Language variation in the advertising discourse: a cross-cultural approach

Elena A. Shamina – Elvira I. Myachinskaya – Yulia V. Ryabukhina

DOI: 10.18355/XL.2018.11.02.34

Abstract

The paper presents the discussion of two types of language variation observed in the Russian and English advertising discourse. The material for the study is taken from open media sources of different kinds and some of the observations are verified with the help of sociolinguistic experimental methods. The Russian advertising discourse is claimed to be undergoing creolization, or mixing with elements from foreign language systems it is in contact with on the world market arena. The process of creolization involves all the linguistic levels, from lexis and graphics to pronunciation and grammar and on the whole is positively assessed by native speakers of Russian. The English (British) advertising discourse is shown to avoid language mixing, but to rely instead on the regional and social variation of English and to make use of non-standard language forms, especially in the pronunciation domain. Certain sociolinguistic factors are offered as an explanation of the differences in the use of language variation in advertising in the cultures under consideration. It is emphasized that both the multilingual nature of the Russian advertising discourse and the free exploitation of deviant language patterns in the English one encourage creative techniques to be used in the sphere of product and service promotion.

Key words: advertising discourse, foreign language, creolization, regional and social dialects, sociolinguistic situation

Introduction

The advertising discourse, which is a perfect example of a multi-faceted and hierarchically organized linguistic phenomenon, has lately become a subject of intensive research with a number of very different approaches. These are represented by a wide range of research strategies, from the purely pragmatic ones (interesting to specialists in economics and marketology) to the social, psychological and even aesthetic ones (interesting to artists).

As the advertising discourse, in most cases, contains a verbal component, one of the approaches used to study it is the linguistic one. The latter often includes psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic viewpoints. The importance of such in-depth linguistic research is self-evident: at the present stage of the consumer society development, a huge share of media communication (via newspapers and magazines, radio and television, posters and billboards, the Internet) is represented by advertising texts or commercials. It means that every media user is subjected to their impact every single day, the influence being not only economic, but also linguistic. The advertising discourse is extremely rich in conative strategies and creative techniques (Crompton, 2000; Drewniany, Jeweler, 2007; Moriarty, Mitchell, Wells, 2012; Ryabukhina, 2014). So far, linguists have mostly been taking a communicative approach to the subject matter and concentrating on such phenomena as idiomatic imagery, language concepts, gender roles, text structure peculiarities, the use of polymodality and non-verbal components, etc. that abound in this kind of discourse (Ivanova, Moshcheva, 2011; Minaeva, 2002; Pirogova, Parshin, 2000). What, it seems, has escaped their attention is the very old idea of language contact that is well worth looking into in the context of advertising.

Literature Review

In the contemporary conditions of globalization and world-wide economic integration, the production process, as well as the goods distribution and advertising usually involve several producers, sellers, intermediary companies and advertising agencies, who may be based in different countries and work in different languages. Successful advertising techniques, easy-to-remember brand names, slogans and jingles in a particular language are constantly borrowed from one culture into another one.

All this means that the present day globalization and economic cooperation are leading to intensive language contact. In the historical perspective, this has been studied thoroughly and is known to undergo two stages: pidgins and creoles. Pidgins spring up as intermediary ways of communication in the absence of any common code and when bodily gestures are not enough for achieving the communication goals (Belikov, Krysin, 2001; Vinogradov, 1990). The use of a pidgin over a long period of time and the appearance of a group of people who speak it as a native language produce a creole, a language that combines many specific features of the languages in contact (Hancock, 1990; Holm, 2000; Smith, Veenstra, 2008). The language mixing usually results in significant simplification of grammatical paradigms and pronunciation patterns as well as in extensive lexis borrowing, and may bring about some systemic innovations. The process leading to the emergence of a creole is usually called "creolization".

The advertising communication, seen from the point of view of language contact theory, may be shown to have all the prerequisites for creolization to develop. The fact has been recognized by some linguists (Piller, 2003), but there has been no detailed research into the subject yet.

On the other hand, language mixing of some kind in advertising texts have been pointed out and described by a lot of researchers. They emphasize graphic innovations (Ivanova, Moshcheva, 2011; Myachinskaya, 2008) and vocabulary intrusions (Proshina, Ustinova, 2012; Ryabuhina, 2014; Santello, 2015). They also claim that mixed language messages on public display signs play an important role in changing the language landscape of modern cities (Kirilina, 2013). Over some decades there has been a discussion of the social and/or psychological impact the use in the advertising discourse of a foreign language as such or a specific foreign language may have on the recipient (Backhaus, von Doorn, 2007; Haarmann, 1989).

