

ENGLISH AND SLOVENE HAND IN HAND IN SLOVENE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

Mojca Kostelec Cvitkovič

Abstract: *English is a global language and as such exerts a great impact on almost every language in the world, including Slovene. As a consequence, many words from the English language (i.e. from any of its varieties) entered the Slovene linguistic system. These English words (also called Anglicisms) are especially common in certain areas of our lives, e.g. information technology, entertainment, sport, tourism.*

The paper examines web sites of major Ljubljana hotels. We were interested in the number and type of Anglicisms used by hotels. One of the major research points was to establish whether English words are used instead or alongside Slovene terms as well as finding out how much attention is paid to the Slovene standard language. The article will try to give possible solutions and state the reasons for the use of Anglicisms in the Slovene language.

Key words: *Anglicisms, Slovene language, English language, tourism, hospitality, hotels*

Introduction

English is spoken almost all over the world and has a similar role as Latin used to have in the past – it has become the language of international communication (a *lingua franca*). The paper presents the reasons that led to the spread of English around the globe. The impact of English can also be seen in the Slovene language since Anglicisms can be found in almost all areas of the language. The purpose of this paper's research was to determine to what extent English borrowings are used on the Slovene webpages of major hotels in Ljubljana.

English as a global language

Being the official or dominant language in more than 70 countries around the world, English is called the world or global language. The English language is so widespread that "that there are now many times more non-native speakers of English than native speakers" (Ronowicz 1999: 14). The USA and the UK are the countries with most native speakers of English as their mother tongue, which represents 70% of all speakers of English as their mother tongue (Crystal 2002: 106).

Until the end of the 16th century, English was spoken by a relatively small number of people because it was geographically limited to the British Isles. However, in the 17th and 18th centuries, English expanded due to migration of English-speaking population to America, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Canada (Crystal 2002: 95). An even greater expansion of English occurred in the 19th century due to the colonization of South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and some other islands. English acquired its status of the world language in the 20th century due to the economic, political and cultural influence of the United States.

The US (and thus American English) is a symbol of economic and political power. English is the predominant language also in the field of communication, information technology, entertainment and world media. English prevails in the computer industry (hardware, software, computer networks, e-mail, social networking), as well as in the music and film industry (many people are in everyday contact with English through films). (Quirk and Stein 1993)

The spread of English has led to the development of quite numerous varieties of the English language. Among all the varieties, British and American English have the greatest impact, but many speakers around the world come in contact with other standard varieties (e.g. Australian, New Zealand, Canadian, and South African English).

Languages in contact

The area of languages in contact has been the point of linguists' study already since the 18th century. However, the foundations of the modern theory of languages in contacts (which is called contact linguistics) were set in 1950s by W. Leopold, E. Haugen, U. Weinreich and W. F. Mackey. Among the prominent linguists of modern sociolinguistics we have to mention W. Labov, D. Hymes, P. Trudgill, S. G. Thomason and T. Kaufmann. As far as the Slovene-English contact is concerned, some of the Slovene linguists have done extensive research (e.g. R. Šuštaršič, E. Sicherl and N. Šabec).

Language contact and bilingualism are the result of use of two or more languages in a given area (border areas, migrations due to political, social or economic reasons).

A bilingual speaker usually uses two strategies – either code-switching, which "is defined as the alternate use of two linguistic systems by an individual speaker within the same conversation" (Šabec, 1988: 71), or borrowing, where words (or phrases) are adjusted on the phonological, morphological or semantic level.

Anglicisms in the slovene language

Anglicisms are linguistic elements taken from the English language that are borrowed into Slovene (or any other) language system, usually used to fill lexical gaps, to name new objects and concepts. However, Anglicisms are nowadays increasingly used in many technical terms or simply as expressions considered to be more prestigious and sophisticated (Šabec 2005; Kalin Golob 2001).

First English words entered the Slovene language in the 17th and 18th centuries indirectly through German as "an intermediary language and through printed media (e.g. *keks*, *sprint*, *start*)" (Šabec 2005: 471). The number of English borrowings in Slovene began to increase after World War II. However, the growing influence of English began with a mass access to satellite and cable television and later the Internet in the last few decades of the 20th century.

