



STYLISTIC AND LEXICAL FEATURES AND DIFFERENCES IN RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT

The theses compares stylistic and lexical features of the Russian and English languages in terms of register variability, expressive means (tropes and sound devices), as well as mechanisms of lexical enrichment and phraseology. Using brief illustrative examples, the study demonstrates how the choice of vocabulary and stylistic strategies affects tone, evaluative meaning, and the pragmatic effect of an utterance. For clarity, tables and diagrams with conditional indicators are presented as a model of comparative analysis.

KEYWORDS: Stylistics, lexicology, Russian language, English language, register, pragmatics, phraseology, metaphor, metonymy, alliteration, epithet.

INTRODUCTION

The Russian and English languages differ typologically and in their cultural and historical development, which is reflected in their stylistic norms and lexical organization. A comparative approach makes it possible to more accurately understand the distinction between neutral, formal (bookish), and colloquial speech, as well as to avoid literal transfer of imagery in translation. The purpose of these theses is to briefly characterize the key stylistic and lexical tendencies in both languages and to demonstrate them through concrete examples. The objectives include describing registers and typical markers of formality, comparing frequent expressive devices, identifying lexical features (word formation, borrowings, idioms), and formulating practical conclusions for translation and language teaching.

Stylistic Features: Register and Expressiveness. Both languages distinguish several registers (neutral, formal/bookish, and colloquial); however, the means of marking these registers differ. English official communication is characterized by a strong tendency toward clarity and brevity (plain style), while formality is often expressed through the use of Latinate vocabulary and impersonal constructions. In Russian, the bookish style frequently allows more extended syntactic structures and nominal constructions (the predominance of abstract nouns). Example: Formal ↔ Neutral Register (Comparison)

Russian	English
Formal: "В соответствии с вышеизложенным просим предоставить информацию..."	Formal: "In accordance with the above, we request that you provide the information..."
Neutral: "Пожалуйста, пришлите информацию..."	Neutral: "Please send the information..."

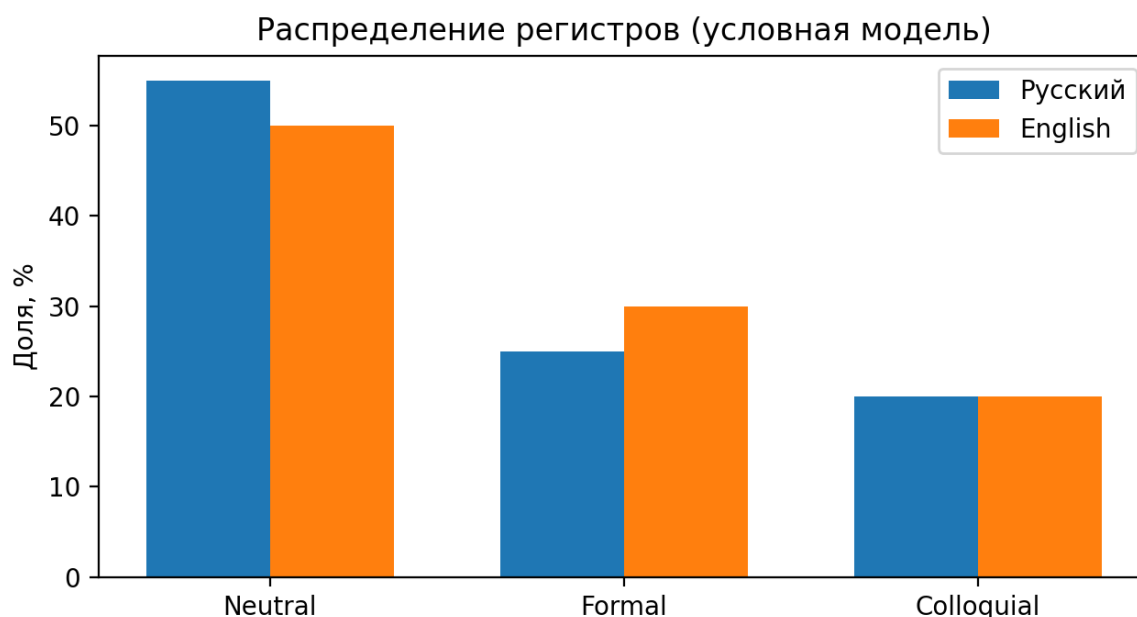
The analysis shows that in the formal style of both languages, set phrases (“в соответствии”, “in accordance”) and nominalizations are intensified, whereas the neutral style prefers direct verbal constructions and explicit address to the recipient.

