



Customer-friendly Approach or Pidginization of German Tourist Discourse

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INTRODUCTION

One of the topics of interest within contemporary scientific linguistic discourse has been assigned to the impact of English and the inexorable flow of mainly Anglo-Americanisms into other languages over the past few decades. The global leadership of the U.S.A. in economics, science and politics, as well as global social changes accompanied by globalization and Europeanization, has influenced language evolution in European states and all over the world. Technological development considerably reinforced the power and scope of the mass media, which in turn overwhelmingly impacted on language use. The process of globalization not only affects communication; it is also aimed at the creation of a unique cultural community, leading to language convergence. Some researchers indicate that the process involves vocabulary harmonization ("Harmonisierung der Wortschätze") of European languages and the development of a unique Eurosemantics (Bär 2000: 21).

This paper aims to analyze the tourist discourse and to research its most prominent features in the German tourist discourse, with special emphasis on some characteristics typical for pidginization caused by the Anglo-American influence. These features can be regarded as the result of achieving the goal of a customer-friendly approach. Analysis of the tourist discourse and its main features was carried out on the corpus of:

- professional tourism journals titled *NGZ- Der Hotelier - Die Wirtschaftsfachzeitschrift für Hotellerie und Gastronomie* (Deutscher Fachverlag GmbH, Frankfurt



am Main), *FVW- Zeitschrift für die Tourismuswirtschaft* (Freizeit-Verlag, D-86882 Landsberg) and *Top Hotel – die Fach Illustrierte für das Hotel-Management* (Freizeit-Verlag, D-86882 Landsberg).

- scientific publications: *Destination Management in Theorie und Praxis - Organisation und Vermarktung von Tourismusorten und Tourismusregionen* (Luft 2007) and *Hotelmanagement* (Seitz 1997) ;
- brochures: *Reise aktuell (Frühjahr/Sommer/2009)* and *RIVATOURS Kroatien Hotel / Fewo / Privatunterkunft / Landhäuser / Kreuzfahrten / Bus / Flug/ 2008* analyzed in the period from 1998 to 2009.

TOURIST DISCOURSE AND ITS MAIN FEATURES

Within the tourist discourse which presents "the totality of codified linguistic usages attached to a given type of social practice", communication plays a central role in tourism and, as emphasized by numerous authors (e.g., Picard 1933; Tresse 1990; Hollinshead 1994; Urry 1997; Dann 1996 and others) communication is a personification of tourism on the one hand and tourism is nothing but a system of communication on the other. As it forms a crucial part of tourism, communication not only serves as a medium for buying/selling tourist products, it also assumes the role of the product itself, so that the tourist discourse can also be considered as a tourist product. If analyzed from the linguistic point of view, the multi-layered structure, fluidity and highly dynamic linguistic structure of the tourist discourse makes the issue of its definition a rather complex matter. Accordingly, the term tourist discourse can provide only an orientational function.

The diverse interdisciplinary area of tourism produces in the tourist discourse a mixture of discourse typical for specific and for general purposes. This is based on the premise that they are interconnected, implying that the role of language for general purposes serves as a functional basis for the development of languages for special purposes (Schröder 1991; Hoffman 1988; Möhn, Pelka 1984). Hoffmann's thesis (1988: 21) also shows that studies within the field of languages for special purposes (LSP-s) failed to define a strict delineation between the general and specific purposes. In this connection, the tourist discourse proves that those elements of the language for specific purposes cannot always be unambiguously classified as the language for general or for specific purposes, which makes delineation between the general and specific purposes pointless (Monteiro 1995: 304).

A combination of the discourse typical for specific purposes on the one hand and general on the other, represented in the tourist discourse, is evident in the lexical units borrowed from the general language. Within the tourist discourse, their semantics becomes different from the general language in order to lexicalize specialized

¹ <http://www.revuetexto.net/Reperes/Glossaires/Glossaire.en.html>



functions related to the hotel and tourism context (Mekis 2007: 74). Thus the lexical units which can be seen as part of the language for general purposes such as *holiday, sailing, charters* etc. acquire a professional status by borrowing professional semantics. The main aim of the lexicalization of specialized functions resulting in professional semantics is to establish professional communication in the field of tourism.

