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Research Article

English in the Russian-based recruitment discourse

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Abstract

The paper addresses the use of English in the Russian-based recruitment discourse. Language is viewed through the prism of the sociolinguistics of globalization and understood as a set of mobile trans-locally operative resources used to achieve specific goals of communication. The corpus for analysis includes job ads and résumés posted on the recruitment platforms HeadHunter and Super.Job, videotaped conversations of job seekers with recruiters and employers, and ethnographic interviews with recruitment professionals. We used discourse analysis, ethnographic methods, and quantitative measuring to analyze the data. The study consists of two stages. During the first stage, we found out that English can be used as the main language of recruitment or in the form of “insertions” in the Russian-based texts to demonstrate professionalism, position the company, and “filter” the candidates. The second stage revealed that the all-English segment of the Russian recruitment discourse has narrowed, while the use of English in “truncated” forms has increased. This dynamic is caused by the expansion of the digital segment of the Russian job market (social media, Internet channels), where English-mediated technologies are the main instrument of interaction with clients. It results in further hybridization and boosts translanguaging in work-related settings. English, with its tendency to informal personified communication patterns, also affects the communicative conventions of the Russian-based recruitment discourse. The study demonstrates the growing role of English as an agent of global professional discourses and an intermediary between people and technologies.

Keywords: *Expanding Circle, globalization of English, bilingualism, language hybridization, recruitment discourse, indexicality*

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АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК в российском дискурсе трудоустройства

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Аннотация

В статье анализируется использование английского языка в российском дискурсе трудоустройства. Язык рассматривается через призму социолингвистики глобализации и трактуется как набор мобильных транслокальных ресурсов, используемых для достижения конкретных целей коммуникации. Материалом для анализа послужили объявления о работе и резюме, размещенные на онлайн платформах HeadHunter и Super.Job, видеозаписи интервью кандидатов с работодателями и рекрутерами и этнографические интервью с представителями кадровых агентств. Использовались методы дискурс-анализа, этнографический и количественный методы. Исследование проводилось в два этапа. На первом этапе было установлено, что английский может использоваться как основной язык процесса трудоустройства, а также в качестве фрагментов и вкраплений в русскоязычном тексте для демонстрации профессионализма, позиционирования компании, привлечения нужных и отсеивания неподходящих кандидатов. На втором этапе работы было выявлено, что при сужении сферы использования английского языка как основного инструмента рекрутинга растет его присутствие в «усеченной» форме. Это связано с появлением цифрового сегмента рынка труда (социальные сети, интернет-каналы), где опосредуемые английским языком технологии становятся основным средством взаимодействия с клиентом. В результате растет гибридизация профессиональных коммуникативных практик, усиливается транслингвальный характер общения. Наряду с этим отмечено растущее влияние англоязычных образцов на коммуникативные конвенции дискурса трудоустройства (тенденция к неформальному персонализированному стилю коммуникации). Проведенный анализ демонстрирует растущую роль английского языка как агента глобальных профессиональных дискурсов и посредника между человеком и технологиями.

Ключевые слова: *расширяющийся круг, глобализация английского языка, билингвизм, языковая гибридизация, дискурс трудоустройства, индексальность*

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1. Introduction

In recent years, the focus of research on English in the Expanding Circle shifted from feature-oriented description of new varieties to “the most exciting areas <...> dealing with the slippery linguistic spaces between and within particular speech communities, where the use of English is juxtaposed with other international, national, regional, and local languages” (Bolton 2012: 33). The transnational use of various kinds of resources of English available to individual

speakers in specific contexts has become an important and challenging topic. The notion of “English” in this framework covers not only the standardized variety and its forms and functions but also “elements and fractions of it,” which “can be employed and adopted selectively and integrated into new contexts where they retain old or adopt new functions” (Schneider 2014: 25).

Outlining the principles of sociolinguistic research in a globalized world, Blommaert (2010) argues that globalization transforms not abstract languages but specific speech forms, genres, styles, language repertoires and practices. In other words, the impact of globalization is “niched.” Recruitment discourse in Russia is one such niche. According to Barber, recruitment includes the “practices and activities carried on by the organization with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees” (Barber 1998: 5).

