ENGLISH AS THE GLOBAL LINGUA FRANCA

OBJECTIVES

This unit provides understanding of the concept of a world language, discusses pros and cons of having a global language, considers functions and features of Global English.

IN THIS UNIT, YOU WILL LEARN

- how to treat the term *unique / global language*;
- what conditions and factors bring a language the global status;
- about the role of English as the European language and global lingua-franca.

OUTLINE

- The notion of *global langua*ge, its role and features.
- English in Europe.
- English as a world lingua-franca.

RECOMMENDED READING

Textbooks

Башманівський О. Л., Вигівський В. Л., Моркотун С. Б. Лінгвокраїнознавство. Житомир : Вид-во ЖДУ ім. І. Франка, 2018. 98 с.

Hickey R. Variety studies. URL : https://www.uni-due.de/ELE/VarietiesOfEnglish.pdf (дата звернення: 21.05.2021).

Dictionaries

Trudgill P. A Glossary of Sociolinguistics. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2003. 148 p.

Internet Resources

English Around the World. *English-speaking countries*. 2011. URL : http://sweetlittlebox.blogspot.com/2011/02/blog-post.html (дата звернення: 6.09.2021).

English as a Global Language. URL : https://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/sounds/case-studies/minority-ethnic/ (дата звернення: 6.09.2021).

English Speaking Countries. URL : http://www.xtec.cat/~ellach/English_speaking_countries.htm (дата звернення: 13.08.2021).

English-speaking countries. URL : http://sweetlittlebox.blogspot.com/2011/02/blog-post.html (дата звернення: 6.09.2021).

Eurobarometer. European Commission. URL : http://ec.europa.eu/commfron toffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/General/index (дата звернення: 26.07.2021).

Nations in which English is an official language. URL : http://anthro.palomar.edu/language/English_speaking.htm (дата звернення: 6.09.2021).

The Electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English. URL : http://ewave-atlas.org/languages (дата звернення: 25. 12. 2020).

The history of English: how English went from an obscure Germanic dialect to a global language. URL : http://www.thehistoryofenglish.com/issues_global.html (дата звернення: 6.09.2021).

Varieties of English. URL : http://the_english_dept.tripod.com/esc.html (дата звернення: 6.09.2021).

Why Learning English Is So Important In The 21st Century. URL : https://www.englishexplorer.com.sg/why-learning-english-is-so-important-in-the-21st-century/ (дата звернення: 26.07.2021).

SYNOPSIS

There is no official definition of the term **global** or **world language**. It just refers to a language characterized by the following features:

- it is spoken as a mother-tongue and second language;
- it has a wide geographical distribution;
- it is used in international organizations (the World Bank, World Health Organization, UNICEF, the Universal Postal Union, the Commonwealth, the European Union, etc.) and diplomatic relations;
- it is adopted as an official language in a number of countries;
- in a number of countries, it is taught as a foreign language of choice in schools;
- it enables people from diverse social, ethnic and cultural backgrounds to communicate on a more or less equitable basis.

There are some other factors contributing to the global status of a language: its intrinsic features and relative easiness of the structure; the size of vocabulary enabling a language to describe various aspects of social life and foreign cultures; prestige and association with great religious or literary tradition; the economic and political power of native speakers maintaining the global position of a language.

Having a global language strengthens the world peace and unity, provides effectiveness in modern communication, trade and travel. However, a few pitfalls of having a global language should be taken into consideration. A global language might be a threat to the ideals of diversity, multiculturalism, and the principles of freedom. Minority cultures and languages might be endangered whereas the first-language speakers might be at some advantage over the second, third, or foreign language users.

Today, English has become a language mainly used by bilinguals and multilinguals being spoken as a first native language in over forty countries compared to over fifty-five countries where it is used as a second language.

