

Professional paper

THE ROLE OF ANGLICISMS IN SERBIAN SPORTS TERMINOLOGY

UDK 811.163.41'276.6:796/799; 811.163.41'373.45:811.111

Katarina Ćirić-Duvnjak¹

College of Sports and Health, Belgrade, Serbia

Abstract: With an ever-increasing interest for sports and the expansion of English, there is the need to expand Serbian sports terminology as well. The aim of this paper is to show by what means and to what extent Anglicisms are integrated and incorporated in Serbian sports terminology, which has in the last decades been expanding by the same token.

With this in mind, various levels of the adaptation of Anglicisms to the receiving language were considered (at the phonological, morphological and semantic levels), as well as the reasons why such a substantial number of Anglicisms and translated English terms were taken up in Serbian sports language. This article also reviews the frequently brought up issue of national identity being at risk by an inflow of new, foreign words into the language, also clarifying why this is not the case, especially where it concerns sports terminology.

Key words: *Anglicisms, sports terminology, adaptation of Anglicisms, national identity*

INTRODUCTION

There was a somewhat unanticipated expansion of the use of the English language in various areas of life during the 20th and 21st centuries. Even though the positive outcome of World War II, at least for Great Britain and the USA, is cited as contributing to the ever-increasing expansion of the English language, it can be said that, nonetheless, this language perhaps owes its spreading out to the exceptional developing of high technology, which imposed English as the *lingua franca* of the 21st century, enabling it to achieve what even the most widely spoken constructed language of Esperanto lacked to do. Furthermore, English is well on the way to become a global means of communication.

Together with the development of technology and the media, in that same era there was an increased interest in sports, as an aspect of up-keeping a competitive spirit

¹ ✉ ciric.katarina@gmail.com

not just within one nation, but also among many nations. The increasing of diverse media-sponsored sports competitions on a global level has led to the popularization of different sports on a local level, and thereby there occurred the need to introduce an adequate sports terminology in the languages of those nations which had adopted new sports – including Serbia.

And that is what this paper is about, its objective being to show the indivisibility of language from sports, in this case in the terminological sense. In other words, it aims to demonstrate the influence which a global language such as English has on the specific sports terminology of another language – in our case, Serbian. Another objective is to show how widely Anglicisms are used in sports terminology, as well as to discuss the validity of borrowing foreign terms. With this in mind, this paper is classified into components which are involved with the following:

Adapting English phrases in sports terminology – at the phonological, morphological and semantic levels;

The validity of introducing a large number of loan words in sports terminology;

The frequently discussed issue of the correlation of national identity and the large number of existing loan words.

Earlier on, the eminent philologist Rudolf Filipović and linguist Ranko Bugarski had already discussed these and similar topics. Moreover, this paper is largely founded on their theories, along with those of Mira Milić, especially developed in her *Englesko-srpski rečnik sportskih termina (Dictionary of sports terms)*, which represents a unique attempt to standardize the Serbian terminology used in sports games.

Examples of Anglicisms in Serbian sports terminology classified according to different types of adaptation

There are many professional papers written about loan words, especially Anglicisms, many of which maintain the view that their adopting and common usage represents a natural process, considering the dominance and role which the English language has in the social and global cultural life after World War II. Another famous Yugoslav philologist who studied this issue was Rudolf Filipović, who in his book *Anglicizmi u hrvatskom ili srpskom jeziku: porijeklo, razvoj, značenje (Anglicisms in Croat or Serbian: origin, development, meaning)* assessed that foreign words “in the process of language borrowing are adapted and integrated into the receiving language, and thus as loan words fill in the empty spaces in the vocabulary of that language” (Filipović, 1990, p. 15). Writing about this adaptation and the integrating of loan words, in his book *Teoriji jezika u kontaktu: Uvod u lingvistiku jezičnih dodira (Theory of Languages in Contact: An Introduction into Contact Linguistics)*, he created a division into primary and secondary changes in a language, of which relevant for this paper are the secondary ones (as they pertain to the monolingual speaker, which we are focusing on), and which he defines as “those which answer on cue – the loan word of interaction in the system of the receiving

language and further” (Filipović, 1986, p. 56). It is the secondary adaptation at various levels which we will deal with here - the phonological, morphological and semantic levels.

