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ENGLISHIZATION OF RUSSIAN AND BILINGUAL LEXICAL VARIATION

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This paper aims to show that due to the increase in mass English-Russian bilingualism the notion of lexical variation generated by Englishization should not be restricted to the traditionally studied opposition of English loanwords vs. their host language equivalents, but should be broadened to embrace a wider range of Englishized lexical units. This will include borrowings from English, recurrent English-Russian code-switches, and a number of intermediate phenomena between them. This paper argues that there is a tendency for different Englishized lexis expressing the same denotational semantics not to be ousted in the process of assimilation, but rather to be settled in a series of variants which index different contextual information and render different socio-pragmatic connotations, especially in written discourse in various domains. Bilingual lexical variation, one of the most visible trends in modern Russian, testifies to the increase in its Englishization, facilitates the process of further Englishization, and contributes to the formation of Russian English.

Key words: language contact, borrowing, code-switching, lexical variation, bilingualism, biscriptalism / digraphia, World Englishes, Russian English

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INTRODUCTION

According to the World Englishes theory[3], by the turn of the 21st century, Russia was considered to have joined the Expanding Circle of English, though it is described as being on the remote periphery of the Expanding Circle continuum due to a restricted range of functions, international mostly (Proshina 2007: 80). Intra-nationally, English is notable mainly in an instrumental function in the sphere of education, being the primary foreign language taught as a subject at all levels. The lesser functional spread of English in Russia than in many other Expanding Circle countries is explained by a number of socio-historical, socio-cultural, and linguistic factors: a shorter period of intensive English-Russian contact, a weaker (though gradually growing) economic, cultural, and political cooperation with the global English-speaking community, traditional "linguistic resistance" toward the spread of foreign languages because of the importance of the national language and national literature for the building of the Russian nation, and the use of a different script (Cyrillic) (Ustinova 2011: 69).

However, the majority of linguists agree that the present-day linguistic situation in Russia is to a large extent influenced by the intensifying contact of Russian with global English. The Englishization of Russian is seen as one of the leading trends in a range of drastic linguistic changes caused by the complete overhaul of social, political, and economic life of the country after *perestroika* in the late 1980s and early 1990s. A number of book-length research projects (Kazkenova 2013; Krongauz 2009, 2013; Krysin 2000; Kuz'mina and Abrosimova 2013; Levontina 2010; Marinova 2008, 2013; Shaposhnikov 2010; Valgina 2003; Zemskaia 2000; Yudina 2010) and numerous articles highlight the major influences of English on Russian, such as contact-induced lexical innovations (borrowings, semantic calques, translation loans, hybrid words, etc.), grammatical and pragmatic changes, innovations in non-verbal communication, and others. English-Russian code-switching and code-mixing have received less attention so far and deal mainly with the domains which entail extensive interaction with English-language sources: the speech patterns of Russian teachers and students of English (Chirsheva 2008; Sichyova 2005), advertising in Russia (Ustinova and Bhatia 2005; Proshina and Ustinova 2012), modern Russian music industry, including pop- and rock-music (Eddy 2008), fashion and "glossy" magazine publishing (Isaeva 2010), some aspects of business discourse (Isakova 2005), and others.[4] It is essential that because of the narrow range of intra-national functioning of English in Russia, fully-fledged, balanced and productive English-Russian bilingualism, in spite of its exponential growth, remains largely an individual or

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[3] On the World Englishes theory, see (Bolton 2006; Kirkpatrick 2010; Proshina 2007).
[4] For an overview, see (Eddy 2007).

group phenomenon. The overwhelming majority of the population makes what can be treated as a periphery of bilingualism (Rivlina 2013): their proficiency in English is limited by the basics of English learnt at school and university, combined with the odds and ends acquired through extensive Internet use, exposure to English-language popular culture products and international advertising, and the code-switched speech of other bilinguals. The present-day English-Russian bilingualism of the majority of Russian citizens can be defined as "minimal", "passive", "incipient" (Li Wei 2001: 6-7), and often "truncated", that is, organized topically, on the basis of separate activities (Higgins 2009: 15). It is in this minimal form that English-Russian bilingualism has become a mass societal phenomenon in Russia.

English embedded into Russian-based communication beyond the speech of competent English-Russian bilinguals or the well-documented domains, such as advertising or computer-mediated communication, does not often make a topic of independent study in Russia. It is usually covered in various research dealing with the so-called "active processes" in Russian (Valgina 2003; Kuz'mina and Abrosimova 2013), with speech standards, including the issues of "language purity" (Gudkov and Skorokhodova 2010; Krongauz 2009; Levontina 2010; Yudina 2010), or with the theory of borrowing (Kazkenova 2013; Marinova 2008, 2013). In addition to the various types of English-Russian code alteration (code-switching, code-mixing, and borrowing) mentioned above, these publications provide examples of a relatively new contact-induced phenomenon defined as "graphic instability and variation" (Kuz'mina and Abrosimova 2013: 147, 151; Marinova 2013: 46-47), that is, the practice of intermittent use of English words and their Russian transliterations/borrowings, or rather, of Roman or Cyrillic graphic forms[5] for some lexical units, such as *VIP* and *вип* (pronounced as [vip]), or *bar* and *бар* ([bar]). Researchers maintain that this practice is on the increase in Russian in different domains and has become one of the most visible trends in the Englishization of Russian today. Tentatively, this practice can be treated as bilingual lexical variation.