The approaches to the linguistic study of recruitment discourse in the Expanding Circle may vary due to the differences in the sociolinguistics status of English, proficiency level and access to language learning in particular countries. Oftentimes, the role of English in the local job market is addressed in the context of other relevant issues, such as socio-economic inequality and national educational policies. Some authors focus on the racial bias of English-related recruitment discourses. Based on the analysis of the professional websites advertising employment opportunities for TESOL professionals in Southeast Asia (language schools in China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Thailand), Ruecker and Ives show that “the ideal candidate is overwhelmingly depicted as a young, White, enthusiastic native speaker of English from a stable list of inner-circle countries” (Ruecker & Ives 2015: 733).

The role of English as a divide between the wealthier, educated urban populations and other socio-economic and geographic groups is addressed in a few studies involving Latin America (Ecuador, Columbia, Argentina, Brazil). According to Perez (2019: 46), in this part of the world, English is rather seen as a symbol of prestige and an asset for social mobility than a necessary requirement for professional contexts.

The demand for English in the Turkish job market is attributed to its role in globalization, international trade, and upward mobility of individuals. Discussing the market value of English in Turkey, Dogancay-Aktuna argues that it acts as a gate-keeper for advancement in prestigious jobs. Her survey of job advertisements in two largest national newspapers shows that “for the higher level, better-paid white-collar positions in well-known companies, employers sought candidates with knowledge of a foreign language and specified English especially as a job requirement” (Dogincay-Aktuna 1998: 34). Although over 45% of job openings did not require foreign language proficiency, those were much less prestigious positions. Notably, 20 % of the ads were printed in English, thus cutting off those who did not know the language.

In European countries, where the socio-economic inequalities are less acute and the range and depth of English penetration into professional, academic and

everyday life are much higher, the focus of research is different. Van Meurs investigates the use of English in job advertisements in Netherlands from three perspectives: the sender of the ad's message, the message itself, and the target audience (Meurs van 2010). He shows how the use of English may affect the comprehension of the ads, the attitude to the job and to the organization, and subsequently the receivers' behavior, i.e. job pursuit intentions and application decisions.

Different reasons are offered for using English in job advertisements. Moor and Varantola observe that in job ads in Finnish newspapers English is used “for global image building” (Moor and Varantola 2005: 138). Seitz reports that English job titles in German ads “transfer a more modern and innovative image,” “function like an eye-catcher,” and “as euphemisms for low-prestige jobs” (Seitz 2008: 42). Based on the analysis of all-English job ads in German and Swiss newspapers, Hildendorf and Martin (2001) and Watts (2002) conclude that they emphasize the importance of language skills for advertised positions: even if the advertisement has no explicit reference to language requirements, applicants “are expected to infer [...] that the major language with which they will be expected to communicate is English” (Watts 2002: 117). Gerritsen argues that the use of English job titles in a Dutch context helps to avoid gender bias (Gerritsen 2002: 103). According to Larson, the use of “an English-sounding job-title” in a Swedish job ad makes the job sound “more appealing and challenging” (Larson 1990: 368).

The issue of English in the Russian-based recruitment discourse received much less attention. Stebletsova compared structural and pragmatic peculiarities of English and Russian recruitment discourses and examined the cultural differences of self-representation in the genre of CV/resume focusing on identity issues (Stebletsova 2010, 2016). Golovushkina & Voyachek addressed some lexical and stylistic features of English and Russian job ads (Golovushkina & Voyachek 2018). As part of a larger study on globalization and language ideologies, Laletina examined the attitudes to English on the Russian job market (Laletina 2012). The functional range of English and its role as a meaning-making resource in various genres of the Russian recruitment discourse was addressed in our own previous research (Alikina 2014, Alikina & Gritsenko 2015). However, the ongoing changes in the socio-economic situation and technological developments call for a more in-depth analysis of the topic with emphasis on the dynamics of the domain-specific use of English.

