

Borrowings from English in Italian. Functional and Pragmatic Aspects

Alla Bykova

Postgraduate Student, Department of Spanish and French Philology, Kyiv National Linguistic University, Kyiv, Ukraine

all-italia@ukr.net

How to cite:

Bykova, A. (2026). Borrowings from English in Italian. Functional and Pragmatic Aspects. *International Journal of Linguistics and Translation Studies*, 7(2), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlts.v7i2.709>

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received:
06/02/2026

Accepted:
23/03/2026

Keywords:

Anglicism, borrowing, globalization, pragmatic, functions, discourse analysis, mass media

Abstract

After the Second World War and during the American economic boom, the role of English in the world grew rapidly. English is increasingly used as the language of interstate relations in newly established international organisations and in intercultural and scientific exchanges. It is changing and simplifying to facilitate communication, which is why it has been chosen as the official language of such a global communication tool as the Internet. Modern mass media operate with information flows from all over the world. Italian online publications tend to use English-language sources from international news agencies. Sometimes they do not translate certain words. Instead, they use their foreign-language form to attract the attention of the audience. The article identifies eight main functions of Anglicisms in general. These are nominative, differential, integrative, euphemistic, expressive, manipulative, linguistic economy and linguistic fashion orientation. Three of these functions — nominative, integrative and differential — are considered to be linguistic in nature, as they are said to satisfy speakers' needs for new or alternative linguistic means. The other five functions — integrative, euphemistic, expressive, manipulative and orientation towards fashion and prestige — are pragmatic and based on speakers' psychological needs. The reasons for the adoption of Anglicisms are related to their functions.

1. INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the new millennium has been characterised by a significant expansion of international relations and increased interlingual contact, both directly between speakers of different languages and via the media and the internet. This is happening in the context of the global spread of English, which is the source of a large proportion of the vocabulary in many other languages, including Italian.

The need for borrowings and their position within a language's lexical system largely depend on the sociocultural processes of a given society. Over the past few decades, the development of information and communication technologies has led to a significant acceleration of the borrowing process as language contact has become closer and more multifaceted. However,

linguistic theory is unable to record and describe all processes of lexical exchange at such speed.

The intensification of the borrowing process and the activation of Anglicisms in all spheres of modern Italian require a comprehensive theoretical understanding, particularly with regard to the phenomena that occur when English borrowings are adapted to a new language system. A thorough analysis of a foreign word must consider the feasibility and potential of its integration into the language, taking into account the communicative competence of speakers and the full range of extralinguistic factors that could affect the future use of the borrowing.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Global Language

According to researcher Liria Fernández (Fernandez Liria C. & Fernandez Liria P. & Zahonero & Brieva, 2007), globalisation is presented to us as the highest stage of modernisation, but it is actually a capitalist model of the world economy that is steadily moving towards greater monopolisation and increased profits for a few transnational corporations that own the lion's share of the world market. These corporations are supported by the governments of the most influential countries in the world. Fernandez believes that these companies impose certain development coordinates on humanity because they are interested in cultural and linguistic homogenisation, which makes society easier to control and allows them to hire the unemployed for lower wages, thus increasing their profits from the exploitation of cheap labour (Fernandez Liria C. & Fernandez Liria P. & Zahonero & Brieva, 2007).

S. Canagaraj (Canagarajan, 1999) argues that, alongside classical English grammar, students learn the controversial values of Western liberal culture associated with the language in educational institutions. However, at the same time, they gain access to the science, technology, power and prosperity that Western civilisation offers.

As the renowned linguist D. Crystal says, "There has never been an era when so many nations have felt the need to communicate. There has never been an era when so many people have wanted to travel so much. And there has never been such an acute need for a global language" (Crystal, 2003).

Contemporary linguistics is characterised by the realisation among many scholars that, in the 21st century, many languages and cultures are doomed to disappear. Many articles and books have been written about language extinction, but few authors link this process to the simultaneous global spread of Western languages, primarily English. However, since the beginning of the colonial era at least, these two facts have been closely linked. According to T. Skutnabb-Kangas (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000), therefore, it is no longer so much a question of language extinction as of destruction: linguistic genocide or 'linguicide'.