The regular insertion of foreign linguistic components into advertisements that the works mentioned above demonstrate can serve as a ground for the statement that creolization processes may indeed be going on in the advertising discourse. The present study shows that some cultures are more immune to the compulsive linguistic borrowing than others. The Russian and English languages seem to have adopted diametrically opposite strategies of dealing with the constant inflow of foreign linguistic elements in the advertising discourse, and the explanation may lie in the different sociolinguistic situation in the Russian and English speaking communities or in the areas where the languages are spoken.

Research methodology

3.1. Materials and methods

The material for the study has been gathered over a period of some years (2008 – 2017) from all kinds of open media, including billboards and shop window notices, newspapers and magazines, TV and radio commercials, as well as the Internet resources. It means it includes examples of both visual and audio advertising discourse in the two languages under consideration: Russian and English.

The Russian corpus contains about 700 advertisements where language variation is registered and the English one – more than 200. The English collection includes only the advertisements published or broadcast in the British media. For this particular

study the Russian collection is restricted to the advertisements produced by Russian advertising agencies and copywriters and targeted at Russian speaking consumers. Advertisements translated from other languages are excluded and advertisements in foreign languages placed around the tourist attractions (i.e. in the centre of St.Petersburg, Russia) for the convenience of foreign travellers are avoided. Foreign elements introduced into advertising to emphasize the national character of the product or the establishment (such as names of restaurants offering national cuisine) are not considered.

The collected advertising texts are analysed with the aim to register and describe types of language variation found in them. All the levels of linguistic analysis are taken into consideration: graphic, phonetic, lexical and grammatical.

3.2. Experimental study and participants

To assess the perception of creolized advertisements by consumers an experimental sociolinguistic survey was undertaken. The respondents were more than a hundred Russian speakers from different age, gender and occupation groups. They were approached either personally or via the Internet. The participants were asked to evaluate intelligibility and attractiveness of creolized written and oral advertisements while being exposed only to their verbal component, in the visual or audio form accordingly. To achieve this, recordings of commercials were modified to remove the music and non-verbal noises. The advertisements were extracted from the corpuses described above and represented different types of creolization (lexical, grammatical, graphic and phonetic). About 2000 responses were received and analysed.

Results and Discussion

4.1. Language variation in the Russian advertising discourse

4.1.1. Creolization

The study of the verbal component of the Russian advertising discourse proves that it demonstrates all the symptoms of the creolization processes going on.

First, the invasion of foreign language elements into the Russian advertising matter, both printed and broadcast over audio media, has been and is very intensive, notwithstanding the federal and local authorities' attempts at limiting it. Including foreign elements into the advertisement seems not only to present an opportunity for creative techniques to be used, but also to be highly fashionable, the thing to do. The survey of perception of such creolized texts demonstrates a predominant acceptance of these by the target audience. The subjects in the study did not object to the "foreign flavour" of the advertising texts and were quite benevolent to it, although the high level of education and the knowledge of foreign languages were contributing factors in negative assessment of the creolized advertisements. More importantly, the respondents admitted that in about half of the cases the comprehension of the creolized messages suffered. Figure 1 shows the percentages of positive evaluation of comprehension and attractiveness of written advertisements with lexical, grammatical and graphic types of creolization. Figure 2 shows the percentages of positive evaluation of comprehension and attractiveness of oral commercials with lexical, grammatical and phonetic types of creolization.

Figure 1: Evaluation of comprehension and attractiveness of written advertisements

Figure 2: Evaluation of comprehension and attractiveness of oral commercials

What is especially worthy of notice is the fact that, quite strangely, the degree of attractiveness of both the printed advertisements and the commercials did not correlate with the degree of their intelligibility. It means that the respondents tended to find them rather attractive even if they were not able to understand the message. The data may be interpreted to state that the contemporary Russian language has a hybrid (creolized) variety with a body of speakers (workers in the advertising industry) and users (the population of Russia who is the target audience of the advertising texts), which constitutes a creole by definition. It has to be admitted that the creole definitely has functional stylistic limitations.

Second, both written and spoken forms of advertising discourse are influenced by creolization processes. The examples described below demonstrate this fact.

Third, the Russian advertising discourse draws its foreign material not only from English that has won the position of a global language and is therefore the primary

donor, but from other sources as well. The material collected for the study contains examples of borrowings from a number of European and other languages, e.g., the names of a repair service *Bonjour* (French), a beauty parlour *Olá* (Spanish), a wine shop *Vinissimo* (Italian), a day care centre for children *Kinder* (German), etc. Moreover, there are examples of introducing into advertising texts foreign elements from an unspecified language, a foreign language as such, so to say. This agrees with the observation that foreign elements can serve a symbolic function implying the prestigious foreign background that does not actually exist (Backhaus, von Doorn, 2007). In visual advertising the use of the Latin alphabet that does not point to a specific language is omnipresent as well as graphic hybrids using different types of lettering. For example, the names of restaurants *Fistashka*, *Grusha*, *Solnce*, *Farsh & Bochka* are transliterated straight from Russian, and the names of a bar *Matrëshka*, a gym *Зажигалка*, a beauty parlour *Пилки* and a car wash service *Пузыри* combine letters from different graphic systems (see Fig.3).

