

The influence of English in the language used by Kosovar media

*Sejdi Sejdiu & Aida Alla**

Abstract:

The aim of this research is the reflection of the influence of English language on Albanian language used by Kosovar media. The Albanian language is always influenced by other languages, including the impact of different invaders throughout history over the Albanian people. English language holds a special place as a global or international language. Its use affects all the languages of the world, including Albanian, where its influence has become more significant over the past twenty years. This happened due to uncontrolled entry of anglicisms in Albanian language and the need for appropriate terminology labelling as a result of technological development. The equivalents of current Albanian words are not used in the media or in public because of the prestige that that English words have. Lack of equivalent words is another reason for using more anglicisms. Today, despite the commitment of the Albanian language lecturers, television media and daily newspapers are the most significant users of anglicisms. This research deals with the history, use, causes, time and future anglicisms in Albanian language.

Keywords: *Albanian language, anglicizms, impact, use, media*

Introduction

Ever since the existence of languages, they have borrowed words from each other, some more, some less, depending on

* *Sejdi Sejdiu (PhD), AAB College, email: sejdi.sejdiu@aab-edu.net & Aida Alla (PhD Cand.), AAB College, email: aida.alla@aab-edu.net*

their prestige. Borrowing arises from human contacts as people are always on the move.

In this regard, the Albanian language has borrowed many words from foreign languages depending on different invaders, the phrases of which are still present in Albanian language. The influence of English language in Albanian language has had a rapid increase during the last two-three decades, and the anglicisms are already present in almost every field of human life. The human intellectual development brings the language development as well, which also is individual linguistic enrichment. Nowadays, borrowing is the most common way of linguistic enrichment. The borrowed words mainly cover the labeling for which there is no appropriate expression in the receiving language. An example could be the words that name technological concepts, the ones that name various sports activities, economic or political expressions, etc.

In terms of grammatical category, the Albanian language has borrowed mainly nouns from English language. Today, the common words are such as: obligation (obligim), attack (atak), event (event), intervention (intervenim), association (asociacion), leader (lider), competence (kompetencë), implementation (implementim), coordination (koordinim), department (department), approval (aprovim), progress (progress), barrier (barrier), staff (staf), resource (resurs), acceptance (akceptim), and many others. These are only some of thousands of words that are present in our media and press.

However, the question is whether the above mentioned words should be part of Kosovar media when there is an equivalent for each of them? Are those words understood by every age group? Why and by whom are they mostly used? These issues are part of this research carried out on three daily newspapers and four television mediums during a three month period between March-May 2015.

Today, anglicisms are present in almost every language of the world, but, in order for them to be a part of a language, they must be subject of grammatical, orthographic, phonetic and phonological rules, so that they would be properly adopted into the receiving language. Initially, before accepting the foreign words, we should make efforts on finding the equivalent of the same words in our language, and the new words may be borrowed only when all the possibilities are consumed. Another method of creation of new words is the translation of foreign words into Albanian language.

English language is the second most used language worldwide. Foreign words are brought by people who speak another language. People today use anglicisms to show their high level of education or to prove a high position. Foreign words later become a model made by other people and in a short time they occupy a place in their vocabulary. One way to avoid foreign words is their creation by local linguists. But since there is no initiative or work by them, then our language is overflowed by foreign words and sometimes not even used or understood clearly by the broad masses of Albanian speakers.

It is mainly the journalists, economists, politicians, lawyers and many others who speak an undefined Albanian language, which can be hardly understood by older people or those who do not understand English. On the other hand, the use of anglicisms on speaking and writing does not make one more intellectual than the other, but their use highlights the poverty of the Albanian vocabulary and the lack of vocabulary or disadvantage of their users.

The Albanian language should be developed and concurrently protected via active mechanisms from the uncontrolled anglicisms which are being used instead of words with the same equivalence.