B. Uranga (Uranga & Maraña, 2008) emphasises the importance of protecting the languages of indigenous peoples and national minorities, which are under threat of complete extinction in the era of unbridled globalisation. He argues that attempts to impose a standard version of English on the whole world are destined to fail, given that even the British and Americans themselves rarely use it in everyday life, instead favouring colloquial language and slang.

2.2. The Situation with Anglicisms in Italy

Those who oppose borrowing call them barbarisms, i.e. unnecessary and awkward elements that litter the language just as garbage pollutes the environment. They argue that it is impossible to introduce a foreign element into a language without disturbing its natural balance (Bombi, 2003). Italian purists are concerned about the impoverishment of vocabulary, particularly in specialised fields, and the mockery of Italian phonetics, spelling and syntax through the use of borrowings. While some untranslatable terms may be considered irreplaceable, in general they do not contribute anything new to the Italian language. According to G. Rando (Rando, 1973) in his article on the influence of English on Italian, their use is caused only by mental laziness or disregard for one's native language.

However, not everyone in Italy considers the dominance of the English language to be so threatening. According to J.-L. Beccaria (Beccaria & Graziosi, 2015), a language cannot be preserved like an object in a museum, because change is a sign of life. There are no absolutely pure languages; they are all mixed, and contact with other languages enriches vocabulary. S. Sgroi (Sgroi, 2010) also supports borrowings, arguing that there are relatively few Anglicisms in Italian, and that they add dynamism and flexibility to the language — a sign of its 'health'. In 1987, A. Castellani (Castellani, 1987) published an article entitled 'Morbus Anglicus', destined to go down in history as a linguistic prophecy about the growing influence of the English language. In it, the author expresses concern about how easily and unhindered Anglicisms penetrate the Italian language without adapting to its pronunciation and spelling rules. The article sparked a debate between supporters and opponents of borrowings that continues to this day (Zoppetti, 2019).

Among A. Castellani's opponents were his student L. Seriani (Rando, 1987), as well as T. de Mauro (De Mauro, 1980), who argued that English loanwords had penetrated mainly the outer layers of the language and had not yet reached the core lexical layer. He expressed the same position in an interview with the online publication Treccani in 2006 (Picchiori, 15.02.2006). Until recently, his views were shared by the majority of Italian linguists. However, T. De Mauro soon revised his position and acknowledged that Anglicisms had overtaken French loanwords and continue to increase their presence, even settling into the basic vocabulary of the Italian language (De Mauro, 2014). In 2016, he completely reversed his opinion on A.

Castellani's "Morbus Anglicus": "Thirty years ago, the courageous philologist Arrigo Castellani identified and diagnosed the so-called 'English disease' in the widespread use of Anglicisms by Italians — a virus capable of infecting and corrupting the Italian language. But more needs to be said about this phenomenon now. (...) The influx of English words, from the 1980s to the present day, has reached enormous proportions; it is a veritable English tsunami..." (De Mauro, 14.07.2016).

Luca Seriani has also changed his mind. In a 2015 interview with HuffPost (Carrarini, 26.04.2015), he said: 'Twenty years ago, I was more optimistic about Anglicisms. I believed that borrowing was more of a physiological problem, and that the percentage of unadapted English words — the only ones to worry about — was not that high. But now I see that their number is becoming threatening, especially when you consider the ability of other Romance languages, such as French and Spanish, to adapt them'.

Over the past ten years, attitudes in linguistic circles have changed radically. Those who deny the excessive influence of English are becoming fewer and fewer, repeating the same narratives that were relevant in the 1980s. However, it can no longer be said that Anglicisms occupy a marginal position in the Italian language, as they are becoming increasingly prevalent and entrenched.

Such concerns among linguists have not been in vain. Over the past ten years, numerous initiatives have been launched to protect the Italian language. In 2015, two significant linguistic events took place. First, the Incipit group was established at the Accademia della Crusca. This group includes renowned Italian scholars such as M. Cotelazzo, P. D'Acquille, V. Della Valle, C. Giovannardi, C. Marazzini, A. Petrali and L. Seriani. Their task is to identify and analyse new borrowings, and to suggest Italian alternatives. The second was an international linguistic congress at the Accademia della Crusca on Anglicisms, resulting in the publication of a book containing the participants' reports (Marazzini & Petrali, 2015).

