

SOME REMARKS ON HIDDEN ANGLICISMS

The objective of this paper is to add to the lexicographical study by discussing the essentiality vs. inessentiality (or acceptability vs. unacceptability) of recent English semantic loans. The issue in question becomes crucial in view of a lexicographer's problem of placing the new foreign meanings of Polish lexemes in dictionaries of Polish. One other attempt is to clarify the criteria that enable a lexicographer to differentiate between a semantic loan and a loanword (or lexical borrowing), which is crucial in deciding on the polysemous or homonymous character of the borrowed element, which, in turn, finds its application in deciding on the number of dictionary entries. The major point of interest here is the problem of etymological information provided in dictionary entries that include the newly adopted English meanings. This seems a vital issue in view of the fact that most of the Polish lexemes that currently adopt new senses from English were earlier Latin (or French) lexical borrowings. The problem of etymological information may also be discussed in reference to another kind of hidden Anglicisms, i.e. phraseological calques from English. One more problematic issue a lexicographer has to face here is the co-existence of an English phraseological expression (adopted by Polish in the form of a lexical borrowing) and its translated form – a phraseological calque (or loan translation).

Let us begin with a brief overview of nearly three hundred English semantic loans which have almost unnoticeably entered Polish in recent years. They have been collected, analyzed and described in my monograph *Anglosemantyzmy w języku polskim* (Witalisz, 2007a). Anglosemantyzmy or English semantic loans are new English senses adopted by Polish lexemes, either by native Polish words or earlier loanwords from Latin or French which today are no longer perceived as foreign by an average speaker of Polish. The borrowing process in question is facilitated by the fact that many Polish Latinisms are semantically much narrower than their English counterparts (Kurkowska, 1976). The acquiring of a new sense, previously unknown in Polish,¹ makes the Polish lexeme polysemous and thus makes it resemble semantically its English counterpart. The examples

¹ The exceptions here are few and they are Polish 16th-century Latinisms which today, under the influence of English, are again used in all their traditional Latin senses just as they were used when first borrowed, e.g. *adresować* (the new restored sense 'to direct speech, programme to sb'); *korespondować* (the new restored sense 'to be in harmony with; to be similar to'); *korupcja* (the new restored sense 'making sb or being immoral,

are numerous and represent various semantic fields. Some nouns have adopted more than one new sense and thus may be classified as belonging to various semantic fields, e.g. P. *aplikacja* (E. *application*) with its four new senses: 1. *inform.* ‘a computer program such as e.g. text editor’; 2. ‘job application; a written request’, e.g. *aplikacja na studia*; 3. ‘making a request; applying for sth’, e.g. *składać aplikację członkowską*; 4. *cosm.* ‘applying cream or shampoo on to one’s skin or hair’, e.g. *aplikacja odżywki na włosy*.

ESSENTIAL or INESSENTIAL

Apart from noticing the new sense, a lexicographer must decide whether the new uses of traditional lexemes deserve their entries in dictionaries of Polish. In other words, he has to discern which new uses are essential or acceptable and decide whether they are well established in everyday use.

The language we use reflects our way of thinking and our reacting to the outside world, that is why clear-cut determining which language innovation is acceptable and which is the abuse of linguistic norm becomes immensely difficult, if at all possible. Classifying new linguistic phenomena as incorrect or unacceptable exclusively on the grounds of their not being traditional and recorded, is an offence to any language user. For it is typical of every natural human language to change and develop and the most visible changes are lexical and semantic. The lexicon of a language includes lexemes that have been its part for ages as well as those whose semantic content or emotional overtone may change at the speed of one generation (Kochański et al., 1989). Therefore, formulating language accuracy criteria that would find their application in all semantic loans becomes a hard task.

Among the many correct language usage criteria, the one that seems most applicable to semantic loans is this of functionality, which allows to determine whether the new language element correctly passes on the communicative intentions of the speaker; secondly, whether it is semantically precise and unambiguous and thirdly, whether it lacks its Polish counterpart. The question to ask here is whether the new foreign sense of a word is necessary in a language, i.e. whether it has a nominative function. We might open-mindedly accept as necessary those new senses that name new objects or refer to phenomena that never before had their names in Polish or never before existed and thus remained unnamed. Nominative semantic loans are objectively necessary and therefore it is more probable that they will

depraved’); *kreacja* (the new restored sense ‘making, producing in general’) or *relacja* (the new restored sense ‘connection between one thing, person, idea etc. and another or others’) (Witalisz, 2004).

become established in the lexicon of contemporary Polish (Buttler, 1982), which is a prediction a lexicographer has to make.

