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Formation of Russian-Culture-Orientated English

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The development of Foreign-Culture-Oriented English inevitably results in the formation of a specialized variety of this language with its own lexis. These are xenonyms, i.e. names of specific elements of the foreign culture in question. In the case of Russian-Culture-Oriented English the language accumulates the necessary amount of xenonyms. Once a part of the vocabulary, xenonyms develop according to the rules of English. Derivatives are formed by means of affixation, and in rare cases Russian affixes are borrowed (-NIK; -SKI/SKY).

Keywords: functional dualism, interlinguoculturology, culturonyms, idioculturonyms: idionyms & xenonyms

Introduction

Globalization accompanied by “globanglization” makes it necessary for all non-English nations to use English in order to promote their cultures. Foreign-Culture-Oriented English is a specialized variety of this language which is best studied by resorting to original native English descriptions of these cultures. Abundance of various English texts devoted to Russian culture allows us to see the formation of the peripheral layer of the English vocabulary oriented towards Russian culture and its naturalization.

Globalization made it necessary for all nations to master international, therefore intercultural, communication. Trying to reach for a wider audience all countries have started to resort to international languages (primarily to English, but also to French, Spanish, German) in order to promote their cultures. Application

of the language to a foreign culture by necessity needs certain adaptations of the language. Actually such type of communication results in the formation of a specialized variety of the language: Foreign-Culture-Oriented (FCO) Language. Naturally we are primarily interested in Global English applied to Russian culture, i.e. Russian-Culture-Oriented English (RCO English).

Cultural reorientation of a language is the result of its “**functional duality**”: the language although primarily oriented towards its “own” (“**internal**”) culture by necessity is also used in application to foreign (“**external**”) cultures, gradually accumulating all the necessary verbal means for it (Kabakchi 1998, 9). We call the linguistic discipline devoted to the study of the language in its **secondary cultural orientation** towards a foreign culture ‘**interlinguoculturology**’ (ILCology, for short).

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Types of Russian-Culture-Oriented English texts

Our research which started in the early 1980s has shown that the FCO Language by necessity accumulates specific lexis, *xenonyms* (fr. Greek ‘xenos’, “strange”, “foreign) used in reference to the foreign culture thus described. Xenonyms regularly appear in texts of various genres: academic publications, popular travel notes, publicist and fiction. It proves the words of the editor of the OED: “The English vocabulary is now federated rather than centralized. No one person’s English is all English, but each English speaker is to some extent ”multilingual” within English. We are competent in varieties of English in which we do not perform”. (Weiner, 501). Naturally, Russian-culture xenonyms constitute a part of the layer of xenonyms too.

Here are some extracts from English-language description of Russian culture. For instance, in an academic article:

The gentry or middle service class (*dvoryane*) also figure in numerous graveside inscriptions. A 1677 Pskov memorial, for example, recalls the “Moscow *dvoryanin*” Evsegneii Nikitin *syn* Neelov, while a 1679 inscription remembers another *dvoryanin*, Grigorii Grigor’ev *syn* Chirikov. Numerous memorial plates from the Pskov Caves monastery identify the deceased as “*pomeshchik*,” confirming the fact that the middle class level of Muscovite servitors became accustomed to adding social rank to grave markers. Soon *zhiltsy* and others who inhabited the middle levels of the Muscovite social order also had their rank recalled in commemorative tablets. Seventeenth-century ceramic memorials commemorate a musketeer (*strelets*), artilleryman (*pushkar*’), and others

from the lower reaches of the military service classes. (Kaiser, 446)

An extract from notes of a traveler:

There were three principle sorts of conveyance: the *telega*, a springless, one-horse cart, which had a leather hood and curtain for bad weather; the *kibitka*, which was similarly equipped but could also be converted into a horse-drawn sleigh; and the *tarantass*, a sort of hooded and seatless basket about seven feet long ... The *tarantass* was drawn by a *troika*, a team of three shaggy Siberian horses. ... the *tarantass* was the most popular. Both *kibitkas* and *tarantass* could be bought or hired in Perm ... All these sorts of vehicles were driven by a *yamshchik* (driver) who was invariably at least partially drunk. (Newby, 77)