Figure 3: Mixing graphic systems in visual advertising

It is important to emphasize that the transliterated names of the service establishments are targeted at the Russian speaking audience, do not add anything to the understanding of their function (if not hindering it), often look funny and, consequently, border on word play, e.g., the names of a clothes shop *Ubka & Bruki* (from Rus. “skirt” and “trousers”) or a fast food restaurant *Obed Bufet* (from Rus. rhyming words “lunch” and “canteen”) (see Fig.4). Sometimes such transliterations and graphic hybrids are actually difficult to pronounce in accordance with reading rules of any real language (cf. the discussion of phonetic creolization below).

This technique is also used in the audio advertising discourse. For some years the TELE 2 mobile operator advertising campaign on the central Russian TV channels has been based on the imitation of foreign speech in an unrecognisable language with a voiceover translation into Russian.

Figure 4: Transliteration of Russian names in the Latin alphabet

This technique is also used in the audio advertising discourse. For some years the TELE 2 mobile operator advertising campaign on the central Russian TV channels has been based on the imitation of foreign speech in an unrecognisable language with a voiceover translation into Russian.

4.1.2. Massive lexis borrowing and word play

In the present day Russian advertising discourse lexis is borrowed from many sources and in many ways. There are examples of direct citations: a tattoo parlour *Real Ink*, a clothes shop *Why Not?*; of foreign names coupled with transliteration into Russian: credit agency *Quick Money* *Квик Мани*; and of transliteration of foreign words into Russian without any comment or translation: a lingerie shop *Плеже* (from Eng. *pleasure*). Often, mixed collocations form a pattern, as in the incorporation of *room* as the second element of a compound (presumably, from *showroom*): *кофе-room*, *мебель- room* and even *Чебуroom*, where the Russian element is the beginning of the word *чебурек* (a kind of famous Caucasian food). The famous café chain *КофеХауз* (*Coffee House*) is the result of mispronunciation (or hypercorrection) by Russian readers who pronounce the noun *house* with /z/, as a verb. From it developed a number of similar names: *Шаилык-хауз*, *Отель Хауз*, etc. Hypercorrect reading (or pronouncing the transliterated version) of the English word *key* has resulted in the name of the electronic stores *Кей*. Different types of loans are shown in Fig.5.

Figure 5: Lexis borrowing: citation and transliteration

There are also some instances of calques, when a foreign word is literally translated into Russian and used instead of the original Russian term: *Новая линейка хлеба от Хлебного дома* (from Eng. *Line* “series”, while the corresponding Russian word usually means “scale, ruler”); *Уникальная текстура и замшевый финиш* – все это жидкая помада (from Eng. *finish* “last stage, concluding touch”, the word which in Russian is traditionally used in the sports context to mean “completion of a race”).

Apart from direct borrowings, there is a phenomenon of coining new Russian words based on the existing English words. For example, the habit of using “chicken” and “fish” in Russian transliteration for dishes from McDonald’s has led to a new perception of these two words, especially the former. A survey of McDonald’s customers in St. Petersburg shows that they would hardly ever use the Russian word *курица* meaning “chicken” to describe their order or the meal that they have had from McDonald’s. In the newly advertised product of “Chicken Gourmet Exclusive” written in Russian transliteration, none of the three words is Russian. However, whereas the second and the third words are “international” and that can be the explanation of their easy understanding, the first one has been acquired by the Russian

consumers from advertising and marketing. One of the authors has witnessed a scene when a 6-year old boy would not accept a burger with “chicken” said in Russian and insist on the “chicken” transliterated – he did not even want to know that it is the same kind of poultry. A man of forty has been known to give a serious explanation of the difference between the notion of “chicken” and Russian poultry of exactly the same kind – not in the way it has been cooked but in the nature of the meat itself. Thus, a new word has been coined to denote a special kind of meat used in McDonald’s burgers. English transliterations for “chicken” and “fish” in burgers and rolls have become new words in the Russian vocabulary with their very specific meaning and usage.