One mustn't forget the frequency of use criterion, which unfortunately until now has been rarely used because of the lack of appropriate lexicographic sources providing data on the frequency of lexeme appearance in various contexts. This may change soon with the advent of the electronic media. The significance of the cultural authority criterion has been limited recently. In the olden days the use of a certain language form was evaluated as correct if used by a well-known author. Recently this practice has been avoided due to frequent adaptations of modern texts to various styles such as slang or vulgarisation. Also, against common practice, one should not trust the language of mass media whose language correctness leaves a lot to be desired.

For the purpose of evaluating English semantic loans one might divide them into nominative and expressive. Nominative loans are justifiable by not having their Polish equivalents and by filling a gap in the Polish semantic system through e.g. naming the latest technological advances. Expressive loans are not well-founded; they were spontaneously brought to life for infamous reasons of linguistic carelessness or snobbery and should not even be taken into account by lexicographers. Frequently they replace their Polish counterparts because they are attractive, new, attention drawing. Such innovations ought to be considered ephemeral since created for one particular occasion.

The nominative semantic loans that surely deserve their place in dictionaries name e.g. new appliances, especially those referring to computer technology, e.g. *mysz* 'a computer device moving the cursor on the screen' (E. *mouse*) or *sieć* 'the Internet' (E. *web/network*). Coining new Polish equivalents seems time-consuming and imprecise. Referring to *okno* (E. *window*) as 'wydzielony w ramce fragment ekranu monitora przeznaczony do wyświetlania informacji, pisanie poleceń itp.' (E. 'a display rectangle used by a graphical user interface appearing on the computer screen') is far too uneconomical.

Among the necessary semantic loans one finds those that convey specific semantic content which has never been present in Polish before, e.g. the new sense of P. *manipulować* (E. *to manipulate*). To manipulate people or their views does not only mean 'to manage or control them' but also 'to manage or control them by using one's influence or unfair methods'. Such 'semantic surplus' may justify many semantic loans (Kurkowska, 1976).

Functionally justified are also so called semantic internationalisms. They are widespread in other European languages and this decides on their functionality in Polish. Deliberate avoidance of foreign senses that are commonly used in other European linguistic

systems seems improper in view of the effectiveness and easiness of international communication (take e.g. translations of EU texts).

Taking into account the above criteria of the normative evaluation of semantic loans, it may be stated that the new foreign sense of a word is more acceptable and is more likely to become established in the Polish linguistic system if it is semantically similar to the traditional sense. The most frequent type of semantic change here is based on the semantic extension of the primary sense, where the new meaning is directly motivated by the traditional one, as in e.g. *bank* (E. *bank*) (e.g. *bank krwi* - E. *blood bank*, *bank danych* - E. *data bank*); *skuteczny* (E. *efficient*) (e.g. *skuteczny pracownik* - E. *an efficient worker*, *skuteczna sekretarka* - E. *an efficient secretary*); *przyjazny* (E. *friendly*) (e.g. *przyjazny kredyt* - E. *friendly loan*, *samochód przyjazny dla kierowcy* - E. *a user-friendly car*); *inteligentny* (E. *intelligent*) (e.g. *inteligentny balsam do ciała* - E. *intelligent body balm*, *inteligentny piekarnik* - E. *an intelligent oven*). One other popular type of semantic change uses metaphorical extension based on the similarity of function or physical likeness as e.g. *mysz* (E. *computer mouse*) or *sieć* (E. *web/Internet*) used as computer terms.