In 2016, Italian linguist A. Zoppetti launched the *Diciamolo in Italiano* website in response to the prevalence of Anglicisms in Italian. The website aims to promote a new culture of conscious and ecological speech (Zoppetti, 2016). In 2018, the same scholar created *Alternative Agli Anglicismi* (<https://aaa.italofonia.info>), an online dictionary containing around 4,000 recently adopted English words and their Italian equivalents. In 2019, a group of activists founded the Italian Language Defenders Association (<https://attivisti.italofonia.info>), which promotes conscious bilingualism.

Following Italian linguist A. Zoppetti (Zoppetti, 2023), let us now turn to statistical data to gain a comprehensive understanding of the state of the Italian language today. One of the most comprehensive Italian dictionaries, *Gradit* (De Mauro, 1999) edited by Tullio De Mauro,

provides the total number of borrowings from different languages among its 260,000 entries. For comparison, let us consider only the most numerous groups: Anglicisms, Frankisms, Hispanisms and Germanisms. The figures are as follows:

Anglicisms: 6,292 in total, of which 1,989 are adapted and 4,303 are not.

Frankisms: 4,982 in total (3,517 adapted, 1,465 not adapted).

Hispanisms: 1,055 in total (792 adapted, 263 not adapted).

Germanisms: 648 in total (360 adapted, 288 not adapted) (Zoppetti, 2023).

As we can see, only 30% of Anglicisms have been adapted into Italian. Unlike borrowings from other languages, the vast majority of which are much easier to assimilate, the situation with Anglicisms is very different. These statistics do not take into account 21st-century Anglicisms, which further change the picture in favour of unadapted borrowings.

Thus, comparing the total number of Anglicisms in the 1999 and 2007 Gradi dictionary reveals that this figure increased by around 2,100 over eight years. Notably, the number of unadapted Anglicisms increased from 4,300 to 6,000, whereas the number of adapted Anglicisms only increased from 2,000 to 2,400. In other words, the language's ability to assimilate is steadily declining.

For comparison, let's consider two other Italian dictionaries — Devoto Oli and Zingarelli — the first electronic versions of which were published in 1990 and 1995 respectively. An automatic count of the number of unadapted Anglicisms in the first electronic versions and the 2020 editions shows the following results:

- Devoto Oli: 1990 – approximately 1,700 unadapted Anglicisms, 2020 – approximately 4,000;
- Zingarelli: 1995 – approximately 1,800 unadapted Anglicisms, 2020 – more than 3,000 (not including fixed expressions, which this dictionary does not present as separate entries) (Zoppetti, 2023).

As we can see, the number of unadapted Anglicisms recorded in the dictionary has more than doubled over the past 30 years, which shows a general tendency for Anglicisms to skip the assimilation stage and enter the dictionary almost immediately after their introduction.

A. Zoppetti (Zoppetti, 2023) provides statistics on neologisms in the Italian language recorded in the Devoto Oli and Zingarelli dictionaries from the 1940s to 2016. The scholar shows how the quantitative share of Anglicisms among lexical neologisms gradually increased with each decade. In the 1940s, it was only 3-4%, but by the 1990s, it was about 30%, and it kept growing, reaching 50% in 2016. So, every other neologism is an unadapted Anglicism.

Another issue that concerns contemporary Italian linguists is the presence of Anglicisms in everyday vocabulary. While the 1980 edition of the basic Italian dictionary by T. de Mauro

contained only a dozen Anglicisms among its 7,000 most commonly used words, the 2016 edition includes 129 such elements. A. Zoppetti's online dictionary *Alternative agli anglicismi* lists around 4,000 unadapted Anglicisms, approximately 1,600 of which are categorised as 'common' (*Alternative Agli Anglicismi*, 2018). A study by linguists of Anglicisms in the headlines of the four largest periodicals in Italy, Germany, Spain and France showed that Italian journalists use English borrowings twice as often as their German counterparts, three times more often than French journalists and four times more often than Spanish journalists (Zoppetti, 2023).

In light of this, it is evident that there has been an increase in Anglicisms in the Italian language, driven by global social factors, technological advancements, and the growth of mass media. This makes it difficult for them to be fully assimilated into the recipient language, as the language cannot keep up with current societal changes on a global scale.