The most striking feature of lexis borrowing in the Russian advertising discourse, however, is its involvement in word play (Shamina, 2016) (see Fig.6), which is a widely used technique in advertising as such. Foreign words regularly rhyme with Russian ones: *Электрoинструменты Total – отлично поработал!* They give ground for puns, as in the slogan of a Finnish construction supermarket: *Скажи ремонту Finnish* (from Eng. homophones *finish* and *Finnish*) or in the name of a café *CUP & CbIP*, where the two words look almost the same but belong to different languages and mean different things (the Russian one means “cheese”). Foreign and Russian words and word parts are used to produce blendings of all kinds: *Beerжа* (the name of a pub selling beer, when pronounced in Russian means “stock exchange”), *Eastопуя* (the name of an Asian cuisine restaurant, when pronounced in Russian sounds like the word meaning “history”), *ОжиVittelно!* (the slogan for the mineral water, when read out in Russian results in a neologism “enlivening”). An estate agency leaflet has a rebus on it: *cYESom*, and the potential customer is supposed to translate the English word *yes* in to Russian *da* and get the message: *сДам* “to let”. A TV commercial for a German car is accompanied by a slogan where English words are changed to suit a regular Russian word structure and to rhyme with the name of the car model: *Opel Corsa – йес оф корса!* (from Eng. *Yes, of course!*).

Figure 6: Examples of word play based on foreign language elements in visual advertizing

Sometimes the language mixing takes exotic and complicated forms as in the announcement of a sports event: *The CAHI Battle*, with its use of the article next to the Russian word meaning “sledge, toboggan”, or the name of a clothes shop *Lüid & Milla Furs* where the first two elements (from an indeterminate language) sound as a Russian female name *Людмила*. The name of a shoe shop *ART I COOL* incorporates English words *art* and *cool*, which supposedly provokes a positive attitude to its merchandise, and sounds as a Russian word *артукул* “a category of product”. The name of a bar *Dr.Inki* (see Fig.7) invokes the concept of the Inca culture that is supported in the interior decoration of the establishment. But it also attaches the Russian plural suffix *-u /i/* to the English word *drink* thus stimulating the customers to order more than one drink. Another bar has a name *Covër* which is practically a transliteration of the Russian word meaning “carpet” with the insertion of the exotic letter *ë*, but it also suggests a safe place to those who are able to recognize the English word *cover*.

Figure 7: Word play: blending of several words and concepts

4.1.3. Phonetic creolization

Instances of phonetic creolization found in the material collected for the study may also be interpreted in terms of word play or linguistic games (Shamina, 2015). They are mostly represented by the use of real or mock accents in spoken advertising texts. Often a famous person is asked to become not only the face of the advertising campaign but also its voice. For example, Scooter (H.P. Geerdes) and Patricia Kaas were invited to act as some kind of symbolic figures in MediaMarkt and Lipton tea advertisements respectively. This results in what is known as “phonetic interference” when a foreign speaker reads out the advertising text in Russian with all the (or some) pronunciation characteristics appropriate for his/her native language: *Ein, zwei, drei – выбирай!* (with an authentic German accent) and *Липтон в пирамидках превзошёл мои ожидания. Смотрите, крупные чайные листочки оживают, раскрывая весь вкус и аромат. Попробуйте! Вы сами всё поймёте* (with an authentic French accent). In the case of phonetic interference it is possible to define the pronunciation features typical for speakers of this or that language in Russian, e.g., no palatalization

of consonants and velar [r] in both these examples, nasalized vowels, shift of stress to the end of words and specific intonational and rhythmical organization of the text in the second one. The accent in the second commercial is so heavy that its comprehension is severely hindered.

Mock accents appear when Russian speakers reading out the advertising texts imitate foreign accents. In most cases, the target accent is easily recognized because only the stereotypical or even stigmatized pronunciation features are used, as in the commercials of Finnish construction companies: *Ююют слууушает* (with extra-long vowels). *Новые квартиры от Юит Дом Мы строим быстрее, чем говорим* (“We build faster than we speak”, making a joke of presumably slow speech characteristic of Finnish speakers). The following example (MediaMarkt commercial) shows a combination of original and mock accents: *Вот это да! В Германии я такого не видел!* (with an authentic German accent, spoken by Scooter) – *И в Японии тозе!* (with a mock Japanese accent, with phonemic substitution, in a very high voice) – *Понаехали тут да понапокупали!* (with a stigmatized “oriental” accent and stereotypical intonation contours of the Caucasian region).

Visual advertising, too, demonstrates instances of phonetic creolization. It mostly concerns cases of transliteration (see above) when the pronunciation of the resulting word is very far removed from the original. Some English words become virtually unrecognizable when transliterated in the names of brands or retailers. A classic example is the fur brand *Elena FURS* that is represented in Russian as *Елена ФУРС*. Dating back to 1991, this brand is well known all over Russia, and its name has always been pronounced in that way. Discussions of the brand quality and its name on the Internet forums offer many versions of the name origin, with none of them mentioning the English word “fur” as its possible etymology. This is certainly explained to a great extent by the fact that the “real” pronunciation and the “correct” transliteration of the English word *fur* in Russian is by no means feasible for lack of corresponding vowel sounds in the phonetic system.