Modern guides on foreign countries sometimes include most unusual texts:

Word of the Month: *Kulich*

A *kulich* is a traditional Russian Easter cake made from fruit, almonds and raisins. It is usually made several days before Easter so that all the ingredients get a good soaking in rum and saffron. When the cake is decorated, the initials *XB* can be written in icing on the sides. *XB* are the Russians initials KhV for *Khristos Voskres*, (Christ is Risen). Many Orthodox people go to the church on Saturday with their *kulich* to get them blessed and made holy. (*SPbIYP* Apr 2008:12)

Trying to achieve objective results, we decided that only ‘authentic’ (original, not in translation) texts, preferably written by native speakers, ought to be used as the source of our research. Therefore a file of over 4,000 citations from original texts describing Russian culture

formed the corpus of the research: more than a hundred books, including such fundamental works as *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Russia* (1982; 2nd ed. 1994, 604 p.), the result of joint efforts of over a hundred authors under a single editorship. We looked through numerous newspapers and magazines (*Time*, *Times*, *Newsweek*, *National Geographic*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Moscow Times*, *St Petersburg Times*, etc.). 26 dictionaries, including general purpose dictionaries (OED, RHD, W3, WNW, and smaller ones), dictionaries of foreign words and phrases, dictionaries of new words as well as specialized dictionaries of Russian cultural terminology were used to check the appearance of Russian-culture xenonyms (specific elements of foreign cultures) in this type of communication. At least ten dictionaries were thoroughly, page-to-page examined in search of such xenonyms. The result was *The Dictionary of Russia* (2002): a compilation of about 2500 Russian xenonyms, their presence in the English language was checked in the abovementioned dictionaries.

Are xenonyms legitimate words?

The legitimacy of xenonyms as an integral part of the vocabulary can be proved by the presence of such words in the general purpose dictionaries of the English language. It is a well known fact that dictionaries register only those lexis which appear a certain amount of times in the corpus of the texts forming the base of the dictionary.

While checking Russian xenonyms which regularly appear in our corpus in the OED we discovered that the first citations with such words which for the first time appeared only in the second edition of the OED (1989) in many cases go as far back as the publication of the first edition (1928). In the examples supplied below the date of the first citation is given in parentheses: ataman (1835); balaclava (1881); balalaika (1788);

blin (1889); doukhorbor (1876); дума (1870); omul (1884). In fact, “balalaika” was first registered in 1788, which means that this Russian loan had been waiting to be registered over two centuries. (Kabakchi 1998, 39)

The *Washington Post* article «Czars»

It is particularly revealing to see Russian xenonyms beyond the habitual context of Russian culture. The *Washington Post* published on October 23, 2009 an article under the title «Czars» which opened with the following sentence:

October revolutions just ain't what they used to be.

It was 92 years, almost to the day, since the **Bolsheviks** stormed the **Winter Palace**. Sens. Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) and Susan Collins (R-Maine), as fine a duo as **Lenin** and **Trotsky**, presided over the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, which for a couple of hours Thursday morning seemed more like the **Council of People's Commissars**.

It is obvious that the problem discussed is the US politics and Russian xenonyms are simply used as metaphors to criticize appearance in President Obama's administration too many czars chosen by Democrats. The meaning of the word “czar” is local and has nothing to with Russian politics:

[WNW **czar**] *American English*
any person having great or unlimited power; autocrat (the President's energy czar). <>

The author compares “the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee” with Russia's *duma*:

... Chairman Lieberman said after his **duma** was gavelled to order.

29 various Russianisms are used in the article: Bolsheviks (2) <> Winter Palace <> Lenin <>

Trotsky <> Council of People's Commissars <> czars (17) <> Romanov <> Russia + <> Nicholas II <> дума <> anti-czarist <> Yekaterinburg. In fact, once the word "czar" is used in its original meaning:

Recognizing a chance for shtick, Lieberman described a scene from "Fiddler on the Roof" when one of the townsfolk asks the rabbi if there is a prayer for the **czar**. "The rabbi answers, 'Yes, my son, there is. It is: God bless and keep the **czar** -- far away from us.' May I paraphrase that prayer this morning: God bless and keep the title 'czar' forevermore away from the American government.

