

## DO WE REALLY UNDERSTAND ANGLICISMS USED IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY TERMINOLOGY?

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**Abstract:** *The English language has indubitably become the language of world communication and as such it is generally accepted as a consequence of globalization. As a result, English has a great impact on almost every language in the world, including Serbian. Consequently, anglicisms are very frequently used in Serbian especially in the domain of tourism and increasingly in hospitality terminology.*

*This is a corpus based research. The corpus was extracted from numerous web sites and brochures of Serbian hotels, restaurants and tourism agencies. The examples from the corpus were then used to create a questionnaire in order to determine whether the readers, or the visitors of the mentioned web sites, actually understand the anglicisms used in tourism and hospitality terminology in the Serbian language. And whether this new hybrid language often called Angloserbian facilitates the communication between the reader and the writer or, on contrary, makes it impossible for the reader to understand the message, or even worse, the message is misunderstood.*

**Key words:** *anglicisms, tourism and hospitality terminology, Angloserbian language, translational equivalents*

### 1. Linguistic Angloglobalization

Today, the English language has indubitably become the language of world communication, a *lingua franca*. The global expansion of this language started in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when USA became the leading world force in every domain, thus having a crucial role in the global expansion of the English language. The fast-growing technological prosperity, the computer revolution and invention of the internet brought upon the absolute domination of the English language. Rapidly, various scientific, educational, entertainment and other information have become available in the English language to millions of people. Consequently, through mass media and the internet, the

English language found its way into every kind of written and spoken means of communication.

In the last ten years, we witnessed a great influx of English words into Serbian (and not only Serbian). This unique linguistic, sociological and cultural phenomenon initiated the linguistic anglomania and became a recognizable status symbol.

Consequently, the massive influence of the English language on Serbian brought upon a gradual hybridization of the Serbian language creating in such a way, a new, hybrid language which can be named Angloserbian. Angloserbian is a new sociolect used mostly by young urban people who are consciously or unconsciously using English words in the Serbian language considering themselves to be more fashionable, refined and socially superior.

This hybrid language is in fact a variety of Serbian language which has adopted the semantic, pragmatic, grammatical and even spelling norms of the English language (Prcic 2005: 56). It is safe to say, that the Angloserbian language represents a linguistic anomaly which developed parallel linguistic norms which are incorporated into every linguistic domain (Panic-Kavcic 2006: 21, Prcic 2005: 78):

**Spelling.** Namely, the English spelling is used in the Serbian language mostly because people do not know the actual spelling norms of the Serbian language, so they simply adopt the spelling norms of the English language and use them in Serbian without phonetic transcription. For example: *web site* instead of *vebsajt*, or *e-mail* instead of *imejl*.

**Grammar.** The structure of compounds consisting of two nouns like *chocolate cake*, *cheese cake* is simply copied into Serbian (*čokolada kolač*, *sir torta*), even though there is an actual Serbian construction which corresponds to the English one (*čokoladni kolač*, *torta od sira*).

**Semantics.** The words of the English language are simply used in the Serbian language even though there is a Serbian translational equivalent. For example: the word *edukacija* (from English *education*) is used instead of *obrazovanje*, or *menadžment* (from English *management*) instead of *rukovodstvo*, *poslodavstvo* or *menadžer* (from English *manager*) instead of *rukovodilac*, *šef*, *upravnik*, *director*.

**Pragmatics.** Refers to the use of English discourse norms even though there are translational equivalents in the Serbian language. For

example: *Mogu li da Vam pomognem?* (from English *Can I help you?*) instead of simply *Izvolite*.

Due to its enormous influence on every aspect of our professional and personal lives, English terms are very frequently used in the Serbian language especially in the domain of tourism and increasingly in hospitality terminology. The research conducted for this paper has shown that anglicisms have a great impact on their Serbian translation equivalents at all levels: written, spoken, grammatical, semantic and pragmatic. A question arises whether this anglomania has positive or negative consequences. And whether the people who visit websites actually understand the information presented to them or the frequent use of anglicisms and Angloserbian language in fact makes the communication more difficult since the reader does not really understand the message the writer wanted to convey.

## 2. The Research

This is a corpus based research which aim was to determine whether the examinees fully understood the anglicisms used in tourism and hospitality terminology.

### 2.1. The Questionnaire and the Corpus

The corpus for the research was extracted from various web sites of different hotels and restaurants in Serbia as well as web sites of Serbian tourist agencies. The corpus included all the Serbian sentences in which an English word or phrase has been used. The sentences were copied as they occurred in the above mentioned sites, this is why some Serbian sentences from the corpus consist of words with the original English spelling and in some sentences the phonetic transcription has been used. The corpus consists of 100 sentences which were then used to create a questionnaire.

