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Tendencies of Intellectualisation and Democratisation in the Contemporary Russian Language and Their Realisation in Publicistic Texts

In the report at the international scientific conference "Language of Mass Media as an Object of Interdisciplinary Research", the facts of contamination and fusion of styles in the publicistic texts were analysed as an example of common tendencies to democratisation and intellectualisation of the contemporary Russian language (Leitchik 2001). The present article is aimed to briefly analyse the tendencies under discussion and to show the position of contamination and fusion of styles in their realisation.

In recent years, linguists have been so much involved in research and critics of the tendency of the contemporary Russian language towards democratisation that is often called colloquialisation, vulgarisation, and even criminalisation of the language (see, for example, International Conference 2002; Social Variants of Language 2002) that they often forget that the development of our language is not only due to the increase of the quantity of jargonisms and their development in the speech of various social and professional groups of the population. Moreover, the tendency toward complication of the discourse, appearance and use of the elements which come to life because of the achievements of scientific-technical and social progress in the 20th century on all the levels of the language, is not less strong: This can be proved by the facts which are being observed in not less than the four spheres of the language:

- 1) The sphere of vocabulary may serve as a more obvious one. The simple comparison of so-called current and special lexical units (LU) proves that the latter occur many times more often than the first. For instance, there are about 135 thousand words in the 17-volume academic dictionary and 145 thousand lexical units in the semantic dictionary edited by N. Yu. Shvedova; however, for example, Russian terminology of Chemistry numbers about 3 million units; entomological terminology ranges from 1 to 2 million names of insects; the number of registered names of medicines and medicaments (word trademarks) reaches 130 thousand, and in

the classification of industrial and agricultural production of the former USSR there were 24 million nomenclature units. More than that, during the last decade, the volume of special lexical units has greatly increased, firstly because of the borrowings from English and other European languages. (There are no exact data yet, but approximately the figures are in the thousands of LU. There are especially many lexical units among common nouns (terms), nomenclature, and proper names of special kinds.)

- 2) Intellectualisation of the language has revealed itself during the last century so that on the basis of traditionally distinguished functional styles (scientific-technical, business, and publicistic) languages for specific purposes have developed – LSP, special languages – in English linguistic literature, *Fachsprachen* in German, *langues de spécialité* in French – thousands of functional variabilities of contemporarily developed national languages, which work for different special spheres of knowledge and activities which are characteristic of our epoch: innumerable sciences, industry, economics, law and diplomatic spheres, sports, mass media, and others. The notion of special languages goes back to the functional styles of the Prague Linguistic Society; however, it was not until 1950-1970 when it became established after the publication of the books by Savory (1953), Sager et al. (1980), Hoffmann (1976), and some works by Russian scientists (for example, Komarova 1996). Several schools were established which conducted research on Languages for Specific Purposes, aimed at terminological studies and professional communication (in Denmark, for example, and other European countries (LSP and Professional Communication 2001)). One should not think, however, that the specifics of LSP are just the lexical aspects: Even if we do not agree with the opinion of the German linguist L. Hoffmann that the peculiarities of LSP first occur on the phonetic level, we may still definitely say that, on the level of word-building and morphology, some LSP are distinguished quantitatively and qualitatively (e.g., in chemical LSP, there are different models of multi-component chain formations which include morphemes, parts of morphemes, symbols of figures, and letters). As for the language of law, logic, mathematics, and other sciences, here one can find complex, multi-levelled, and ramified constructions on the sentence level and sub-phrase units specific for each of these Languages for Specific Purposes and not characteristic of the literary style.