In other words xenonyms are a part, let it be peripheral one, of the vocabulary of English which is becoming more and more cosmopolitan including xenonyms of various cultures:

Jerusalem, Mecca, Rome, Moscow – all are places of pilgrimage, whether the faithful come to pray at the Wailing Wall, circle the *kaaba*, be blessed by the Pope or file past Lenin's embalmed body in the great mausoleum on Red Square. (Fodor 1989, 131)

Naturalization of xenonyms – affixation

Once as a part of the Foreign-Culture-Oriented English domain, xenonyms develop in accordance with the laws of English. They receive affixes and give life to new words. These affixes are so familiar that new formations are taken for granted so long as xenonyms are already familiar:

-an: Kievan <> Tolstoyan (DR) <> Drevlians (DR) <>
-ana ('things associated with):
Tolstoyana (Nabokov 1990 Pnin 415)
<>

-dom: tsardom (DR)

-esque Gogolesque <>
Pushkinesque <>

The second [masterpiece] was his dazzling **Gogolesque** fantasy, *Master i Margarita* (*The Master and Margarita*). (EncBr)

-ian: Gogolian (DR) <> Chekhovian (DR) <> Leskovian (Nabokov *Pnin* 378).

The "English" park that separated our house from the hayfields was an extensive and elaborate affair with labyrinthine paths, **Turgenevian** benches, and imported oaks among the endemic firs and birches. (Nabokov, 135)

Some affixes are used seldom. For example, **-id** appears in the derivative of the the word "Rurik" in reference to the dynasty of the first rulers of ancient Rus' («Рюриковичи»):

From the beginning of the Tatar period, the **Rurikid** princes displayed much disunity. (EncBr)

The Roman suffix **-ina** which forms «feminine names and titles», is used in the xenonym "tsarina", alongside a rarer variant "tsaritsa".

The suffix **-ism** is so frequently used that needs no comment. The list of the corresponding xenonyms is endless: Decembrism, Karamazovism, Tolstoyism, Leninism, Brezhnevism.

Sometimes affixation produces nonce words, but these are also helpful serving the stylistic function:

The translation of the *Philokalia*, a collection of Greek monastic texts, into Old Slavic by the *starets* Paissy Velitchkovsky (1722-94) contributed to a revival of *starchestvo* ("staretsism")... (EncBr)

The suffix «-ist» is also highly productive (Decembrist, Leninist, Stalinist, etc.):

Rodchenko led a wing of artists in the **Constructivist** movement – the **Productivist** group – who wanted to forge closer ties between the arts and industry ... (EncBr)

As the fund of affixes in English is not so rich as in Russian, sometimes the same affix covers the function of two Russian affixes. This is the case of the xenonym “Octobrists” which first appeared in the beginning of the 20th century in the meaning «октябристы», members of a party of that period, and later was used in reference to «(юные) октябрята», members of a Soviet children organization (a sort of Soviet Scouts), cf.:

... Stolypin did obtain the cooperation of the party of the moderate right (the Octobrists) ... (EncBr)

All the children of Grades 1, 2 and 3 were Octobrists. (Smith E., 114)

The suffix «**-ite**» is regularly used to form xenonyms with the meaning «adherent: follower» – Muscovite, Trotskyite, Brezhnevite (EncBr), sometimes parallel to the suffix «**-ist**». Thus the author of the book *Black Earth* prefers the xenonym Trotskyist (Meier 2004: 2007), although the more familiar variant is Trotskyite:

[Bukharin] was secretly arrested in January 1937 and was expelled from the Communist Party for being a “Trotskyite.” (EncBr)

The suffixes “-ize” and “-ization” are most productive too:

-ize: Leninized Russia (Nabokov Pnin 375) <> Muscovitize (Figs 201) <>

-ization: collectivization (EncBr) <> ‘Chechenization’ (Jack 121) <>

The Russian idionym «славянофил» has two versions in English. One xenonym is formed by means of the suffix “-phile” – “Slavophile”, while the other variants is a slightly Russified version of it: “Slavophil”, cf.:

The celebrated controversy between Slavophiles and “Westernizers” in the 1840s is but one episode in a long struggle. (Billington, x)

Counter to these traditions ran the ideas of the ‘Slavophils’ ... (CamEnc 1982: 100)

Naturally < prefixes are also used. In the article “Czars” it is the prefix “anti-”: “anti-czarist”. More examples:

cis-: Cisbaikalia (EncBr)

de- de-Stalinization (EncBr) <>

dekulakization (EncBr) <>

It is worth while noticing that in the last case we have a combined affixation – **dekulakization**, and affixes are attached to the root borrowed from Russian:

At the end of 1929 a campaign to “liquidate the kulaks as a class” (“**dekulakization**”) was launched by the government. (EncBr)

The combining form “**pseudo-**” is rarely used: we have only one example – **Pseudodemetrius** (the more usual version is “False Dmitry”):

He came from Poland (the first Pseudodemetrius, 1605-06). (Wittram, jn: DR)

The prefix “**trans-**” is used to form Russian place names: Trans-Caucasian <> Trans-Dnestrian <> Trans-Siberian (EncBr)

“Sophisticated” formations are mostly used stylistically, but they also imitate native models:

It had taken a very **un-glasnost-like** 18 days to admit ... (Kokker, 17)

... the **Chekist-in-Chief** tossed the Bushists a lifeline ... (*SPb Times* 29.06.2004)

Sometimes affixation is combined with descriptive xenonyms:

In the Soviet Union it is possible to buy a *pel'mennitsa*, a **pel'meni-maker**. (Craig, 56)

Russian morphemes are sometimes used stylistically to form hybrid neologisms. Obviously the authors consider such neologisms impressive because they include such formations into the titles of their books:

Marshall I. Goldman. *Petrostate: Putin, Power, and the New Russia*, Oxford University Press, May 2008.

Hollingsworth M., Lansley St. *Londongrad. From Russia With Cash. The Inside Story of the Oligarchs*, 2009.

Blends are also, although sparingly, used in Russian-Culture-Oriented English. Thus numerous airlines which multiplied after the disintegration of the Soviet Union were (and still are) jokingly referred to as “babyflots” where the morpheme “-flot” is taken from the familiar xenonym of the Soviet period “Aeroflot”:

... a bunch of smaller regional airlines (often called “babyflots”) ... (Fodor 2002, xiii) <> also: Meier, 238 <>

The Wikipedia encyclopedia has combined two words – “*siloviki*” and “oligarchs”, the result is “**silogarchs**” (Wikipedia Putinism).

Writers are very inventive in this verbal game:

[Cherney was asked] whether Russia was closer to ‘Capitalism or KGBtalism?’ (Hollingsworth & Lansley, 320)

Borrowing Russian affixes.

Languages seldom borrow affixes. Even when some affix already appears in several xenonyms and becomes noticeable:

-ik: There were four of us in the rattling Soviet Army jeep, known endearingly as a UAZik, pronounced *wahzik*, in the common parlance. (Meier, 57)

Authors frequently feel necessity to borrow the suffix «-ЩИНА»:

The period from 1946 until the death of Stalin in 1953 was one of severe repression known as the *zhdanovshchina*, or Zhdanovism. (EncBr)

The Russian suffix is immediately supported by the familiar “-ism” because this Russian suffix is unknown to the wider readership and needs explanation:

The influence of Zhdanov was so dominant that the post-war period became known as the *Zhdanovshchina* (‘Zhdanov’s reign’). (Figs 503)

However, this Russian suffix is so full of cultural connotations, that authors frequently resort to borrowing:

[Biron] exercised extraordinary influence over Russian affairs during a period that became known as Bironovshchina. (EncBr)

When terror was loose, even the victims tended to speak of it as the creation of an underling: *Yezhovshchina* in the thirties, *Zhdanovshchina* in the forties. (Billington, 542)

It would have been inappropriate, for instance, to anglicize the title of M. Mussorgsky’s opera, so the title is traditionally borrowed:

Left very much alone, Mussorgsky began to drink to excess, although the composition of the opera *Khovanshchina* perhaps offered some distraction (left unfinished at his death, this opera was completed by Rimsky-Korsakov). (EncBr)

However, one Russian suffix has entered the club of English affixes, it is the suffix “-nik”. It first entered English through Yiddish in the middle of the 20th century (OED 1945), was not particularly productive and formed the words with the meaning similar to its Russian relation. These

words usually belonged to slang, for instance “noodnik”, “no-goodnik”:

He falls in love with Rachael, a girl of Polish descent, but accept such a no-goodnik as a chaussen (son-in-law) her father will not. (V. Dognam, *Morning Star*, 28.10.1974).