The purpose of this paper is to outline the main features of bilingual lexical variation as one of the latest and most significant tendencies in the interaction of English and Russian and to suggest its interpretation drawing on some of the recent developments in sociolinguistics and World Englishes research. We aim (i) to outline different types of English-Russian or Roman-Cyrillic

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[5] It is important to distinguish between scripts and writing systems in the discussion of bilingual written speech, because one script can represent the writing systems of different languages (as, for example, the Roman script represents, with slight variation, the writing systems of English, German, French, etc.). This paper deals with the interaction of the Roman (Latin) and Cyrillic scripts in relation to the English and Russian writing systems.

graphic variation as a regular feature of Russian speakers' repertoire; (ii) to characterize bilingual lexical variation as a paradigmatic phenomenon of bilingual speech in relation to other contact-induced phenomena, such as borrowing, insertion (nonce borrowing), and code-switching; (iii) to define the intermediate status of the lexical units involved in bilingual variation, showing that they are interconnected in a continuum of ambivalent contact-induced phenomena which challenge the borderline between the languages in contact, in our case, between English and Russian; (iv) to provide the interpretation of bilingual lexical variation in respect to some of the latest advances in sociolinguistics and World Englishes research, such as the shift from studying languages and language varieties as separate entities to verbal repertoires, the shift from sociolinguistic study of variation in correlation with broad social categories to the study of variation as a resource in social style construction, and the shift from the primacy of spoken language and conversational bilingualism to the analysis of bilingual written discourse; and (v) to demonstrate that English-Russian graphic variation testifies to the increase in the Englishization of Russian, facilitates the process of its further Englishization and contributes to the formation of Russian English.

DATA

Numerous examples of English-Russian or Roman-Cyrillic graphic instability and variation are provided in the publications mentioned above. The increase in this practice is also supported by our own data which have been collected as part of an on-going investigation into the Englishization of Russian since 2004 from various sources including local advertising, brands and labels, mass media discourse, the "linguistic landscape" (such as the names of shops, or eating facilities), popular culture products, and others. Examples for illustration in this particular paper have been selected mainly from a top-selling Russian newspaper *Komsomol'skaia Pravda* (daily circulation ranging from 700,000 to 3.1 million, according to Wikipedia); some Russian linguistic landscape units have also been used as supporting evidence. The rationale behind this choice is that the primary consumer of the texts in both cases is the average Russian speaker with no special background knowledge of English required.

Drawing on these corpora, several types of lexis involved in Roman-Cyrillic graphic variation can be distinguished. First, quite a number of recent borrowings from English are increasingly used both in their original English/Roman graphic forms alongside their transliterated or transcribed Russian/Cyrillic equivalents, even though some of them have already been registered in Russian dictionaries of borrowed words (Zakharenko et al. 2006). Lists of lexical units co-existing in two graphic forms in Russian discourse are provided by Marinova (2008, 2013),

Kazkenova (2013), and Kuz'mina and Abrosimova (2013). They include the pairs *VIP - вип*, *off-shore - оффшор*, *PR – пиар, know-how – ноу-хау, second-hand - секонд-хэнд, spa – спа* and many others. Some of these lexical units, especially those abbreviated, are also used in their Russian translations, for example, *VIP - вип – очень важная персона* ('a very important person', a calque / a loan translation) or *PR – пиар – паблик рилейшнз* ('public relations', a transcribed phrasal borrowing) – *связи с общественностью* ('public relations', a calque / a loan translation). Below, we illustrate the use of the word *VIP* and its various equivalents in Russian:

1 (a) *За какого мэра проголосовали уральские ВИПы?* (the Komsomol'skaia Pravda, September 8, 2013).
Za kakogo mera progolosovali ural'skie VIPy? / Which mayor did the VIPs from the Urals region vote for?

1 (b) *Детективы подслушивали VIPов* (the Komsomol'skaia Pravda, July 16, 2012).
Detektivy podslushivali *VIP*ov / Detectives wiretapped *VIP*s.

1 (c) *Дело «Оборонсервиса»: возвращение государству vip-дачи позволит лишь скостить срок наказания* (the Komsomol'skaia Pravda, September 2, 2013).
Delo 'Oboronservisa': vozvraschenie gosudarstvu *vip*-dachi pozvolit lish skostit' srok nakazaniia / 'Oboronservis' criminal case: the return of the *VIP*-dacha to the state will only help to slightly shorten the sentence.