To prove the statement that when studying LSP we come across particular varieties of national languages, we may accept the fact that inside Languages for Specific Purposes there appears sort of a style differentiation: One can see a vertical differentiation (as Czech researcher M. Tchekova says) into “high”, “average”, and “low” variants of lexical units and their combinations; therefore, in the vocabulary of the majority of LSP, there are literary (especially, codified) lexical units – terms as well as professionalisms and jargonisms. In LSP of the 20th and 21st centuries, one may observe a strange phenomenon: There are intellectual jargons beginning from the language of pilots, described by L. V. Uspenskiy, and up to the jargon of nuclear physicists and – of recent times – computer-internet jargon, analysed, for example, in the works by Likholtov (1997). In the combination of LSP referred to the very complicated fields of scientific and social activity and their “lowered” styles, we may observe a fusion of opposite tendencies in the contemporary Russian language: Intellectualisation of the language is accompanied by its democratisation in the sphere of its functioning. (Speaking about the sphere of functioning, we should bear in mind the oral speech of scientific discourse where these tendencies are realised in full swing – see, for example, the works by Lapteva (1985-1999).

- 3) The further intellectualisation of the Russian language is revealed also in the changing of its style picture. Since the middle of the 80s of the 20th century, there was a renovation of the style system in the contemporary Russian language (Leitchik 1998). If in the Soviet epoch (the works by V. V. Vinogradov and M. N. Kozhina) 5-6 functional styles were distinguished, now there is a renaissance of the religious style (Krysin 1994 and K. N. Dubrovina write about that). It is obvious that this style that began to form in the Russian language in the 11th century and whose existence was ignored in the Soviet years is one of the most intellectual: Both its lexis and its syntax, very similar to Church Slavonic, express and reveal the highest spiritual values of mankind. Realised in the texts of different religious newspapers, more than 70 journals of orthodox subject published in Russia and in oral works of churchmen, the religious style continues to enrich the contemporary Russian language (see “Forward to the World Culture” [...] 2000). Equally, the scientific-technical style receives intellectual impulses, which are transformed into a literary-conversational style. More than that, one can not imagine business style

with its gradations (officialese, legal, diplomatic, and economic) without a new lexis which also differentiates the achievements of scientific and technical progress. Moreover, the economic sub-style, which is evidently being transformed into a certain style or even a separate LSP very quickly, is enriched (both in documents and advertisements) by borrowing from the vocabulary and creation of new Russian words, word-building morphemes, phraseological units, and other stable syntactical constructions. In the vocabulary and phraseology of the texts of mass media style (publicistic style), from ten classes of units more than half of them can be referred to scientific-technical and socio-political progress – they are: scientific, technical, and economic terms; professionalisms; nomenclature units; proper names of special kind (names of firms, scientists' names, and names of statesmen and public figures); socio-political terminology and socio-political vocabulary (Kryuchkova 1989); journalistic terms – stylistic synonyms of special terms; phraseological units, and winged words borrowed from fiction and science fiction. To cut it short, the system of styles of contemporary Russian has become more complicated than it was during the past decades: It counts 7-8 styles, and as any system of styles and stylistic means, it reveals the whole life mosaic of contemporary society with its great sphere of intellectual activity.

- 4) One more aspect should be distinguished in the problem of the intellectualisation of the language – it is the aspect of terms and terminology. Though this question is connected with all the above mentioned aspects (the growth of the number of terms is marked in the vocabulary of the new epoch; terms are one of the lexical layers of LSP; terms work in different styles except vernacular), the methods of study of terminological units and their function exceed the limits of just linguistic methods. The matter is that in the notion and formal structure of the term besides the language component (it was called natural language substratum) there is a so-called terminological nature which depends both on corresponding natural language and the very content which is connected with some sphere of knowledge or activity; there is also a logical superstratum which lets a term reveal some general special notion (a concept that is limited by the level of knowledge and the correlated theory that describes the subject field in the appropriate epoch). The presence of these three components in the structure of a term allows us to build terminological systems which in comparison to chaotically built terminologies have the

indication of a concrete system, non-contradiction and completeness and, therefore, may be unified and then regulated and systematised (this is not typical of lexical units of non-terminological nature). Realisation of all these facts led to the formation of a new complex, scientific-applied discipline – the science of Terminology, which is not regarded as a linguistic one by many specialists. Actually, the problems of the study of terms exceed the limits of linguistics (Leitchik 2001). Nevertheless, it is directly connected with research of the tendency of intellectualisation of the language. You may not agree with the opinion about terminologisation of the language in our epoch, but you should not doubt the fact that contemporary language (including Russian) can not exist further without a great terminological layer (and terms, as Nikitina says, are the clots of thoughts (1987, p. 29)), and this layer, in itself, reflects and reveals a high level of achievements of mankind.

