

# THE SPECIFICITY OF PROFESSIONAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE OF THE MULTILINGUAL PERSONALITY: THE SITUATION IN LITHUANIA

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## Annotation

*The article deals with the language of the students of a non-linguistic institution of higher education – a micro-social community, a socio-communicative system, consisting of a few functionally unequal languages: the native language (in most cases Lithuanian), a West-European language (mainly English), and Russian. Such multilingual personality experiences an interaction of linguistic systems, which most often manifests itself in cases of interference. Long-time observation of linguistic activities of the students in a foreign language and the analysis of mistakes caused by interference allows stating the existence of communicatively irrelevant interlingual interference in the language of Lithuanian students speaking Russian. The aim of the paper is to present the most frequent cases of the impact of the system of the native language on the learned language. The article focuses on the problems of acquiring professional communicative skills.*

**Key words:** *micro-social community, a socio-communicative system, multilingual environment, multilingual personality, communicatively irrelevant interference.*

## Introduction

The issues of foreign language producing skills among academic youth remain in the focus of attention of researchers in various fields of science: linguistics, psycho-linguistics, sociolinguistics, teaching methodology, intercultural communication and others. The most famous researchers in the mentioned sphere are V.Avrarin, V.Alimov, W.Bright, U.Weinreich, E.Vereshchagin, D.Cepelyte, A.Jacikevicius, etc. The sphere of higher education is an important research area from the point of view of various functioning languages that are in the relationship of functionally supplementing one another and perform a different volume of functions. The following might be enumerated as the main ones: a) language as a means of instruction; b) language as a teaching subject; c) language for international communication; d) language as a means of mastering a profession. The sphere of functioning of languages is learning and research as well as social activities of a few micro-social communities (further MSC), organised in a particular way: it is academic staff and students. The focus of our attention is essentially on the specificity of producing written and oral speech in Russian by Lithuanian students, while the main problem is the development of professional communicative competences.

**The aim of the present research** is to examine the specificity of the non-native language of the students studying on non-linguistic study programmes and to single out the most often cases of deviation due to the influence of the native language, lack of certain knowledge, skills and abilities in producing speech in Russian, due to narrowing of the spheres of usage of Russian, etc.

**Research materials** are examples of written and oral texts of non-native students of Russian at Šiauliai State College, studying Russian for specific purposes.

The above-mentioned multilingual situation, i.e. the functioning of a few languages, requires paying attention to the development of communicative competences of the prospective professionals. Communicative skills are one of the main aims of teaching foreign languages in a multilingual environment. The statement is echoing the thoughts of Z.I.Kirnoze (Kirnoze 2002: 232) about the fact that anthropocentric orientation has substituted the “era of monologue”, i.e., the focus has been shifted from language as a means of communication onto the personality. Such communicative success in foreign languages is necessarily two-sided (the addresser and the addressee). In our case, the speed of code switching plays a major role. That is why the paradigmatic problems in the theory of bilingualism come to the fore; this, in our opinion, is also quite applicable to the theory of multilingualism. Having in mind that any type of bilingualism and multilingualism presupposes interference, while a person, learning a foreign language, is rarely able to avoid interference, we think it necessary to further research and describe the manifestation of mistakes caused by interference in the speech of students on non-linguistic study programmes.

Interference is studied by a complex of related sciences, that is why the background of its classification can consist of different features (the source, the sphere of functioning, the level of paying attention to differential features of the native language by the multilingual speaker, forms of manifestation of interference, its communicative effect, etc.) (Мечковская 1983: 368).

Research literature differentiates between various types of interference; some of these are going to be presented here. The analysis of deviations, which are characterised by interference, allows stating that there is an interlingual **communicatively irrelevant** interference in the language of Lithuanian students speaking Russian, i.e. the violation of the orthoepic norms of modern Russian does not cause problems in oral communication. The most frequent deviations were noticed at the following levels:

а) **phonetic, orthographic and graphic level.** Most difficulties are caused by the following: the articulation of the phonemes [o] and [e], the absence or the insufficiency of qualitative changes in pronouncing the reduced vowels o, e: *понимаю* [o instead of ъ]; *занятия проходят* [o instead of short a]; *с этой* [o instead of ъ] *специальностью* [o instead of ъ]; *преподают* [o instead of short a]; *проходили* [o instead of ъ, short o] *тему*; *тематика* [e instead of и] *курсовых работ*; *предметы* [e instead of и] *общего* [e instead of ъ] *образования* [o instead of short a]; *переходный период* [e instead of ъ, и]; *проверяла* [o instead of ъ; e instead of и] *задания*. The system of articulation of the mother tongue makes an influence on the orthography and graphics of Russian words and collocations, especially in conveying Lithuanian names and surnames, also names of certain subjects. For instance, *аэродром* [je instead of э]; *Дубявичьуте* [instead of *Дубявичюте*]; *Кяльмэ* [instead of *Кяльме*]; *Луковайтите*, *Памувис* [English w instead of ш]; *Ридите* [и instead of у]; *Шяуляйский* [э instead of я] *университет*; *кабинет* [в instead of б]; *коллекция* [л instead of лл]; *улиса* [с instead of ц], etc.,