Redundant semantic loans include new senses that have their counterparts in Polish, e.g. P. *artykułować* (E. *to articulate*) ‘to express one’s thoughts/opinions; P. *wyrażać*’ (e.g. *artykułować interesy państwa*); P. *generować* (E. *to generate*) ‘to produce, to bring sth into existence; P. *tworzyć*’ (e.g. *generować nowe miejsca pracy*); P. *kondycja* (E. *condition*) ‘the present state of sth; quality of sth; P. *stan*’ (e.g. *kondycja polskiej gospodarki*). Unjustified are also expressive semantic loans as they also name referents which have their well-functioning Polish equivalents. Lexemes such as *rodzaj* (E. *kind*) or *typ* (E. *type*) are replaced with the words *rodzina* or *generacja* in their new senses, e.g. P. *rodzina telewizorów Philips* (E. *a family of Philips television sets*); P. *nowa generacja kamer cyfrowych* (E. *the new generation of digital cameras*). From the point of view of their usefulness they are completely redundant; their only function is persuasion in advertising campaigns. Overusing semantic loans may even sound comical as a result of an excessive semantic extension (e.g. *ekskluzywna woda mineralna* (E. *exclusive mineral water*), *ekskluzywny przedstawiciel sprzedaży* (E. *an exclusive sales representative*)).

In cases where one Polish lexeme takes over more than one foreign meaning, it becomes necessary to consider each of them separately. The new sense of *aplikacja* (E. *application*), referring to ‘computer software’ has been dictated by the nominative language need, and so it seems justifiable. Three other new senses of this noun, taken over from English, are dubious as to their functionality, e.g. 1. ‘applying for; making a request’ (e.g.

składać aplikacje członkowską); 2. ‘a written request’ or 3. ‘applying a cosmetic on to the skin, hair’ (e.g. *aplikacja odżywki na włosy*). All these new senses have their Polish counterparts, just like the new senses of the corresponding verb *aplikować* (E. *to apply for*) ‘to apply for a job, for a place at a university’ or ‘to apply a cosmetic on to the skin’.

WELL-ESTABLISHED or still INNOVATIONS

The new sense of a word should find its place in a dictionary if it is well-established in the Polish linguistic system. The easiest way of checking whether a new sense is well established would be looking it up in a dictionary, as that would provide a proof sufficient. However, would this new sense be still new, if already listed in the lexicon? A vicious circle. For a lexicographer to take the new sense into consideration, it has to appear frequently enough in a number of various contexts for a given period of time (Fischer, 1998). However, frequency evidence is hard to come by. Unsurprisingly, Polish lexicographers present a rather cautious attitude towards giving the new English senses the benefit of trust, even though the frequency of use of many semantic loans, especially in the media, is a fact. Many such innovative uses are treated as a reflection of linguistic fashion and therefore perceived as short-lived. Thus, the conservative attitude of dictionary-makers seems well-founded.

This does not mean that a lexicographer is left with no tools at all. A new sense is well established if it liberates itself of the context in which it was first used and recognized as new (Wesołowska, 1978). New semantic loans are usually recognized as such when they are used in untypical contexts and those contexts clarify the new senses and make them comprehensible. When the new sense of a lexeme starts being used outside of this context it can be stated that it is well-established in a language. Cf. P. *filozofia* (E. *philosophy*) as in *Ten parlament ma już pewną filozofię*. It is not necessary anymore to add *philosophy of what*, e.g. *filozofia działania* or *rządzenia* to understand the new sense (Mycawka, 1991). Secondly, many semantic loans form derivatives, e.g. the adjective *agresywny* in its new positive sense ‘inventive, efficient, enterprising, forceful’ gave rise to an adverb and an abstract noun. Acquiring the new sense by the derivatives proves the stabilization of the new sense.² Thirdly, a semantic loan may be a result of an earlier process of copying the semantic and structural pattern of a foreign expression, as in P. *konferencja na szczycie* (E. *summit conference*). The emerging calque is used in its full form for some time until it becomes well-established. The

² It must be noted, however, that it is impossible to determine whether the new senses of the derivatives are direct semantic loans from their corresponding English counterparts or whether they have developed as a result of the native process of derivation.

establishing of the new sense becomes apparent when part of the expression takes over the meaning of the whole phrase and starts being used separately in this new sense. Now P. *szczyt* (E. *summit*) has taken over the meaning of P. *konferencja na szczycie*.

SEMANTIC LOAN or LEXICAL LOAN

Once the problem of the loans' usefulness and wide spread has been resolved, one other issue a lexicographer faces is distinguishing between a semantic loan and a separate lexical loan (or loanword), homonymous to the Polish lexeme, which finds its direct reflection in the number of dictionary entries. A semantic loan, i.e. a new sense, is added to the traditional senses of a native lexeme making it polysemous; a lexical loan deserves a completely new entry and becomes homonymous to the formally similar but semantically different Polish lexeme (cf. I *klon* and II *klon*, USJP, p. 128, v. II). Unsurprisingly, research shows that it remains a much avoided issue in the semantic study and is a source of semanticists' disagreement.

