.

At the next stage of instruction the words and word-combinations learned are presented in the sentences from the text under analysis, and the students are offered to translate

them. The necessity for this step is conditioned by the fact that the students should master the general scientific vocabulary not in isolation, but in appropriate contexts. It is important to take into account that especially effective is the so-called "dynamic translation," i.e. conveying the gist, rather than word-for-word translation.

All the translation variants offered are discussed, edited by the students themselves, and the variant closest to the original is chosen. Within this 10-15-minute work the phonetic and prosodic peculiarities of the sentences offered for translation are also interpreted. This is again enclosed by a reverse oral translation assignment.

To consolidate the material learned, the student-teacher dictates sentences in the native language made up by himself/herself (which, as you can imagine, also require a lot of independent learning by the student), and the other students within 3-4 minutes provide their "dynamic" translation on the spot. This is followed by the discussion of the sentences translated.

But as has already been mentioned, intellective prose is not completely devoid of emotional elements, which make the speech more expressive and emotional as they are not stylistically neutral and should be perceived as manifestations of the author's individual style. Thus, it would be appropriate to further explain to the learners that these metasemiotic combinations, though functionally quite different from the peculiar informative collocations of the text, are unable to change the functional orientation of intellective prose writing (Razinkina 1977:198-205).

The task of the final stage of teaching-learning the Lingua Franca of scientific communication is to finalize the analysis with the written summary of the text which is sure to demonstrate the degree of the students' ability to perceive and understand the material discussed.

Conclusion

Drawing conclusions, we could say:

a) Latin was unable to carry on its role of Lingua Franca, because due to the social-historical changes it went out of use and gradually became a dead language;

b) no artificial sign system is able to fulfill the role of Lingua Franca because of their closed nature; the only reliable system that can be used and has been used as basis for elaborating a language for international communication is natural human language which is a living open system;

c) ESP is a specific variety of Lingua-Franca aimed at optimizing international scientific communication;

d) it has peculiar functional-generic features in all aspects of language;

e) the most effective method to be applied in teaching/learning any variety of domain-specific English is the learner-oriented teaching which presupposes both independent, active participation of students in conducting the class, and independent learning before coming to class;

f) among the effective concrete methods the application of which shortens the way to acquiring competence of domain-specific English is that of "dynamic translation," as well as vocabulary acquisition in appropriate contexts.

Notes:

1. Recent research indicates that in this register of language we deal with the so-called "pragmatic linguistic" function.
2. Research has shown that the authorial presence is more apparent in texts on literary criticism where the topic of study (analysis of literary works) greatly disposes the researcher to bigger expressivity and emotionality.
3. The text is considered modeled, if it is, on scientific bases, deprived of all the linguistic units which cannot be copied and used in the speech of foreign learners.

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Անգլերենը որպես լինգվա ֆրանկա

Սույն հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվում է անգլերենը որպես միջազգային միջնորդ լեզու: Ներկայումս ամենատարածված լինգվա ֆրանկան միջազգային անգլերենն է, և որպես միջէթնիկական շփումների ընդունված ագատ լեզու ակտիվ շրջանառության մեջ է: Համաշխարհայնացման գործընթացն, ըստ էության, օբյեկտիվ օրի-նաչափություն է, որը բխում է արդի ժամանակաշրջանի սոցիալ-տնտեսական և քաղաքական զարգացումներից: Գոյություն ունեն մի քանի պատճառներ, անգլե-րենն լեզվի գլոբալացման առումով. մշակութային, պատմական, լեզվական, տեղե-կատվական, քաղաքական և տնտեսական:

Լեզուների, մասնավորապես անգլերենի ուսուցումը ընդլայնել է իր ավանդա-կան շրջանակները ձեռք բերելով հաղորդակցական ուղղվածություն: Ժամանա-կակից պայմաններում առավել մեծ կարևորություն է ձեռք բերել անգլերենի այն տարատեսակի ուսուցումը (LSP – Language for Specific Purposes), որն առաջատար տեղ է զբաղեցնում միջազգային գիտական հաղորդակցման ոլորտում և, ըստ էու-յան, գիտական խոսքի հիմքն է: Այսպիսով, անգլերենը դարձել է միջնորդ լեզու, ո-րը միտված է ծառայելու միջազգային հաղորդակցությանը աշխարհի ցանկացած ծայրում:

Английский язык как лингва-франка

В данной статье обсуждается проблема статуса английского, который использует-ся в качестве универсального международного языка-посредника. Проводится анализ трактовок и объема понятия "английский как лингва-франка" на основе изучения лингвистических работ, посвященных исследованию статуса английского языка. Гло-бализация затронула почти все сферы нашей повседневной жизни – экономику, поли-тику, культуру. Одним из важнейших аспектов процесса современной глобализации

является наблюдаемое на протяжении жизни одного поколения распространение английского языка. В условиях глобализации число изучающих английский язык в мире непрестанно растет. Существует несколько причин превращения английского в язык глобального общения: культурные, исторические, лингвистические, информационные, политико-экономические. В настоящее время преподавание английского языка для специальных целей (LSP) занимает лидирующую позициию в международном научном общении на ту или иную специальную научную тему. Особенности языковой организации наблюдаются в любых научных текстах, вне зависимости от их понятийной направленности. Расширение межкультурной коммуникации привело к необходимости поиска наиболее оптимального средства общения на языке, понятном и приемлемом для носителей разных языков мира. В качестве такого средства многие специалисты в области лингвистики и межкультурной коммуникации рассматривают так называемый "лингва-франка". Таким образом, английский превратился в языка-посредника, который используется как лингва-франка для межнационального общения в любой точке земного шара.