

LINGUOCULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE GLOBAL IT COMMUNITY

ЛІНГВОКУЛЬТУРНІ АСПЕКТИ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ У ГЛОБАЛЬНІЙ ІТ-СПІЛЬНОТІ

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The article is devoted to the study of linguistic and cultural aspects of English in the context of the global IT community, where English is the lingua franca and the main means of professional communication between members of international teams. The analysis shows that the effectiveness of communication is determined not by the normative standards of the “native” English language, but by the ability to ensure mutual understanding, intelligibility and adaptation of the language to intercultural contexts, which corresponds to the concept of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and the LinguaFranca Core model. The article examines the language practices of global IT teams, including common terminology, jargon, standardized documentation formats and internal communicative culture. It is emphasized that these practices form the supranational professional identity of the participants, create an emergent culture that includes specific styles of written and oral communication, internal memes and jokes, as well as standards for the design of code and technical documents. The analysis of cultural and linguistic challenges, such as cultural barriers of politeness, contrasting rhetoric and cultural gaps, demonstrates the need for a high level of linguistic and intercultural competence for successful interaction in international teams. The article provides examples of practices from Google, Microsoft and open source projects, which demonstrate that effective communication requires the use of glossaries of terms, style guides, structured documentation templates and training in intercultural interaction. It is shown that the diversity of linguistic and cultural backgrounds of team members stimulates innovation and creativity, increases project productivity and efficiency. The educational aspect is also highlighted: the training of future IT professionals should include modules on English as a second language, simulation of global team scenarios and practice of intercultural communication. In general, English in the global IT community acts not only as a tool for exchanging technical knowledge, but also as an important cultural and communicative resource that forms professional identity, promotes innovation, and ensures the effective work of international teams. The article has practical significance for the development of communication policies in IT companies and educational programs for future specialists, and also expands the scientific understanding of the interaction of language and culture in a professional transnational environment.

Key words: lingua franca, linguocultural aspects, IT-community, intercultural communication, professional identity, transcultural competence.

Стаття присвячена вивченню лінгвістичних та культурних аспектів англійської мови в контексті світової ІТ-спільноти, де англійська мова є lingua franca та основним засобом професійного спілкування між членами міжнародних команд. Аналіз показує, що ефективність комунікації визначається не нормативними стандартами «рідної» англійської мови, а здатністю забезпечити взаєморозуміння, зрозумілість та адаптацію мови до міжкультурних контекстів, що відповідає концепції англійської як лінгва франка (ELF) та моделі LinguaFranca Core. У статті розглядаються мовні практики глобальних ІТ-команд, включаючи спільну термінологію, жаргон, стандартизовані формати документації та внутрішню комунікативну культуру. Підкреслюється, що ці практики формують наднаціональну професійну ідентичність учасників, створюють емерджентну культуру, яка включає специфічні стилі письмового та усного спілкування, внутрішні меми та жарти, а також стандарти оформлення коду та технічних документів. Аналіз культурних та лінгвістичних викликів, таких як культурні бар'єри ввічливості, контрастна риторика та культурні розриви, демонструє необхідність високого рівня лінгвістичної та міжкультурної компетентності для успішної взаємодії в міжнародних командах. У статті наведено приклади практик з Google, Microsoft та проєктів з відкритим кодом, які

демонструють, що ефективна комунікація вимагає використання глосаріїв термінів, посібників зі стилю, шаблонів структурованої документації та навчання міжкультурній взаємодії. Показано, що різноманітність мовного та культурного походження членів команди стимулює інновації та креативність, підвищує продуктивність та ефективність проєктів. Також виділено освітній аспект: підготовка майбутніх ІТ-фахівців повинна включати модулі з англійської як другої мови, моделювання сценаріїв глобальної команди та практику міжкультурної комунікації. Загалом, англійська мова у світовій ІТ-спільноті виступає не лише інструментом обміну технічними знаннями, але й важливим культурним та комунікативним ресурсом, що формує професійну ідентичність, сприяє інноваціям та забезпечує ефективну роботу міжнародних команд. Стаття має практичне значення для розробки комунікаційної політики в ІТ-компаніях та освітніх програм для майбутніх спеціалістів, а також розширює наукове розуміння взаємодії мови та культури у професійному транснаціональному середовищі.