The impact of English is most often seen on the lexical level (e.g. *blockbuster*, *e-mail*, *junk food*, *lifestyle*, *play-off*, *wellness*, *couch surfing*), whereas syntactic and intercultural influences of English are usually present in media, advertising and the speech of young people (slang). Anglicisms among teenagers are found mainly in the field of music, film, computer terminology, entertainment, sports (e.g. *spot*, *surf*, *party*, *shopping*, *basket*). These are slang terms, which typically have a short lifespan, but some can survive and become part of the general vocabulary (Šabec 2005: 474).

The Slovene syntax also reflects the influence of English (e.g. the redundant use of possessive pronouns, calques). An example of intercultural influence is Slovene ads where American music and typical American scenes, slogans (partly translated or not at all) are used. Very often we are not even aware of this since it has already become a part of our daily lives (e.g. the use of *&* and *24/7* in Slovene). Among the more recent intercultural influences are the English terms for takeaway food and drink. In most cases the citation form is used (e.g. *Coffee to go*), but occasionally we encounter Slovene alongside the English loan words (e.g. *kava za s sabo*, *kava na poti*). There are also combinations of the English and Slovene words (e.g. *kavica in juhica to go*). The Slovene language has also borrowed the word *smoothie* in its citation form. This word is still quite new and has not been adapted to the Slovene language system yet (this is evident from the different uses of the word's plural forms – both *smoothieji* and *smoothies* are in use).

English exerts its influence on the Slovenian orthography as well. Šabec (2007: 321-32) mentions the use of abbreviations in chat rooms and SMS messages (e.g. *LP* = *lep pozdrav*, *ju3* = *jutri*), use of English

letters and other characters in advertisements, names of the companies, magazines and music groups.

The use of anglicisms in hospitality

The analysis included the websites of eight major hotels in Ljubljana. The websites are available in both Slovene and English. The aim of the research was to find out what Anglicisms or other English terms are used in Slovene. We wanted to explore which terms occur, how often they are used, whether there are adequate Slovenian expressions and what the reasons for the use of Anglicisms might be.

The survey included the following hotels:

1. Hotel Lev Ljubljana (<http://www.hotel-lev.si>)
2. Hotel Slon (<http://www.hotelslon.com>)
3. Grand Hotel Union (<http://www.gh-union.si>)
4. Hotel Park (<http://www.hotelpark.si>)
5. City hotel (<http://www.cityhotel.si>)
6. M hotel (<http://www.m-hotel.si>)
7. Hotel Mons (<http://www.hotel.mons.si>)
8. Plaza hotel (<http://www.plazahotel.si>)

Anglicisms found on the websites of the above mentioned hotels can be divided into two groups: the first group includes Anglicisms that have been used in Slovene for many years and can already be found in the Dictionary of the Standard Slovene Language (*Slovar slovenskega knjižnega jezika*) (e.g. *koktajl, bar, transfer*); the other group includes newer expressions, used in their citation form (e.g. *Wi-Fi, on-line*).

The most common Anglicisms which can be found on the hotels' websites are connected with accommodation, in particular with expressions for room categorization. In Slovene there is no uniform terminology to categorize rooms, so as a result hotels mainly use English terminology in the citation form, but occasionally add Slovene terms that are clearly a matter of each individual hotel. E.g.:

Superior/Deluxe/Comfort/Economy/Standard sobe
Duplex (Dupleks)/Junior/Executive/Business suite

The most widely used Anglicism is the word *suite* which can be found on all of the websites, despite the fact that there is a Slovene equivalent (*apartma/hotelski apartma*). The hotels obviously perceive the word *suite* as part of general Slovene, but they nevertheless feel the need to explain this word since the Slovene word appears as well, sometimes even in the same phrase (e.g. *Apartmenti Junior suite*).

The above mentioned Anglicisms are not adapted to the Slovene language system yet, since they can be found in premodifying as well as postmodifying positions (e.g. *Deluxe sobe* in *Sobe deluxe*).