Vertical and horizontal layering typical for specialized discourse is also found in the tourist discourse. In simplified terms, the horizontal layering involves an equal relationship of dependency on the basis of different professions and fields of expertise (Roelcke 1998: 34), and, based on horizontal layering, the tourist discourse comprises one of the components of the superordinate discourse of economics (economic science). Since tourism belongs to the tertiary sector, all economic areas that depend on tourism help to contribute to the tourist discourse. However, within the tourist discourse, macro-and microeconomics, marketing, etc. appear in the applied and more narrowed form than when they are treated as independent economic disciplines.

In this respect, the tourist discourse can also be defined in a narrower and wider sense by using the elements of the vertical and horizontal structure of tourism as parameters for its definition. Elements that comprise the horizontal structure of tourism as a system, such as subprofessions of hospitality, travel and transport activities, activities of mediation and negotiation, tourist attractions and destination management, can be classified as tourist discourse in a narrower sense. The vertical structure of tourism as a system includes technical, technological, organizational, economic, legal and environmental subprofessions and they form the components of the tourist discourse in a wider sense.

Consequently, the tourist discourse in a narrower sense includes those subprofessions or registers that have already been present in it for some time and constitute its core, while the tourist discourse in a wider sense comprises 'more contemporary' i.e. applied or peripheral registers of tourism. With reference to its vertical layering, i.e. the degree of specialization of the communication context, the function of the tourist discourse is to satisfy the idiomatic needs of tourists and experts in the tourism sector including internal communication, via communication between the different sectors and terminating with external communication.

Mekis (2007: 73) argues that, in spite of the fact that tourism includes economic, legal, organizational, social, health, cultural, historical and other aspects, their significance in defining the discourse of tourism will depend on their representation in the terminology of tourism.

Mixed terminology is the most evident characteristic of the mixed register. It is typical for mixed registers to combine diverse terminologies, and the relationship among them is determined by the scientific hierarchy. In this way, the process of lexical influence shows the development from fundamental sciences to practical activities, i.e. economics, to a certain degree, gives its terminology to many professions, including the field of tourism. Mixed registers are primarily found on the lexical, but also on the syntactic and textual levels. Accordingly, tourist discourse containing mixed registers shows



overlapping and interconnectivity of lexical units of various subprofessions and related professional fields (Fox 1993: 517), and can be defined as the sum of various registers.

Consequently, tourist discourse can be defined as codified linguistic usage within the field of economics, presenting a mixed register with the language for general purposes as its fundamental part. The center of the tourist discourse is created by the scientific discourse, which, if compared with its periphery, is very small (Kriston, 2009: 8). The language for specific purposes used in the tourist discourse includes subprofessions and communication areas in tourism associated with related registers (the terminology of different professions and science) aimed at establishing and performing professional communication. What makes the tourist discourse distinctive in relation to other professional discourses is the nature and interconnectivity among the different registers, which is caused by certain communication situations and communication partners.

CUSTOMER-FRIENDLY APPROACH

Tourism is primarily a creative and people-centered industry. In the contemporary globalized business environment, tourism professionals work with tourists from all over the world to discover what they want when on holiday. From hotel preferences to holiday packages and all-inclusive resort incentives, tourism professionals are expected to generate and increase sales by enticing tourists. In a highly competitive environment, tourist products created by tourist professionals are marketed in order to satisfy the needs and expectations of very demanding customers.

The creation of tourist products is based on a business-minded approach to marketing and communication by applying business principles such as profit and negotiating techniques aimed at presenting and advertising tourist products. To stay in business, tourism professionals are expected to convince customers to *become* customers, convince customers to *continue* to buy, convince customers to *increase* purchases of current products and services, convince customers to *expand* to new products and service and convince customers to *recommend* the products and services to others (Ziegenfuss 2007: 5). To entice customers to start, continue, increase, expand and recommend tourist products and services is the mission of the customer-friendly approach in tourism.