The type of creolization described here allows a kind of interplay of different factors: advertisers’ intentions, levels of foreign language acquisition, creativity, etc. What advanced users of English can sometimes perceive as mistakes or lack of knowledge on the part of brand creators, may in fact be a purposeful use of word variants that are not correctly spelled or pronounced, or that do not even exist in the English language, but will be easier accepted by native Russian speakers than the correct ones. For example, the retailer name *Lady Sharm* may look weird to those who have mastered English (even the Word spell checker does not like the spelling). However, a brief survey of customers has shown that 84% of respondents prefer to have it this way rather than in the “correct” version of *Lady Charm*, as most people who have learnt English at some point in their lives still pronounce it in the way that clearly brings them to the Russian (borrowed from French) word *шарм* thus making it understandable. Here an interference of three languages emerges – the original French word borrowed into English in its French pronunciation and spelt in English in the same way as in French but pronounced differently, has given a new spelling of the word in the Russian brand name in accordance with the known pronunciation norms of English.

4.1.4. Grammatical creolization

Grammar is supposed to be one of the most stable elements in a language system. Still, the analysis of the Russian advertising discourse reveals regular occurrence of grammatical features adopted from other languages. Among them, the overuse of the determinative (relative possessive pronoun) *свой* should be mentioned (instead of an article?), as in the slogan *Выбери свой лучший бургер* “Choose your best burger” (see Fig.8), as well as the change in the function of the prepositions *с*, *вместе с*

“together” that are now regularly and incorrectly used with the instrumental meaning analogous to the one of the English preposition *with* (instead of Russian prepositions *при помощи*, *посредством* or a different grammatical construction): *Путешествуйте в Таллинн вместе с ПТК* (Петербургской Транспортной Компанией). The slogan of the transport company in this creolized form implies that the client should take them on the journey, and not his/ her friends or relatives.

Figure 8. Examples of grammatical creolization in visual advertising

A new word building technique also seems to have been adopted from Germanic languages into the Russian advertising discourse. That is making compound nouns by just putting two words together with the attributive one in the pre-position, as in *pencil skirt*, as opposed to the Russian use of an attributive apposition after the main word as in *юбка-карандаш* or an adjective preceding a noun, as in *узкая юбка* or several other attributive prepositional constructions. The examples are found both in the written forms of advertisements and in the commercials: the shop names *КурткиСити* (see Fig.8), *Сноу дисконт*, *Дайвинг-магазин*, *Каждый месяц «Домашний Очаг»* (a women's magazine) *делится самыми интересными быюти находками*; *Готовься! Лайм-охлаждение наступает* (a slogan for Baltika beer). Actually, this Nominative case attributive structure signals a serious grammatical shift in Russian, very much under the influence of English. Since the English language has lost its morphological nominal inflectional paradigm, grammatical case relationship is manifested outside the word/lexeme itself, by word order or prepositions, i.e. analytically. Typologically, Russian is an inflexion language, in which lexical and

grammatical meanings are synthesized in one word, thus indicating syntactic relations, e.g., *Центр обоев*. Borrowing the English pattern of *stone wall* or *headphones*, the Russian language also borrowed indication of the syntactic function by word order, instead of by case inflections, that is, analytically. Starting with *Интернет кафе* (Internet café), it moved on to *Korova Bar* ("Cow" Bar), *Яйцо-бар* ("Egg" Bar), *Обои-центр* ("wall-paper centre"), etc. Probably the most recent example of this phenomenon is the announcement in the Russian media of a *митинг-концерт* (instead of *концерт-митинг* "manifestation concert") taking place on the Red Square in Moscow on the day of the Presidential elections (March 18, 2018).

Another giveaway of the grammatical creolization in the Russian advertising texts is the loss of noun declination in brand names, as in the slogan for a detergent: *Я стираю "Ласка – магия цвета"*, which sounds rather awkward. The requirement for the brand name to appear in the advertisement in the initial form for easy recognition should not lead to grammar rule breaking. The addition of the generic term in the appropriate case in front of the brand name can solve the problem, e.g.: *Я стираю порошком "Ласка – магия цвета"*.

Languages are never altogether synthetic or analytical; analytical features have existed in Russian for indeclinable words, like *пианино* "piano", which show the grammatical case with the help of collocation words, or prepositions. What is happening at present in the sphere of Russian advertising is a massive inflow of new collocational formations generated by linguistic contact with English and following a very definite pattern. The linguistic outcome of the avalanche is yet to be seen, as the pattern is productive and seems to be spreading over into the everyday language.

4.2. Language variation in the English advertising discourse

4.2.1. No creolization

Signs of creolization similar to the ones found in the Russian advertising discourse and described above are practically absent in the English advertising discourse. One of the few examples of creolized creative inventions is a rhyming slogan for chewing sweets: *You can tella it's Fruitella!* Where *tella* represents "tell her" in colloquial pronunciation.