However, it is clear that some anglicisms are needed as they name new concepts, mainly of technical nature for which there is no appropriate word in Albanian language. Some of them are: project, internet, computer, e-mail, record, printer, coalition, investment, export, import, radar, database, etc. It would be a good idea to have a vocabulary of anglicisms in order to be able to handle this highly impetuous phenomenon.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Linguistic borrowings occur when two or more languages are in contact with each other. Under these circumstances, it is usually the poor language that happens to receive new words or phrases from the other language. Many linguists, such as Rasmus Rask¹, Franc Bopp² and Jakob Grimm³, have expressed their opinions on linguistic borrowings and language blending. They have reached a conclusion that the words may be borrowed, but the linguistic structure should not be changed as a result of the borrowing.

Hugo Schuchardt opined that there is no language that is clean, unblended and unaffected by another language and to him; the borrowing was something very normal⁴. Ernst Windisch presented the idea that the linguistic influences occur as a result of bilingualism⁵. Unlike these, Hermann Paul was of an opinion that blending or borrowing is required in order for a language to exist or live out.

¹Rask, R. *Essay on the Origin of the Ancient Norse or Icelandic Tongue*, Copenhagen, 1818

²Bopp, F. *On the conjugational system of the Sanskrit language - In comparison with that of Greek, Latin, Persian and the Germanic languages*. Germany 1816

³Grimm, J. *Deutsche Grammatik*, USA, 1819

⁴Schuchardt, H. *Contact Linguistics*, Berlin, 1884

⁵Windsich, E.A *Bibliography of English Etymology*, Published by the University of Minnesota Press, USA, 1897

In the 20th century, the term blending was replaced by the term borrowing as it looked more appropriate by the linguists of that time. Uriel Weinreich later used the term interference as this described in the best way the linguistic influences brought by bilingual people. The interference is perceived at Albanians when their speaking contains foreign words, or when their language is mixed. The interference is usually noticeable when learning another language⁶.

On the other hand, Antoine Meillet considered borrowing of words as a natural act as majority of languages may take elements of other languages which may not last long⁷. Leonard Bloomfield noted that words are mainly borrowed when cultures are carried forward between people. According to him, this is a cultural diffusion because new labelling occurs during this process⁸.

Being two Indo-European languages, there were cultural borrowings from English into Albanian language because geographically they are not close to each other. Due to the significant number of international community present in Kosovo since the end of nineties, English language has served as *lingua franca* for communication between the Albanians and foreigners. Consequently, the Albanian language was influenced by English language because of the prestige of the latter. This flow of aglicisms in Albanian language has never been controlled by any institution of Albanian language. Most of the linguists nowadays say that the influence of English language in all existing languages is a consequence of international globalization since English language is increasingly being used as *lingua franca*.

⁶Weinreich, U. *Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems*, Linguistic Circle of New York. No. 1. New York, 1963

⁷Millet, A. *Linguistique historique et linguistique générale*, Paris, 1921

⁸Bloomfield, L. *Language*, Allen and Unwin, London 1935

VIEWS OF ALBANIAN LINGUISTS ON BORROWINGS

Regarding the phenomenon of borrowings from English into Albanian language, it is difficult to find Albanian linguists who have clear-cut viewpoints either pro or against it. This is due to the complexity that carries this phenomenon as it confronts two extremes: the richness of language whether these loans introduce new concepts, or its impoverishment whether their introduction in Albanian dictionary is overlapping the existing Albanian words and therefore setting aside the latter even though it was serving the same function bearing the same semantic charge.

On his book *'Ndikimi i anglishtes ne gjuhen shqipe'* professor Vesel Nuhiu is of the opinion that today the Albanian language has deviated in many directions and many spheres, therefore, a deep repair is needed since it is out from literary norms⁹. It is the very use of anglicisms that is the subject of this study, which also professor Nuhiu sees as the greatest violations of literary norm. He further states that the language should be developed, maintained even by borrowings which should however be reasonable and in line with orthographic system of Albanian language¹⁰.