Expressive Means: Tropes and Sound Devices

Device	Example (Russian)	Example (English)
Metaphor	“Время — река: уносит всё.”	“Time is a river; it carries everything away.”
Metonymy	“Читаю Пушкина.” (the author’s works)	“I’m reading Pushkin.” (works)
Synecdoche	“Нужны руки на стройке.” (workers)	“All hands on deck.” (people)
Alliteration	“Шорох шёлка, шёпот шагов.”	“Wild winds whistle.”
Epithet	“горькая правда”, “тихий вечер”	“a bitter truth”, “a silent night”

The similarity lies in the universality of tropes: figurative meaning and semantic transfer are possible in any language. Differences emerge in genre preferences and contextual use. In

English, alliteration is often employed for memorability (poetry, slogans), whereas in Russian it is more commonly used for sound imagery and emotional intensification. Epithets in Russian literary texts tend to be more extended and may combine with inversion, while English epithets are frequently realized through fixed collocations.



Lexical Features: Word Formation, Borrowings, and Phraseology

The Russian language has a highly developed word-formation system (suffixation and prefixation), which makes it possible to express evaluative meanings as well as aspectual nuances within a single lexical family: dom — domik — domishko (“house — small house — shabby little house”), pisat’ — dopisat’ — perepisat’ — podpisat’ (“to write — to finish writing — to rewrite — to sign”). In English, evaluative meaning is more often conveyed analytically, through adjectives, adverbs, the choice of lexical items (small/tiny, pleasant/awful), and contextual cues. For example:

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
«Он построил домик у озера» (суффикс уменьшительности выражает тёплую оценку).	“He built a small cottage by the lake” (оценка через прилагательное и выбор слова).

Borrowings in Russian actively enrich the vocabulary of technology, business, and media (e.g., startup, deadline, streaming), whereas English has historically absorbed a large layer of French and Latin vocabulary, which often serves as a marker of formality and bookish style (commence vs start; assist vs help). In Russian, a similar function is performed by synonymous pairs such as pristupit’ vs nachat’ (“to commence” vs “to start”) and sodeistvovat’ vs pomoch’ (“to assist” vs “to help”). Phraseology and idiomatic expressions reveal cultural specificity. Even when meanings coincide, the underlying imagery often differs: “delo v shlyape” ≈ “it’s in the bag”; “ni ryba ni myaso” ≈ “neither fish nor fowl.” For language learners, it is important to memorize idioms as ready-made semantic units and to select functional rather than literal equivalents.

Figure 1. Stylistic Devices (Conditional Model)