According to Ziegenfuss (2007: 6) the definition of the notion 'customer-friendly' in the context of the tourism industry, provides very many variations on a few central themes: good value of the tourist product, a high-quality service and reliable performance. Even within these categories, there is a seemingly endless list of possible interpretations. 'Value', for example, can mean something different to everyone, including the component of creativity and attractiveness. Creativity, in the context of tourism industry, refers to the phenomenon of presenting an attractive tourist product to the target group of customers, bearing in mind that the most important component of the tourism industry is the customer.



THEORICAL PRELIMINARY ON PIDGINIZATION RELATED TO GERMAN TOURIST DISCOURSE

The German tourist discourse used as a means to achieve attractiveness of the tourist product introduced has acquired some features that indicate the influence of pidginization. Before presenting the results of this study and examining whether the German tourist discourse shows the influence of pidginization, it is essential to define what pidginization is. According to Ping-Hu (2007: 140) *pidgin language* is a contact language with unique linguistic features which makes it very difficult to be defined and explained completely. Due to this fact some of the definitions of pidginization are presented.

Baker (1993: 6) defines pidgin "as a form of language created by members of two or more linguistic groups in contact as a means of intercommunication, the most basic grammatical rules of which are common to all its habitual users regardless of their own primary language, while at least one, and perhaps all, of the participating groups recognize that this means of intercommunication is not the primary language of any other".

For Baker, pidgin is a form of intercommunication and according to it the German tourist discourse can be seen as a form of intercommunication between the service providers and the target group of customers, which is under strong Anglo-American influence.

On the other hand, it should be emphasized that for Bickerton (1977), "pidginization begins by the speaker using his native tongue and relexifying first only a few key words. Even these will be thoroughly rephonologized to accord with substrate sound system and phonotactics and slotted into syntactic surface structures drawn from the substrate".

Bickerton's definition indicates that through the influence of pidginization the English words are also relexified, rephonologized and slotted into the syntactic surface structure of the German tourist discourse.

According to John Holm (2000: 5), "a pidgin is a simplified language containing target language lexicon and including features of the speaker's first language".

Related to the German tourist discourse, it also presents a kind of a simplified language including linguistic features of English as a consequence of Anglo-American influence, with the lexicon presenting a remarkable frequency of English loan words.

Through tourism, communication between the different languages has become closer. However, only prestigious languages make an influence on other idioms and it is obvious that in the contemporary globalized and interconnected world English is the language of prestigious character. The development has much in common with the definition of pidginization given by American linguists Henry and Renée Kahane (1976: 31), "a prestigious language reduced to a mini-structure - for colonials", which can be related to the German tourist discourse exposed to the influence of



pidginization. Precisely for these reasons, there are a lot of Anglo-Americanisms in German, but despite the millions of Turkish citizens in Germany there are no germanized loanwords from Turkish, so that the phenomenon of pidginization can be explained as a way a language reacts to the environment.

The main prerequisite of avoiding pidginization without causing damage or creating doubt in the target - German language would be integration of Anglo-Americanisms, primarily by following the German word formation rules. Therefore, the following discussion focuses on the influence of pidginization in the German tourist discourse and the integration of Anglo-Americanisms. The following examples of the influence of pidginization on the German tourist discourse caused by Anglo-American influence are provided for syntactic, morphological, orthographic, semantic, word formation and textual level and are supported by results of the quantitative analysis.

SYNTACTIC LEVEL

English influence on the level of syntax was regarded by Carstensen (1965: 69-87) as a stylistic enrichment in German language, in contrast to Zimmer (2002: 53-55) who, almost forty years later, identified its danger in terms of deregulation of the structured language system. Zimmer introduced the original concept of *Tiefencode* (2002: 7) by which a system of linguistic rules that guarantees the functioning of language and prevents linguistic anarchy is meant. In the powerful Anglo-American influence, Zimmer (2002: 8) sees destabilization of the deep code (*Tiefencode*) which is closely connected with weakening of the assimilation potential in German on the one hand and the influence of pidginization on the other. Through analysis of the syntactic level exposed to Anglo-American influence, deviations in word order, transitive usage of intransitive verbs, as well as examples of literal translation were found.

Transitive usage of intransitive verbs

Transitive usage of intransitive verbs is evident in the language of advertising in imperatives, such as:

Fliegen Sie TUI! Instead of: Fliegen Sie mit TUI!

