Research Article

Language Code Mixing in the Discourse of IT Companies

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Abstract. The mixing of English with national languages in business communication is a consequence of global processes: the development of transnational corporations, modern technologies, the intensification of communication flows and the dominance of English in intercultural communication. Mixing and switching of language codes is quite often observed in the corporate media discourse of IT companies. For organizations in this sphere, English is the main language of business communication, but its use goes beyond professional slang and terminology, creating characteristic forms of language codes mixing. The purpose of the research presented in the article is to identify and analyze situations of mixing English and Russian in the corporate media discourse of IT companies. The research material was corporate media texts in Russian and English posted on the pages of official websites, corporate blogs and in the social networks Twitter and Facebook. In the analyzed texts in Russian, English inclusions (phrases, individual words and their parts) are often observed to denote work programs and tools, corporate events. As part of the professional slang of IT professionals, English words are transmitted using the Cyrillic alphabet and in accordance with the rules of Russian grammar. The influence of English on Russian media discourse in the IT field is also observed in the expansion of the meanings of some words. In Russian media texts, there are also phrases that are not typical for the Russian language, but represent a literal translation of English phrases. English-language sentences are used in Russian texts as mottos or slogans of the company, as congratulations or advice. As a result of the content analysis of the selected media texts, it was also found that along with the English language, the values typical for the discourse of American corporations are being borrowed. It was found that the value dominants of the corporate discourse of IT companies are "change" and "progress", "success", "equality", "partnership".

Key words: language code mixing, language code switching, corporate media discourse, globalization, English

ЯЗЫКОВЫЕ ПРОЦЕССЫ

Научная статья

Смешение языковых кодов в дискурсе ИТ-компаний

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Аннотация. Смешение английского языка с национальными в деловой коммуникации является следствием глобальных процессов: развития транснациональных корпораций, современных технологий, интенсификации коммуникативных потоков и доминирования английского языка в межкультурной коммуникации. Смешение и переключение языковых кодов достаточно часто наблюдается в корпоративном медиадискурсе ИТ-компаний. Для организаций этой сферы английский служит основным языком делового общения, но его употребление часто выходит за рамки профессионального сленга и терминосистемы, образуя характерные формы смешения языковых кодов. Цель представленного в статье исследования заключается в определении и анализе ситуаций смешения английского и русского языков в корпоративном медиаопосредованном дискурсе ИТ-компаний. Материалом исследования послужили русскоязычные и англоязычные корпоративные медиатексты, размещенные на страницах официальных сайтов, корпоративных блогов и в социальных сетях Twitter и Facebook. В проанализированных русскоязычных текстах достаточно часто наблюдаются англоязычные включения (словосочетания, отдельные слова и их части) для обозначения рабочих программ и инструментов, корпоративных мероприятий. Являясь частью профессионального сленга ИТ-специалистов, английские слова передаются при помощи кириллицы и в соответствии с правилами русской грамматики. Влияние английского языка на русскоязычный медиадискурс в сфере ИТ наблюдается и в расширении значений некоторых слов. В русскоязычных медиатекстах также встречаются словосочетания, не характерные для русского языка, но представляющие собой дословный перевод английских словосочетаний. Англоязычные предложения используются в русскоязычных текстах в качестве девизов или слоганов компании, как поздравления или советы. В результате контент-анализа отобранных медиатекстов было установлено, что вместе с английским языком происходит заимствование ценностей, характерных для англоязычного дискурса американских корпораций. Ценностными доминантами корпоративного дискурса ИТ-компаний являются «изменение» и «прогресс», «успех», «равенство», «партнерство».

Ключевые слова: смешение языковых кодов, переключение языковых кодов, корпоративный медиадискурс, глобализация, английский

Introduction

English, as the dominant language of intercultural professional communication [1—5], vividly manifests itself in this quality in the corporate discourse of IT companies. As a language of international communication in the field of computer technology, it goes beyond the terminological system and professional slang, creating particular situations of mixing codes. It is displayed in:

— the inclusion of English lexical elements in a foreign-language text in their authentic spelling;

— the inclusion of English lexical elements in a foreign-language text in the spelling of the language of the text;

— changing the English-language lexical components according to the rules of the text language while maintaining the authentic spelling;

— changing the English-language lexical components in the spelling of the language of the text according to the rules of the language of the text;

— switching codes: English and foreign.