1 (d) *Побоище фанатов спровоцировала ВИП-ложа* (the Komsomol'skaia Pravda, September 23, 2013).
Poboische fanatov sprovotsirovala VIP-lozha / The fight of the fans was provoked by the VIP-box.

1 (e) *Одевайтесь, как «очень важная персона»* (the Komsomol'skaia Pravda, January 18, 2007).
Odevaites' kak "ochen' vazhnaia persona" / You should dress like "a very important person".

1 (f) *Когда «импортант персонс» зевают* (the Komsomol'skaia Pravda, September 4, 2008).
Kogda "important persons" zevajut / When "important persons" are yawning.

Similar patterns of use are revealed by various set phrases and quotations, or intertextual references borrowed from English (so-called "phrasal borrowings"). For example, the phrase "[the] show must go on" is regularly used in modern Russian discourse either as an English insertion (a code-switched variant), or transliterated into Russian as *шоу маст гоу он*, or translated as *шоу должно продолжаться*. Compare the following examples:

2 (a) *Все на сцену и в зал. До выборов - месяц. Show must go on* (the Komsomol'skaia Pravda, February 2, 2012).
Vse na stsenu i v zal. Do vyborov – mes'iats. *Show must go on* / Everybody should go to the stage and to the assembly hall. There is only one month left before the elections. The show must go on.

2 (b) *Рано или поздно это все утрясется, конечно, и, надеюсь, благополучно для Филиппа, потому что "шоу маст гоу он"* (the Komsomol'skaia Pravda, December 14, 2010).
Rano ili pozdno vs'o utr'ias'otsia, konechno, i, nad'ejus', blagopoluchno dl'ia Filippa, potomu chto "shou mast gou on / Sooner or later, everything will sort itself out, hopefully, for the best for Phillip (Phillip Kirkorov, Russian pop-signer, notorious for his brawls with the media – A.R.), because "the show must go on".

2 (c) *Директор саратовского цирка повредил позвоночник, упав с праздничной повозки. Но фестиваль "Принцесса цирка" не отменили: шоу должно продолжаться!* (the Komsomol'skaia Pravda, October 28, 2011).

Direktor saratovskogo tsirka povredil pozvonochnik, upav s prazdnichnoi povozki. No festival' ne otmenili: shou dolzhno prodolzht'sia! / The head of the Saratov circus sustained a spine injury after he had fallen off the bandwagon. But the festival "Circus princess" was not cancelled: the show must go on!

Another group of examples of English-Russian graphic variation includes some long established borrowings from English, international words, and cognates (all of them registered in regular dictionaries of Russian), which have recently started to be used in different Russian texts in their original Roman graphic forms, such as *бар - bar, банк - bank, шоу - show, джаз - jazz* and others (Marinova 2008: 65; Marinova 2013: 139). The linguistic mechanism of this contact driven innovation is defined as "back transliteration" (Marinova 2008: 65; Marinova 2013: 139) or graphic "restoration" (Rivlina 2010). Such examples are particularly visible in Russian urban signage and in various event titles. For example:

> 3 (a) *Калифорниmania* / Californi*mania* (the code-mixed name of a promotional campaign in one of the Moscow sushi-bars, though the word *мания* ('mania') has long been borrowed and assimilated by Russian)
>
> 3 (b) *Черный Jazz /* Chornyi *Jazz /* Black Jazz (in the title of the concert given by an American jazz singer this word was used both in Russian, as *джаз,* and in English, *jazz*)

Similar graphic variation is well-documented in various international commercial "-onyms", such as international company names, brands, labels, and product names. The preservation of their original graphic form is justified in Russia, like in many other countries of the world, by the requirements of a registered trademark, and by various socio-pragmatic factors and functions, such as their symbolic, commercial, or decorative functions (Bhatia and Ritchie 2013). Most of them, however, are also regularly used in Russia in their Cyrillic transliterations, making pairs of graphic variants, for example, *Coca-Cola – Кока-Кола, Samsung - Самсунг, Snickers – Сникерс*. Some of them have been registered by the Russian dictionaries of borrowings, such as *Кока-Кола* and *Сникерс* (Zakharenko et al. 2006: 294, 595). Moreover, many Russian companies choose to acquire English names or transliterate their Russian names into English aspiring for international status and prestige symbolized by English or in order to project a double, global and local, identity.[6] This fact has been well-researched in the domain of Russian advertising and business discourse (Proshina and Ustinova 2012). For example:

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[6] It can be argued that the decision to give a company or a shop an English name or a Russian name transliterated into the Roman script is to a certain extent motivated by the need to simplify its further Internet search, since most Internet addresses are in the Roman script anyway. It should be mentioned that Cyrillic Internet addresses were introduced in Russia in 2011 (e.g. http://правительство.рф). How this development will impact the share of English in Russian company names, brands and labels remains to be seen. However, the Russian public has already grown accustomed to the practice of using the Roman script for their Internet activities; besides, as this paper shows, it provides additional means of linguistic variety, so, it probably will not be easily abandoned now.

