

Review

Furiassi, Cristiano, Virginia Pulcini and Félix Rodríguez González (eds.). 2012. *The Anglicization of European Lexis*. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

This volume contains fifteen papers devoted to the description of English influence on the lexis of European languages, and covers English influence on Armenian, Danish, French, German, Italian, Norwegian, Polish, Serbian and Spanish with some cross-linguistic comparisons. The papers are mainly corpus-based and, as the editors point out (2012: 1), do not engage in critical discussions of attitudes towards Anglicisms and the dominance of Anglophone culture.

The editors' introduction provides a lucid overview of English influence in general and lexical borrowings in particular. The findings of the papers are set against a background where English is on the verge of becoming a second language rather than a foreign language in some European countries, and English being used as a *lingua franca* in higher education, business and international politics. The term Anglicisms adopted for the phenomena studied in the volume covers all kinds of lexical influence from English: from the most obvious cases of direct unadapted loans (*T-shirt*), to adapted loans (Danish *strejke* from *strike*) and false Anglicisms (i.e., loans "made up of English lexical elements but unknown or used with a conspicuously different meaning in English" (2012: 7), such as German *Handy* for *mobile phone*) to loan translations (Italian *carta di credito* for *credit card*) and semantic loans (Norwegian *het* for *hot* ('trendy')). In the introductory chapter the editors do a fine job of combining these categories with questions related to borrowed phraseology and the level of integration of Anglicisms.

The book is divided into three sections. Section I addresses more general issues of classifying, counting and analyzing Anglicisms in different languages.

To begin with, MacKenzie discusses the relationship between proficiency in English and types of borrowing. He predicts that increasing proficiency in English in continental Europe will lead to fewer false Anglicisms and more abstract nouns and adjectives being borrowed. The strength of the paper lies in the discussion of individual examples

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(such as *fair (play)*) rather than in the coherent description of overall trends.

The aim of the following paper by Winter-Froemel & Onysko is to devise a pragmatic distinction between types of Anglicisms. They propose a distinction based on whether the concept already exists in the language (in this case German) (*Kids* for *Kinder*) or not (*Software*). Anglicisms which already have a semantic equivalent in the recipient language tend to express additional pragmatic meanings, as for instance *Deal* instead of *Geschäft* indicates a dubious deal. The findings from the corpus study show that through increasing frequencies, Anglicisms can become the default expression, such as *Baby*, which in many contexts has replaced *Kleinkind* and *Säugling*. The paper combines quantitative corpus data with detailed analyses of individual examples in a particularly fruitful manner.

In perhaps the most methodologically ambitious paper Callies, Onysko & Ogiermann investigate gender variation in English loanwords in German. The study includes both a large-scale investigation of newspaper corpora from Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and an experimental study comparing speakers from across the German-speaking area. Results show that variation is greater with nouns that do not have semantic or morpho-phonological schemas to base their gender selection on, or that do not have straightforward German equivalents. Furthermore, there is more variation among informants than in the corpus data, and southern German informants generally produce more variation than northern ones, in spite of the fact that the Austrian and Swiss corpus data contain less variation. Because of these differences, the authors conclude that “certain phenomena of language use call for the consideration of different types of linguistic data” (2012: 87). This paper is impressive in its scope and its findings, and calls for similar investigations in other languages.

Graedler’s paper in turn raises a number of important methodological issues regarding the study of Anglicisms in Norwegian. She clearly illustrates the problems of comparing different studies based on different materials, methods and definitions. For instance, should fully integrated Anglicisms such as *jobbe* (from *job*) be included or not, is *fit for fight* to be counted as one item or three, and is *plateshop* (‘record shop’) the same lexeme as *record shop*? Graedler shows convincingly that

differences in definitions can lead to wildly different results, and therefore suggests that future studies should have a joint basis.

Andersen reports on the development of semi-automatic methods for Anglicism retrieval in Norwegian. The tools developed retrieve Anglicisms from a newspaper monitor corpus partly based on *chagrams* (sequences of *n* characters) typically found in English, but not in Norwegian words (e.g., *ect*, *row*). The results show that any tool used to identify Anglicism candidates must be combined with the linguistic knowledge of the researchers.