According to D. Graddol (Graddol 2001, p. 47-51), modernity, a process which began with the Renaissance and nearly reached its completion in the 19th century, stimulated the growth of English as a second language in two contexts. The first arises from immigration to English-speaking countries and the necessity to transform the identity of migrant-language speakers and integrate them into the native English-speaking environment. The second context is linked with former colonies and the incorporation of English into a social elite who supported the British in the administration of local societies. That trend was largely based on the dissemination of English, Western values and Christian morality. Such an increasing role of English gave it a status of an official language in the countries where a small percentage of the population may speak it with fluency, and has resulted in a change of ethnic identity of the speakers, modifications of social, political and economic landscapes of the world. Modernity has stimulated new notions of the 'native' and 'foreign' speaker.

English as a foreign language (EFL) was learnt to understand the identity of the native-speakers who served a model in correctness and proficiency. In the last thirty years English has been destroying the old linguistic order in Europe, conquering more and more linguistic space, and changing the Europeans' attitudes towards it. According to Eurobarometer (2012):

- around 67% of Europeans consider English one of the two most useful languages for their personal development;

- 79% of Europeans believe that English is the most useful language for children to learn for their future;

- at a national level English is the most widely spoken foreign language in all but six member States where it is not an official language;

- the majority of Europeans who speak English as a foreign language believe they have better than basic skills;

●English is spoken on a more than occasional basis, with 47% of respondents who speak it saying that they do, and 19% saying that they use it every day or almost every day;

●25% of respondents say that they can follow radio or television news, read a newspaper or magazine article in English while 26% understand it well enough to use it online in email, Twitter, Facebook etc.

In the modern European context, English is a European language creating a new kind of bilingualism: English is a linguistic constituent of Europe and should be learnt along with the understanding native-speaker cultures; as a national language (in Ireland) it should be treated as any other European language. English is becoming increasingly important as a lingua-franca ("Frankish tongue"). In Europe it is widely used in communication among people who speak different native languages.

It cannot be ignored that English today is a **global lingua-franca** as it is preferred as a means of communication with people from other parts of the world. A lingua-franca has no native speakers (NSs). J. Jenkins (Jenkins 2004, p. 63) suggests that the essential distinction between speakers of English as a Foreign language (EFL) and speakers of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) is a very basic one: EFL speakers use their English chiefly to communicate with NSs of English, often in NS settings. They need at least to be intelligible and the learning goal is then to approximate the norms of a native variety (generally Standard British or American English). ELF speakers use English to communicate with other non-native speakers (NNSs) of English in typically NNSs settings. Their goal is to be intelligible to other NNSs of English as they have their own emerging norms. And if NSs participate in ELF setting it is for them to adjust to NNSs and not vice versa.

☝ **SELF-STUDY INSTRUCTIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Assignment 1. D. Crystal, world authority on the development and functioning of English, explores the rise of English as a global language. Read the following extract, highlight the key points and write a summary (approx. 200-230 words) of the role of English as the global lingua franca.

Source: Crystal D. English as a Global Language. Cambridge : CUP, 2013. 2nd ed. P. 9-11.

Although *English as a global language* did not appear until 1997, it was actually written in 1995, which in 2002 seems a very long time ago, as far as global linguistic developments are concerned. The 1990s were a revolutionary decade, in that respect, with a proliferation of new linguistic varieties arising out of the world-

wide implementation of the Internet, an emerging awareness of the crisis affecting the world's endangered languages, and an increasingly public recognition of the global position of English. Academic publications relating to this last topic seriously increased in number and weight. The largely article-driven literature of previous decades had typically been exploratory and programmatic, restricted to individual situations, anecdotal in illustration, lacking a sociolinguistic frame of reference, and focusing on the written (and usually literary) language. By contrast, the 1990s saw the emergence of a more comprehensive perspective in which spoken varieties became prominent, there was a real increase in the amount of descriptive data, and attempts were made to arrive at explanations and to make predictions of an appropriately general and sociolinguistically informed character.