4 (a) *Incity / Инсити* (a Russian clothes company; the English name of the company is also sometimes used transliterated into Russian)

4 (b) *Isterika! / Истерика!* (a Moscow karaoke-bar; the Russian word, used in its Roman script transliteration, means 'hysterics')

These patterns of double Roman and Cyrillic representation of lexis support and facilitate each other, habituating the Russian public to Roman-Cyrillic graphic variation. What unites all the examples is the fact that they do not fit into the traditional models of borrowing and code-switching, but rather form pairs or larger sets of lexical variants which render the same denotational meanings and interconnect the two languages in contact. This type of lexical variation challenges a number of traditional linguistic and sociolinguistic premises: it blurs the clear-cut distinctions between borrowing and code-switching, between monolingual and bilingual speech, and between the two languages as separate entities. Thus, it needs to be investigated as a specific type of variation, inter-lingual or bilingual lexical variation.

DISCUSSION

Bilingual lexical variation as a linguistic phenomenon

The issues of variation and choice are at the core of many fields of linguistic study, including World Englishes research.[7] Today, many linguists call for a deeper consideration of these issues, emphasizing the fact that linguistic variability is an essential property of language without which it is difficult to gain insight into the structure of language (Van Rooy 2010).

Lexical variation, being a part of this wider topic, is touched upon in lexicology, in general sociolinguistic research, in contact linguistics, in bilingualism/multilingualism studies, in World Englishes theory, and in many other adjacent fields of linguistics. In sociolinguistic variation research, which aims at studying the interplay of linguistic and social factors in terms of sociolinguistic variables and their variants (starting with Labov's variationist approach), the interpretation of phonological variables is traditionally the primary focus of investigation; however, the social meanings of lexical variation are increasingly involved into it (Eckert 2008). Contact linguistics and bi-/multilingualism studies investigate variation connected with the choice of code, such as the choice made by bilinguals in the use of code-switching/code-mixing, borrowings, and other contact phenomena. Important for the investigation of bilingual lexical variation is the idea that bilinguals, depending on a whole range of contextual circumstances, may resort to a bilingual mode and code-switch, or they may choose to remain in a monolingual mode (Grosjean 2001; Li

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[7] See the discussion of the concepts of variety and variation in relation to World Englishes in Bolton (2006).

Wei 2013: 37). Psycholinguistic studies show that even when bilinguals speak one of the languages, there is evidence of the parallel activity of both languages in their minds and "it is virtually impossible for bilinguals to ignore the language not in use" (Kroll and Dussias 2013: 218). That is why, when it comes to the cases of "lexical sharing" between the two languages (Muysken 2000: 69), such as borrowings, international terms, or cognates, these lexical units "remain available for code-switching" (Angermeyer 2005: 514). In other words, bilingual speakers are able to choose between borrowing and code-switching. Therefore, the boundaries between code alternation and borrowing, or between monolingual and bilingual speech remain variable.

In World Englishes research, lexical variability is highlighted primarily in connection with the investigation of regional variation in English as a result of its localization and indigenization. New lexis - borrowed from local languages, as well as phonetical, orthographic, grammatical and semantic deviations of original English lexical units - are studied as an inventory of features on the basis of which, among other innovations, new varieties of English are established and variation between different varieties is described. Halliday points out that, when regarding lexical innovations and variations, it is crucial not to restrict their description by lists of new words, but to pay attention to the paradigmatic aspects of vocabulary arrangement - to new word-making principles, new word clusters (lexical sets), new meanings, and new registers (functional varieties) (Halliday 2006: 353). The investigation of bilingual lexical variation may be very fruitful in this avenue of inquiry.

In traditional lexicology, where lexical variation is studied most profoundly as a phenomenon of lexical paradigmatics, it is treated either in a narrow way or in a broad way. In the narrow treatment of the term, lexical variation is seen as a phenomenon distinct from synonymy, when one lexical unit is realized by different phonetic, orthographic, or grammatical variants (Valgina 2003: 26-40). For example, when the word 'often' is pronounced as either [`ɒfn] or [`ɒftən], it is usually defined as "free variation". Regional variation in English may be illustrated by the word 'tomato' pronounced as either [tə`mɑːtəʊ] or [tə`meitoʊ], or by orthographic variation in the pair 'centre' and 'center'. In the broader understanding, synonymy is included into lexical variation. Lexical variation in its wider interpretation embraces different types of choice between lexical alternatives, determined by various semantic (semasiological and onomaseological), formal, or contextual factors, the latter involving speaker-related and situation-related differences, including stylistic, social, or regional variation in lexis as, for example, in the pair 'pants' and 'trousers' (Geeraets et al. 1994: 1-7). Borrowings are covered in lexical variation research in that they are often synonymous or near-synonymous (semi-synonymous) with the vernacular lexical items (Zenner et al. 2010). For example, in Russian, the word *имидж,* 'image', borrowed from English, is

semantically close to Russian *образ, obraz*, but is used to denote image in official and business contexts, especially where the intentional formation of the opinion is implied, as in *имидж политика*, 'the image of a politician', while *obraz* is used in more intimate contexts (Krysin 2000: 150), as in *образ Татьяны в романе* "*Евгений Онегин*", 'the image (obraz) of Tatyana in the novel "Evgenii Onegin"'.