The literal translation

Examples of literal translation show deviations from the rules of German syntax due to English influence.

Die Gäste können jederzeit zurückrufen. (NGZ, 8/2000/34)



The compound verb *zurückrufen* is the literal translation of the phrase *to call back* and it replaced the German term *anrufen* or (*wieder*) *anrufen*.

Sie sind bequem in unseren Fitness- und Wellnessräumen. (NGZ, 1/2004/39)

Adjective *bequem* is the literal translation of *guests are comfortable* that corresponds to the German *sich wohlfühlen* while *bequem*, describing the personal quality in the German language, has a meaning *lazy* and *comfortable*.

Alle von uns sind in der Begutachtung der verwendeten Produkte tätig. (FVW, 1/1999/9)

The English structure *all of us* served as a model for *alle von uns*. The appropriate German form is *wir alle*.

The above examples of non-integrated syntactic structures created under Anglo-American influence show that the cause of frequent violations of the German rules on the syntactic level lies in the poor quality of translations, disregarding the component of interpretation and the very complex issue of translatability.

MORPHOLOGICAL LEVEL

Morphological integration implies the integration of loan words in relation to the morphological system of the recipient language. This integration refers both to the basic form, and also the morphological categories. Pidginization on the morphological level is evident in the noun inflexion in genitive singular form masculine and neuter, in the comparison of adjectives, where the formation of German comparative and superlative forms follows the English morphological model as well as in the formation of past participle forms and plural forms which is shown in the following examples.

Genitive singular form

There is no -s ending typical for the German genitive singular form (masculine and neuter):

Karl Th. Walterspiel wurde erneut zum Mitglied des Executive Board gewählt (NGZ, 10/2003/27).

Formation of the genitive influenced by Saxon genitive

Meyer's Reisen (NGZ, 8/2002/23)



Formation of the plural form

In most anglicisms, the English plural form by adding -s was found. The following examples show that the plural forms stick to the British rules:

Anders als in Asien, wo seit vielen Jahren Spa-Cottages bekannt sind, können wir
(NGZ, 5/2002/33)

Eine besondere Einrichtung für die Geschäftsfrauen sind die Ladies Business
Suites. (NGZ, 8/1999/38)

However, the anglicisms Hobby and Party show uncertainty between the use of ending -ies and -ys, such as:

Brave Parties bieten für jeden etwas Neues. (NGZ, 8/1999/32)

Bei den Night-Crawler-Partys drängten sich bis 1.000 Gäste im Erdgeschoss. (FVW,
2/2005/14)

Adjective comparison

The tendency of borrowing the English morphology was confirmed by the examples of the German adjective comparison following the English model. Those are the adjectives of more than one syllable, where instead of the German ending -st the form with *am meisten* is used in the superlative, which is in accordance with the English *most*, as illustrated by the following example:

die am meisten gefragten Getränke. (NGZ, 3/1998/52)
instead of: die gefragtesten Getränke

The influence of English morphology was also observed in the formation of comparative polysyllabic adjectives, although to a lesser extent than in superlative forms. Instead of the comparative ending -er the form with *mehr* is used, which is the translated form of the English *more*.

Sie sind einfach mehr anpassungsfähig als die alten Gäste. (NGZ, 4/1998/15)

Formation of the past participle

In some cases the formation of the past participle form is under the strong influence of English, because the suffixes typical for German morphology do not exist, which leads to the creation of hybrid forms like: *gestyled*, *gedoubled*, *geleased*, *gemanaged*, *gcancelled* which was confirmed in the following example:

Nachdem die Werbung erstellt, gestyled, mit wertvollen Inhalten versehen wurde
hat man künftige Stammgäste gewonnen. (NGZ, 3/1998/67)



ORTHOGRAPY LEVEL

Munske (1987: 78) points out that the problem related to orthography of anglicisms is the consequence of immediate adoption in their original phonological and morphological structure into the standardized system of German orthography. He also emphasises that the original spelling of anglicisms provides lasting protection in relation to their forthcoming integration.