The questionnaire consists of 15 Serbian sentences with 29 anglicisms. The anglicisms were underlined in each sentence. The questionnaire also included additional questions which helped clarify whether the examinees actually understood the anglicism or not.

Namely, the first examinees' task was to state whether they understand, fully or partially, the underlined anglicism in the given sentence. If they understood the anglicism they had to provide its Serbian translational equivalent. Finally, the examinees had to state whether they consider the underlined word or phrase a foreign word or

they think the word has been domesticated and adopted into the Serbian language, and as such can be freely used.

An example question from the questionnaire:

**Check in i check out vreme određeni su prema pravilima objekta.**

Do you understand the meaning of the underlined words or phrases?

YES NO PARTIALLY

If you understood the meaning of the underlined words or phrases, please replace them with Serbian translation equivalents, if such replacement is possible.

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To what extent do you consider the underlined words or phrases foreign? 1 2 3

- 1- the underlined word looks and sounds completely foreign / I have never heard nor used it in my life
- 2 - the underlined word looks and sounds foreign, but I might use it in this sentence or elsewhere
- 3 - the underlined word is domesticated and I do not see why we would not use it in this sentence or elsewhere

## **2.2. Examinees**

The examinees were divided into three groups. The first group consisted of university professors of hospitality management, restaurant management, gastronomy management and tourism management. The second group of examinees consisted of students of hospitality management, restaurant management, gastronomy management and tourism management. And the third group consisted of other university graduated people who do not have any professional knowledge of tourism and hospitality terminology.

The total number of examinees is 45. Each of the three groups had 15 examinees.

Such structure of the examinees gave a better and clearer insight into the understanding of anglicisms used in hospitality and tourism terminology.

The initial hypothesis was that the professors will know all the underlined words or phrases and will be able to provide the accurate translational equivalents, while the third group was expected to have the

least knowledge of the meaning of anglicisms used in hospitality and tourism terminology. And the knowledge of students of hospitality and tourism was expected to be somewhere in between.

### 3. The Results of the Research

The research has shown that the majority of the examinees answered that they understood the underlined words or phrases without providing the translational equivalent, thus answering the third question by circling the number 3, expressing in such a way their opinion that the underlined anglicism has been domesticated and can be freely used in the Serbian language. The professors did not provide a Serbian translational equivalent in 46.6 % of their answers, students in 40.2% and the third group of the examinees did not provide a Serbian translational equivalent in 32.1% of their answers. This can be explained by the fact that the examinees are familiar with the meaning of the underlined anglicisms and often use them or come across them in the relevant literature.

On the other hand, there were examinees who stated that they understood the underlined anglicism, but provided an incorrect translation of the given word. This happened in 20% of the total answers of all the examinees.

Professors provided the incorrect translational equivalent in 9% of the examples, students in 17% and other examinees in 14% of the examples regardless of whether they stated that they understood the underlined anglicism or not.

The incorrect answers are most often literal or word for word translations of the anglicisms without any consideration of the grammatical or semantic rules of the Serbian language, for example: *cena prvog minuta, u prvom momentu, prvog minuta, početni minut* for *first minute price*, *servis za budjenje* for *wake-up service*, *prevozne usluge, transport prevoza* for *transport services*, *servis za limuzine, limuzina servis* for *limo service*, *sobna usluga* for *room service*, *reklamno upravljanje* for *marketing management*, *proveriti* for *check-in*, *užina bar* for *snack bar*.

On the other hand, even though the examinees said that they understood the underlined anglicisms they provided completely incorrect translational equivalents which prove that they do not know the actual meaning of the anglicisms. For example: *Ljudi koji brinu o gostima u odredjenoj firmi, osoba koja reklamira neki hotel, poznata licnost* for *manager*, *prženi sir* for *cheeseburger*, *dostava hrane*,

*serviranje hrane, promocija, spremanje hrane, ishrana for catering, kalsa, imidž, vrste luksuznih hotela, popularni, poznati, jedinstven, lanac hotela for brand, salon lepote, dobra linija for fitness and spa.*

Lastly, a surprisingly small number of the examinees stated that they understood the underlined word or phrase and actually provided the correct translational equivalent. This happened in 42.6% of the professors' and students' answers and 51% of the answers of the third group of the examinees.

Some of the correct answers the examinees provided are: *cena rane rezervacije for first minute, program putovanja for intinerery, usluživanje u sobi, usluga pranja, usluga buđenja for room service, laundry service, wake up service, upravljanje tržišnim poslovanjem for marketing menagement, rezervacija for booking, marka for brand, sve usluge su uključene u cenu for all inclusive, prva (početna) ponuda for first minute, prijavljivanje i odjavljivanje for check in and check out, kanapei, sitni zalogaji for finger food.*

As previously mentioned, the questionnaire consisted of fifteen questions, every question had three additional questions. The first was to state whether the examinees fully or understood the question or did not understand the question. The second additional question was to provide a Serbian translational equivalent and the third to state to what extent they consider the word foreign.