The paper by Prčić presents the problems of compiling a dictionary of Anglicisms in Serbian called *Du yu speak anglosrpski?* and also evaluates the pros and cons of this dictionary. The words included had to belong to everyday vocabulary, they had to be integrated into the system of Serbian at least to some extent, they should not have existed in Serbian for more than 30 years, and they should be more frequent than the minimum threshold set by the compilers. Prčić concludes that the corpus on which the dictionary was based should have been bigger and more varied in order to take into account more kinds of styles and registers. He also concludes that the compilers have failed in their prescriptive aim to encourage a “more responsible attitude towards an uncritical and erratic use of recent Anglicisms” (2012: 134), because the general Serbian public are indifferent to the (over-)use of such words.

Galstyan completes Section I by discussing the levels of adaptation of Anglicisms in Armenian. This study, which is mainly based on introspection, covers a wide range of phenomena from phonetic integration to grammar and semantics. Some loanwords have acquired new meanings (such as the Armenian equivalent of *bikini* which also refers to ‘all kinds of women’s underwear consisting of two pieces’). The author claims that this is the case for only few items, but unfortunately, no statistics are provided.

Section II deals with English-induced phraseology, i.e. English influence on multi-word units in other languages. Loan translations are usually not recognized by non-linguists as the result of English influence, and such influence also appears to have been largely overlooked by linguists. The papers in this section show that the sheer volume of English loan translations in other languages is astounding, and in view of this, it is surprising how little attention has been devoted to this area.

Because these articles cover new ground, they are also among the most interesting in the volume.

Gottlieb investigates English influence on Danish phraseology. This is done against the backdrop of the status of English in Denmark, where 86% of the population claim to speak it, universities and corporations encourage the use of English and young people have a positive attitude towards English loans. A strength of this paper is that the author not only considers 'handpicked' items (*det faktum at (the fact that); have sex (have sex)*), but also includes types randomly selected from a dictionary (*varm kartoffel (hot potato)*). It turns out that almost all of these have increased their shares in comparison to their native Danish competitors (e.g., *slutte op bag/om* for *bakke op*) in the last few decades. Interestingly, average shares for the randomly selected multi-word units were higher than those for the handpicked ones. This finding leads the author to the conclusion that a corpus-linguistic approach is crucial in such investigations, because people usually notice conspicuous uses of language while less marked elements tend to go unnoticed.

The paper by Martí Solano covers loan translations and semantic borrowings in the French press. The study centres on a selection of phrases classified as Anglicisms in the *Dictionnaire des expressions et locutions*, and also on some not included in that dictionary. The results show that many calques (e.g., *plafond de verre (glass ceiling); effet domino (domino effect)*) have only recently been incorporated into the French language and are increasing in use. The author discusses the level of integration of the loans as reflected in their overall frequencies, explanations added in the text and typographical markers.

In a similar study of recent Anglicisms in Spanish, Oncins-Martínez looks at typical loan translations (*techo de cristal* for *glass ceiling*) but also at semantic Anglicisms (e.g., *icono* adopting new meanings due to English influence ('small sign or picture on a computer screen')). It is perhaps most striking to see how English is also affecting the meanings of words and phrases in other languages. The corpora used allow the author to compare usage in European and American Spanish.

In the next article, Fiedler discusses English phraseological units in German, covering both direct loans and loan translations. Some direct loans occur in German texts (e.g., *an apple a day keeps the doctor away*), but the main part of the article deals with loan translations. Some of these are used to organize discourse (*in einer/der Nussschale (in a nutshell)*);

das Ding ist (the thing is)), while others, such as the old favourite *gläserne Decke/Glasdecke (glass ceiling)*, denote new cultural phenomena. Fiedler's corpus material shows that translated phraseological units vary in form over time, as seen with *gläserne Decke/Glasdecke*. The author discusses three criteria that can be used to prove Anglo-American origin: (1) use in English-speaking contexts (e.g., *der Elefant im Raum (the elephant in the room)* in connection with the American election), (2) explicit metacommunicative signals of the origin, and (3) variability in form. The last criterion is slightly puzzling, however, since many non-loan idioms also (initially) display a degree of variation. This is nevertheless a solid study providing new insights into the adoption of a wide range of English phenomena into German.