Rami Memushaj is very critical when stating that "These linguistic fallacies, which account not only for a narrow linguistic culture, but also for a general scarce formation of individuals involved in public discourse, such as journalists, politicians, etc. may be imitated by laymen and as a result

⁹ Vesel Nuhiu. *Ndikimi i anglishtes ne gjuhen shqipe*, Akademia e shkencave, Prishtinë, 2013.

¹⁰Ibid.

degenerate the language¹¹". Nevertheless, Prof. Memushaj agrees with the fact that if needed the language should be enriched and modernised¹².

Even the persons of the same nationality, the youth in particular, during their daily conversations use the expressions and even complete sentences in English language in order to show their social and educational status. During this process, particular words begin to be used more often and by time they become a part of their general vocabulary as if they are clear Albanian words. ie "Kjo nuk është fair.", instead of "Kjo nuk është e drejtë". "Ajo është një fashion lover.", instead of "Ajo është një adhuruese/ndjekëse e modës"¹³. Nevertheless, these expressions may be considered in fashion, which are a novelty or often new borrowings which carry the temporariness as a distinctive feature. They get spread widely just like the fashion for a certain period of time. It is already clear that the Albanian language is subject to foreign interference; nowadays the languages are giving and taking like never before and such an occurrence happens for many objective reasons; but this should not mean that whatever is introduced should necessarily be accepted and be turned into a norm.

Every conduct or attitude is an expression of cultural emancipation, but in the foundation of cultural identity for discoursing with others, an individual shall first inherit and then elect, by continuously making efforts to pay contribution for a life model/pattern. This model/pattern involves the "model of language development". This conclusion has its own

¹¹Rami Memushaj. *Shqipja Standarde, Si ta flasim dhe ta shkruajmë*. Botimet Toena. Tiranë 2011. pg. 110.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Lilo, R. *Mbi huazimet frënge në gjuhën shqipe*. Konferencë shkencore: Kontakte gjuhësore dhe kulturore mos shqipes dhe gjuhëve të tjera në 100 vjet (1912 - 2012), pg. 22.

ground of logic. For one language, borrowing the terminology items from other languages is not something tragic. Particularly detrimental would be considered taking the words or expressions without any reason, which are sufficient on everyday vocabularies, or which can be replaced with ancient words of Albanian language by simultaneously giving them contemporary meanings. The word formations in Albanian language are potentially available¹⁴.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As mentioned above, in order to get enriched, the languages continuously give and take from each other and this phenomenon has become more common over the last decades whereby the possibility of expressing in electronic and press media, be it social or not, has considerably increased.

Judging from the alert raised by the linguistic theoreticians of Albanian language, and taking into account the fact that most of the communication activities among humans are carried out through electronic and press media, we deemed as necessary to conduct a detailed research on the presence and impact of anglicisms in the media of the Republic of Kosovo.

Moreover, another reason that legitimizes our research is the fact that in most of the cases, the sources of news in Albanian press are in English language and they are translated by amateur translators or by the journalists themselves whereupon they often replace the Albanian word with its equivalent in English language due to their lack of professionalism in translation.

¹⁴Mëniqi, K. *Anglicizat në ligjërimet*. Prishtina Press, Prishtinë, 2012.

Our research covered the most popular television and press media of the Republic of Kosovo, respectively on television media RTK, KTV, Klan Kosova and RTV21 as well as press media by reviewing the newspapers Koha Ditore, Zëri and Kosova Sot covering a 30 year period, from 1998 till April 2015. The research was mainly focused on articles covering politics as well as art and culture, and this was due to the developments over the recent decades, the political-diplomatic terminology was subject to most changes and transformations, unlike the term covering art and culture which were regarded as resistant to the temptation of foreign words, namely English words.