For Fleischer (1992:112), the integration process begins when an anglicism is used in the German context for the first time. On the other hand, Langner (1995:181) claims that the newer anglicisms are scarcely integrated into the German language system, and that consequently only "older" anglicisms are subject to orthographic integration, which is confirmed by the following examples from the analyzed corpus.

Nouns with small initial letters

In spite of the fact that the majority of nominal anglicisms show integration on the orthographic level by following the German rule of writing nouns with capital initial letters, there are some exceptions showing nominal anglicisms written with small initial letters. This is a rather frequent case in scientific publications where such anglicisms are written inside quotation marks:

Er ergibt sich aus der Multiplikation der 'room nights' mit dem Durchschnittsübernachtungspreis ... (DM, 1998: 122)

Group of words with small initial letters

Anglicisms written with small initial letters were also found in examples where a group of English words or phrases were borrowed.

See you next year/season! (NGZ, 12/1996/10)

The following sentence also illustrates writing with small initial letters.

Dort führen winers, dinners und clubbers ein harmonisches Miteinander.(FVW, 1/2004/59)

Writing of nominal compounds

Unlike the English spelling, in German orthography compounds made up of more than two components are joined by the hyphen inserted between each of the components (Sörensen 2005: 10). The analyzed examples show inconsistent application of the proposed ways of writing as in:



Promotion-Team vs. Promotion Team, City-Hotels vs. City Hotels, Hotel-Outfit vs. Hotel Outfit,

Writing with a -c

Rehabilitation of writing with a -c like in *Club* or *Camera* shows interference on the orthographic level. An ideal course of orthographic assimilation would be the following example of the anglicism *club*:

1. initial stage: *club* • zero assimilation,
2. transitional stage: *Club* • partial assimilation,
3. final stage: *Klub* • complete assimilation.

It should be emphasised that nowadays in the case of the anglicism *club* the English orthography (*Club*) prevails, which shows the additional stage in the course of orthographic assimilation:

club→Club→Klub→Club

Zürn (2002: 175) explains the usage of English orthography by the omnipresent Americanization in the world and language of advertising.

SEMANTIC LEVEL

The analysis of semantic integration in the tourist discourse showed that anglicisms have enriched German semantic fields and become their new members by supplanting German words. Besides the enrichment of semantic fields, the Anglo-American influence was identified primarily in semantic narrowing and semantic expansion.

Semantic narrowing

The concept of semantic narrowing shows a tendency of reduction of meanings on the one hand and transition from the general to the specialized meaning on the other. A reduction of the number of meanings presents a frequent semantic change during the process of borrowing because the loan words are borrowed from the donor language for the purpose of naming a certain object or concept, and this process of borrowing and adoption includes a decreased number of meanings. Hereunder are examples:



der/das Event

| <i>Language</i> | <i>1. meaning</i> | <i>2. meaning</i> | <i>3. meaning</i> |
|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|--|
| English | a thing that happens, especially something important | a planned public or social event | one of the races or competitions in a sports programme |
| German | | Veranstaltung, Ereignis | |

die Party

| <i>Language</i> | <i>1. meaning</i> | <i>2. meaning</i> | <i>3. meaning</i> | <i>4. meaning</i> | <i>5. meaning</i> |
|-----------------|--|---|---|--|---|
| English | a political organization that you can vote for | a social occasion, often in a person's home, at which people eat, drink, talk, dance and enjoy themselves | a group of people who are doing something together such as travelling or visiting somewhere | (formal) one of the people or groups of people involved in a legal agreement or argument | (informal) to enjoy yourself, especially by eating, drinking alcohol and dancing (verb) |
| German | | zwangloses, privates Fest | | | |

Semantic expansion

Semantic expansion includes additional meanings that do not exist in the donor language and which were developed in the recipient language. The anglicism *das Dancing* as an example of expansion in the meaning was recorded:

das Dancing

| <i>Language</i> | <i>1. meaning</i> | <i>2. meaning</i> |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| English | moving your body to music | |
| German | Tanzbar, Tanzlokal | Tanz, Tanzveranstaltung |