Ключові слова: *lingua franca*, лінгвокультурні аспекти, ІТ-спільнота, міжкультурна комунікація, професійна ідентичність, транскультурна компетентність.

Statement of the problem. In today's interconnected globalized world, English has become not only a means of communication, but also a powerful linguocultural agent that significantly influences the formation of professional identities and cultural norms of participants in the global IT community. The use of English as a *lingua franca* in internationally distributed IT teams ensures seamless communication between culturally diverse technical experts. However, in turn, this also creates significant difficulties. One of the main problems is the asymmetry between native and non-native English speakers: quite often the dominance of English is the cause of certain communicative barriers that affect the accessibility of information and the possibility of participating in international projects. Moreover, the globalization of IT through English can lead to certain "standardized" ways of thinking and cultural homogenization, as this reduces the preservation of local linguistic identity and cultural features.

Another problem is that traditional English language learning is often focused on standard British or American norms and therefore does not always meet the real needs of the professional IT sector. Language strategies in global teams must be flexible, and members must be cross-culturally sensitive in order to be able to exchange information, coordinate work and maintain productive interaction. Thus, there is a need for a thorough linguocultural analysis of English in the context of the global IT community as a means of communication, a cultural mediator and a factor of professional identity.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Scholarly interest in the linguocultural aspects of English in professional and global contexts has been growing over the past decades. One of the main changes examined in English as a *Lingua Franca* (ELF) research is the adaptation of English for international communication to the cultural and linguistic characteristics of its users [7]. ELF research emphasizes the fact that communicative functionality is more important than strict adherence to the norms of "native" English speakers, which paves the way for linguistic innovation and cultural hybridization.

In the IT context, English is not only a technical tool, but also a factor of cultural integration and professional identity. For example, some research shows that global IT teams use English to coordinate complex projects, while language differences can become a source of misunderstandings and conflicts. But on the other hand, there's an emphasis on the role of language in shaping professional practices, norms, and values, which is especially relevant for open source communities and startups, where English shapes the culture of collaboration and innovation.

Ukrainian researchers also raise the issue of English in global IT teams. For example, some linguist investigate the linguocultural problems of students and specialists in Ukraine and note that English is becoming a key component of professional training and intercultural competence. Karachova and Agibalova examine changes in English under the influence of globalization, including gender, slang, and professional variants that adapt to local and cultural contexts [8]. The study of such aspects emphasizes the need for a holistic approach that takes into account not only grammar and vocabulary, but also pragmatics, cultural context, and professional expectations.

Task statement. This article aims to comprehensively investigate the linguistic and cultural aspects of English in the global IT community and to determine the role of English in the formation of professional identity, cultural norms and communicative practices. The article pays special attention to the analysis of the impact of English on the interaction between native and non-native speakers, global and local cultural practices, as well as the development of effective communication strategies in international IT teams.

Research **tasks** include:

1. Review of theoretical approaches to English as a *lingua franca* in a professional context and analysis of its communicative functions.
2. Research on the ways in which English shapes cultural models, professional norms and values in the global IT community.

3. Research on the language practices of multinational IT teams, especially the adaptation of English for effective information exchange and collaboration.

4. Identifying problems and obstacles related to the dominance of the English language and asymmetry in cultural and professional interaction.

5. Identifying tips for developing intercultural competence and adapting the English language in a professional IT environment.

Outline of the main material of the study.

English as a lingua franca in the global IT community is not just a technical tool, but a key communicative resource that supports complex cultural dynamics. In many international IT teams, English is the working language chosen by the participants, even if none of them is a native speaker. The functional role of the language corresponds to the classical concepts of English as a lingua franca, where its value is determined not by strict adherence to “native” norms, but by the ability to ensure effective and understandable communication. According to this approach, the main thing is the desire for intelligibility, not grammatical correctness.

In the IT sphere, this is confirmed by the joint creation of language practices that take into account different cultural backgrounds. Thus, developers, managers, testers from different countries, for example, India, Ukraine, China, the USA, often work together on projects. They agree on terminology, create common standards for documentation and communication, and patterns of communication that are not limited to just “academic” English. The theory of communities of practice explains that such teams create shared resources (including linguistic ones) that arise precisely in the process of interaction. Phonologically, the speech of members of these teams can differ significantly from the standard norms of native speakers.