Bibliography that is devoted to the opposite tendency in the development of the Russian language – its democratisation – is great, and here we do not intend to scrutinise this question. It is enough to name some basic means of realisation of the process and to dwell on the problem of contamination and fusion of the elements of various styles in oral and written texts of mass media, because this problem has not been thoroughly analysed yet.

- 1) The regular approach of the literary, codified sphere of the language with conversational speech has lately achieved such a degree that it is very difficult to draw a marked line between them. Intensive study of conversational speech in theoretical and descriptive (registering discourse phenomena) works of some linguistic schools in this country (the school of Ye. A. Zemskaya, the school of O. B. Sirotnina) has shown that as well as in the period of the October Revolution with its new language (no-voyaz), after the period of perestroyka, conversational elements still enter the literary speech, and this leads to its reorganisation on all the levels (Lapteva 2002).
- 2) This process has been developing even further in recent decades – in the form of the penetration of jargons into the speech, texts, and discourse of various layers of the population. In particular, the so-called common jargon that was formed initially, in our opinion, in the GULAG resulted from the joint confinement of representatives of the Russian intelligentsia and criminals, and then it became the means of the activity of protest against

language censorship. Now, it is practically used by all social groups, including the elite (Krysin 1994); it has penetrated into the press (Yermakova/Zemskaya/Rozina 1999). We have mentioned before some intellectual jargons which exist along with hundreds of jargons and argots described in dictionaries and scientific literature (see the works by V. S. Yelistratov, V. M. Mokienco, and others as well as the third culture of contemporary society in Russia (Khimik 2000)).

- 3) All these disturbing moments are often analysed as signs of the crisis of the Russian language. One may think that until the boundaries between the functional styles used in appropriate language/speech situations are observed, it is too early to speak about the crisis of the language. Certainly, these boundaries at the present moment are moving towards their liberalisation (Kostomarov 1999, p. 96). Again, surely, facts of usage in the works of the definite style of language/speech units, inappropriate for that style, can also be observed. Nevertheless, we may suggest that the two kinds of phenomena should be distinguished here.

If to speak about the most dynamic – publicistic style, there are cases of possible and justified usage of the elements of different styles in texts of mass media; this case has been called the *contamination* of styles. The most typical cases are as follows (the quotations given below are without translation, because it is not possible to show the specific peculiarities of the style of different units such as jargons and professional lexicons by means of translation; definitions of some less understandable words are given in square brackets):

- a) In the genre of newspaper and magazine articles – which can be compared with literary/fiction texts and which are, in fact, a conglomeration of styles – different lexical, syntactical, and other elements are used as these texts are written or spoken by different groups (as far as their language is concerned). Some examples from an article about transport workers: “Yest u zheleznodorozhnikov professional’ny termin *razmer dvizhenia*. Im oboznachayut kolichestvo poezdov v sutki (ne sostavov, a marshrutov soglasno raspissaniyu) ... Poetomu tekhnologicheskie “okna” neizbezhny” ‘Railwaymen have a professional term for it: *Traffic density*. It denotes the number of trains per 24 hours (actually, not the trains but the journeys according to the timetable). Therefore, a “windows” technique [= time slots] is inevitable.’ (newspaper “AiF-Moskwa”). A quota-

tion from an article about the Internet with the use of the Internet language and jargon: “Vprochem, sidya v *chate*, ya reshila usovershenstvovat’ sovremennyy *ask* i raznoobrazila vozmozhnosti “*boltalki*” [the jargon name for talk in the Internet]” ‘By the way, while sitting in the *chat* I’ve decided to improve today’s *ask* and have rearranged the “*talk*” options’ (newspaper “*Vechernyaya Moskva*”);