Mostly, foreign language elements are used in the English advertising texts in the form of citation: they stay foreign and may be said to be inserted into the English text, but not incorporated into it. The target audience in such cases is exposed to the verbal component of the advertisement in a foreign language in its integrity, with all the authentic graphic, lexical, grammatical and pronunciation properties. A good example is the HSBC holding commercial, where an Indian girl with the lemon plantation in the background is speaking in three languages, Hindi, English and French, presenting to the viewer an embodiment of globalization: *Namaste. Namaste. Please. Perfect. I'm gonna need a lot. No problem. I have plenty. Bonjour, Christophe. Où sont mes citrons? Je n'ai presque plus de limonade. Pas de problème, instant en route. Who's on the phone? My French distributor. I'm sending him my lemons. In HSBC we believe that in the future rapidly growing business will need a global supply chain.*

Another type of foreign language citation is represented by one of the Guinness commercials, in the format of rather a long an interview with some citizens of France, with the audio recording made completely in French and accompanied by the English subtitles.

As most European languages use the Latin alphabet there is no need for transliteration and practically all the brand names in the printed advertising matter are introduced in the original form, e.g., *Premier* (French). *A new fragrance for women from Gucci* (Italian).

What is at play here are cultural stereotypes (Haarmann, 1989; Santello, 2015). French and Italian are used in advertising perfume and other cosmetic products,

German – in promoting new cars and other technical innovations, Spanish and French – in advertising restaurants and foods: *Coco Mademoiselle*. *Chanel* (French); *The all new Audi TT*. *Lands 15.11.14*. Audi. *Vorsprung durch Technik* (German); *Doritos has given us a great mission to bring good times to the people of Britain, to bring fiesta and joy to everybody. We are Mariachi Doritos. We bring the party to the party. Doritos. Add a little Mexican* (Spanish).

4.2.2. National variation

As English functions as a native language for several nations, national variation has found its way into the English advertising discourse. Although the data for the study was collected from the British sources, some of the commercials use other national varieties of English with American English (USA) taking a bigger share. The following commercial shows an Englishman and an American interacting in a dialogue when promoting a car-hire firm (the American English part is underlined): - *We're enterprise rent-a-car. When it comes to our grand locations, you get the sausage and a sizzle.* - *He means we have a large network.* - *Not only you can find the enterprise throughout the UK. We're also all over Europe. Come on. We're always going the extra mile. Top! Go long! Yes! T-shirt candid. You did the math.* - *Maths. Come and get enterprise a try.* - *Wherever you are, we'll be there. Bob's your uncle.* - *Who's Bob? My uncle is Tony.* - *It's UK car-hire with US customer service.* The advertisement makes use of rather sharply defined accents and British and American idioms that are mutually incomprehensible.

4.2.3. Regional and social variation

Regional variation, usually coupled with social variation, is a prominent feature of the sociolinguistic situation in Great Britain (Trudgill, 1983; Wells, 1999). Some linguists and sociologists hold an opinion that nowadays regional accents have become much more acceptable than some decades ago, definitely not associated with the lower working class and even desirable, especially in broadcasting (Fox, 2004). Others describe the recent appearance of new dialects (for example, Estuary English) and predict the development of more (Crystal, 2005). English speakers are usually well aware of dialectal features typical for certain areas in the UK and are used to them through films and literary prose (Hodson, 2014). Code-switching is practiced not only to choose from some functional styles, but also from different regional/social varieties that may constitute a part of an idiolect. .

All the wealth of English dialectal variation is reflected in the English advertising discourse. It is mostly represented in oral advertising texts, with the help of deviations from the RP (Received Pronunciation, the British pronunciation standard) and specific phonetic features of this or that dialect. For example, a commercial for the financial company Gocompare based in Scotland goes like this: *No, no, the name's actually an abbreviation. The full name is... "Land of saving money and getting the right deal on just about anything, from amazing credit card rates to hot utility deals [...] that go gogo compare", but we shortened it, because it was crashing the website.* It is recorded in a female voice with rather a noticeable Scottish accent featuring a rhotic [r] and monophthongization of diphthongs in words like *saving* and *go*. Code-switching, too, occurs in commercials, as when a shop owner praises the local food he sells addressing the general TV audience in near RP and then turns to a customer and speaks to her in Welsh English, presumably with the purpose of underlying his respect to local values.

Sometimes regional variation is registered even in written advertisements, as in the one for Student Flight service that presents a friendly chat between students in a pub and imitates the Northern Irish accent: *A point o'the black. Awed jew care foreign Irish red? If ye don't loike eider o'doors, oil poor ye a peel eel.* This actually should

read as “A pint of the black. Or do you care for an Irish red? If you don’t like either of those, I’ll pour you a pale ale.”

5. Conclusion

The study of language variation in Russian and English (British) advertising discourse shows that it plays very different roles and takes very different shapes in these two cultures, presumably predetermined by the sociolinguistic situation in each.