2. Overview of the study

2.1. Theoretical foundations

The study is guided by the concept of language as a transnational mobile resource, a set of semiotic repertoires used to achieve specific communicative goals (Blommaert 2010), and the research on language ideologies which link the assumptions people have about a language to their social experience (Silverstein

2003, Woolard & Shieffelin 1994). We bring together sociolinguistic and ethnographic approaches to investigate how the spread of English manifests itself and what functions English performs in the Russian-based recruitment discourse.

In the assessment of the scope of English in various recruitment genres, we follow Bhatia and Ritchie and take into account not only English words, but also “the use of English wrapped in non-Roman scripts” (Bhatia & Ritchie 2013: 573). Bearing in mind that speakers can use English as a creative resource without necessarily switching to English, we take into consideration “pseudo-English in Roman characters” (Proshina & Ustinova 2012: 43) as well.

We draw on the insights from critical genre analysis (V. Bhatia 2019) to explore how recruitment professionals use language to achieve their objectives within the context of specific institutional culture and to highlight the role of interdiscursive performance in professional practice.

2.2. Terminology

The English term “recruiting” (Rus. “рекрутинг” [rekruting]) was borrowed into Russian in the 1990s to name professional activities of HR agencies and in-house recruiters connected with attracting, screening, and selecting suitable candidates to positions within an organization. There was no pre-existing Russian word since the recruitment industry came to Russia with the advance of the market economy. The Russian word “трудоустройство” [trudoustroistvo] has a different focus: it denotes activities connected with helping people to find jobs, i.e. providing employment. The word is translated into English as “employment,” “recruitment,” and “placement” (“job placement”) In this paper, we use the term “recruitment” to cover both foci and understand recruitment discourse as “purpose-driven interaction of job market participants connected with searching for jobs and personnel” (Stebletsova 2016: 78). The terms “recruitment ad,” “job ad,” and “job posting (job post)” are used in the paper interchangeably.

2.3. Data and method

The study consisted of two stages. During the first stage (May 2013 – January 2014) we looked at how English is used and what pragmatic functions it serves in the Russian recruitment discourse. The material for analysis included 566 job ads and 300 résumés selected from the data bases of two largest Russian online recruitment platforms HeadHunter (hh.ru) and SuperJob (superjob.ru), as well as eleven televised job interviews from the TV series “Kadry Reshayut” (www.uspeh-tv.ru). This educational documentary shows real-time conversations of applicants with employers/recruiters followed by experts’ evaluations of applicants’ performances during the interviews. To verify and clarify the results of the analysis, we conducted quasi-ethnographic interviews with two professional recruiters.

The goal of the second stage of the study (March – April 2020) was to reveal the dynamics in the spread of English and its functional range. Using the search

instruments of the recruitment platforms hh.ru and superjob.ru, we found out the percentage of all-English job ads and résumés, the percentage of ads in which English is listed as a necessary requirement, and the percentage of résumés where applicants mentioned the knowledge of English as a professional skill. The findings were compared with the previous phase of the study. Then we screened 570 job ads from hh.ru (0.1% of the total data base) and 211 ads from superjob.ru (0.1% of the total data base) to trace the changes in the use of English and its impact on shifting the local conventions of professional communication.

3. Analysis and results

3.1. Stage I

The recruitment platforms HeadHunter and SuperJob are Russian companies. Their target audiences are speakers of Russian. All navigation tools and standard relevant information (company address, sphere of activities, regions of available vacancies) are provided in Russian. However, companies can choose the language of self-presentation (introductory information posted on the platform) and the language of job postings.

At the first stage of the study, we divided the sample of job posts and résumés into three parts (all-English, mixed, and all-Russian) and focused on the first two parts.

It was found that all-English job ads are usually posted by local affiliates of international companies, such as Microsoft, KPMG, Visa, and Russian companies that work on the global market, such as Kaspersky, LUXOFT, Severstal. In such companies, English is either the language of corporate communication or a “must” for successful professional performance. Language proficiency is a prerequisite for employment; therefore, job openings are advertised only in English, résumés are also submitted in English, and applicants are evaluated for their knowledge of English. The testing procedures may vary, from a conversation on professional topics during a job interview to a written text in English to screen out candidates prior to an interview (Gritsenko & Laletina 2016).

