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BASIC GLOBAL ENGLISH IN NON-NATIVES' COMMUNICATION

Abstract. The goal of this article is to discuss a few simplified English variants used to enable learners to acquire communicative competence in English as a lingua franca because most of the time, non-natives are faced with non-native or non-standard English (in conversations with other non-natives). These variants are: Basic English, Globish, Basic Global English. Globish is considered an auxiliary language culturally neutral. Basic Global English consists of linguistic variants only rarely leading to any communicative breakdown and therefore is widely spoken. The students of Pyatigorsk State University working with foreign tourists carry out their duties in the sphere of contact service due to the following facts:

- foreign tourists speak mostly Basic Global English;
- our students have a good command of English and always observe the principles of intercultural communication.

Keywords: Basic English, Globish, Basic Global English, non-natives, non-native English, Pyatigorsk State University, intercultural communication

In this article we will discuss a few systems that have been used to enable learners to acquire communicative competence in English as a lingua franca in a comparatively fast way:

- Basic English, developed by C. K. Ogden;
- Threshold Level English, developed by Dr. J. A. van Ek and L. Alexander;
- Globish, developed by J.-P. Nerrière;
- Basic Global English, by J. Grzega;
- Nuclear English, by R. Quirk and G. Stein, never fully developed.

The main modern systems are Globish and Basic Global English (BGE).

Basing on the experience of his own, J.-P. Nerrière considers Globish an auxiliary language supposedly culturally neutral. Its characteristic features are:

- 1500 most-common English words;
- simple sentence structures;
- no idioms;
- no jokes [1].

The system of Globish is criticized because it does not seem to be based on any empirical or theoretical observations and shows a tremendous amount of errors and inconsistencies [2].

Basic Global English (BGE) consists of linguistic forms functioning in non-native/non-native communication. The use of non-standard or non-native grammatical variants only rarely leads to any communicative breakdown, whereas most breakdowns occur due to lexical or phonetic obstacles.

The goal of Basic Global English (BGE) is to let learners quickly acquire a level of global communicative competence characterized by tolerance and empathy [2].

The background of BGE is concept of English as a means of communication between non-native speakers derived from observation of successful communication.

The language system of BGE is characterized by:

- only 20 grammar rules;
- basic vocabulary of 750 words (unbound to any specific culture);
- another 250 words related to individual needs and acquired by dictionary work;
- word-formation rules and other strategies to facilitate the denotation of things;
- communicative strategies for the most basic situations [3].

The sphere of interlinguistics is studying international languages in the context of globalization [4]. On the whole, any kind of International English contrasts with British English, American English, South African English, etc. It is culturally neutral, practically oriented and often centered on academic, scientific and business communities.

The business center of Pyatigorsk State University (Pyatigorsk, Russia) has won a contract with the public corporation of “Mosturflot”. Its aim is to provide our students with service industry jobs on board the ships with foreign tourists during the students’ practice / internship. Our students get traditional University education in the sphere of linguistics, have access to professional linguistic training in tourism and service and therefore they can speak the most representative European languages. As we mainly stick to British English it is not at all difficult for our students, non-natives, to communicate with the British, natives. The speech of other natives (Americans, Australians, New Zealanders) sounds a bit “exotic” though quite comprehensible. But the students find some difficulty in communicating with Hindus, non-native English speakers, because of their somewhat specific phonetics and grammar.

There are some situations when foreign tourists (e.g. Spaniards and Italians) have to switch to non-native English. There English is Basic Global and the students’ is Standard.

Besides, the students of Pyatigorsk State University are well familiarized with general rules for intercultural communication [5, 6, 7, 8, 9]. To avoid communication failures, they always observe these principles [2, 3] wherever they

might work - in five-star hotels like “Hilton”, “Hyatt”, “Mariott” or aboard luxurious ships like “Alexander Grin” or “Rossiya”.

Here are a few of the rules.

- Respect other cultures’ values as equally valuable and in the entire context of the other culture.
- Use standard or general colloquial speech. Speak slowly and distinctly. Your sentences shouldn’t be too complex. You may support your utterance with body language.
- Listen and watch others and yourself attentively and consciously. There might be hidden misunderstandings. If you feel that there is a misunderstanding, you should verbalize this in a circumspect manner.
- Be aware that linguistic politeness rules may be different in different situations.
- Feel friendly toward the other. Smile!

So, working with foreign tourists, most of the time non-natives (students) are faced with non-native or non-standard English. Anyhow, it does not prevent the students of Pyatigorsk State University from carrying out their duties in the sphere of contact service wherever they might work. Their communication is always successful.

The practical conclusions are based on the experience gained by the co-author of the article, a student of Pyatigorsk State University Alina Davydenko.

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