In particular, several book-length treatments of English appeared, each providing a personal synthesis of previous observations and speculations, and focusing on the phenomenon of global English as an end in itself. By the end of the decade, the different attitudes had highlit a number of important theoretical issues, and made it possible to see the various kinds of focus adopted by individual authors. I came to see the first edition of the present book, as a consequence, more clearly as predominantly a retrospective account, examining the range of historical factors which have led to the current position of English in the world. Although avoiding firm predictions about the future, I thought it likely that English 'has already grown to be independent of any form of social control' (1st edition, p. 139). In my view the momentum

of growth has become so great that there is nothing likely to stop its continued spread as a global lingua franca, at least in the foreseeable future. Other books took different perspectives. For example, David Graddol's *The future of English*, published in 1998, looked towards the future, beginning with the present-day situation, and examining the contemporary trends likely to affect the language's eventual role. For him, English is certainly stoppable. Emphasizing the unpredictability inherent in language use, he suggested that 'the current global wave of English may lose momentum' (p. 60) and saw the real possibility of new language hierarchies emerging in the next century, with English holding a less global position. Then Tom McArthur, in *The English languages*, also published in 1998, adopted a more synchronic perspective, moving away from a monolithic concept of English. His primary focus was on the kinds of variation encountered in the language as a consequence of its global spread. He suggested that English was undergoing a process of radical change which would eventually lead to fragmentation into a 'family of languages'.

The role of these books has been to underline some of the parameters of inquiry which must influence the next wave of empirical studies. From a stage when there were few general hypotheses to motivate research, we now have a multiplicity of them. Some are issues relating to language use: several political, economic, demographic and social factors have been identified as potential influences on world language presence, all of which have been recognized as operating at local regional levels, such as in relation to minority languages or endangered languages; however, the role of such factors at a global level remains virtually unexplored. Others are issues affecting language structure: the way in which regional and social factors influence the growth of language varieties and

foster linguistic change has formed much of the subject-matter of sociolinguistics and dialectology; but here, too, there is as yet little understanding of what happens when these processes begin to operate at a macro level. To take just one example: the radical diversification envisioned by McArthur could have several outcomes, certainly including the development of an English family of languages, but also resulting in various forms of multiglossia (going well beyond current conceptions of diglossia), the emergence of more complex notions of 'standard', and different kinds of multi-dialectism. We have as yet no adequate typology of the remarkable range of language contact situations which have emerged as a consequence of globalization, either physically (e.g. through population movement and economic development) or virtually (e.g. through Internet communication and satellite broadcasting).

I originally wrote *English as a global language* as (what I hoped would be) a straightforward read, and chose not to impede the flow for a general reader by providing an array of academic footnotes and a full bibliographical apparatus. When I wanted to make a specific reference, I incorporated it into the text. I think now, several years on, things have changed, with very much more literature available to refer to, and more points of view to take into account, so for this new edition I have adopted a more conventional academic style of presentation. As far as content is concerned, the main change has been an expanded chapter 5, which now includes a long section illustrating and discussing the structural features of 'New Englishes'. This too has been the consequence of the much greater availability of descriptive studies of individual varieties than was the case a decade ago. Finally, all population figures and estimates of usage have been updated to the year 2001.

Assignment 2. Read the following extract and highlight the key points. Write a summary (approx. 200-230 words) explaining how space perception of English-speakers shaped their worldview in various regions.

The geographical dissemination of English beyond the territory of its origin, the British Isles, stimulated its transformation into a pluricentric language, i.e. a system with many centers where English has evolved in its standard and sub-standard forms. English today is a highly variable language exhibiting significant differences in regional lexicons. Such variation was caused by the urgent need to verbalize changes in speakers' environment, life-style differences, contacts with autochthonous cultures, and later formation of new cultural and linguistic identities.