б) **lexico-semantic level.** In this case, the impact of the native language is mainly due to the differences in the spread of semantic fields, the specificity of some meanings, lexical compatibility of words, also differences in the expressive and stylistic meanings. For instance, *висит шкаф* [instead of *висят полки*] *с книгами*; *домашнее указание* [instead of *задание*]; *мотивированное* [instead of *мотивационное*] *письмо*; *Шяуляйская государственная коллегия* [instead of *Шяуляйский государственный колледж*]; *школа профессий* [instead of *профтехучилище*]; *работает переводчиком в бюро путешественников* [instead of *путешествий*]; *после студий* [instead of *окончания учебы*]; *техникум переназван* [instead of *переименован*]; *устроение на работу* [instead of *трудоустройство*]; *поговорить с господином* [instead of *руководителем, начальником*]; *представляю рабочее место* [instead of *предприятие*]; *поставить подписку* [instead of *подпись*]. Cases of **mistakes in paronyms** were recorded, e.g., *адресат-адресант*; *желательно-с желанием*; *кампания-компания*; *понятие-понимание*, etc. The students often create new forms and words, for instance: *дружелюбимость* [instead of *дружелюбие*]; *кафедра туризма* или *кафедра святых Пятра и Повиласа* [instead of *кафедра*; *кафедральный собор*]; *получила квит* [instead of *квитанцию*]. A negative phenomenon or a “fashionable” trend in the speech of academic youth is inserting certain English or Russian words: *короче* = in short; *вот* = thus; *OK* = fine; *super* = wonderful, great; *greitoji* = an ambulance. **Barbarisms not to be used:** *čipsai, bantas, parankos, britva, hospisas, hostelis, knopkė, kurtkė, leiblas, menedžeris, štuka, tyneidžeris, tomatai, ukolas, vykendas, žulikas, zelionkė, etc.* (Lietuvių 1998: 433-436) and words with the wrong meaning: *atkrauti, atredaguoti, atremontuoti, įnešti pasiūlymą, etc.* (Lietuvių 1998: 439-446),

в) **grammatical level.** This level is a definite indicator of the manifestation of an interlingual interference. The following examples can be given to illustrate this: а) the wrong usage of the forms of gender: *фабрика моей* [instead of *моего*] *дяди*; *моя* [instead of *мой*] *папа – экономист*; *два* [instead of *две*] *тысячи*; б) mistakes in using case forms: *фасады коттеджей* [instead of *коттеджей*]; *высший* [instead of *высшее*] *образование*; *начинает лекцию с обзором* [instead of *с обзора*] *литературы*; с) mistakes in verb government: *готовится занятиям* [instead of *к занятиям*]; *заботится о мы* [instead of *о нас*]; *от косметолога ждут умения* [instead of *умения*] *выслушать*; *руководить отделу* [instead of *отделом*]; *ответить вопросы* [instead of *на вопросы*].

**Usage of prepositions** also points to the influence of the native language system: *работает на* [instead of *в*] *туристическом агентстве*; *первыми месяцами* [instead of *в первые месяцы*] *было трудно*; *сдал экзамен математики* [instead of *по математике*]; *следующий* [instead of *в следующий*] *семестр буду писать курсовую работу*, etc.

At the level of **syntax**, the interlingual impact is characterised by the fact that deviations from the syntactic norm of modern Russian are closely linked with morphological categories of the native language and the language the student is learning, because syntax is a particular sphere of realisation of morphological categories. The more typical areas affected by the

influence of the native language and resulting in interference mistakes in a foreign language are described above.

One of the main tasks for prospective professionals is mastering various types of scientific/scholarly discourse (summaries, course and diploma papers, projects and their presentation, delivering papers at student and other conferences, etc.). Linguistic analysis of oral and written texts produced in a foreign language and presented above allowed concluding that the same type of interlingual interference is manifested: the character of digressions caused by interference essentially remains the same, independent of the differences in style of linguistic material, which points to the insufficient level of mastering a language. In the process of mastering the scientific sub-style, an interlingual communicatively irrelevant interference can be stated. Besides, "terminological competence" (Kvašytė 2005: 77) remains an important issue, which means the necessity to study terms of various types and ways of making them in the systems of different languages in contact: terminology transfer, word-building synonymy, joining synonyms, using figurative meanings, abbreviations, etc. (Kvašytė 2005: 16-89). The general tendency of vocabulary modernization cannot be forgotten in the present context, too (Словарь 2006: 133).

Thus teaching a foreign language for specific purposes in a non-linguistic institution of higher education under present conditions, according to Kaplina, "is an essential component in professional training, the task of which is to contribute to the quality professional training of specialists, to support students in mastering their future profession" (Каплина 2006: 42).

### Conclusions

1. Frequent cases of manifestation of the impact of the native language described in this article represent communicatively irrelevant interlingual interference. Divergences from the norm of modern Russian are not considered serious obstacles for professional communication.

2. Further development of teaching methodology, new teaching materials, collaboration with students and their independent work as well as motivation can contribute to the development of knowledge and communicative competences in a foreign language (Russian).

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