The criteria at hand include the semantic similarity of the new and traditional senses (Hope, 1960) as in P. *definiować* (E. to *define*), whose new sense 'to state or explain clearly' is undoubtedly a semantic loan as the new sense is only a semantic extension of the traditional one. Coincidental formal sameness but lack of semantic similarity between the traditional Polish *klon* 'a kind of a tree' and English *clone* 'a copy of an animal or computer program' let us identify the new foreign element *klon* with its new sense 'a copy of' as a new lexical loan (from English). Clear-cut and unambiguous decisions are not always possible due to the very understanding and meaning of the phrase 'semantic similarity' which may be perceived in different ways. In many cases stating whether the new element is an example of a semantic loan or a lexical loan or a new sense that developed on the Polish soil becomes an impossible task, as in the case of the new sense of P. *autor* (E. *author*) 'a person who creates or begins sth'.

To solve the problem of semantic similarity one might use the etymological information (Hope, 1960:130). Lack of any etymological connection between the native lexeme and the newly-adopted foreign sense seems to prove that the new loan is a separate loanword, homonymous to the native word as in the case of *klon*. Also, if the new element has a different graphic form than the native word, it is treated as a new lexical loan, as e.g. P.

konsensus (E. *consensus*) ‘agreement’; the traditional Polish form – *konsens* (Mycawka, 1992).³

ETYMOLOGICAL INFORMATION

With time, many semantic loans find their place in the lexicons of Polish, and usually they receive the last position in the dictionary entry under the other senses of the headword. Their appearance in dictionaries proves their being well-established, i.e. their being comprehended and commonly used. At times, the new meaning adopts such a popularity that in the subsequent issues it is moved to the first position in the entry, as in the case of the new sense of P. *artykułować* (E. *to articulate*) ‘to express thoughts; opinions’ (ISJP; p. 44, v. I). Placing the new senses in dictionaries poses an etymological problem for the lexicographer, a problem that hardly any dictionary of contemporary Polish resolves satisfactorily and in agreement with semantic studies. The etymological information in the case of lexical borrowings is easy; in the case of semantic loans the problematic issue is whether or not provide this information and then what kind of information. One of the easy ways out is to treat English semantic loans as separate lexical loans and provide them with a separate dictionary entry and with separate etymological information (that happens in the case of some native Polish lexemes adopting English senses, e.g. P. *mysz* (E. *computer mouse*), USJP). In the case of earlier Latin or French borrowings that today acquire new senses under the influence of English the common practice is the strategy of avoidance along the dictum ‘if in doubt leave it out’. Here the entry lists the new sense/s under the traditional sense/s and skips the new proper etymological information so it seems the new meaning was adopted from the same language as the original loanword, so either from Latin or French, as in e.g. P. *aplikacja* (E. *application*) where the new meaning referring to ‘computer software’ seems to have been borrowed from Latin (USJP, p. 107, v. I), which for obvious reasons is not true. In very few cases the dictionary entry includes an annotation explaining that this particular sense is used in reference to e.g. American reality, as in the case of the new sense of P. *administracja* (E. *administration*) ‘government’ (USJP, p. 14, v. I).⁴ Proper etymological information is provided in ŁSTS (*Łatwy słownik trudnych słów*) and SWOT (*Słownik wyrazów obcych i trudnych*) (an extended version of the former) where the thorough description of the four senses of the noun P.

³ On *konsensus* see also Sinielnikoff (1990); Bobrowski (1992), Mycawka (1994), Markowski (2000; 2005).

⁴ The problem of etymological information does not exist in the case of earlier English borrowings, e.g. P. *film* whose new meaning ‘coat; layer’ comes also from English or P. *surfować* (E. *to surf*) and its new sense ‘to look up information on the Internet’.

aplikacja tells us that senses number 3. and 4. come from English. Unfortunately, this practice is not performed consistently throughout the whole dictionary.

Every scholar of semantic changes knows that proper etymological information is important. Dictionaries record the history of language, and the history of language including semantic and lexical changes tells us a great deal about the people who use that language, about historical and social events of the whole community. Therefore it becomes lexicographers' most important task to pursue accuracy and precision.