Adaptation of Anglicisms in sports terminology at the phonological level

There is a significant difference between the phonological systems of English and Serbian, but nonetheless this was not an obstacle for Anglicisms in sports terminology to be submitted to the process of transphonemization – or the substituting of “phonological elements of the giving language with the elements of the receiving language which occurs in the course of forming a phonological form of loan words in the receiving language” (Filipović, 1986, p. 69). Three types of transphonemization will be discussed, which were defined by Filipović as 1) complete, 2) partial or compromise, and 3) free transphonemization.

In the following part, there are examples of auditory adaptations of Anglicisms in sports terminology via the process of transphonemization.

A complete transphonemization of Anglicisms in sports terminology – a process in which the substitution of phonemes (of consonants as well as vowels) from the giving language to adequate phonemes from the receiving language takes place.

Example:

back – bek

drop kick – dropkik

fitness – fitnes

offside – ofsajd

team – tim

Partial/compromise transphonemization – cases in which phonemes from the giving language are only partially identical to the phonemes from the receiving language.

Example:

aerobic – aerobik

football – fudbal

out – aut

surfing – surfing

Free transphonemization – a process in which the phonemes of the giving language have no articulatory equivalents in the receiving language, and thereby there is unregulated substitution. English diphthongs have a significant role.

Example:

bonus – bonus

finals – finale,

but also: **paragliding – paraglajding**

goal – gol

hockey – hokej

volley – volej

waterpolo – vaterpolo

Adaptation of Anglicisms in sports terminology at the morphological level

As in the case of adaptation at the phonological level, this paper is guided by Rudolf Filipović's theory. Namely, after the phonological level, an adaptation at the morphological level (and later at the level of the sentence as well – the syntactic level) concerns the substitution of the morphemes into the giving language and receiving language and integration into the grammar of the receiving language system (for example, gender, number and case in the case of nouns, or conjugation in the case of verbs). There are three types of transmorphemization – zero, compromise and complete transmorphemization.

When there is no need for a grammar morpheme in order for the loan word to adapt to the receiving language, we have the case of zero transmorphemization. With Anglicisms in sports terminology there are not many examples for this type of transmorphemization, which demands no morphological adaptation. One of the rare examples is the adjective **fer** (**Eng. fair**), as it is fixed and in the phrase which includes it only the noun which defines it changes, for example **fer sudenje, fer sudenja, fer sudenju**, etc. Another example would be the adjective of a newer date - **kros** (**Eng. cross**), which also remains fixed in the phrase **kros fit**.

The next type of transmorphemization is the one in which a loan word retains its original suffix, adapted at the phonological although not at the morphological level. Such a transmorphemization is called a compromise one. Examples for this are the suffixes **-er** and **-ing**, which have been integrated into the terminologies of many languages, not just Serbian. Thus, we have a multitude of words which have been used in Serbian sports terminology for a while – **amater, bodibilder/ bodibilding, bokser, doping, surfing, teniser, trening**, etc.

Concerning the third type of transmorphemization – the so-called complete transphonemization, where the morphemes from the giving language substitute the morphemes from the receiving language, this type of adaptation implies several processes: suffixation, prefixation, compounding, as well as prefix-suffix formation.

Examples of suffixation: **center – centrirati, direct – direktan, dribbling – driblanje, line – linijski, national – nacionalni, sport – sportski, ženski rod imenice teniser – teniserka, training – treniranje, zone – zonski**.

Examples of prefixation: **polufinale/četvrtfinale**.

Examples of compounding (with compounding there are two foundations for word formation – usually one is English, and the other one Serbian, or English with a Serbian suffix): **autogol, prvoligaš, Paraolimpijada**.

Examples of prefix-suffix formation: **neregularan, nesportski**.

Adaptation of Anglicisms in sports terminology at the semantic level

As has already been mentioned, when a word or phrase enter the receiving language from the giving language, there is an adaptation at the

phonological, morphological and semantic levels before it is finally integrated into the receiving language. When it concerns the semantic level, which is perhaps the most complex for studying, Filipović says that in semantics most often mentioned are “the six main *causes of semantic change*: a) linguistic causes, b) historical causes, c) social causes, d) psychological causes, e) foreign influence as a cause of semantic change, f) a need for new words as the cause of semantic change” (Filipović, 1986, p. 158).