The facts that Russian is the language of only one nation and that the language standard has always been highly respected in the Russian culture (to the point that there are billboards with language rules on St.Petersburg underground!) account for there being virtually no regional or social variation in the verbal component of Russian advertising texts. The very few examples found in the data seem to have fallen out of circulation soon after they were introduced into the advertising discourse and for that reason are not worthy of mention. On the other hand, about a half of English written and especially oral advertisements contain features of regional and social dialects. According to some linguists, there is a war of words going on in the advertising discourse (Sheperd, 1996), between language purists and creative copywriters who draw material for their work from diverse sources, and the source of language variation is always available. Besides, regional variation in Russian (Zakharova, Orlova, 2004) is not as marked as in English where the dialectal speech may be incomprehensible for RP speakers or speakers of other dialects for purely phonetic reasons. It may be surmised that this makes the use of Russian dialects in advertising quite dull, and the use of English dialects close to an adventure.

Or, rather, Russian local accents are not very well-known to Russian Standard speakers in the metropolises. An ongoing survey with students of the Faculty of Philology of St.Petersburg state university as respondents proves this beyond any doubt. This group of respondents is socially and educationally homogeneous and represents young elite of standard language speakers. For that reason, their responses should be considered presentable and demonstrative. For some years now they have been asked about their perception of Russian language dialects and their attitude to dialects and dialect speakers. As a result, it has become clear that their knowledge of local variation is very general, if not vague, and limited to the opposition of Northern and Southern dialects and of Moscow and St .Petersburg varieties, i.e. areas that are mentioned in most textbooks on the subject. At the same time, the reaction and emotional attitude to dialect speakers are distinctly critical and mostly negative. True, there have been responses admitting that language variation is historically conditioned and linguistically beneficial, but the majority of the respondents qualify dialect speech as “language corruption” and characterize dialect speakers as “unintelligent, lacking in culture or education” (Myachinskaya, 2016).

This sort of attitude is one of the typological features of an authoritative type of language with a strong prestige of Standard, to which Russian belongs. The strong position of normative Russian is supported by a complex of factors, such as school education, which eliminates any possibility of variation; academic institutions monitoring the maintenance of the Standard; serious requirements for “good” Russian in a diversity of job position; and, most of all, by the high level of literary production. The latter factor, the prestige of literature, is even reflected in the term for the standard language variety – “literary Russian”, as opposed to the English non-committing term “standard”. The authority of Russian literary standard entails socially subservient position of local variation in the eyes of the educated elite, strongly reinforced by the social unbalance between the metropolis and the province, characteristic for the Russian society. Advertising is a domain aimed at attracting people, which requires the use of socially, aesthetically and culturally attractive linguistic means, thus excluding local language varieties from the sphere.

Being a global language and often functioning as a *lingua franca*, English tends to be rather a lender than a borrower (if an allusion to Shakespeare is appropriate here). In the advertising discourse it uses foreign elements for their stereotypical cultural values, but does not adopt them or make them its own. Contemporary Russian may be said to have chosen the role of a borrower and be going through yet another stage of intensive language development and excessive adoption of extraneous influence that is typical for periods of political and/or economic changes. Russia's integration into the world market is an important contributing factor. The Russian language's loan-words inventory is enormous, which makes it one of the great languages of Europe. In a way, incorporating external material has become a sign of social and cultural sophistication to people who do it. That is the reason for the multilingual character of the present day Russian advertising. It should be emphasized, though, that even if the tendency for creolization grows stronger with time and deepening of globalization processes, creolized linguistic elements are not supposed to be perceived and understood in other communicative contexts or used outside the advertising discourse.

Acknowledgements

The authors are most grateful to T. Grishanina, E. Klueva, V. Morozova, V. Moskvina for their help in collecting the data for the study.