The concept of Lingua Franca Core, proposed by Jennifer Jenkins, indicates a set of phonetic features that are most important for mutual understanding among non-native speakers, and these features often do not correspond to “natives” of the language, but are sufficient for communication. In real IT teams, this means that the accent or rhythm of speech may be unusual, but this does not interfere with the work – productivity is more important than “perfect” pronunciation.

Linguocultural dimension of English in IT is significant: English lexical units in the IT sphere are developing rapidly, and a large number of terms originate from English or are created within the global community. For example, the terms “microservices”,

“containerization”, “CI/CD” or “frontend/backend” are used in the original English language in most global teams. Research also pays attention to the process of localization of IT terminology. For example, the analysis of glossaries in localized versions of Microsoft Outlook and Google Gmail showed that the company’s stylistic guides influence the choice of terms, as well as the variability of terms.

In the communicative practice of global IT teams, team members often use strategies typical of ELF: paraphrasing, clarification, explanation of context. For example, a foreign engineer may refine some parts of a technical specification, explaining the specifics of his proposal in a way that is better understood by colleagues from other regions. This can happen both orally in a meeting and in writing in project management systems: explanatory notes are added, sometimes examples are provided, to ensure that all participants understand the meaning and that there are no cultural or linguistic misunderstandings.

This linguistic practice also forms a shared professional identity. In global IT communities, participants create a “third space”, this is not just a place of work, but a culture that consists of a combination of their national experience and global norms. Jargon, memes, internal communication styles in Slack or in code, common rules for documents or message formatting often appear. This structured but transnational communicative model is a manifestation of the emergent culture typical of ELF. Researchers of English as a lingua franca, including Baker, emphasize that these cultures are dynamic and adaptive, participants actively create and transform shared cultural forms [5].

However, such communication also has its challenges. One of them is cultural norms of politeness. In teams where people from cultures with a pronounced desire for directness (for example, where the emphasis is on fast work), conflicts may arise with participants from cultures where euphemisms, forms of address or polite wording are more common. For example, a manager from the United States may expect clear and concise messages, while an employee from another culture may try to soften a request with polite introductions; different perceptions can lead to discomfort or misunderstandings if there is no common communication policy.

Another problem is cultural gaps – concepts or metaphors that are inherent in one culture, but may be foreign or misinterpreted in another. In the IT context, this can refer to specific jokes, cultural allusions, or even forms of explanation: for example, if a team uses English humorous analogies based on American pop culture, some members may not

understand or misinterpret them. These gaps can affect documentation, technical presentations, or internal communication if they are not implemented.

It is necessary to state that contrastive rhetoric also plays a big role. The styles of wording in documents, reports, emails, or technical documentation can differ significantly depending on the cultural environment. For example, the way a proposal is argued or a bug is described may correspond to different logics of discourse construction: one engineer may prefer to directly formulate the problem, another to construct the message as a “story” or with context. If such differences are not taken into account, misunderstandings, delays in completing tasks, or even conflicts can arise.

But there are also bright sides to these linguistic and cultural interactions. The diversity of linguistic and cultural resources of global team members can be a source of innovation: people with different mindsets, professional experiences, and cultural practices bring new ideas and approaches. For example, a team of developers from China, Europe, and South America can combine their different perspectives, which will lead to creative solutions – and this is not just a hypothesis: research on global open source projects shows that international teams often have higher internationalization precisely because of shared English README files and documentation. Additionally, the creation of common English terminology and style guides helps to build a transcultural professional culture. In companies such as Microsoft or Google, glossaries of terms and style guides are actively used during the software localization process.

Companies can also be very active in supporting employees’ cross-cultural communication skills. For example, leading IT organizations usually implement training, facilitate communication practices, and create internal style guides, instructions on how to better formulate requests, criticism, and clarifications depending on different team contexts. Such a policy not only reduces the risk of conflicts, but also promotes trust, a favorable atmosphere, and effective joint design.