Adaptation to the introduced setting required modifications in the worldview as the transported system of concepts appeared inappropriate for the new colonial experience. First immigrants varied in their social and linguistic background. In some areas, they were often far from respectable layers (Australia) or had a rural outlook (New Zealand). As migrants had to adapt to living rough, outdoor experiences, coping with novelty and hardships, tyranny of distance and isolation, they tried to invoke previously acquired (home) patterns of conceptualization, modify and reemploy them. Giving more salience to such features are wilderness, isolation and extreme remoteness, hostility and competition, endurance and modesty alongside contrast to metropolitan (British) life necessitated alternative (overseas) representations that have survived and influenced contemporary regional vocabularies: Cf.:

UP=GOOD, DOWN=BAD (BE *to be on the up and up* «to be increasingly successful», *to go downhill* «to get worse, deteriorate») vs UP=BAD, HARDSHIP (AusE *uphill* «(presenting difficulties) hard-pressed», *upter, up to* adj. «bad, hopeless, no good» — «1947 J. Clearly *You can't see round corners* 167 'How you going?' 'Upta. I've lost on every race so far.'» <…>; AE *up a tree* «entrapped, in a fixed position»; AusE *up a gum tree* «in another place, another state of mind; 'treed', cornered, in a state of confusion; in a predicament»);

DOWN=DECREASE, DISAPPEAR (BE *to come down* «to leave a university at the end of a period of study») vs DOWN=INCREASE, ARPPEAR (SAfE *to come down* «to swell, to rise», coming down «flooding», *to be down* «to be in flood, to be high, to be in spate»; CarE *to come down* «(of a river) to flood or overflow its banks with rushing waters»; AusE *down* «of a watercourse: in flood»);

UP=CENTER, DOWN=PERIPHERY (BE *to go up* «to move from one place to another, to town or city from a smaller place») vs DOWN=CENTER, UP=PERIPHERY (AusE *to go (come, etc.) down* «to travel from the country to a capital city», *down the country* «towards the capital city», *down the south* «in a more southerly part of the country, frequently with reference to the urban populace of esp. Melbourne and Sydney»; AE *downtown* «the main business section of a town of city», *upcountry* «away from seaboard, the backwoods»; NZE *up the country* «away from the coast or a center of settlement», *up-country* «a district remote from town»; CnE «Only the most daring hunters would sign contracts for the 'Up Country'» <...>

It appears at first sight that these examples are random, but they illustrate the specificity and cultural significance of spatial encoding in different English-speaking cultures. It is hard, if possible at all, to ground all these alternating variations. They are obviously caused by a complex set of extralinguistic and intralinguistic factors.

One of them is the specificity of the introduced environment, speakers' adaptability and observations as in the case of CarE *to come down* «(of a river) to flood» primarily applied to a Caribbean ghaut, a valley or cleft in mountain- or hill-side, especially down which water rushes to the sea after rain, and later extended to refer to any flooding streams and rivers.

The second possible reason involves intercultural communication, contact-induced language change and speakers' strive to rely upon external sources in search of cognitively easier, hence advantageous, strategies of naming. It can be done by means of internal (from other English varieties) or external (from other contacting languages) borrowing and calquing the ready-made naming models as in AusE *up a gum tree* < AE *up a tree*, SAfE *to come down* < Afr. < Du. *die rivier kom af*).

The third explanation of metaphoric variation probably deals with the cognitive adaptability of speakers and the change of perspective from which entities are approached and cognized. The proof is found in enantiosemic shift of the UP—DOWN image schema realization in overseas varieties of English. The semantic reverse UP=CENTER > PERIPHERY, DOWN=PERIPHERY > CENTER obviously took place due to the migration and change of the reference point from 'outside' to 'inside'. That well explains why the expression *down under* is used of Australia and New Zealand by those whose point of judgement is geographically up north (in Britain), suggesting the image of the end of the world. When the judgement point moves to Australia and New Zealand, the

perspective switches to 'from inside, down here', suggesting the centrality of a speaker's location. This cognitive factor is enforced by a craving for creativity and expressivity, desire to establish one's own identity and encode cultural opposition to another social group (AE *down* «center») <…>

Orientational metaphors are integrated into language and culture tradition, they are diachronically stable and resistant to changes in social or cultural environment of speakers.