Mixed job posts and résumés are Russian-based texts in which English words and Anglicisms are used as insertions. Most of them refer to the spheres of sales, marketing, advertising, PR, banking, and other industries that came to Russia with the market economy and brought with them new brands, products, concepts, and terminologies. English is used to name jobs (*data scientist, account assistant*), computer software and digital platforms (*Python, GoogleAds, Power BI, MyTarget, Twitter, ARIS, MS Visio*), professional skills and activities (*e-Commerce, testing A/B*), and general work-related concepts (*dead-line, soft skills*). Hybrid terms are very frequent (*event-менеджер [ivent menedzher] – Eng. event-manager; оператор call-центра [operator kol tsentra] – Eng. call-center operator*), as are transliterated English words adapted to Russian grammar, e.g. *генерить кэшфло [generit' keshflo] – Eng. to generate cash flow*; *увлечен*

юзабилити [*uvlechon yuzabiliti*] – Eng. *keen on usability improvements*). An implicit presence of English is felt due to abundant translation loans and calques, e.g. *продуктовая линейка* [*produktovaya lineika*] – Eng. *product line*; *банкетный менеджер* [*banketnyi menedzher*] – Eng. *banquet manager*; *клиентоориентированность* [*kliyentoorientirovannost'*] – Eng. *client orientation*, and so on.

The functions of English in Russian-based recruitment discourse are manifold. English fills lexical gaps by providing names for jobs and professional activities for which there are no already-existing Russian words (*data scientist*, *актуарий* [*aktuarii*] – Eng. *actuary*) or when English names more accurately convey the specific features of certain professions (*трейдер* [*treider*] – Eng. *trader*; *букер* [*buker*] – Eng. *booker* (*in fashion and cinema industries*)). English also performs an indexical function by connoting various sociocultural meanings connected with language ideologies circulating in Russian society. The symbolic meanings of English have been explored across regions, discourses, and genres (Kachru 2006, Hildendorf 2010, Kirilina 2011, Bolton 2012, Proshina & Ustinova 2012, Bhatia & Ritchie 2013, Rivlina 2015, Zhang 2015, Gritsenko 2016, Khokhlova 2017, Martin 2019, Nelson, Proshina & Davis, 2020, etc.). In Russian-based recruitment ads, employers use English to position their organizations as modern, progressive, and globally oriented (see examples 1–3 below). They also resort to English for targeting the audience: only those candidates who are familiar with English-based professional vocabulary and/or are prepared to accept the corporate culture are encouraged to apply (examples 4 and 5).

(1) *Опыт работы от 3-х лет, уровень middle-senior. В портфолио должны быть сложные интерфейсы.*

[*Opyt raboty on tr'okh let, uroven' mid-sinio. V portfolio dolzhny byt' slozhniye interfeici*].

Work experience from three years up, mid-senior level. Portfolio must include complex interfaces.

(2) *Работа в главном department store страны.*

[*Rabota v glavnom department store strany*].

Work in the main department store of the country.

(3) *Превосходное владение русским языком, желание писать действительно много текстов в разных форматах – **must have*** (emphasized in the original – E.G.).

[*Prevoskhodnoye vladenie ruskim yasykom, zhelaniye pisat' deystvitel'no mnogo tekstov v raznykh formatakh – must have*].

Excellent command of Russian. Willingness to write a lot of texts in various formats – must have.

(4) *Опыт работы SMM-менеджером в fashion-сегменте.*

[*Opyt raboty SMM-menedzherom v feshen-segmente*].

Experience as SMM-manager in the fashion segment.

(5) *Прокачай скилы: на новых проектах высокая планка качества и множество вызовов.*

[Prokachai skily: na novykh proektakh vysokaya planka kachestva i mnozhestvo vyzovov].

Pump your skills: new projects set a high bar of quality and pose a lot of challenges.