The data presented above indicates that the concept of lexical variation can be broadened to embrace a wider range of Englishized lexical units regularly used in the host language discourse. In English-Russian lexical variation, such lexical sets include, on the one hand, translation loans and borrowings proper which belong to the host Russian language, such as *очень важная персона* in 1c, *шоу должно продолжаться* in 2c, or *ВИПы* in 1a (the word *ВИП* is fully assimilated and used in this example in the Russian plural form); on the other hand, they include code-switches proper, the examples of the source/English language embedded into the host/Russian language texts, such as 'show must go on' in 2a. In addition, there is a variety of contact-generated near/semi-synonymous lexical variants of intermediate status, which blur the boundaries between code-switching and borrowing and which form a continuum of intermediate phenomena between the two poles. These include the following:

- code-mixes and lexical hybrids, such as *vip-дача* in 1b, *Калифорнитапiа* in 3a, or the form *VIPов* in 1b, where the Russian plural genitive inflexion is attached to the English abbreviation *VIP* (this form challenges in a certain way the idea of "the free morpheme constraint" developed in contact linguistics, according to which codes may be switched after any constituent provided that constituent is not a bound morpheme (McCormick 2001, 452));

- insertions, or "insertional code-switches", also treated in Russian linguistics in terms of "barbarisms" ("alien" lexical units, which do not belong to the host/Russian language, according to Marinova (2013: 38-41)), such as *jazz* in 3b;

- non-borrowing transcriptions and transliterations which are seen in contact linguistics and World Englishes research as "English in non-Roman scripts" (Bhatia and Ritchie 2013: 573), such as *импортант персонс* in 1f, *Инсити* in 4a, and *шоу маст гоу он* in 2b. Or, just the opposite, the examples described as "Russian in the Roman script" can sometimes be defined as "pseudo-English in Roman characters" (Proshina and Ustinova 2012: 43), such as *Isterika* in 4b.[8]

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[8] The practice of utilizing "pseudo-English in Roman characters" appears to be common for the linguistic landscapes in different Expanding Circle countries. Similar cases are quoted by Androutsopoulos when, for example, the choice of the Roman script for a common Greek word meaning 'meat' for a restaurant's name "contextualizes, perhaps not without a certain irony, the restaurant's supposed cosmopolitan character" (Androutsopoulos 2012: 368).

All these lexical units cannot be fully attributed to either the host/Russian language or to the source/English language, but rather form a continuum between the two. Functionally, they provide diversity which can be accounted for stylistically and rhetorically: for example, they help avoid repetition or, due to their novelty and graphic "otherness", function as attention-getters and memory-facilitators, which is defined by Bhatia and Ritchie (2013: 570) as "low level cosmetic effects". Furthermore, being (near-)synonymous with their Russian equivalents and/or fully assimilated borrowings, they often render additional positive connotations generated by the symbolic value of the English language as the marker of globalization, modernization, prestige, technological advancement, and so on (see more on different socio-pragmatic meanings rendered by English in the Outer and Expanding Circle countries in Bhatia and Ritchie (2013)). On the other hand, in the contexts fraught with negative attitudes to the process of globalization, Westernization, and Americanization, Englishized variants can express negative connotations and ironic detachment. The choice between the Russian/Cyrillic and English/Roman graphic variants in these cases is purely emblematic. Interestingly, some linguists claim that lexical units from other varieties may also be used by speakers and writers "innocently" (Auer 2007: 7), without being aware of the lexical differences and being unable "to interpret the lexical variation at hand in social terms" (ibid). In a similar way, the social connotations of lexical variation implied by the writer may be lost on "innocent" readers. It can be argued that in such cases the use of Englishized lexis reveals free variation, unaccounted for by any special contextual or social factors. However, it should be stressed that, as Eckert puts it, though not all variation is consciously controlled and not all variation is socially meaningful, all variation has the potential to take on meaning (Eckert 2005: 30).