The situation changed in October 1957 when the launch of Sputnik 1 shocked the West. The fact that the English language had the exact counterpart, “satellite”, was overlooked, the Russian word was borrowed and used even as a verb (Kabakchi 1985, 1990).

As the world was in the midst of the Cold War and everything coming from the Soviet Union was considered by the official Western ideology negatively, the suffix was used to create new words describing a person who rejects the mores of established society, the most famous word being “beatnik”, but also “peacenik”, “vietnik” and some others. However, later on, particularly after the fall of the USSR, this meaning became archaic, but the original meaning of the Russian suffix is evident in such words as “refusenik”, “computernik” and others (Algeo 1992), cf.:

The boy was probably a Komsomolnik. (*Soviet Studies*, 1983, No.4, p.521).

You can also find this suffix in contemporary texts:

FSBniks (former KGBniks) were summoned to the scene to disarm the device. (Mike McCoy, *SPbPress* 06-13.06.1995)

However, John Algeo is right stating that the suffix is still full of life, as it follows from the title of his article:

Unlike their peacenik parents, today’s college students are expressing a patriotism ... (*Christian Science Monitor World* 03-09.12.2001)

Yuri was no Greenpeacenik.

(Meier, 279)

The Russian suffix “-ski/-sky” stands somewhat apart. It would be wrong to state that this suffix is used to form really English words. However, it is not infrequently used to form Russian-Culture-Oriented neologisms used stylistically:

Kicking **buttski**. Making you **laughski**. The Academy is **backski!**

(*Newsweek*, 21.05.2001)

All these words are united by two characteristics. They are mostly used within the domain of Russian culture and they have negative meaning or at least negative connotation. Incidentally, words formed by means of that suffix are registered by dictionaries:

butt.in.sky also **butt.in.ski** *n, pl* **-skies** [*butt in* + *-sky, -ski* (last element in Slavic surnames)] (1902): a person given to butting in: a troublesome meddler <**butt**: to hit or push against something or someone with your head (WNCD9).

The dictionary explains that this suffix is «the last element in many Slavic names» and supplies the date of registering of this word: the beginning of the 20th century. The interpretation of this suffix is evident from lexicographic comments on the word “Russkii”. While the WNCD9 simply states the existence of the word **Russki**, variously spelt, in the sense “a native or inhabitant of Russia” and supplying the date of registration – 1858, while the WNW4 states that its meaning is “Mild term of contempt, esp. formerly”, the OED (**Russki**) states in a straightforward way: “often *offensive* a Russian or Soviet [‘Russian’ after Russian surnames ending in –SKI]” <>.

This suffix so far is an integral part of the negative stereotype of Russian culture in the official English speaking world. It is also a marker of Russianness.

Therefore the appearance of this loan in the text usually marks the author's stereotypically negative attitude towards the nation:

It is a magnificently emetic account of the lifestyles of the **Russki** oligarchs ... (*Sunday Times*, review by Rod Liddle, July 26, 2009) <>

The word, however, becomes ambiguous, because those who treat Russian culture positively borrow the word in its original neutral meaning, synonymous to the word "Russian". This is definitely the case taken from Russia's English language newspaper of expatriates *The St. Petersburg Time* (not to be confused with Florida's St. Petersburg):

Last week, MuzTV started a show called "Top Model po-**Russki**..." (*SPbTimes* 13.04.2011)

For some reasons native speakers of English think that it is enough to attach this suffix to any word to make it "Russian":

Abramovich's purchase of Chelsea – promptly nicknamed 'Chelski' ... (Hollingsworth & Lansley, 125)

It seems that this practice is amusing both for the inventors of such words and for the readers, because examples abound. When at the end of the Soviet Union the Communists in the elections failed, an American newspaper (*Des Moines Register*, 06.04.1989) published a cartoon which showed the newspaper *Pravda* with the headline "UPSETSKY".