2.3. A Pragmatic View of Borrowings

Modern linguistics criticises the old system of categorising borrowings as either necessary or superfluous, since every individual who uses exotic terms has their own reason for doing so. Therefore, according to A. Onysko (Onysko & Winter-Froemel, 2011), it is incorrect to label something as superfluous if it is necessary for someone for one reason or another. To differentiate between borrowed words, he proposes alternative definitions to the traditional ones.

Catachrestic innovations are linguistic innovations introduced into a language alongside the new concepts they denote. Non-catachrestic innovations introduce a new linguistic unit into the language in parallel with one that already exists for the concept being denoted.

A. Onysko (Onysko & Winter-Froemel, 2011) notes that the pragmatic component is primarily contained in non-catachrestic innovations since their introduction is motivated by the desire to make utterances more expressive. Catachrestic innovations, on the other hand, are almost always pragmatically neutral as they perform a mainly nominative function.

According to Onysko (Onysko & Winter-Froemel, 2011), borrowing is not a sign of linguistic passivity or subordination, although dominant or prestigious languages undoubtedly have a stronger influence. Rather, it is an extremely valuable resource for enriching and renewing the language. The reasons for borrowing are most often related to an internal onomasiological need, as with any other neologism. Therefore, the traditional division into 'necessary' and 'superfluous' borrowings (i.e. those that duplicate words already present in the language) is meaningless, because each borrowing initially responds to a specific need, at least for the person who initiates it. Thus, we can interpret borrowing as a speech act by bilingual individuals seeking more precise, expressive or emotionally charged forms. Only when the

innovation spreads to the general language level of use can the initial motives gradually be lost, and some marginal foreign language elements may seem superfluous.

3. METHODOLOGY

In general, we employed a combination of scientific and linguistic methods:

Descriptive: This method involves observation, generalisation, interpretation and classification of the collected material.

Component analysis: This method helps to understand the formation of the semantic structure of a borrowed word.

Contextual analysis: This method establishes the semantic and stylistic potential of English borrowings. Additionally, we employed two interrelated methods in our study: continuous sampling to select factual material, and dictionary definitions to determine the semantic structure of borrowed words.

Furthermore, linguistic pragmatics employs contextual analysis. This method involves studying the functional specificity of words and their meanings. This is achieved by collecting a large array of factual material, on the basis of which the researcher determines the lexical and syntactic contexts typical of specific speech acts. A contextual analysis of Anglicisms enabled us to evaluate the reasons why Italian speakers use them, primarily to attract attention and make speech more expressive.

Discourse analysis is based on the concept of social interactivity, viewing linguistic code as a sphere of action through which people can influence the behaviour, thoughts and emotions of others. In our study, we employed discourse analysis to ascertain the reasons for the proliferation of Anglicisms in contemporary Italian and to develop a broad psychological profile of individuals who excessively use English loanwords. In addition to the above methods, intent analysis was employed in this study to reveal the hidden intentions of communicators who use Anglicisms.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. The Reasons Why Italians Borrow Anglicisms

Italian linguist Y. Pani (Pani, 2020) believes that the main reasons for the popularity of Anglicisms among Italians are, firstly, their love of the exotic — English words sound unusual and attractive to them — and secondly, the desire to hide unpleasant facts or concepts with the help of euphemisms.

In his welcoming speech at the scientific conference "The Relationship of Italian and Other Romance Languages to Anglicisms", K. Marazzini (Marazzini & Petralli, 2015), president of the Italian language academy Accademia della Crusca, expressed his opinion on the reasons for the prevalence of English borrowings in the Italian language: "We lack a collective sense

of self-identity and knowledge of our history and language, so we cannot perceive ourselves as part of our national culture." According to the linguist, Italian youth have a low level of education, as evidenced by research on text comprehension conducted among European youth, in which Italians performed worst. Their chaotic use of Anglicisms in speech is merely an attempt to "pull the wool over the eyes of those around them and pretend to be great connoisseurs of English" (Marazzini & Petralli, 2015).