Job seekers use English in their résumés (6, 7) and in job interviews (8, 9) to demonstrate professional competence and raise their value in the job market:

(6) *Размещение POS-материалов – ценники, wobлеры.*

[Razmeschenie POS-materialov – tsenniki, woblery].

Placement of sales materials – price-tags, wobblers’.

(7) *Осуществляла поставку по бренд-букам*

[Osushestvlyala postavku po brend-bukam].

Shipped goods according to brand-books.

(8) *Это будут компании стабильные, большие, которые будут генерить хорошо кэшфло.*

[Eto budut kompanii stabilnye, bol’shie, kotorye budut generit’ khorosho keshflo].

They will be stable, big companies that will generate cash flow really well.

(9) *Перед тем, как прошел дьюдил, проводить тендер – это обязательно.*

[Pered ten kak proshol d’udil, provodit’ tender – eto ob’azatel’no].

Prior to due diligence, holding a tender is a must.

The “commodification” of English (Heller 2010) is connected with its high social prestige and wide spread in professional communities. For recruiters, foreign language competence is not only a sign of professionalism but an index of positive personal characteristics; these features can be seen in the following statements from an employer and a recruiter:

“A candidate who is fluent in English is better educated, hard-working, prepared to understand western culture” (Marina, HR agency director);

“Good knowledge of English means that a person is goal-oriented, hard-working, diligent, and disciplined” (Lisa, recruiter).

The study showed that English and Anglicisms are more frequent in job ads than in résumés. In ethnographic interviews, recruitment professionals explained that for employers it is important to cut off the unfitting candidates at the very beginning: they use English as a “filter.” On the contrary, job seekers want to reach the maximal number of potential employers (both globally oriented and local companies) and abundant use of Anglicisms can be a disadvantage.

“If a candidate uses too many English words, it [is] a signal of orientation to western corporate culture. We do not recommend such candidates to local companies” (Marina, HR agency director).

In job interviews, Anglicisms are more often used in conversations of applicants with employers (professional to professional) than with recruiters

(professional to non-professional). In the example below, a candidate to a position of marketing director is speaking to director of the company:

(10) Для этой целевой аудитории у нас нет пространств, которые бы были френдли <...> Не знаю, правильна ли формулировка “креативный Арт базар”, но ... это может быть формат open спейса.

Dl'a etoy tselevoi auditotrii u nas net prostranstv, kotorye by byli frendli <...> Ne znayu, pravil'na li formulirovka “kreativnyi Art bazar”, no ... eto mozhet byt' format open speisa.

“For this target audience, we have no spaces that would be friendly <...> I don't know if the wording “creative Art bazar” is good, but ... it could be the open space format” (<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDbZVDVp1foU4vjO-h8NOZg5ROz27tRKv>) (5 April, 2020).

In many respects, the use of English in job interviews resembles a hybrid jargon that is typical of informal workplace communication in IT and other professional spheres (Gritsenko & Laletina 2016). In this type of talk, English serves a lexifier language and Russian provides phonological, morphological and syntactic foundation. Based on the resource-oriented approach to bilingualism (Blommaert 2010, Mahootian 2012), these transidiomatic practices of job market participants can be viewed as “truncated” English-Russian bilingualism (Higgins 2009: 3). Depending on the context and goals of communication, speakers switch from monolingual to bilingual mode creating and perceiving additional relevant meanings.

3.2. Stage II

The second stage of the study revealed some changes in the spread of English and its functional range. The percentage of all-English job postings on hh.ru has decreased: 0.5% of the total number of posts on the platform compared to 1.2% in 2013. It may be connected with the fact that under the influence of economic sanctions, some international corporations left Russia or reduced their activities and relocated personnel to other countries, while foreign companies that came to Russia for local clients increased the use of Russian in recruiting. Companies that posted all-English job ads specialize in IT (40%), marketing (12%), industrial production (9%), sales (9%), and medicine (6%); other industries represent less than 5%.