Nevertheless, as it will be noticed on the analysis below, the language on art and culture articles is influenced as much as the articles of politics. It was deemed as appropriate to review this period of time as it was the very 90's when massive use of internet begun. Consequently, we have the first introductions of words which later invaded increasingly. Twenty students of AAB College, Faculty of English Language, voluntarily took part on the researching phase which lasted three months. They organised their tasks on three groups and came up with rather interesting data which will be discussed and analysed in the course of this study.

RESEARCH DATA

Our research covered a 30-year period with the aim of identifying the density of these borrowings. As we had anticipated, in this precise period we have an increasing number of anglicisms. Many of them, introduced in our lexicon for reasons mentioned above, are unnecessary words as their equivalents in Albanian language have the same semantic value. Another group is the words that have enriched the Albanian language with new concepts previously unknown or

have added connotations and additional meaning to the existing words, which fit to different contexts. Another interesting linguistic phenomenon is the use of the English derivational affixes instead of local ones. In this respect, the classification of the examples which will be demonstrated in this study will identify the nature of these anglicisms and the position they hold in the lexicon of the Albanian language. It is worth mentioning that, due to space constraints of this article, we are including only a small number of examples compared to the findings made by the students of AAB College.

List of unnecessary borrowings from English (deviations from the lexical norm)

Englis	Borrowing	Albanian
Abuse	Abuzim	shpërdorj
apply	aplikoj	zbatoj
agenda	axhenda	rend dite
cancel	kanceloj	anulloj
correct	korrektoj	korrigjoj
confidence	konfidencë	besim
consensus	konsensus	pëlqim
confuse	konfuzoj	ngatërroj
concentration	koncentrim	përqëndrim
dedication	dedikim	kushtim
event	event	aktivitet/ngjarje
perform	performoj	shfaq
performance	performancë	shfaqje
principle	princip	parim
leadership	lidership	udhëheqje
quality	kualitet	cilësi
quantity	kuantitet	sasi
observation	observim	vrojtim
implementation	implementim	zbatim
support	suport	mbështje
treatment	tretman	trajtim
Union	union	bashkim

List of words with borrowed derivational affixes

English	Borrowing	Albanian
Unfavorable	Disfavorshme	i/e jovavorshme
demonition	demontim	çmontim
maltreatment	maltrajtim	keqtrajtim
multiethnic	multietnike	shumetnike
illegal	ilegale,	joligjore/e jashteligjshme
destabilization	destabilizim	jostabilizim
disinformation	disinformim	keqinformim
depolicization	depolitizim	çpolitizim
post-electoral	postzgjedor	paszgjedor
demilitarization	demilitarizim	çarmatim/çmilitarizim

List of words integrated in the vocabulary of Albanian language

English	Borrowing
Mission	mision
context	kontekst
process	proces
execution	ekzekutim
contribution	kontribut
manipulation	manipulim
consultation	konsultim
proposition	propozim
transmit	transmetoj
internet,	internet,
computer	kompjuter,
e-mail	e-mail,
record,	rekord,
printer	printer,
coalition	koalicion,
investment	investim,
export	eksport
import	import

RECOMENDATIONS

In the context of globalization and virtual communication, it is impossible for languages not to be influenced by each other, especially when new concepts are introduced. However, new entries with no criteria from English into Albanian language, and especially through the press, hamper the development and standardisation of the norm. On the other hand, we have a contingent of words acquired in the lexicon of the Albanian language, adapting to its grammatical nature. The latter group has occupied the status of the language "supplier". Nevertheless, the distinguished linguist, Eqerem Çabej said that "there exist all the possibilities for a replacement of foreign words with the native word without weakening the meaning of words at all."

The findings of the research highlight the phenomenon of increased anglicisms in Albanian language over the recent years employed mainly by our media. Therefore there is an immediate need to deal with this phenomenon. There is no language immune to the phenomenon of influence from other language. However, we need to use this fact as a justification.