Also, semantic changes which occur with loan words can be the following:

- a) changes in semantic extension
- b) ellipsis
- c) metonymy
- d) pejoration and amelioration of meaning.

Some authors add to these changes the following: metaphors, synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy and polysemy, as there are also some examples for these in practice. This paper will discuss the mentioned four changes.

According to Filipović (Filipović, 1986, p. 65), semantic extension is classified into zero extension (the meaning of the loan word does not change in the receiving language), narrowing of meaning (only a part of the original meaning of the loan word is retained) and extension of meaning (the loan word receives a new meaning in the receiving language).

An example of zero extension: **autogol** (auto goal), **džoging** (jogging), **fer igrač** (fair player), **fudbal** (football), **kikboks** (kickboxing), **teniser** (tennis player), etc.

An example of narrowing of meaning: **gard** (from the English word **guard** Serbian took only the meaning of a defense position, but in English it means both guard and sentry), **gol** (**goal** in English means a goal area, which was the only thing taken by Serbian, but it also means objective), **korner** (**corner** in English means both a corner and an angle, while in Serbian as the receiving language it denotes only a location – the corner of the field where the kick is carried out from).

An example of meaning extension: **nokaut** (Eng. **knockout** includes the original meaning from boxing which pertains to the strike that renders the opponent unable to continue fighting, but in Serbian sports terminology the meaning has been extended also to competitive terminology whereby it denotes the stage of competing in games), **start** (Eng. **start** denotes the beginning of a match, competition, etc., while in Serbian it also obtained the meaning of breach).

An ellipsis, which is a semantic change which involves contracting and can be found very frequently in Anglicisms in Serbian sports terminology.

Some examples of an ellipsis are the following: **bek** (Eng. **backcourt player**), **kontakt** (Eng. **bodily contact**), **kvalifikacije** (Eng. **qualification round**), **penal** (Eng. **penalty kick**), **teniser** (Eng. **tennis player**).

Metonymy as a change of proper nouns or place names in common nouns is very rare in sports terminology. A rare example is the word **Gladijator**, which denotes versatile exercise equipment, and whose name is linked with the producers of this equipment. It's the same case in English, where the same equipment is called a **Nautilus**, which is also the corporate name.

According to Filipović, “The assessment of meaning within the change of meaning shows movement in two directions: a) the direction whereby meaning becomes negative – *pejoration*, b) the direction whereby meaning becomes better – *amelioration*” (Filipović, 1986, p. 160). Usually such changes can be found in slang, and rarely in sports terminology, one of the examples being the word **amater** (Eng. **amateur**), which traditionally denotes a person who is not a professional athlete, while the pejorative meaning is a person who has little knowledge of their work.

On the high frequency of using Anglicisms in sports terminology

As our eminent philologist Ranko Bugarski said in his *Uvod u opštu lingvistiku (Introduction to Linguistics)*, it would be hard to imagine “entire areas of contemporary life” without Anglicisms (Bugarski, 1991, p. 135), including sports. Nevertheless, the question often asked is whether the use of Anglicisms in sports (as well as other areas of life) is adequate in the existing extent. The answer proposed by this paper may perhaps not satisfy language puritans, but it is still founded on a realistic situation in which Serbian and sports correlate in regards to English.

That is to say, one of the main reasons why there is such a large number of Anglicisms in Serbian sports terminology is that a large number of sports were invented in the English speaking countries – Great Britain and the USA. These countries have a large and long sports tradition which has conveyed the competitive spirit to the rest of the world and caused a great expansion of sports. Thus it is not strange that the majority of sports terminology has been taken from the language of sports – English, and not only in Serbia, but in the entire world. It can be said that Anglicisms from the area of sports have become internationalisms, which actually eases communication and understanding among sportspeople/sports aficionados/fans on a global level. This is indeed one of the main advantages of introducing Anglicisms in sports terminology.