In general, we can say that each specific case of language contact has its own motives and reasons for borrowing, with a certain tendency prevailing, which is formed under the influence of communicative and pragmatic factors, or extra-linguistic reasons, as linguists call them. According to our observations, the borrowing of English vocabulary into Italian occurs for the following extralinguistic reasons:

- 1) Borrowing occurs as a result of the cultural, military, and economic dominance of Anglo-Saxon countries in the world, which automatically increases the prestige of the English language. In other words, speaking English is fashionable nowadays.
- 2) English terms enter several related languages in parallel, often indirectly, and become internationalisms, thus simplifying communication between representatives of different spheres of activity in a globalized world;
- 3) Euphemization — the desire to veil the unpleasant or disadvantageous meaning of a concept in order to make it more palatable;
- 4) The need for effective, stylistically coloured means of self-expression and creating one's own positive image;
- 5) Wordplay with the aim of manipulating and influencing the consciousness of the addressee.

All these factors are linked by cause-and-effect relationships and united by the main root cause: the dominant role of English in a globalised world.

The main and most ancient internal linguistic reasons for borrowing can be considered to be the following:

- 1) The need to name a new concept when the language's existing resources do not provide a suitable option;
- 2) The need to semantically differentiate similar concepts;
- 3) The desire to save speech effort and time spent on translation by simplifying complex expressions.

Therefore, in our opinion, extralinguistic reasons play a decisive role in vocabulary migration from one language to another. However, whether borrowed words become established in the recipient language or are weeded out over time is determined by linguistic factors. If

autochthonous lexical material is insufficiently represented, the borrowed word fills the empty niche and takes root in the language. Otherwise, competition arises between local and borrowed terms, and one of them may become obsolete.

4.2. The Pragmatic Functions of Anglicisms in Italian

There is a fundamental difference in the meanings we generate when we speak: some are purposeful, while others are not. At a certain stage in its development, pragmatics focused primarily on the study of intentional utterances and analysing how people express themselves and perceive what is said. Speakers pursuing a specific communication goal naturally try to choose means that allow them to achieve maximum discourse effectiveness.

Recently, a new trend has emerged in pragmatics: an interest in how speakers and listeners engage in communication and the extent to which they participate, even in cases where the utterance is incoherent or the speaker or listener does not fully master the language of discourse. Such communicative situations are precisely where we can attribute the use of Anglicisms, since they are not always interpreted in the same way by all participants in the speech act.

Typically, pragmatic information about a word is intertwined with semantic information; however, in new borrowings, the pragmatic component may prevail over semantics, gradually changing the word's meaning. By referring to extralinguistic facts, we can characterise borrowed linguistic units in terms of their pragmatic role in a given communicative situation. The formal, functional and situational interpretations of borrowings have converged within the field of pragmatics research in discourse.

The assimilation of borrowed vocabulary is associated with the emergence of specific communicative models in which borrowings function as identifiers of the author's intentions. In various types and genres of discourse, a borrowed word is not only a means of informing, but also an instrument of influence. Borrowing can imbue reality with a particular code, social value and specific evaluation.

Furthermore, the presence of borrowings in an individual's speech reveals their thought processes and value orientations. In discourse, the addresser's cognitive attitudes and intentions are verbalised in a way that directly or indirectly influences the addressee. Creative processes in speech activity correlate with deep personality traits oriented towards pragmatically directed communication. Situational intentions, motives and attitudes can all be revealed in discourse, including through communicators' perception of borrowed words.

In the early stages of borrowing, the evaluation component is actively involved in the process and often proves to be dominant. This is why, in a discourse containing new borrowings, they are often intensified through epithets, comparisons, metaphors, word formation, derivation and synonymous additions — means of compensating for semantic insufficiency with the help of

pragmatic elements. Therefore, it can be assumed that the pragmatic factor plays a leading role in the assimilation of borrowings.

We define the functional potential of Anglicisms as the set of functions that are potentially inherent in their structural, pragmatic and stylistic components and which manifest depending on the context and circumstances of use. J. Rogato (Rogato, 2008), in his study of Anglicisms in the mass media, concludes that they typically serve to conserve linguistic resources and often function as highly specialised terms in various fields of science, economics, and politics.