The educational aspect is no less important. For IT curricula, it is useful to integrate special modules for learning English as a foreign language, not only grammar and technical vocabulary, but also modeling international teams, analyzing cross-cultural cases and practicing communication in different styles. Thus, students acquire not only linguistic, but also transcultural competencies, which will become a valuable resource for them in the global professional sphere.

Another interesting aspect related to technological solutions is that machine translation (MT) can support global teams. Research by Zhang, Owusu, Karpuat, and Ga shows that exchanging machine-translated reports of subgroups (in their native languages) before meetings of global teams significantly improves discussion and understanding. This approach preserves the nuances of local discussions, but at the same time provides a common context for meetings in English [9].

Moreover, English is seen in large corporations not only as a communication channel, but also as a cultural marker. For example, a significant number of Ukrainian IT companies and employees confirm that a high level of English proficiency was one of the reasons for their successful integration into global companies such as Google and Microsoft [2]. Roksolana Mykhaylyk, who worked at Google, Amazon and Microsoft during her career as a research linguist, claims that English is not just a tool that helps her perform technical tasks, but part of her professional identity and opportunities.

In general, this means that English as a *lingua franca* in the global IT community is much more than just a language for exchanging code or documentation. It is a living system of cultural and communicative practices that shapes professional identity, stimulates innovation and at the same time requires sensitivity to cultural differences. Real-world cases from companies like Google and Microsoft, as well as research on global open source projects, demonstrate that success depends not only on technical skills, but also on linguistic agility, shared communication strategies, and the ability to build transcultural connections.

Conclusions. The analysis of the linguocultural aspects of English in the global IT community provides the first of several key conclusions. First, English in this context is a *lingua franca* and the main tool for professional communication between members of international teams, regardless of their native language. The effectiveness of this communication is determined not by the “native” standards of English, but by the ability to ensure mutual understanding, as confirmed by the theory of English as a *Lingua Franca* and the concept of *Lingua-Franca Core* by Jennifer Jenkins. The emphasis on intelligibility, rather than grammatical perfection, is the main feature of the successful functioning of the language in global IT teams.

In other words, in the process of team activity, participants create transnational linguistic practices that include technical vocabulary, slang, and standardized documentation formats; this allows for the

formation of a transnational professional identity. Participants working together on projects create an emergent culture: certain ways of communicating, memes, insider humorous allusions, standards for presenting source code and documentation. This process testifies to the assertion of the theory of communities of practice, which states that knowledge and linguistic resources are created within the framework of social interaction.

Third, the most complicating factors of linguocultural dynamics in global IT teams are cultural barriers of politeness, contrasting rhetoric, and cultural gaps. Different ideas about politeness and styles of message formulation can lead to misunderstandings or conflicts in cases where nothing is said about a common communicative norm. Similarly, different methods of structuring documents and presentations can affect the perception of arguments or technical solutions. These aspects already show that successful communication in a global team requires a high level of linguistic and cultural competence.

This means that the success of teams in the most successful companies, such as Google and Microsoft, and internationally, is determined by the ability of their members to adapt to diverse communicative and cultural contexts. Common glossaries, style guides, structured communication models, and active cross-cultural facilitation are used to reduce misunderstandings and improve team performance. The above facts prove the importance of a systematic approach to managing linguocultural interaction.

The fifth point is that the linguocultural aspects of English in IT support innovative and creative work. The diversity of linguistic and cultural knowledge of team members inspires new ideas and solutions. The example of teams from China, Europe, and South America illustrates the synergy that occurs when different cultural approaches to problem solving and discussion lead to highly effective results. This combination of cultures and linguistic practices thus proves that a transcultural environment positively contributes to professional development and, accordingly, increases the effectiveness of IT projects.

In other words, the training of future IT professionals should also include the development of intercultural communicative competence in addition to technical English. Practical ELF modules are available; Finally, global team scenarios, cross-cultural analysis cases and communication styles are available for their assimilation.

In general, English in the global IT community plays a multifunctional role: it is simultaneously a technical means of communication, a cultural marker and a factor in the formation of professional identity. The successful fulfillment of these functions depends on the combination of linguistic flexibility, cultural sensitivity and the systematic implementation of communicative practices. Real-world cases from large IT companies and open source projects confirm that linguocultural adaptation is a critically important prerequisite for productive, innovative, and effective global teams.

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