The *Time* magazine published an article (28.05.1990) devoted to religion in the Soviet Union under the title «ADAM AND EVESKY».

In another item the newspaper *The St. Petersburg Time* generously supplies its description of a noisy party of expatriates with "-sky" words:

... all horsing around the foyer of one of the city [St Petersburg] hotels,

yelling "Fabsky" and "Goodsky."
(*SPbTimes* 26.04.1996)

Rod Liddle, the reviewer of the book *Londongrad* makes his straightforward hatred of Russian oligarchs in London both by the very title of the book "Londongrad") and particularly by the "-sky" words:

There's bling, you see, and then there's blingski – which is a different, more elevated beast altogether. [...] And the yachts, each more outrageous and blingski than the last. (*The Sunday Times* 26.07.2009)

Undoubtedly, the word **bling (bling bling)** itself is negative enough in its meaning: «expensive objects such as jewellery that are worn in a way that is very easy to notice» [LDCE]. By attaching to the word 'bling' the suffix "-sky" the author indicates that here is tastelessness "in the Russian ("Russki") way.

The Cold War era inevitably influenced the development of Russian-Culture-Oriented English. The negative attitude to Bolshevism created a verbal derivative, 'Bolshie':

Bolshie (also **bolshy**) *British English informal* tending to be angry or annoyed and not to obey people <>
bolshiness *noun* (Longman)

Nadtsat

The novel *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) by Anthony Burgess (1917 – 1993) was a curious literary experience of word creation and had become the apotheosis of linguistic Cold War. A polyglot linguist, Anthony Burgess, invented for his novel a Russian-based argot used by the teenagers. The roots of the dialect are obvious (for Russians, anyway) from its name – Nadtsat', the Russian suffix for numerals from 11 to 19, similar to the English suffix "-teen" (as in 'thirteen'). Similarly, the meaning of the Nadtsat words is transparent for all those familiar with Russian:

droog < baboochka < korova < golova
< malchick < soomka < prestoopnick <
rooka < litso < malenky.

The function of the argot Nadtsat in the book is best described by one of the characters, the doctor who examined the phenomenon of the criminals: «most of the roots are Slav propaganda». The author's attitude towards the argot is particularly evident in the word "horrowshow" which is supposed to mean (A. Burgess supplies a 'dictionary' of the dialect) *khorosho* ('good').

Conclusion

Foreign-Culture-Oriented English develops depending on the intensity of the intercultural contact. Russian-Culture-Oriented English develops noticeably. Xenonyms of Russian culture come and go. Some get naturalized and acquire new meanings. This process needs constant monitoring and attention of linguists at the time when Russian culture needs English as the communicative second string to reach a wide readership.

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Abbreviations

- CamEnc – *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Russia*
- DR – Кабакчи В.В. *The Dictionary of Russia*
- EncBr – *Encyclopædia Britannica*
- FCO – Foreign-Culture-Oriented
- ILCology – 'interlinguoculturology'
- LDCE – *Longman Dictionary ...*
- OED – *Oxford English Dictionary*
- RCO – Russian-Culture-Oriented
- SPb – St. Petersburg.
- SPbIYP – *St. Petersburg*. In Your Pocket.
- WNCD9 – *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*

Формирование лексики английского языка, ориентированного на русскую культуру

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Формирование «английского языка межкультурного общения» (АЯМО) неизменно приводит к формированию специализированной разновидности этого языка со специальной лексикой. Это «ксенонимы», т.е. наименования специфических элементов иноязычных культур. В случае АЯМО, ориентированного на русскую культуру, формируется слой ксенонимов-русизмов, которые могут принимать английские аффиксы, образуя необходимые производные слова. В редких случаях заимствуются русские аффиксы (-НИК; -СКИЙ).

Ключевые слова: функциональный дуализм, интерлингвокультурология, культуронимы, идиокультуронимы: идионимы и ксенонимы.