Our interpretation of bilingual lexical variation as a phenomenon of bilingual speech in its own right is in stark contrast to the way graphic variation is seen traditionally: graphic variation and instability is treated in the majority of publications as the feature of the initial step in borrowing adaptation, which starts with a nonce borrowing, or a foreign insertion, and is gradually replaced by a transliterated/transcribed or translated Russian equivalent (Kuz'mina and Abrosimova 2013: 101). As the examples show, English/Roman graphic variants of the units involved in bilingual variation do not reveal any tendency to being ousted by their Russian/Cyrillic counterparts; moreover, as shown above, the number of lexical units being used in different graphic variants increases as some long assimilated borrowings "restore" their original graphic forms and develop bilingual pairs following this pattern. The relations between local and foreign variants in bilingual lexical variation sets are not those of competition, but rather those of cooperation, complementarity, or even of "symbiotic interplay" (Haarmann 1989: 226): English is employed here primarily as "a reservoir of

innovation and synonymity" (ibid: 21). It can be argued that bilingual lexical variation increases the pool of features, the repertoire available for the construction of various shades of meaning and social style.

Bilingual lexical variation is most evident in written speech: different subtypes of intermediate contact phenomena outlined above are often indistinguishable in speaking, but in written texts they are distinguished with the help of different scripts, for example, *VIP* and *вип, show must go on* and *шоу маст гоу он* (in speaking, the choice is made between insertions or borrowings, on the one hand, and translation loans, on the other hand, as in *show must go on / шоу маст гоу он* and *шоу должно продолжаться*). The spread of English-Russian graphic instability and variation can be accounted for by the fact that English in Russia is acquired primarily through the formal system of education: though not many Russians actually speak English, practically all of them are familiar with the English alphabet. In other words, though not many Russians are proficient bilinguals, almost all of them are "biscriptals" (Bassetti 2013: 652) - they know both Russian and English writing systems represented by Cyrillic and Roman scripts. One more factor that promotes mass biscriptal knowledge in Russia, like in many other Expanding Circle countries, is the need to use the Roman script in computer-mediated forms of communication when keyboards with local scripts are unavailable (the role of insufficient access to Cyrillic keyboards in the 1980s-1990s in the emergence of practical Russian-English transliteration and the development of Rus(s)lish/Ru(n)glish is investigated in Ivleva (2005)). Mass biscriptalism in Russia has led to what is known as the situation of "digraphia", the idea developed by an analogy with "diglossia" to denote the use of multiple writing systems within the same speech community (Dale 1980; Grivelet 2001; Androutsopoulos 2012). Angermeyer (2005: 495) argues that the analogy can be extended to distinguish between "digraphia with bilingualism" and "digraphia without bilingualism" (cf.: "diglossia with bilingualism" and "diglossia without bilingualism"). He analyzes "digraphia with bilingualism" in Russian immigrants in the US. In Russia today, mass biscriptalism and well-honed skills of practical transliteration, especially through what Androutsopoulos (2012: 226-227) defines as "computer-mediated digraphia", have led to wide-spread Roman-Cyrillic "digraphia without bilingualism": variation in graphic representation, as in the examples above, helps Russian speakers perceive and express subtle semantic and socio-pragmatic nuances, or just employ the Roman script for the sake of "low-level cosmetic effects" without actually being able to speak English.

Thus, the notion of bilingual variation dilutes the distinction between code-switching as a contact phenomenon of bilingual speech and borrowing as a contact phenomenon of monolingual

speech. Being part of practically every Russian speaker's repertoire, variable lingual units bridge the two languages in contact.

Bilingual lexical variation in view of theoretical developments in sociolinguistics and World Englishes research

The suggested approach to English-Russian graphic instability and variation as a separate linguistic phenomenon, namely, bilingual lexical variation, is substantiated by the general shift in modern sociolinguistic studies from studying languages as isolated, autonomous, and enumerable entities to the study of verbal repertoires of speakers and speech communities. Today, many linguists claim that the categories such as "languages", "varieties", and "dialects" present an idealized construct, a product of the 18th century European political philosophy. They point out that the analysis of actual speech practice in the multilingual world challenges the clear-cut boundaries between languages and language varieties (Blommaert 2013; D'Angelo 2013; Pennycook 2007; Seargeant and Tagg 2011). In World Englishes research, many scholars turn to what they define as a "post-varieties approach": Seargeant and Tagg (2011: 511) state that "a conceptual methodology which focuses from the outset on the diverse semiotic resources employed, and examines the ways the various features respond to specific contextual influences, offers an opportunity for a more nuanced understanding of the ways in which the spread of English manifests itself […] in the era of globalization". In other words, the research focus is shifting today 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). This approach is of particular importance for the Expanding Circle countries. D'Angelo in his comment on the on-going debate about the existence of Japanese English maintains that "it is fitting at this time to *refocus* the discussion, and document/describe the domains where English is of the most value and most frequent use for Japan today. We do not need to argue for the legitimacy of Japanese English in order to claim ownership of English and the right to use it to promote our opinions" (D'Angelo 2013: 117-118). As another advocate of this approach, Blommaert says, "people do not use 'Languages', they use *resources* for communication" (2013: 3). This theoretical shift provides the framework for the investigation of bilingual variation. It helps explain how "people all over the world blend English with local languages, without being capable of having an extended English-only conversation" and how their "'mixed' speech appears to be subject to precisely the same sociolinguistic variation as speech in 'one' language" (ibid).