Besides the terms for accommodation, there is one Anglicism that appears on all of the analyzed websites, i.e. the expression for wireless Internet – *Wi-Fi*. This term can be found in different formats (*Wi Fi/WIFI/Wi-Fi/WiFi*). Moreover, it is very often combined with a Slovene expression, so again we get a lot of combinations (*brezplačni WiFi, WI-FI povezava, brezžični dostop do internet (Wi-Fi), WIFI internet dostop*).

Among the common Anglicisms almost fully adapted to the Slovene language system, there are *koktajl, fitnes, bar, tim, fit, transfer*. The most frequent two (*koktajl* and *fitnes*) occur also in their citation form (*cocktail* and *fitness*). The Anglicism *transfer* is often successfully substituted by the Slovene word *prevoz*. Interestingly, some sites use equally domestic and borrowed word, suggesting that this Anglicism has entered the general vocabulary.

Single occurrences of anglicisms

The examples shown in Figure 1 present English words or phrases that are rarely used on hotels' websites (they have occurred once or twice only). Nevertheless, they could (should) be avoided since there are relevant Slovenian equivalents. The use of these Anglicisms gives the impression that English is used either to sound more sophisticated or it is used due to poor language skills (e.g. *Kaj doživeti, kaj pogledati* is a literal translation of *What to see, what to do*).

lobby (lobi) bar	bar v preddverju hotela
parking	parkirišče
Last Minute ponudba	ponudba v zadnjem hipu
First Minute bonus	bonus za zgodnje rezervacije
multifunkcionalne dvorane	večnamenske dvorane
cocktail party	koktajl zabava
flip chart	tabla s papirjem
on request	na željo/zahtevo
self service pralnica in sušilnica	samopostrežna pralnica in sušilnica
incentive srečanja	motivacijska srečanja
on-line rezervacija/rezervacija on line	spletna rezervacija
business center	poslovni center
audio oprema	avdio oprema
Rent-a-bike	najem koles
fit prehrana	zdrava prehrana

Figure 1: Examples of English words/phrases and the corresponding translations

Many more similar examples could be presented, but fortunately these kind of expressions are used usually only on individual hotel's website. There are considerable differences among them. On the one hand there are websites that use really few Anglicisms (e.g. Hotel Lev and Grand Hotel Union); on the other hand there are some websites with whole sections of English text (e.g. Hotel Mons, Hotel Park). The latter is inexcusable. From the point of view of a home guest, such a hotel would most likely be perceived as sloppy, indifferent and rather unprofessional.

The language that hotels use to address their (potential) guests probably does not affect the number of guests that in the end choose a particular hotel but at least it shows the attitude they have towards their home guests and their language. This could open an entirely new point of discussion whether employees taking care of hotels' websites have all the necessary skills – it is not only their professional knowledge that matters but linguistic aspect should be taken into consideration as well.

Conclusion

English influences the majority of the world's languages, and Slovene is no exception. When it comes to naming new concepts or objects, the use of English borrowings is perfectly justified (e.g. *Internet*). However, in cases where there is a Slovene, established term, the use of Anglicisms is unacceptable (e.g. *standard sobe* instead of *standardne sobe*).

The use of Anglicisms in the field of hospitality and tourism is partly due to inconsistent terminology, but to a large extent this is due to the fact that the analysis included hotels from Ljubljana, whose target groups are mainly foreigners. Nevertheless, they are Slovene hotels and as such should take care of proofreading, since the attitude towards one's language shows also the attitude to their own country and culture.

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Notes on the authors

MOJCA KOSTELEČ CVITKOVIČ is currently a teacher of English as a Second Language at the Secondary school for food technology and at the Conservatory of Music and Ballet Ljubljana. She graduated at the Faculty of arts, Ljubljana, where she also completed her postgraduate studies (MA in American studies). Besides teaching, her working experience includes editorial work in educational publishing. Her research work focuses on English-Slovene language contact. mojca.kostelec-cvitkovic@bic-lj.si