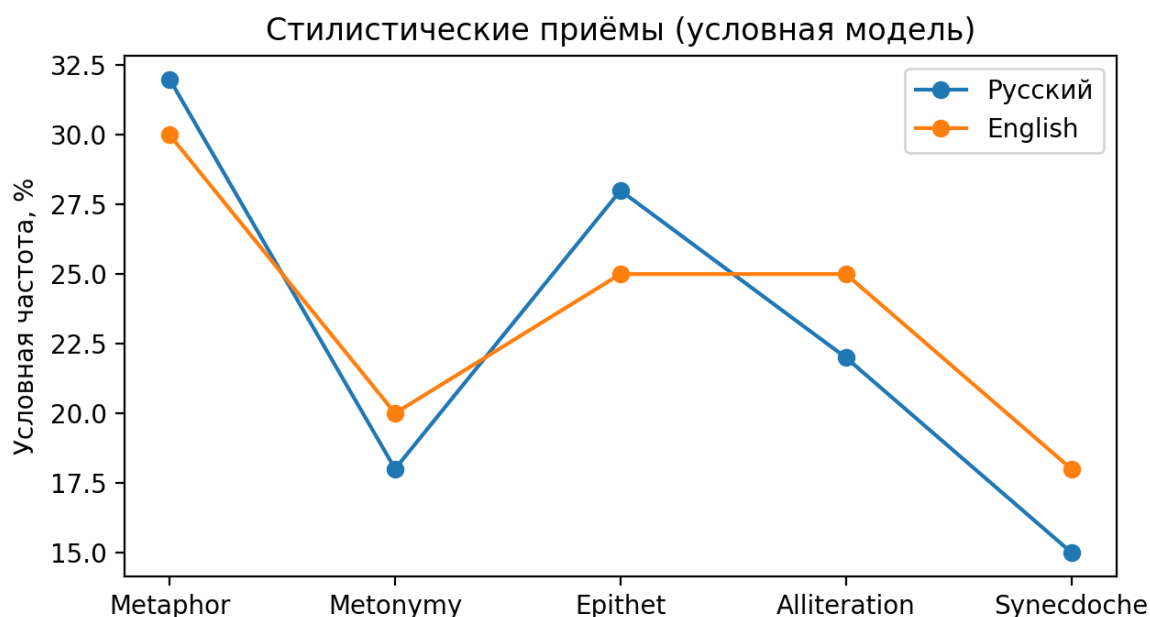
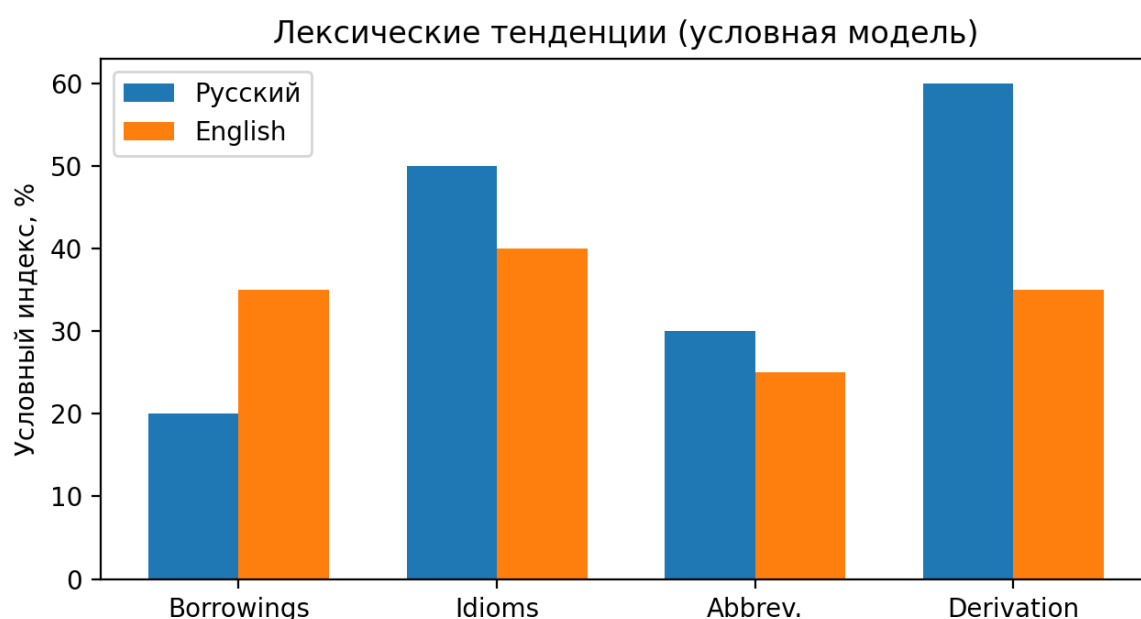


Figure 2. Lexical Trends (Conditional Model)



Practical Implications (Translation and Language Teaching)

In translation, it is essential to preserve the register: an official English phrase is often rendered into Russian either through a neutral business-style formula or a more direct construction, depending on the genre. Politeness in English is frequently expressed through indirectness (Could you..., Would you mind...), whereas in Russian politeness may remain direct but is marked by lexical cues such as *pozhaluysta* ("please") and *bud'te dobry* ("be so kind"). Idioms should be translated according to their function and communicative effect; it is usually preferable to replace them with a close idiomatic equivalent in the target language rather than to calque the imagery. For language teaching, it is useful to compile a mini-corpus of examples and to identify markers of formality and evaluative meaning (lexical choice, modal words, clichés, and sound symbolism).

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