WORD FORMATION LEVEL

The influence of angloference (interference caused by English influence) is most evident in hybrid compounds, where the phrase is used as a determinative of the German basic words. Phrasal compounds consist of the first phrasal base and the other base which is mostly German or, in a minority of cases, English. The hyphen between them is an indicator of partial compounding (Yang 1990: 149) and serves their transparency. Their main function of the language economy is expressed in the context of the sentence:

Learning-by-Doing-Prinzip bildet die Leitidee unseres Erfolgs. (NGZ, 8/1999/22)



Compounding and abbreviating are used as a way of word formation in order to achieve language economy. The impact of technological development and the Anglo-American influence on German is considered as the main reason for a reduction in language, whether it is compounding or abbreviating. The establishment of language economy is identified in opposite tendencies – on the one hand there is shortening (*Hqualityhotel, VIP-Treatments, IC-Züge; Info < Information, Ad < Advertisement, Holi < Holiday*) and on the other formation of increasingly longer compounds (*Hotelteammitglieder, Qualitätsmanagement-system, Netzmanagementsysteme*).

TEXTUAL LEVEL

The text analysis showed that the potential of anglicisms and their integration is evident on the communication, pragmatic, thematic and stylistic level. The multifunctional potential of anglicisms is found in a wide range of associations suggesting progress, innovation, internationalization and openness to the world, which in the context of tourism evokes hedonistic values such as individuality, a sense of freedom, modernity, success and beauty, as well as style and trend awareness. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the potential of anglicisms participates primarily in the creation of the appellative function. The appellative function of anglicisms can be considered as one of the most important components of the customer-friendly approach by arousing the attention of potential customer directed towards a certain tourist product:

Sechsmal pro Woche ist im Open-Air Amphitheater die Showtime des Magic Life Entertainment Teams angesagt. Auch unter Tags sorgen Partys und ein großes Ausflugsprogramm, dass bei Groß und Klein keine Langweile aufkommt. Aerobic, Stretching, Nordic Walking, Mountainbiking, Tennis, Beachvolleyball und viele mehr sind alles „drinklusive“. Viele andere „Goodies“ kann man schon bei der Buchung mitbestellen. (Reise aktuell, 2009: 35).

THE QUANTITATIVE IMPACT OF ANGLICISMS

Here follows a short presentation on the quantitative results of anglicisms in the corpus of the journal on hotel management *Top Hotel*, the monthly issue of July/August 2010. A total of 140 pages, excluding advertisements and the title pages, have been searched for the distribution of anglicisms. The investigated journal has a size of 2100 anglicisms (tokens) within an overall amount of 75,040 words, so that the rate of anglicisms amounts to 2,79 %, which also shows that each 36th word within the investigated journal is an anglicism. If the total of 2100 anglicisms is divided by the



number of pages, which is 140, the result shows that a reader of *Top Hotel* will come across almost 15 anglicisms per text page.

If compared with more recent studies, Yang on average found three anglicisms (tokens) per page in the corpus of *Der Spiegel* (1990: 27), Lee calculates four and six anglicisms per page in east German newspapers, and Onysko (2007: 115) identified 7 anglicisms per text page in the corpus of *Der Spiegel 2000*. Judging from the total figures, a considerable number of anglicisms appear in the German language of the journal *Top Hotel*. In comparison with other studies, it shows a general trend towards an increasing number of anglicisms in German, but in relation to the total numbers of tokens it does not indicate that a flood of anglicisms is undermining the German tourist discourse.

CONCLUSION

The quoted examples prove that the German tourist discourse shows some features of pidginization on all levels of the performed analysis, because a majority of anglicisms have not been adapted to the recipient language rules. Unintegrated anglicisms can cause a change of the lingual deep code (Zimmer 2002: 7) by which a system of linguistic rules can be destabilized. It can be concluded that the German tourist discourse aimed at a customer-friendly approach shows some aspects of pidginization because its vocabulary very often presents a combination of German and (pseudo)-English. It shows grammatical reduction, especially through the language economy, strives to satisfy the anticipated basic needs regarding a customer-friendly approach and communication in selling tourism products and services, and finally, the quantitative impact of anglicisms shows a general trend in the increasing number of anglicisms in the German tourist discourse.

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