- b) In the genre of interviews, especially taped ones, there are elements of conversational speech (conversational sub-style) as well as special terms which Kogotkova called “true-to-life, and naturally estimated incrustations from specialists’ language” (1981, p. 89); they can be followed by explanations of semantics – definitions: “Kogda ya nachala delat’ standup (vystuplenie v kameru [TV-camera] s magnitofonom v rukakh), ya eshchyo ne znala, chto match s yaponsami zakonchilsya porazheniem nashey sbornoy, – rasskazyvaet Larissa” ‘ “When I started the standup (interview in front of a TV camera, holding a dictaphone), I didn’t know yet that the match against the Japanese would end with the defeat of our team”, Larissa explains’ (newspaper “*Moscow News*”). From an interview with the President of the holding “*Kaskol*” who works in the aircraft industry: “High tech – nashe samoye sil’noye mesto ... Eto nostal’giya po tem vremenam, kogda syuda mozjno bylo prodat’ vsyo chto ugodno i zhelezno [surely, by all means] poluchat’ den’gi ... “Okhotniki za golovami” sledyat za kolledzhami, i ne day Bog cheloveku poluchit’ “5”: yego tut zhe vvedut v komp’yuter i budut zhdad’ s kuchey “morkovok” [baits]” ‘High-tech is our main strength. There is a nostalgic yearning for the times when you could sell anything you wanted and you were sure to get your money for it. The colleges are controlled by “headhunters”, and if – God forbid! – someone finishes with an “A”, they store his or her data on a computer and wait with a large “bait”’ (newspaper “*Moscow News*”);
- c) On addressing the appropriate reader, listener, or viewer some elements of his/her vocabulary, morphology, and syntax from his/her very “language” can be used. Here is an extract from correspondence with a reader: “Rasskazhite, gde i pochyom mne, molodomu parnyu, odet’sya poklyovee [in a modern way, trendy], v “nelevye” [not bad] shmotki ... Seryoga – Zhenin. – Seryoga, net problem! Dzhinsovaya kurtka oboydyotsya tebe v 65 “baksov” ... “Parku” [a waterproof jacket] ty smozhesh’ zaimet’, vylozhiv 50-200 dol., “kozhu” [a leather jacket] 200-500

dol ...” ‘Hi! I would like to know where a youngster like me can get some trendy, well-made clothing and how much it will cost ... Seryoga from Zhenin. – Sergoya, no problem! A denim jacket will cost you 65 bucks ... you will have to spend 50-200 dollars for a parka, and 200-500 dollars for a leather jacket ...’ (newspaper “Argumenty i Fauty”);

- d) Elements of business style are included in advertisements, in texts of consultations – juridical, medical – sometimes without any explanations, because it is common knowledge that the addressee is familiar with the appropriate professional term as well as with the abbreviation: “Varikozyne veny. Ozonoterapia sosudistykh zvyozdochek ...” ‘Varicose veins. Ozoneotherapeutic treatment of vasculitis’. “Gotovye firmy. Registratsiya, izmeneniya, FKTB, GRP, akkreditatsiya, vse vidy litsenziy, kartochki VED (stroitel’nye, transportnye i dr.)” ‘Shell companies. Registration, change of legal form, FKTB, GRP [tax/exportation procedures], letters of credit, all licence types, VED-cards [trading licences] (construction, transport, etc.)’ (advertising newspaper “Tsentr-plus”).