A true precision would also include stating from which of the varieties of English, British or American, the new sense was adopted. But this, probably, is asking too much, especially that in many cases it would be virtually impossible to settle this dispute. Only in some cases might this task appear fruitful, e.g. the new senses of P. *segregacja* (E. (*racial*) *segregation*), P. *administarcja* (E. *administration*) 'government' or P. *konwencja* (E. *convention (of a political party)*) were undoubtedly brought from American English as they belong to 'cultural semantic loans'⁵ (Witalisz, 2006; 2007b).

CALQUES and 'DOUBLE PAIRS'

One other problem a lexicographer of contemporary Polish faces is the co-existence of so called 'double pairs' (P. *pary dubletowe*) in the case of structural calques. During the process of borrowing, (temporarily) there co-exist two semantically identical forms: the calqued copy of an English expression and its original English version, e.g. P. *kobieta interesu* and E. *business woman*; P. *śmieciowe jedzenie* and E. *junk food*; P. *szczęśliwe godziny* and E. *happy hours*. Here, the criterion of frequency of use, however imprecise, might come useful (Dunaj, 2000). If the foreign form is used frequently enough, it should also find its place in the lexicon.⁶

Many English-derived calques enjoy their international character, which undoubtedly calls for accepting them and placing them in dictionaries of Polish. Treating calques that have been translated into Polish and enjoy the status of phraseological phrases as incorrect or invalid would equal rejecting expressions that are present in the form of calques in other European languages, e.g. P. *ptasia grypa* (E. *bird/avian flu*), P. *Trzeci świat* (E. *Third World*),

⁵ Cf. Bloomfield, 1933, on 'cultural borrowings'.

⁶ Another problem at this point is whether the dictionary should include all the graphic varieties of a foreign expression (representing the stages of its adaptation), e.g. *bizneswoman*, *bizneswomen*, *biznesmenka* co-exist with the original English form *business woman*.

P. *poczta elektroniczna* (E. *e-mail*), P. *plastikowe pieniądze* (E. *plastic money*) or P. *kryzys humanitarny* (E. *humanitarian crisis*).

The functionality of foreign semantic elements, naming bits of reality typical of a foreign culture, consists in retaining the local character and markedness. Replacing American *Biały Dom* (E. *The White House*), which has been calqued to many languages, with a descriptive Polish ‘dom prezydenta Stanów Zjednoczonych, a także budynek, w którym mieści się administracja oraz podejmowane są najważniejsze decyzje’ deprives the phrase of clarity and expressiveness, and disturbs the criterion of language economy. Equally unreasonable would be rejecting phraseological phrases such as P. *poprawność polityczna* (E. *political correctness*); P. *strefa zero* (E. *ground zero*); P. *błękitne hełmy* (E. *blue helmets*); P. *Dolina Krzemowa* (E. *Silicon Valley*), P. *białe kołnierzyki* (E. *white collars*) or P. *Gabinet Cieni* (E. *the Shadow Cabinet*). If they are well-established and comprehensible, it may be assumed that they are functionally justified and add to the economy of language as they convey lengthy descriptive expressions in a synthetic way.

Taking into account the communicative usefulness, English semantic loans may be divided into three classes: 1. semantic loans functionally positive, i.e. desirable and intentional; 2. semantic loans functionally negative, i.e. those which disturb communication; and 3. semantic loans functionally neutral. It is very hard, however, to draw a line between these three groups, that would prove unambiguous and acceptable by all. Polish semanticists and lexicographers disagree in this respect, and their views surely remain unknown to an average user of language.

To end, one has to say that in everyday linguistic behaviour classifications do not really matter. The most important and advisable criterion in using foreign elements before they enter dictionaries is thorough knowledge of their meaning. Overusing or misusing borrowed words or senses is frequently a result of linguistic ignorance and associating them with more familiar words that have a similar graphic or phonetic form. My personal attitude of a person investigating into the true character of recent English semantic borrowings borders somewhere between the liberal and the commonsensical. I would adopt here the words of professor Smólkowa (1997: 266) who said “Words neither know borders nor can be confined within them. Constructing walls around words is pointless and ineffective.”

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Dictionaries

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- SWOT** - *Słownik wyrazów obcych i trudnych*, ed. R. Pawelec, Warszawa 2003.
- USJP** – *Uniwersalny słownik języka polskiego*, ed. S. Dubisz, Warszawa 2003.