

INTRODUCTION

'Like the layman, the linguist can be the victim of his primary sound system; his native phonemics can be an important source of error, particularly if his description is of the subphonemic impressionistic type'

(U. Weinreich 1963:20)

Indubitably, the influx of English vocabulary items into Czech and Polish has increased considerably over the past two decades to an unparalleled extent, the main factors responsible for this growth being of both a linguistic and extra-linguistic nature. Seemingly, the issue of anglicisms in Czech and Polish has been quite thoroughly investigated: some attempts have been made to collect, compile and catalogue all possible loanwords from English, and finally include them all in the most current reference books.

Although since the early 1990s, hundreds of new loanwords have entered Czech and Polish lexicons in entirely new ways, i.e. via different types of new electronic media, through dramatic technological progress and last but not least by direct contact with the donor language, not many efforts have been made to confront the new linguistic data with the old, well-grounded and axiomatic assumptions concerning the theory of the adaptation of loanwords. Additionally, the most commonly shared beliefs regarding the phonological adaptation of loanwords often lead to the formulation of certain linguistic concepts which are treated as if they were language universal rather than language specific. They are also used to formulate certain rules of phonological adaptation that seem to be treated as absolute, always true within their regime of validity, and consequently operational in most, if not all languages, and in all situations. Thus, despite dramatic changes the theoretical

background of the process of adaptation of foreign words seems to have remained unshaken.

Therefore, it appears that the phenomenon of the phonological adaptation of new lexical items is still analysed with the same old set of tools and is still based upon the same old theoretical assumptions, despite the quantum leap in information technology, which has incredibly accelerated the exchange of lexical items between languages. As a result, one may assume that the dynamism of the new linguistic situation may even have affected the very nature of the process of the adaptation of anglicisms in Czech and Polish and changed its main characteristics.

Although since the beginning of the 1990s new vocabulary items of English origin have been thoroughly analysed, especially on the graphic, morphological and/or semantic levels, the phonological plane and phonetic aspects have usually been discussed together with orthographic or orthoepic issues rather than independently. As a result, the phonological and phonetic aspects of new anglicisms in Polish and Czech hardly ever receive as meticulous attention as the aforementioned ones. Paradoxically, even though there exists a voluminous literature on anglicisms in both Czech and Polish, the problem of their phonological adaptation tends to be a side issue. This situation may result from the firm conviction that the written form of a loanword is superior to its phonological shape by nature, which may discourage some researchers from making the problem of the phonological aspect of loanword adaptation the key issue of their study.

Therefore, the current study is by no means aimed at detecting the most recent lexical item in Czech or Polish. The research is meant first and foremost to be a conscious attempt to confront and, if necessary, challenge the traditional, axiomatic assumptions concerning the process of the phonological adaptation of anglicisms in the two genetically closely related languages: Czech and Polish, in the entirely new linguistic situation created in the early 1990s. Such a parallel, comparative analysis would probably make it possible to reach a higher level of objectivity, while trying to differentiate, between those phenomena that may tend to be language specific in the process of phonological adaptation and others that may seem more universal by nature.

The structure of the dissertation has been designed so as to serve its main purpose. Chapter One is a critical analysis of the allegedly solid foundations of the generally accepted theory of the process of the phonological adaptation of anglicisms and its main concepts. It also discusses the question of the orthoepic rules of pronouncing anglicisms in Czech and Polish, which casts some new light on the true nature of phonological adaptation. The evaluation of the current state of affairs gives grounds for the formulation

of the main theses in Chapter Two, the purpose of which is to create a set of hypothetical models to objectively assess the gathered research material. Chapter Two also contains the research hypotheses and the relevant information regarding the methodology of the research. The main body of the current work juxtaposes the collected data with the hypothetical models and evaluates the material both quantitatively and qualitatively and consequently tries to provide satisfactory answers to the main research questions. It should be added that, the tables in the Appendices, due to their length, have chiefly been contained there for convenience, as the data that they show has already been processed and evaluated and as such could also be contained in the main body.

CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. The concept of anglicism as a 'linguistic loan'

On the theoretical plane the notion of 'anglicism' appears to be quite explicitly defined: it is commonly understood as a word, lexeme, phrase, or lexical structure taken over from English or modelled upon English (cf. Dubisz 2003: 81; Kraus 2006: 54) and a similar interpretation of the term 'anglicism' is found in academic research (cf. Svobodová 1997-2007; Mańczak-Wohlfeld 1994), which in other words points to a conclusion that 'anglicism' is a linguistic loan that meets the specific requirements imposed by the criterion of English origin. Sometimes a distinction is made between (1) anglicisms proper, i.e. those that have entered the recipient language directly, (2) anglicisms that have entered the recipient language via other languages, and (3) borrowings that can be ultimately traced back to languages other than English, yet came into the recipient via English (cf. Fisiak 1962; Walczak 2001; Mańczak-Wohlfeld 1994).

Consequently the categorization of anglicisms as a class of linguistic loans will largely depend on the general classification of linguistic loans accepted by a particular linguist, and its very purpose.

Since the scope of the dissertation is limited to the phonetic and phonological aspects of anglicisms in Czech and Polish since the 1990s, mostly those anglicisms that have been taken over directly from English will be taken into consideration. The theses will not encompass all those anglicisms that are linguistic loan-translations, i.e. calques, as one of its main objectives is the phonological and phonetic analysis of the adaptation of the genuine English pronunciation.

The range of criteria applied in order to classify linguistic loans is enormously diverse and depends on the purpose which they serve. At the same time 'linguistic loan' as a term comprising all types of loans is relatively rarely used giving way to either, linguistically speaking, more vague terms such as 'borrowing', defined as e.g. 'adoption of a linguistic expression from one language to another language, usually when no term

exists for the new object, concept or state of affairs' (Bussmann 1996: 55) or such notions as 'loanword' which narrow down their definitions to either 'foreign words borrowed from one language to another language, which have been lexicalized, i.e. assimilated phonetically, graphemically, and grammatically into the new language' or 'an umbrella term for a foreign word and loan word' (Bussmann 1996: 287). Although the very term 'borrowing' may sound inadequate and even not scientific enough and is often accused of being a misnomer (cf. Haugen 1950), it appears to be quite functional and widespread, especially because of its broad meaning which, unlike e.g. 'loanword' encompasses all possible categories of linguistic loans.

Another somewhat confusing linguistic term is 'foreign word' which seems to stand for 'a linguistic expression adopted from one language into another (usually together with that which it denotes) and which, in contrast to a loan word, has not been phonetically, graphemically, or grammatically assimilated into the new language' (Bussmann 1996: 169). One can hardly imagine a situation in which all foreign lexical elements in the recipient language can be ascribed to either the class of foreign, i.e. non-assimilated items or the class of loanwords, i.e. fully assimilated items, as the distinction between the two categories is far from being sharp and the two extreme categories form the margins of a continuum of lexical items of foreign origin (cf. Svobodová 2007: 26-27).

When categorizing linguistic loans, the following criteria appear to be most commonly adopted:

1. Type of the loan criterion related to what has actually been borrowed, according to which one can distinguish
 - 1.1. loanwords proper (borrowed together with their meaning)
 - 1.2. structural calques (words or phrases translated directly from the donor language)
 - 1.3. semantic loans (new meaning is borrowed and added to the already existing item in the recipient language lexicon)
 - 1.4. artificial loanwords (words created from foreign elements of the same or different languages=hybrids)
 - 1.5. phonetic loanwords (the pronunciation features of another language are imported to a native word)
 - 1.6. syntactic loans
2. The criterion of the origin (based upon identification of the donor language)
3. The criterion of the degree of adaptation related to the degree of assimilation of a given item in the recipient language