The experts who are in charge to examine or protect the Albanian language from this phenomenon should work on this matter with no delay in order to reach a decision on the use or acquisition of anglicisms. Such a committee should have even been continuously present similarly as the role of Oxford Dictionary committee in England which examines all the new or foreign words and provide an opinion on their use or change.

In this respect, it would be appropriate that the editorials of Kosovar mediums establish a committee mainly comprised by linguists, who would edit the material prior to be published and largely disseminated to the population. Establishment of

such a committee would contribute not only on preservation of the linguistic norms but also on orientation of the development of Albanian language, since the latter is in need of correction which goes in line with the development of Albanian society.

Moreover, the editors-in-chief should implement stricter policies on hiring the journalists whose role is very important on spreading the words which later become an inseparable part of our vocabulary, thus continuously pushing the Albanian words aside.

CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of news is to be understood by every citizen without any need for explanations or interpretations. The mixed Albanian-English language in our media has become difficult to be understood by older generations who were not grown up along with modern technology having little contacts with English language, not to say they had no contacts at all.

The extensive use of foreign words is a result of the low level of literacy in native language that reflects the ignorance of many original Albanian words. Even today, there are many cases where the use of foreign words is intentional on the grounds that sounds more educated.

From this research, we have reached to conclusion that in some news sections up, to 40% of foreign functional words are used. Fields of politics, law, and economics are the areas where our media in general use anglicisms only, for example, opozita (opposition), lidership (leadership), koordinim (coordination), realizim (realisation), online (online), degradim (degradation), devijim (deviation), kompani (company), performance (performance), etc.

With this research we wanted to reflect the current state of use of anglicisms by Kosovar media. From what was said

above, it is clear that anglicisms are entering and being used to a great extent by our media. Knowing that the media are the source of news and the reflection of the language of a country, we conclude that the use of the native Albanian words would help media that their news be understood by all levels of population and therefore the Albanian language would not get increasingly impoverished.

Bibliography:

Bloofied, L. *Language*, Allen and Unwin, London 1935

Bopp, F. *On the conjugational system of the Sanskrit language - In comparison with that of Greek, Latin, Persian and the Germanic languages*. Germany 1816

Grimm, J. *Deutsche Grammatik*, USA, 1819

Lilo, R. *Mbi huazimet frënge në gjuhën shqipe*. Konferencë shkencore: Kontakte gjuhësore dhe kulturore mos shqipes dhe gjuhëve të tjera në 100 vjet. Tirana, GEER, 2013.

Mëniqi, K. *Anglicizat në ligjërimet*. Prishtina Press, Prishtinë, 2012.

Memushaj, R. *Shqipja Standarde, Si ta flasim dhe ta shkruajmë*. Botimet Toena. Tiranë 2011.

Millet, A. *Linguistique historique et linguistique générale*, Paris, 1921

Nuhju, V. *Ndikimi i anglishtes në gjuhën shqipe*, Akademia e Shkencave dhe e Arteve e Kosovës, Prishtinë, 2013.

Rask, R. *Essay on the Origin of the Ancient Norse or Icelandic Tongue*, Copenhagen, 1818

Schuchardt, H. *Contact Linguistics*, Berlin, 1884

Weinreich, U. *Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems*, Linguistic Circle of New York. No. 1. New York, 1963

Windsich, E. *A Bibliography of English Etymology*, Published by the University of Minnesota Press, USA, 1897

List of research students engaged on data collection:

1. Albana Gashi
2. Arben Shabani
3. Arber Xhemajli
4. ArgjendBerisha
5. Arjeta Bllaca
6. Bardha Ajvazi
7. BlerinaSfishta
8. DafinaHasanaj
9. Diana Aliu
10. Donika Iberdemaj
11. Fehmi Qerimi
12. FortesaKuqi
13. Gresa Xani
14. Nergis Gjinolli
15. Selda Savqi
16. Shkumbin Baxhuku
17. Uran Berisha
18. Valdet Bytyqi
19. Valeri Ahmeti
20. Valon Sejdiu