At the same time, a non-justified combination of elements of different styles can be observed very often in mass media. This combination may be called *fusion* of styles:

- a) This is particularly characteristic of some journalists who display ostentatiously their knowledge of common jargon, professional jargons, and jargons of declassified fringe groups of the population: “Epopeya s vyborami gubernatora Primor’ya zakonchilas’ unichtozheniem mestnogo extrassensa, provalom federal’nogo chinovnika i pobedoy konkretnogo [a “word-parasite”] bratan... Teper’, nado dumat’, etot Dar’kin vremenno prekratit raspaltsovku [will stop boasting] i zaymyotsya nasseleniem” ‘The epic concerning the Governor’s election in the Primorje district came to an end with the smashing of a local ring of quack doctors, the dismissal of a federal official, and the victory of a criminal. Let’s hope now that Dar’kin will – at least for the moment – quit his braggery and finally take care of his people.’ (newspaper “Moscow News”). The presence of some units from other styles is dictated here only by the influence of fashion, and there is no need to use them in newspaper articles or related publicistic genres.

- b) The reversed correlations of elements of different styles when the material is written or pronounced in one of the “lowered” styles (often without inverted commas), and the units, which refer to the norms of the literary style, are very few. This can be observed in the newspapers “Moskovsky Komsomolets”, sometimes in “Komsomol’skaya Pravda”, in “Megapolis-Express”, and others. From a written text in youngsters’ jargon about clothes: “Koli ne khochesh’ stat’ vragom klyovosti i krutosti, ne nossi kazaki [high-boots] vkupe s kossukhoy [a leather jacket with a belt] bez sochetaniya s mototsiklom – ne katit! ... Ye-es! Esli tvoy paren’ schitaet, chto kabluk – eto bred, otpravlyay svoego družhka v otstoy [give him the sack], ibo on botvy ne rubit [he doesn’t understand that]” ‘If you don’t want to look uncool, never wear high-boots along with a belted leather jacket – without a bike, it just makes no impression! ... Ye-es! If your boyfriend thinks that high heels are stupid, give him the sack: This guy hasn’t a clue.’ (newspaper for youngsters “Boomerang”).
- c) The use of jargonisms (even non-parliamentary and taboo words and expressions) by politicians and public figures during their public speeches and teledébates, which is typical in the State Duma, the Federation Council, etc.: “otrabotannaya ulovka – primenenie tyazhelykh slov ... Primenyali Zhirinovskiy (nazyval Nemtsova “mal’chishkoy” i “malyshom”) i Yavlinskiy (nazval Tchubayssa “ryzhim”, “lzhetsom” i “podletsom”) ‘a perfidious trick is the use of hefty words ... This was used by Zjirinowsky (who called Nemtsov “rascal” and “schoolboy”) and Yavlinsky (who named Tchubaj’s “redhead”, “liar”, and “crook”)’ (newspaper for youngsters “Komsomol’skaya Pravda”). From the shorthand report of a meeting of the State Duma: “Ublyudok, gnida, pustozyon!” ‘asshole, nit, windbag!’ (ibid.).

These examples of a needless and even harmful fusion of styles are criticised absolutely correctly, because they are purely stylistic mistakes, intolerable violations of norms of publicistic as well as literary styles.

At the same time, one should not be so naive as to think that the language can and must stay unchanged during a long period of time. The breaching of common norms of literary style on newspaper pages, on the TV screen, and generally in a modern person’s speech may become (and do become) the

embryo of new phenomena and norms (Leitchik 2002). The aim of scientists, including specialists in the sphere of culture of speech is based on massive research to elicit progressive processes in today's rapidly developing Russian language with its aim towards democratisation and intellectualisation.

To sum it all up, we may say that the two marked tendencies in other spheres are none the less than stimuli towards development. Answering the question of Professor M. A. Alexeenko (Szczecin, Poland) about whether these tendencies are complementary, we must stress that opposition and complementarity may combine. It is worth mentioning that while studying antonymy Novikov distinguished complementary (additional) lexical units as one of the types of antonymy (1973, p. 232). Therefore, the revelation of the tendencies of intellectualisation and democratisation, which do not exist without each other today, create now, at the change of the centuries, the unique combination of the positive and negative conjunction of language/discourse facts which demand further deep analysis and objective evaluation.

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