The survey of the job postings of two companies (*Coca Cola HBC Russia* and *KPMG*) confirmed the tendency toward a reduced use of English. For instance, on April 5, 2020, Coca Cola HBC Russia had four job posts in their “sales” category: only one of them was in English, the other three were in Russian. The all-English post advertised the vacancy of “category manager” in Moscow. Russian ads were for the position of sales representatives in the regions. The position in Moscow is hierarchically higher and requires occasional interactions with global headquarters. The sales representatives in regional offices deal with local clients and do not need to use English.

Although there are fewer all-English job ads, English is frequently used in company names, which demonstrate the growing use of “truncated” English language resources. Our survey shows that 9,5 % of the companies on hh.ru have English (or “pseudo-English”) names. Alongside names of well-known brands and local enterprises (*Visa, Askona, PepsiCo, Hyundai Motors CIS, SAY YES, Pixelforce, SHARE, FunCorp, DigitalHR* and so on), our sample exhibits numerous hybrids (*Магазин Garage, 2БАЙФАЙ, лаборатория T&D Lab, ООО SHARE*) and products of creative English-Russian bi-scriptalism (*Мануфактура, Marina Fashion, ЗАВОД games, SALO, Uchi.ru.*). The use of English in such names is emblematic: they attract attention, and increase recognition and memorability.

Only 1% of the total number of posts on superjob.ru (2156 out of 211926) list English as a requirement for employment. However, English words (transliterated or in the original script) are routinely used to name positions and describe professional skills and responsibilities (*senior account manager, group head, product manager, character 3D artist, junior GD, head of performance, инфлюенс-маркетинг [infl’uens-marketing] – Eng. influencer marketing, предметный фотограф [predmetnyi fotograf] – Eng. subject photographer; подобрать блогеров по брифу [podobrat’ blogerov po brifu] – Eng. to recruit bloggers according to a brief (i.e. a short summary of the objectives and results the customer wants to achieve); развиваем GameDev-направление Critical Hit [razvivayem geimdev-napravlenie kritikal hit] – Eng. develop Critical Hit games, and so on). Apparently, it is assumed that all candidates would be familiar with basic English-linked professional concepts.*

In 11% of résumés posted on superjob.ru (1 591 322 out of 14 175 507), job seekers indicate their knowledge of English (from basic to proficient). This shows that English continues to be viewed as a competitive advantage. Yet, there is an imbalance of supply and demand: only 1% of job posts on the platform require the use of English, while 11% of candidates offer this skill. The survey of 165 recruiters on hh.ru agrees with these findings. Answering the question “*Candidates with what skills are most difficult to find?*” only 2% of in-house recruiters selected the option “*proficient in English.*”

Two explanations can be offered for this trend: (1) the number of people who learn English and bring this knowledge to the job market is growing; (2) with a shrinking pool of vacancies in international companies, emphasis is shifting to other professional skills.

The first supposition is supported by our own findings: the survey of recruitments ads on hh.ru showed a significant increase of employers who provide educational services online (business schools, language schools, professional development courses). Recruitment ads of such employers constitute about 1% of the total number of job posts on hh.ru. Most of them offer various English courses for young people and professionals. They hire English language instructors, tutors, consultants, and so on. Among the most active employers, there are schools

teaching English online (*SkyEng; Инглекс [Ingleks], EnglishDom, Yes!Please, Let's skype, Parta, etc.*).

The second conclusion is consistent with the opinions expressed by representatives of Russian recruitment agencies in the publication of “Vedomosti,” a Russian-based business daily. They stressed that in the changing Russian job market, proficiency in English is vital for employees of international companies and, in some cases, for senior personnel, while many local businesses tend to focus on candidates’ professional expertise (<https://www.vedomosti.ru/management/articles/2017/11/14/741590-pomogaet-li-angliiskii>). Nevertheless, the role of English as symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1991) remains significant. English is considered critical for technological development and innovation, which is a top-level policy agenda. It is the main medium of communication in the global digital economy.