These changes in the globalization of English and World Englishes research parallel the process of theoretical reorientation taking place in modern sociolinguistic variationist theory. Penelope Eckert terms it the "third wave" in variation studies: she argues that the studies which started with establishing broad correlations between linguistic variables and the given, external primary social categories of socioeconomic class, gender, and age (the "first wave) and later gave rise to ethnographic studies of more locally-defined populations (the "second wave"), today shift the focus of investigation "on variation not as a reflection of social place, but as a resource for the construction of social meaning" (Eckert 2005: 1). According to Eckert, "the meaning of variation lies in its role in the construction of styles" (ibid: 24), which makes an integral part of the social meaning construction. How English-Russian lexical variation contributes to the development of stylistic practices in Englishized Russian discourse in different domains is beyond the scope of this paper and needs to be studied in the future. However, its stylistic and rhetorical value in the construction of social meanings and social personae is undeniable and it moves the research interest from establishing the linguistic and sociolinguistic grounds for variation in bilingual speech (based on the oppositions of code-switching vs. borrowing, bilinguals vs. monolinguals, English vs. Russian) to studying bilingual lexical variation, embracing code-switching, borrowings and various phenomena in-between them as stylistic options.

One more theoretical shift pushing the study of bilingual lexical variation to the forefront of English in the Expanding Circle research is the growing interest and drastic increase in written discourse analysis in the investigation of the relationships between language variation and society (Androutsopoulos 2012; Bassetti 2013; Sebba 2009, 2011, 2012; Sebba et al. 2012). Until not long ago, most of the work on sociolinguistic variation, bilingualism/multilingualism, and code-switching focused on spoken language, "in keeping with a long-standing tradition in linguistics which privileges spoken language over written as an object of study, especially when it comes to the study of language in its social context" (Sebba 2012: 1). Recent publications on what is seen by many linguists as a distinct field of sociolinguistic research, "sociolinguistics of writing systems", demonstrate that since none of the models of multilingual speech were developed originally to deal with written texts, it is sometimes difficult to apply them to a written modality and to establish whether the basic notions developed for the analysis of spoken multiligualism, such as "code-switching", "refer to the same phenomena, or slightly different phenomena, or completely different phenomena" (ibid). The need to develop a "sociolinguistics of written multilingualism" (for example, by consistently distinguishing between bilingualism and biscriptalism/digraphia, between code-switching and script-switching, and so on) is of particular importance to the Expanding Circle

countries, where most of the interaction between English and local languages takes place in written texts. Undoubtedly, "[w]riting systems are potent symbols of the languages they encode, to the extent that, in the public mind, a language and its writing system are often the same thing" (Sebba 2009: 39). Therefore, the potential for variation through script choice calls for an in-depth investigation of "writing systems as social practice: a recurrent activity involving meaningful choices" (ibid). The interpretation of the growing practice of English-Russian bilingual lexical variation provided in this paper substantiates this conception.

Bilingual lexical variation and the change in the status of English in Russia

In Russia, linguists and ordinary speakers argue about the existence of Russian English(es) and attitudes to what is defined as Russian English, Russia English, Russianized English, Rus(s)lish, and Ru(n)glish are controversial and negative for the most part.[9] The sociolinguistic history and basic structural properties of Russian English(es) in the acrolectal, mesolectal and basilectal varieties are outlined in Davydova (2012: 375-381) and Proshina (2007: 80-82, 85-87; 2010: 299-308).

Whether one admits the existence of Russian English or rejects it, numerous examples of English-Russian graphic instability and lexical variation, in addition to many other facts, indicate that the status of English in Russia has changed, like in other Expanding Circle countries. It is no longer perceived by its local users as merely a foreign language to be learnt in the formal context of education and to be used primarily for international communication. As Kirkpatrick puts it, "English is now more than simply a 'foreign' language" (2010: 4). Some linguists even define its unique new status as a "non-foreign language" (Gorter 2006: 81).