The material for the study was Russian and English media texts of Belarusian IT companies posted on the pages of official websites, corporate blogs, and on Twitter and Facebook social networks. The material also includes English media texts of 100 Polish IT companies posted on official websites. All of the texts were selected with the help of the continuous sampling method. The method of content analysis [6—9] was applied to determine culturally specific similarities and differences in the content of corporate media discourse of IT companies from different countries.

Discussion

A characteristic feature of the corporate media discourse of IT companies is the predominance of media texts in English. One hundred companies analyzed by us have English versions of their websites, 48 out of 57 corporate blogs contain texts in English, the main language of 45 official Twitter pages of companies is English, and only in two cases the main language of communication is Russian. Within the Facebook social network, the ratio of official pages in these languages is: 22 pages in Russian and 38 in English. Such a ratio of media texts in Russian and English, with the predominance of the latter, is explained by the specifics of the activities of IT companies. They are mainly focused on the western market. For them, English is the main means of communication with a foreign audience, including potential and actual clients and partners. The influence of the English language on the corporate media discourse of IT companies can also be traced in Russian-language publications posted on the official pages of the Facebook social network. In Russian media texts, English inclusions are often found. So, words in English are used as components of complex words or phrases in Russian: *Давайте вместе строить будущее технологий и digital-трансформации!* (Let's build the future of

technology and digital transformation together!); *представили проект — "HR в online"* (Presented the project — "HR in online"), *автоматизация основных HR-процессов* (automation of the main HR-processes); *наш .NET-разработчик Вадим Папко* (Our .NET developer Vadim Papko); *Salesforce-разработчик* (Salesforce Developer); *web-основы* (Web-bases); *winter mood во всех офисах* (winter mood in all offices); *CRM-система* (CRM system); *IT-мурал* (IT-mural); *демо-версия* (Demo version); *Agile-методологию* (Agile Methodology).

As a rule: the elements of the English language are used:

— to indicate work programs and tools: *NET-разработчик Вадим Папко рассказал о своем карьерном пути и наглядно показал, над чем сейчас работает* (NET developer Vadim Papko told about his career path and clearly showed what he is working on now); *понимание front- и backend разработки* (the understanding of front and backend development); *опыт работы с React and webpack* (Experience with React and webpack); *дух инноваций и профессионального развития сотрудников, достигаемый через наши Centers of Excellence* (The spirit of innovation and professional development of our employees, achieved through our Centers of Excellence); *Представленный продукт — модуль Web-portal* (The presented product is the Web-portal module); *Мы запустили внутрикорпоративное приложение SaM MeetApp* (We have launched the in-house SaM MeetApp); *выступит с докладом «Технология Open API — фундамент финансовой экосистемы»* (Will make a presentation "Open API technology — the foundation of the financial ecosystem");

— to name internal corporate events: *Каждый год организаторы FIRST Global Challenge выбирают глобальную проблему, на решение которой должны быть направлены работы участников. В этом году конкурс прошел под названием Ocean Opportunities* (Every year, the organizers of the FIRST Global Challenge choose a global problem to address which the participants' work should be focused on. This year's competition was called Ocean Opportunities); *Сегодня в городе Киеве проходит BUM SME Banking Club Conference 2019 — VIIII ежегодная международная банковская конференция по малому и среднему бизнесу* (BUM SME Banking Club Conference 2019 — VIIII Annual International Banking Conference on Small and Medium Business is taking place in Kiev today); *...выступает Партнером семинара по искусственному интеллекту и машинному обучению Семинар A! Day's, который стартовал сегодня в Минске* (acts as a Partner of the Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Workshop Workshop A! Day's, which started today in Minsk); *Давайте посмотрим на эмоции наших детей на волшебном детском празднике Itransition Magic Family Day и сами на минуту окунемся в сказку* (Let's take a look at the emotions of our children at the Itransition Magic Family Day, and for a moment we ourselves will plunge into a fairy tale); *«□ На прошлой неделе Инватекс запустил Open Doors and Minds Day»* (Invatex launched Open Doors and Minds Day last week).