The research has shown that the majority of examinees answered that they understand the underlined anglicisms. The anglicism that was unfamiliar with the most examinees is *itinerary*. Only one professor, thirteen students and seven third group examinees stated that they do not know what itinerary is and two professors, two students and one third group examinee and said that they partially understand that word.

One of the most interesting results of this research is the fact that the professors consider the majority of the anglicisms in the questionnaire domesticated and already a part of the Serbian language and as such they should not be translated, but freely used in the Serbian language. The anglicisms the all examinees consider domesticated are given in the table below.

Table 1. The domesticated anglicisms

	professors	students	others
check in, check out	3	7	3
first minute	5	3	5
all inclusive	6	10	6
booking	5	5	3
itinerary	7	2	3
brand	6	9	9
fitness and spa center	11	10	7
transport service, rent-a-car, limo service	6	7	6
room service, laundry service, wake up service...	4	4	1
snack bar, brunch, menu, buffet, finger food	6	6	4
catering	9	12	8
steak	7	9	3
hamburger, cheeseburger, milkshake	13	9	9
marketing	11	10	7
managers	9	11	9

According to the results of the questionnaire, it can be argued that the most domesticated anglicisms that already are in the wide use in the Serbian language are *fitness and spa*, *marketing*, *manager*, *all inclusive*.

On the other hand, the words which are considered completely foreign are *itinerary*, *steak*.

According to the results of the questionnaire, it can be concluded that only 45.4 % of the questions were answered correctly by the examinees. Thus, a small percentage of the examinees actually understood the underlined anglicisms, which indicates that the Angloserbian words are not quite clear and familiar to the public. Thus, even though striving to sound posh, modern and “educated” the creators or writers of websites do not actually convey the intended message, rather the readers or visitors of such websites do not understand or, what is even worse, misunderstand the information provided on the hotel, restaurant websites and websites of tourist agencies.

The writers or creators of web sites should always bear in mind that the purpose of any kind of communication is the correct interpretation of the intended message. In other words, the information must be communicated in such a way that the readers can easily interpret the information correctly. Maybe before using the anglicism, the writers should ask themselves whether there already exists a Serbian word that expresses the same meaning. Or the idea can be productively conveyed by other linguistic means not just by copying the English word into the Serbian sentence.

It should be pointed out, that the intention of the authors of this paper was never to fully exclude the use of anglicisms. The influx of foreign words into any language is a natural process, especially in the modern times, but it should be channeled by nurturing the native language as much as possible. It could be done by introducing topics such as *Languages in Contact* and *Contrastive Analysis of the English and Serbian Language* into curriculums of both English and Serbian language courses in elementary and secondary schools. A due attention should be paid to the phonetic transcription of the English words and the Serbian orthography and spelling.

The most intriguing result of this research is that it is the university professors who stated that the majority of the anglicisms in the questionnaire are domesticated and as such should not be translated into Serbian, but still offered the accurate translational equivalents which proves that the translational equivalents do exist in Serbian and that majority of the professors know them. Therefore, it is our suggestion that the university professors point out the Serbian translational equivalents to the students even though the anglicism is frequently used.

It is important to point out that the authors of this paper do not consider that the use of anglicisms should be avoided at all costs, since they enrich and modernize not only the Serbian language but the culture as well (Bugarski 1996: 23), but the use of anglicisms should not come down to just copying the English words into the Serbian language.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The examinees' answers to the questions in the questionnaire have proven a very poor knowledge and understanding of anglicisms. Even though only 3.5% of all the examinees answered that they do not understand the underlined anglicism, it turned out that the majority of the examinees who answered that they understood the anglicisms in fact

did not provide the correct translational equivalent. A question arises: what poses a greater difficulty for the reader, when he/she does not understand the anglicism and is aware of that or when the reader thinks that he/she understands the anglicism when in fact he/she does not interpret it in the correct way. It might be argued that there is a communication gap between the creators of websites and the readers/visitors. Since the creators do not use the means of communication which are clear to the readers which results in an incorrect or false interpretation of the message.

It should be pointed out that the writers' superficial and unprofessional translation as well as their relying solely on their own competence (linguistic and extra-linguistic) reflects their negligence and disregard of the communication outcome, than a conscious intention to mislead the reader by making the intended message harder to understand, even when the author consciously or subconsciously wants to sound erudite, sophisticated or follow latest linguistic trends.

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