Scholarship in world Englishes has long been interested in the impact of digital media on the spread of English worldwide (Lee 2020). Our study yields some relevant results concerning this issue. As mentioned above, the all-English segment of the Russian recruitment discourse has narrowed, but the use of “truncated” English language resources has increased. The increase is to a great extent connected with changes in the job market. New occupational areas have appeared, such as social networks, Internet channels, and so on, where telecommunications are the main instruments of dealing with clients. It caused an influx of English professional terms and non-terminological vocabulary that are nativized in transliteration or in the original English script, e.g. хэштэг [*kheshteg*] – *hashtag*, лонгрид [*longrid*] – *longread*, стример [*strimer*] – *streamer*, блоггинг [*bloging*] – *blogging*, гейминг [*geiming*] – *gaming*, бродкаст [*brodkast*] – *broadcast*, траффик [*trafik*] – *traffic*, You Tube, Instagram, tik tok, VK.com, Facebook, Twitter and so on).

The need for English in the digital job market is determined by the target audience (Russian speakers or international social media communities). Even if English is not required for employment, many jobs in the surveyed sample have English names (*SMM lead, 3d designer, head of performance* and so on), and Anglicisms are routinely used to describe required skills and activities, e.g. разработка новых фиш в игре [*razrabotka novykh fich v igre*] – *developing new features for a computer game*; опыт работы группедомом от 1 года [*opyn raboty grupkhedom ot odnogo goda*] – *experience as group head over a year*). Names for new occupations are not only taken (borrowed) from English; they can be coined by Russian speakers using English as a word-building material’, e.g.:

- **файндер** [*fainder*] – *a person whose responsibilities are to find new ideas on the Internet* (the word is not connected with the English name “finder” – “an unregistered broker”; it was coined by Russian speakers in the Russian context);
- **пикчер** [*pikcher*] – *a person whose work is connected with providing entertaining (funny, challenging) visual content for news posts and social media publications* (the word was coined in the Russian meme-making community based

on the jocular phonetic and graphical adaptation of the English word “picture”: “picture” → “пикча” [pikcha] → “пикчер” [pikcher]).

This phenomenon can be viewed as yet another form of language creativity among Expanded Circle speakers of English: being understood as intended, the new occupational names are in conformity with the “encoding rules” and meet the conditions of “communicative feasibility” (Widdowson 2019). This novel form of translingual word-building, triggered by occupational diversity in social media, demonstrates the growing role of English as an intermediary between people, work, and technologies.

Outlining priorities for World Englishes research in professional communication, V. Bhatia argues “for an integration of discursive and professional practices in order to facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of how professionals exploit generic resources (at various levels, including lexicogrammar, rhetorical structures, discourse organization, conventions and constraints on and across genres) to create new and hybrid forms to achieve their disciplinary objectives, invariably transcending geographical, disciplinary, institutional, as well as cultural, boundaries” (V. Bhatia 2019: 31). In her comparative study of Russian and English recruitment discourses, Stebletsova noted an important stylistic and cultural difference between Russian- and English-based résumés: Russian texts were formal, reserved, and unemotional, while English résumés were less formal and more emotional, promoting personal achievements (Stebletsova 2016).

The same is true with reference to job ads. Traditionally, the function of job ads in Russia has been to inform job seekers about open vacancies; no additional meanings were intended or expected. In the recruitment practices of the US and global business cultures, the goal of job ads is to attract top-talent employees. To gain their trust and inspire them to choose their company over the competitors, employers use special strategies bringing recruitment and marketing efforts together. Oftentimes, elements of other professional genres (public relations and advertising) are appropriated to create an appealing and memorable image of the company.

In Russia, employers are also beginning to use strategies similar to above. Following the global pattern, recruitment ads for Russian corporations now routinely have a short introduction – company presentation. This highlights those aspects of the company’s image which are considered critical for shaping public opinion and attracting potential employees. For example, the ad for the position of “*senior actuary*” posted on hh.ru by Sberbank Life Insurance, a subsidiary of the biggest Russian commercial bank (Sberbank), has the following introduction:

(11) Сбербанк страхование жизни – это масштабный проект на российском страховом рынке, прошедший стремительный путь к уверенному лидерству. Клиентоориентированная сплоченная и дружная команда, которая предлагает клиентам инновационный подход к страхованию жизни.