As a part of the professional slang of IT specialists, English words are spelled by means of the Cyrillic alphabet and in accordance with the rules of Russian grammar: *Также приглашаем всех желающих 26 ноября на гостевую лекцию, посвященную современным технологиям и фреймворкам разработки front-end приложений* (We also invite everyone on November 26 to a guest lecture on modern technologies and frameworks for developing front-end applications); *Предварительный собеседования — отличный спо-*

соб быстро шортлистить кандидатов (Pre-interviews are a great way to quickly shortlist candidates); *P.S. Если бы я была в брюках, то был бы полный рапорт))) Лучше спичить стоя...* (P.S. If I were in trousers, there would be a full report))) Better to have a speech while standing...).

English sentences are used in Russian texts as:

— mottos or slogans of the company. Thus, the presentation text of Sam Solutions begins with the English slogan «Value of Talent. Delivered» followed by the main part of the text in Russian: *Компания SaM Solutions является одним из ведущих поставщиков услуг по ИТ-консалтингу и разработке программного обеспечения под заказ* (SaM Solutions is one of the leading providers of IT consulting and custom software development);

— a part of advice or recommendations: *Будьте терпеливы и идите к целям постепенно, всего и сразу не бывает. Как говорится, one step at a time (поспешишь — людей насмешишь)* (Be patient and go towards your goals gradually, everything does not happen at once. As they say, one step at a time (hurry up — make people laugh);

— congratulations: *Happy Programmer's Day! (С Днем Программиста!) Мы запустили внутрикорпоративное приложение SaM MeetApp. Сделано сотрудниками для сотрудников* (Happy Programmer's Day! We launched the in-house SaM MeetApp. Made by employees for employees).

The influence of the English language on the Russian-language media discourse in the IT field is also observed in the expansion of the meanings of some words. For example, the word *экспертиза* (expertise), defined in Russian as "consideration of some questions by experts to give an opinion", is used in media texts of Belarusian IT companies in the meaning of competence: *Уже 25 лет вы вместе с нами на пути полного погружения в высококачественную инженерную экспертизу* (For 25 years you have been with us on the path of complete immersion in high-quality engineering expertise). The addition of a new meaning was influenced by the English word expertise, defined as: professional competence, special knowledge and skills.

In Russian-language media texts, there are phrases that are not typical for the Russian language, but represent a literal translation of English phrases. For example, the phrase *сделать событие* is a literal translation of the English make an event, and *сделать игру* is make a game: *Поэтому вместе с Айтиландия мы сделали событие, где ребята: *делали компьютерные игры* (Therefore, together with Aitilandia, we made an event where the guys: *made computer games).

An interesting feature of the English-language media texts of Belarusian IT companies is the use of a large number of cliché phrases that are repeated many times in texts of various topics and are placed in different media formats: corporate blogs, websites, social networks. These phrases are used to implement one of 6 themes found in the analyzed media formats: "Partnership", "Quality", "Progress and Change", "Expertise and Professionalism", "Success and Supremacy", "Attitude to Work" (Table 1).

The listed topics are thematic dominants, or the most stable, regularly reproduced topics, transmitting information that is significant from the point of view of the addressee [10. P. 1], in the analyzed media texts [11].

"Partnership" is a hot topic for professional media discourse. It is defined as "a type of constructive interaction aimed at achieving a common goal with equality in the rights and obligations of the parties" [12]. In the media texts of Belarusian IT companies, this

topic raises the question of what should be the relationship between customers and employees for the successful implementation of projects. Partnerships based on equal sharing of duties and responsibilities seem to be the key to productive work: our main goal is a continuous development and advancement in a united team. The theme "Quality" is dedicated to showcasing the high quality of the company's products: "We focus more of our attention on the quality and reliability of our software development services". The topic "Expertise and Professionalism" includes a description of the high level of professionalism and competence of the company's employees: "Our ultimate goal is to be a reliable partner where our software experts are an integral part of the client team. The topic "Progress and Change" is an integral part of the media texts of IT companies: change and progress are undoubtedly viewed as positive processes that contribute to the growth of well-being and the development of society: «We are a software development company constantly growing in numbers, quality and competence».

