

**English-Polish language contact:
orthographic and morphological aspects of English loanwords in Polish in the area of computers**

Polish is under a heavy influence of English these days. Such influence is primarily manifested through English loanwords in Polish, i.e. words where both the form and meaning are taken from English; examples include P. *mecz* < E. *match*, P. *dżem* < E. *jam*, P. *dżins* < E. *jeans*.

The aim of the present paper is to discuss English loanwords in Polish in the semantic area of computers and the Internet. The study is based on the corpus, devised and compiled by the present author. The corpus consists of short informal texts (entries) collected from 32 selected Polish Internet forums devoted to computers. The corpus consists of 1,541,449 running words. The procedure was as follows: the texts in the corpus have been read in their entirety by the author and English lexical borrowings have been noted down. The identification of the loans was performed with the help of dictionaries of Polish with the etymological component, primarily WSJP and SZA (see bibliography). In addition, English dictionaries (primarily OED) and English corpora (primarily NOW) have also been consulted for reference purposes. Altogether, 571 English loans (types) connected with the semantic field of computers and the Internet have been found in the corpus.

Special attention will be devoted to the orthographic and morphological aspects of the loans in question (discussed from the contrastive Polish-English point of view). Specifically, the paper aims at answering the following research questions:

1. Do the English loans in the Polish language of computer science tend to assimilate orthographically to Polish or do they tend to retain their original English spelling?
2. Do the English loans in the Polish language of computer science tend to assimilate morphologically? In other words, are they inflected? Can derivatives be formed on the basis of them?
3. Does orthographic and morphological assimilation of English loans in Polish correlate with their frequency?

In the 1990s, the majority (53%) of the English loans in Polish were adapted at the level of spelling, 15% had variant spelling forms and the remaining 32% retained original English spelling (Mańczak-Wohlfeld 1995: 43-46). In more specialized fields, there was also a general prevalence of orthographically adapted borrowings. Most of the borrowings (73%) were also adapted morphologically (Mańczak-Wohlfeld 1995: 58).

Nowadays, as data from the present corpus show, the situation is entirely different. While assimilation at the level of morphology is even more widespread than in the 1990s (79.5% of the loans found in the corpus have been assimilated morphologically), the orthographic assimilation is far less frequently present (as many as 76% of the loans have *not* been assimilated at the level of spelling). Thus, most of the English loans used in Polish in the area of computers tend to retain their original English spelling. This is most probably due to growing knowledge of English among Poles and greater exposure to English texts, especially via the Internet (English websites, online chats, etc.).

Details, together with numerous examples taken from the corpus, will be presented in the paper. In addition, methodological problems connected with the identification of English loans in Polish will also be discussed at some length.

Keywords: language contact, borrowings, loans, spelling, orthographic assimilation, morphological assimilation, corpus linguistics, the language of computer science

References

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