Also, we should bear in mind that a large part of sports terminology has not been simply transcribed from English, but it has been translated in such a way to retain the spirit of Serbian, with the help of the process which Mira Milić in her paper “*Uticao engleskog jezika na srpski u procesu adaptacije sportske terminologije*” (“The influence of English on term formation processes in Serbian sports terminology”) presented at the Fourth International Interdisciplinary Conference »*Susret kultura*« (Encounter of Cultures) identified as loan

translation or calque (for example, *match ball* – meč lopta), literal translation (for example *scissors* – makazice), descriptive translating (for example, *face off* – borba za loptu), and functional approximation (for example *power volleyball* – Japanese volleyball).

Of course, there are examples of excessive use of Anglicisms (or their inadequate forms) in sports. However, we must be aware that it is not just Serbian which has an inclination to borrow words from other languages – just as it is inevitable that languages evolve with time, they all more or less show a need to fill the newly occurring voids with new words and phrases, which will frequently be borrowed from languages from where the certain novelty comes from. Such phenomena point to an enriching of the language and not so much a danger to that part of the national identity which is founded on language, something which will be discussed in the following chapter.

The relationship between national identity and the influx of Anglicisms

There is no doubt that language represents an important feature of identity – this is the role which it has had from the time of Rousseau and the French revolution, when it stood shoulder to shoulder with the concepts of nation and the state. However, due to its instable character, which we have spoken about in this paper, there are simply no conditions for an excessively large amount of language purism which a language, as one of the three main features of a national identity, demands.

In his work *Language and Identity*, Ranko Bugarski deals with this topic and gives an interesting, personal example of a person who grew up in a bilingual family, and had not just one mother language to identify with (Bugarski, 2010, p. 23), but several. His example is not an isolated case, and the expansion of English is such that it in fact represents a symbol of unity and contemporary life (and thus also identity), and thereby Bugarski with right defines the English language as a separate category – an additional language, which differs from the mother, the second and foreign languages (Bugarski, 2010, p. 47), and cannot even be considered as a foreign language, considering it is a *lingua franca*.

Also, he mentions the increasingly present and unfounded division into “ours” and “foreign”, while everything that is ours is considered as being good, while foreign is bad and undesirable (Bugarski, 2010, p. 43). It is problematical to view things in that way, especially taking into consideration sports terminology and sports as an aspect of maintaining a gracious spirit, equality and tolerance among nations. And while sports actually reflects a certain aspect of satisfying the appetite for national identity, the use of the English language, that is, Anglicisms in sport, does not represent a barrier but rather a bridge which

enables easier communication even among individuals who do not possess a high level of knowledge of English.

Taking all this into view, we can maintain that national identity does not suffer due to the influx of Anglicisms, especially in the case of sports terminology, but rather, it creates the prerequisites for a further enriching of the language as well as the culture, and thereby also a new outlook on national identity.

CONCLUSION

As we can see from this paper, the presence of Anglicisms in sports is a totally natural thing, perhaps mostly due to the very origins of the majority of sports. Anglicisms as new and for the receiving language needed words and phrases are integrated into the language, and adapt at several levels, with which they become an integral part in not just a semantic sense, but also phonological and morphological/syntactic implication.

It is also clear that even though there are cases of an excessive use of Anglicisms in Serbian sport terminology, in no case is their presence unnecessary, and also, in spite of the fact that they are to a large extent used in sport, their purpose is not to deconstruct the concept of national identity, but to offer a new, additional way for successful communication.

REFERENCES

1. Bugarski, Ranko (2010). *Jezik i identitet*. Beograd: Biblioteka XX vek.
2. Bugarski, Ranko (1991). *Uvod u opštu lingvistiku*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva.
3. Filipović, Rudolf (1990). *Anglicizmi u hrvatskom ili srpskom jeziku: porijeklo, razvoj, značenje*. Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti.
4. Filipović, Rudolf (1986). *Teorija jezika u kontaktu: Uvod u lingvistiku jezičnih dodira*. Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti.
5. Milić, Mira (2006). *Englesko-srpski rečnik sportskih termina*. Novi Sad: Zmaj
6. Milić, Mira (2004). Uticaj engleskog jezika na srpski u procesu adaptacije sportske terminologije, Urednik: Ljiljana Subotić, *IV Međunarodni interdisciplinarni naučni simpozijum »Susret kultura«*, Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet Univerziteta u Novom Sadu.