Table 1

The clichés used in the English media texts of Belarussian IT-companies

Topics	Clichés
Partnership	We're here to help with, successful cooperation with, trusted technology partner, to help with digital transformation, a reliable (partner, team)
Quality	Reliable solutions, high quality products, to build powerful software tools, ensure product quality
Progress and Change	quickly respond to changing technical and business requirements, next-gen products, digital transformation, professional growth; build digital future
Expertise and Professionalism	Years of experience, highly qualified professionals, teams of skilled developers, decades of expertise, experienced team of...
Success and Supremacy	global customers, enterprises, providers, leaders, superior IT company, find recognition, leading software development expert, global leader
Attitude to Work	To be passionate about, we're happy to (help, work with), make clients happy

"Success and Supremacy" is the natural consequence of professional, hard and honest work to meet the needs of our customers. The topic "Attitude to Work" reveals the attitude of representatives of the IT sphere to their work: the main characteristics are enthusiasm and passion for their work. Curiosity and a desire to cope with new and complex tasks overpowers in real IT professionals the fear and reluctance to take on difficult tasks: «we are a team of specialists passionate about everything related to technologies».

To determine whether the listed topics and the ways of their verbal representation are a characteristic feature of the media discourse of Belarusian IT companies or a general characteristic of the media discourse of companies in this sphere, a content analysis of the English-language media texts of Polish IT companies was carried out. As a result, the same themes and common clich phrases used to implement them were discovered (Table 2).

Moreover, the frequency of reference to some of the topics coincides in the English-language texts of Polish and Belarusian IT companies. For example, the topics "Expertise and Professionalism" and "Progress and Change" (Table 3).

Table 2

**The comparative analysis of the media texts of Polish
and Belarussian IT-companies in the English language**

Topics	English media texts of the Polish IT-Companies	English media texts of Belarussian IT-Companies
Partnership	SoftKraft has been a very reliable partner for us	We are a reliable team of developers who care about your business
Quality	...meticulous testing minimizes the risk of error and ensures a high quality of the final product	We develop high quality software
Progress and Change	Digital transformation in the world of Intelligent Enterprises	our development team will help you fast-forward your Digital Transformation
Expertise and Professionalism	Our experienced team will help you achieve your business goal	Our experienced team will turn those ideas into a reality
Success and Supremacy	global healthcare providers	Global Leaders in Software Development
Attitude to Work	We would be happy to work with SoftKraft again	We are happy to work with big companies

Table 3

The frequency of reference to the topics "Expertise and Professionalism" and "Progress and Change" in the media texts of Polish and Belarussian IT-companies, in Percentage Terms

Topics	Media Texts of Polish Companies, in Percentage Terms	Media Texts of Belarussian companies, in Percentage Terms
Expertise and Professionalism	22.85	25.60
Progress and Change	22.78	24.82

The dominance of the English language in the IT discourse inevitably leads to the borrowing of the realities of the English-speaking culture and the expansion of values related to this culture, in particular to the culture of the United States. Thus, researchers attribute "changes" and "progress", "success", "equality" to the national values of this country, which form the American system of value attitudes and worldviews [13; 14]. According to Charles Redding and Edward Steele, "change" in American culture is associated with progress, of course, aimed at the development of the welfare of society [15]. "Success" in US culture is invariably associated with power and wealth, it is encouraged and welcomed in society, and is an attractive trait of individuals or companies to a wide audience. "Partnership" in business, based on the separation of duties and responsibility for the overall result in team affairs, is seen as one of the manifestations of "equality", the basic national value of the United States (https://careercenter.lehigh.edu/sites/careercenter.lehigh.edu/files/AmericanValues.pdf).

Conclusion

A characteristic feature of the corporate media discourse of IT companies is the dominance of the English language. It manifests itself: 1) in the quantitative ratio of Russian-language and English-language publications with a predominance of the latter; 2) interspersed with English words, phrases and sentences in a foreign language; 3) the

expansion of the meanings of foreign words under the influence of the English language; 4) a high degree of cliché. The predominance of the English language in the foreign language corporate media discourse seems to be part of a more global process: the expansion of the English-language culture and related values.

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