Мы работаем для того, чтобы помочь гражданам России не бояться планировать свое будущее <...> Благодаря нашим продуктам мечты, устремления и обещания, данные себе и своим близким, будут реализованы. Несмотря ни на что.

Sberbank life insurance is a large-scale project on the Russian insurance market, which has rapidly covered the path to confident leadership. A client-oriented, solid and friendly team that offers innovative approach to life insurance.

We work to help the citizens of Russia not to be afraid of planning their future <...>. Thanks to our products, your aspirations and promises given to yourself and to your loved ones will be implemented. No matter what.

The issues of leadership, innovation, and public good are prominent themes of corporate public relations discourse. They are appropriated to present a commercial enterprise as a benevolent project that improves people's lives. In the post-Soviet Russia, market reforms exacerbated social inequalities. In this context, the message of improving people's lives is very pertinent. It makes the image of the employer more appealing and motivates worthier candidates to apply.

The job ad posted by the Russian metallurgical giant Severstal appropriates the rhetoric of advertising – build trust by adding a personal touch. Potential employees are addressed in an informal and friendly way with a second-person singular imperative and the corresponding familiar personal pronoun *ты* [ty] – Eng. “you.”

(12) Не уппусти возможность попасть в самую эффективную металлургическую компанию мира! Если ты ответственный, про активный, хочешь развивать новые продукты, то подавай заявку в нашу команду.

Don't miss the opportunity to get to the most effective metallurgical company in the world! If you are responsible, proactive and willing to develop new products, apply to our team!

This personalized address form is a syntactic calque from English. It reflects the adoption of western patterns of informal and friendly interaction. Unlike English, Russian grammatizes the difference between formal and informal address, and for professional communication, the unmarked form has always been formality. The emphasis on the individual has never been characteristic of the Russian language and culture, but under the influence of English, it is becoming more common. Thereby, register conventions also tend to shift from formal and reserved to relaxed and friendly.

The examples above show how English-based norms are appropriated to regulate communication in Russian. When professional industries globalize, and businesses move into new markets abroad, they take their communicative norms along with them (Cameron 2008). Today, the genre of job advertising in Russia (like other recruitment genres) is largely regulated by global (English-based) conventions. Russian job ads reproduce their English “prototypes” in form and translate similar messages, but naturally the appropriation of global conventions

involves their adaptation to Russian cultural norms. An example of such adaptation is found in a job post for “Prosvesheniye Publishers,” the leading educational publishing house of the Russian Federation. The post has a standard four-part structure – introduction (company presentation) and three sections: “*What objectives we set for the candidate,*” “*What is important for us,*” and “*What we offer You.*” In the last section, the employer uses a capitalized form of the second-person plural pronoun *Вы* [vy] – Eng. *you*. It is a respectful form of address that is typical of the genre of personal correspondence in Russian. This interdiscursive manipulation helps the employer to sustain a balance between the global requirements of personalization and Russian norms of politeness that require formality in professional communication.

4. Concluding remarks

The spread of English in the Russian recruitment discourse manifests itself in different ways. English can be adopted as a primary language of interaction between job market participants (in this case, “English” means the whole system of the language.) Certain lexical elements (words, phrases) can be borrowed and become nativized (transliterated or in the original script). English-based norms can be appropriated to regulate communication in Russian.

In Russian-based recruitment discourse, English is used to fill in lexical gaps and convey a wide range of socio-cultural implications (indexical meanings) connected with the perception of English as a marker of globalization, business efficiency, professional competence, and so on. Employers use English to position their companies as modern and progressive. They also employ it as a “filter” to target good professionals and cut off unfitting candidates. Job seekers use English to demonstrate their expertise and emphasize professional identity. English is more often used in professional-to-professional type of interaction.

In the current socioeconomic situation, the all-English segment of the Russian recruitment discourse is shrinking, but the use of “truncated” English language resources (insertions, hybrids, calques, communication patterns) is growing. This growth is driven by the expansion of the digital/social media sector where English serves as an intermediary between people, work and technologies and mediates global professional discourses.

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