Bilingual lexical variation as a relatively new tendency in Russian discourse helps expose a number of important new sociolinguistic realities in Russia pertaining to the status of English. Firstly, the scope of English-Russian bilingual variation indicates the increase in mass English-Russian bilingualism, even if it is often restricted to "biscriptalism" and "digraphia". It has to be admitted that, due to the "minimal" character of mass English-Russian bilingualism, the interchangeable use of English is in most cases confined to a limited range of vocabulary shared by English and Russian and easily recognizable in both, Cyrillic and Roman, scripts - cognates, international terms, and borrowings from English. In other words, for the majority of Russian speakers, bilingual variation has to do with their biscriptal knowledge and with their practical skills

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[9] For an overview of the Russian English debate see Proshina (2007: 82-85; 2010: 310-31) or Ustinova (2011).

of Russian-English and English-Russian transliteration, rather than with their actual bilingual knowledge. Nevertheless, regular use of the English/Roman variants of borrowings, international terms, and cognates in Russian-based communication testifies to "a critical mass of learners and users" (Berns 2005: 85): it would be impossible without a sufficient number of writers and readers able to use, understand, and, what is more important, appreciate the nuances of the vocabulary units employed in different graphic variants. Moreover, as English/Roman variants of borrowings, international terms, and cognates are increasingly embedded into Russian discourse, Russians are habituated to English as part of their daily verbal environment and English-Russian bilingualism is sustained and further promoted. As mentioned above, due to their novelty and formal markedness, or "otherness" against the Cyrillic background, the Roman forms serve as attention-getters and memory-facilitators and, at the same time, as the "visual symbols" of globalization, Westernization, Americanization, and so on. Thus, they render various additional connotations and provide stylistic variety, especially in the communicative spheres where there is a need to attract the attention of the audience: in popular fiction and non-fiction literature titles, magazine and newspaper headlines, radio and TV show titles, music groups and individual entertainers names, Russian company names, brands, product labels, various components of Russian "linguistic cityscape" such as shop and restaurant names, the advertising of Russian products and services, and others. In these domains, English/Roman variants, even if they were not widely known before, easily catch on and are then regularly reproduced, increasing the Englishization of Russian. Therefore, English is not only learnt as a foreign language in formal settings in the classroom, it is also acquired through exposure, a process similar to the natural patterns of language acquisition in native speakers.

Finally, it should be emphasized that English variants used interchangeably with their Russian counterparts undergo the process of adaptation and localization (nativization, indigenization, Russianization) in the Russian environment, which often makes them different from their English proper prototypes. For example, the compound *VIP/vip/вип-персона* ('VIP-person') widely used in modern Russian discourse (as registered in Kuz'mina and Abrosimova 2013: 151), indicates that the semantic component 'person' is to a certain degree obliterated in the lexical unit *VIP/vip/вип*, which in its attributive function means just 'very important'. The phrase "show must go on" is also transformed formally and semantically when used in its English or English-transliterated-into-Russian variants in Russian discourse. Unless it is used as a direct reference to the title of the song performed by the late singer Freddie Mercury ("Queen") *"The show must go on"* (the source from which the phrase entered Russian initially), this phrase typically renders strong derogatory connotations when speaking about show-biz personalities, politicians or other public figures, as in

2a or 2b. As for the formal deviation from its English prototype, the article is invariably missing in this phrase both in its insertional/code-switched Roman variant and in its transliterated Cyrillic variant. This can be accounted for by the influence of Russian as a non-article type of language.

Overall, though the existence of Russian English, even as a performance variety is still disputed by many in Russia, it can be argued that the scope and frequency of English-Russian bilingual variation attest to the initial stages of its formation. Further analysis of Roman-Cyrillic graphic instability and variation can help raise awareness of Russian English and remedy the negative attitudes to it among Russian linguists and ordinary speakers. Russia has established its position in the Expanding Circle of world Englishes and even if English remains restricted in its intra-national functioning in Russia and is not developing into a new institutionalized regional variety, English-Russian lexical variation is probably here to stay as an important linguistic asset.

CONCLUSION

In the World Englishes paradigm today, there is a strong urge to make a more complete theory of World Englishes by bolstering the Expanding Circle research and developing its own agenda (Berns 2005; D'Angelo 2013). This paper has demonstrated that some of the most significant innovations in the use of English in Russia today take place in-between the two languages the speakers employ, with a growing volume of shared lexis used interchangeably in their English and Russian, or rather, Roman and Cyrillic graphic variants. This type of interaction of Russian and English represented in written speech by Roman-Cyrillic graphic instability and variation creates bilingual sets of vocabulary units expressing similar meanings and interconnecting the two languages. The Englishized variants in such bilingual lexical series are used interchangeably with their Russian equivalents in Russian-based discourse and they are resorted to primarily as an additional stylistic and socio-pragmatic resource for communication. This tendency seen as bilingual lexical variation is generated by mass English-Russian/Roman-Cyrillic biscriptalism and skills of practical English-Russian transliteration, starting in the formal setting of English language classrooms and promoted further by computer-mediated communication, popular culture, linguistic landscapes, and other domains where the spread of English is most evident. In other words, in Russia today, English-Russian digraphia allows practically every Russian speaker to perceive and to render certain stylistic and socio-pragmatic nuances through Roman-Cyrillic variation. The tendency for English-Russian lexical variation as a distinct contact-induced linguistic phenomenon needs to be recognized and researched deeper to better account for the ways in which English is appropriated in Russia and in other Expanding Circle countries.

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