Bibliographic references

- BACKHAUS, K. – VON DOORN, J. 2007. Consumer Perceptions of Advertising Standardization: a Cross-Language Study of Different Categories. In: International Journal of Management Reviews, vol. 3, n. 4, pp. 37-49. ISSN: 14608545.
- BELIKOV, V.I. – KRYSHIN L.P. 2001. Sotsiolingvistika. Moscow: Russian University of Humanities Press. ISBN 5-7281-0345-6.
- CROMPTON, A. 2000. The Copywriter's Bible. New York: Rockport Publishers. ISBN 2880465931
- CRYSTAL, D. 2005. The Stories of English. London: Penguin Books. ISBN 978-0-141-01593-4
- DREWNIAK, B. L. – JEWELLER, A.J. 2013. Creative Strategy in Advertising. New York: Wadsworth Publishing Company. ISBN 978-1133307266.
- FOX, K. 2004. Watching the English. London: Hodder. ISBN 0 340 81886 7.
- IVANOVA, N.K. – MOSHCHEVA, S.V. 2011. Intencional'nyj aspekt reklamnogo diskursa: fonetiko- orfograficheskie osobennosti. Moscow: INFRA-M. ISBN 978-5-369-00920-8.
- HAARMANN, H. 1989. Symbolic values of foreign language use. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. ISBN 3-11-011712-6.
- HANCOCK, I. 1990. Creolization and Language Change. New York: Mouton de Gruyter. ISBN 0-89925-579-5.
- HODSON, J. 2014. Dialect in film and literature. London: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 140393708.
- HOLM, J. 2000. An Introduction to Pidgins and Creoles. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 0 521 58460 4.
- KIRILINA, A.V. 2013. Opisanie lingvisticheskogo landshafta kak novyj metod issledovaniya yazyka. In: Vestnik TvGU, vol. 24, n. 5, pp. 159-167. ISSN 1994-3725.
- MORIARTY, S. – MITCHELL N. – WELLS, W. 2012. Advertising: Principles and Practice. Melbourne: Pearson Education. ISBN 0132163640.
- MYACHINSKAYA, E.I. 2008. Gibrizatsiya russkogo pis'ma pod vliyaniem angliyskogo yazyka. St.Petersburg: Konventsia. ISBN 5-900271-16-1.
- MYACHINSKAYA, E.I. 2016. Dialektnye stereotipy v predstavlenii nositelej russkogo normativnogo yazyka. Saratov: Amrit. ISBN: 978-5-9907728-3-0
- MINEVA, L.V. 2002. Multimodusnost' tekstov pechatnyh SMI i reklamy. In: Vestnik MGU, vol. 19, 342-356. ISSN 2072-8379

- PILLER, I. 2003. Advertising as a Site of Language Contact. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISSN: 0267-1905
- PIROGOVA Y.K. – PARSHIN, P.B. 2000. Reklamny tekst. Moscow: International Institute of Advertising Press. ISBN 5-938-90-001-8
- PROSHINA, Z. – USTINOVA, I. 2012. English and Asian flavor in Russian advertising of the Far East. In: Asian Englishes, vol. 15, n. 2, pp. 30-45.
- RYABUKHINA, Y.V. 2014. Diskurs turisticheskogo marketinga. St.Petersbutg: Universitetskie obrazovatel'nye okruga. ISBN 978-5-4416-0016-3.
- SANTELLO, M. 2015. Advertising to Italian English bilinguals in Australia: Attitudes and response to language selection. In: Applied Linguistics, vol. 36, n. 1, pp. 95-120. ISSN-0142-6001.
- SHAMINA, E.A. 2015. Phonetic Creolization in Advertising Discourse. In: Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference Phonetics without Borders. Blagoveshchensk: Amur State University Press, pp. 99-102. ISBN 978-5-93493-235-1.
- SHAMINA, E.A. 2016. Reklamnyj diskurs kak oblast' yazykovogo kontakta: osobennosti russkogo reklamnogo kreola. In: Materialy 2 mezhdunarodnogo nauchnogo seminara. Plsen: WestCzeck university press, pp. 252 – 264. ISBN 978-80-261-0668-5.
- SHEPERD, J.W. 1996. The War of Words Between Copywriters and Language Purists. In: The Internet TESL Journal, vol. 2, pp. 4-14. URL: <http://iteslj.org/>
- SMITH, N. – VEENSTRA, T. 2008. Creolization and Contact. Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company. ISBN-10: 9027252459
- TRUDGILL, P. 1983. On dialect: social and geographical perspectives. London: Basil Blackwell. ISBN-10: 0631131515
- VINOGRADOV, V.A. 1990. Pidzhiny. Moscow: Sovetskaya entsiklopediya. ISBN 5-85270-031-2.
- WELLS, J.C. 1999. Accents of English. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 0-521-29719-2
- ZAKHAROVA, K.F. – ORLOVA, V.G. 2004. Dialektnoe chlenenie russkogo jazyka. Moscow: Editorial URSS. ISBN 5-354-00917-0.

Words: 6 903

Characters: 45 292 (25,46 standard pages)

Assoc. Prof. Elena A. Shamina, PhD
Faculty of Philology
Departement of Phonetics
St.Petersburg State University
11 Universitetskaya nab.
199034 St.Petersburg
Russia
e.shamina@spbu.ru

Assoc. Prof. Elvira I. Myachinskaya, PhD
Faculty of Philology
Department of English and Cultural Studies
St.Petersburg State University
11 Universitetskaya nab.
199034 St.Petersburg
Russia
e.myachinskaya@spbu.ru

Yulia V. Ryabukhina, PhD
Head of Foreign Languages Department
Institute of International Development and Partnership
ITMO University
9 ul.Lomonosova, , Saint Petersburg, Russia,
191002 St.Petersburg
Russia
yvryabukhina@corp.ifmo.ru