The section concludes with Rozumko's paper on English influence on Polish proverbs. This corpus-based investigation shows not only how pervasive the English language is, but also how pervasive Anglo-American cultural patterns are. The author proposes that English proverbs relating to empirical science (e.g., *Facts speak for themselves*) can be taken as a sign that the English "culture of facts" is beginning to affect traditional Polish ways of thinking.

The volume is concluded by three articles in Section III on Anglicisms in specialized discourse. First of all, Bergh & Ohlander present findings from a cross-linguistic survey of English direct loans in football lexis. The study is based on 25 terms considered to be central to football (e.g., *kick-off, tackle*) and their occurrence in 16 European languages. Rather than basing their study on corpora, as most authors in the volume, the authors collect their data from a dictionary, namely Görlach's *A Dictionary of European Anglicisms*. Judging from this material, there are considerable differences in the likelihood of languages borrowing English football terminology. Relying solely on a dictionary rather than combining this with corpora and informants has its disadvantages. Finnish ends up at the bottom of the list of languages borrowing football words in this study, but a search on Finland's largest football discussion forum Futisforum2 gives up to twenty (rather than six) terms borrowed directly or used in slightly modified forms. This suggests that a corpus-based follow-up study is needed.

According to Bergh & Ohlander's paper, Germanic languages such as Norwegian and Dutch are most likely to borrow English football terminology directly. The authors nevertheless show convincingly how

the individual histories of the different languages have influenced the propensity to borrow English terms directly, which leads to considerable variation within language families. Some of the terms occur in (almost) all the 16 languages investigated, while others are much rarer. Terms denoting central football notions like *corner*, *dribble* and *offside* are among the most common direct loans. A part of the explanation proposed is that some of these terms are difficult to translate and define.

Gaudio's paper looks at economics-related Anglicisms in the Italian version of the *Official Journal of the European Union*. The terms in this study were selected through a process of keywords extraction, and from the keywords, 80 terms from the area of economics (e.g., *business angels* ('private investors in early-stage businesses')) were singled out. Needless to say, a method based on automatically retrieved types has its advantages over lists of words compiled solely on the base of intuition. The words and multi-word units thus identified were classified into three stages of incorporation: (1) items which occur only very rarely, (2) semi-incorporated Anglicisms which are either accompanied by or alternate with a translation, and (3) fully incorporated Anglicisms which are hardly ever translated. Gaudio's case studies of specific items reveal individual differences in usage patterns.

Finally, Fusari presents corpus findings on Anglicisms and false Anglicisms in Italian newspapers. The terms relate to economics and aviation in connection with Alitalia's bailout. Although some of these terms occur with translation couplets in the same texts (e.g., *outsourcing* and *esternalizzazione*), one of the key findings is that many specialized terms are left without definitions, or are given incomplete or vague definitions. This relates both to true Anglicisms and false Anglicisms (e.g., *bad company* for *bad assets*). Fusari notes that it is difficult to determine whether these practices of using Anglicisms are caused by bias in newspaper reporting or whether they are due to largely unconscious processes.

The Anglicization of European Lexis constitutes a significant contribution to the study of the growing influence of English on other European languages. Its main strength lies in its description of the phenomena and in some of the methods used rather than in theoretical innovation. Reading the studies devoted to loan translations was particularly rewarding since they chart territory that is relatively unexplored. A weakness in some cases is that the selection of the items

investigated is based on criteria that are not entirely transparent. However, this is probably due to the exploratory nature of many papers, and only calls for further studies to be carried out on more lexical items in a wider range of languages. This collection of papers will undoubtedly serve as inspiration for further investigations.

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