P. Vettorel identified the following four main functions of Anglicisms in advertising discourse: 1) attracting attention; 2) marking cosmopolitanism; 3) a linguistic game function; 4) a nominative function, which the researcher considers secondary. Another Italian linguist, P. D'Achille (D'Achille, 2010), categorises borrowings as either necessary or superfluous. The former are adopted alongside the concept and fulfil a nominative function, while the latter are employed for stylistic purposes, creating an association with a more prestigious civilisation. As we have mentioned previously, this classification is considered outdated, as it does not consider the pragmatic aspect of loanwords.

Taking into account the mentioned works and examples of the use of Anglicisms, as well as the reasons for borrowing that we talked about earlier, we have found eight main uses of English loanwords in Italian: nominative, differential, compressive, euphemistic, expressive, integrative, manipulative and orientation towards fashion and prestige. Of these, the first three — the nominative, differential and compressive functions — are classified as linguistic functions, and are primarily fulfilled by catachrestic borrowings. The remaining five, however, are classified as extralinguistic, arising from factors of a pragmatic nature (the speaker's social, psychological and aesthetic needs, etc.). These pragmatic functions are primarily characteristic of non-catachrestic Anglicisms. The functional aspect of Anglicisms is fully realised in discourse.

4.3. Case Study

4.3.1. Mass Media Discourse

English-derived borrowings in Italian that function in the mass media correspond to the main characteristics of this type of discourse. These include the economy of linguistic means, the conciseness of presentation combined with informative richness, and the selection of linguistic material that is easily accessible to the audience. Thanks to these characteristics, mass media discourse enables Anglicisms to perform several functions at once, making them multifunctional. Thus, Anglicisms (Americanisms) introduced into the text in their original graphic form carry a certain pragmatic load in each individual communicative situation. For example:

Baby gang terrorizza ragazzini di Fano con minacce, estorsioni e aggressioni: due arresti. (1).

In this context, the term ‘baby gang’ is a pseudo-Anglicism, employed as a sociological term to denote a group of children who engage in attacks and violence against their peers. The Italian equivalent of this concept is the phrase ‘banda minorile’; consequently, this lexical neologism cannot be described as a catachrestic borrowing. The term is employed in the article’s headline with the intention of capturing the reader’s attention, as it belongs to the expressive-marked lexicon. Consequently, in this instance, it fulfils expressive and manipulative functions. The employment of the semantic and pragmatic structure of the term by journalists is indicative of a reliance on its formal aspect, given that the foreign-language form of the word exerts a more pronounced effect on readers at the textual level.

4.3.2. Blogging Discourse

At the beginning of the 21st century, as the Internet spread and its social role grew, a new subtype of mass media discourse emerged in the form of blogging, serving both authors and corporations. This form of discourse exhibits characteristics of both mass media and conversational discourse, including interactivity and expressiveness, with a focus on engaging the audience. A blog can be defined as an author’s website that is regularly updated with text or video content on a specific topic, and which allows readers or viewers to provide feedback through comments on the publications. This form of communication is deliberate, involving the strategic positioning of oneself as a charismatic personality to enhance popularity, a phenomenon that has recently exhibited a direct correlation with the monetary reward for advertising placed on the page.

Consequently, the high prevalence of Anglicisms in the speech of blog authors becomes comprehensible, as they employ these linguistic elements to align their content with the global mainstream within their respective domains. For instance, one might consider the title of a video review by Italian blogger Valentina Vigato:

Must have low cost dell’organizzazione in cucina con Temu. (2).

Here we see two globally popular English terms: ‘Must have’ — ‘essential, indispensable’ (Italian equivalent: ‘necessario, indispensabile’) — and ‘Low cost’ — ‘cheap’ (Italian equivalent: ‘a basso costo’, ‘molto economico’). This accumulation of ‘trendy’ Anglicisms is particularly characteristic of bloggers who position themselves as ‘professional coaches’, teaching their followers how to organise their domestic, professional or personal lives correctly. In our view, this stems from a subconscious desire to present oneself as a professional well-versed in the latest global trends, i.e. for the purpose of self-promotion. In this case, the non-catachrestic Anglicisms in question serve a wide range of pragmatic functions, including

the enhancement of the speaker's prestige, the addition of expressiveness, and the attempt to tap into trends prevalent on social media.

It is evident that mass media discourse constitutes a primary domain in which borrowed vocabulary is employed, thereby serving as a conduit through which such vocabulary is disseminated to the general public from more specialized sectors. Consequently, it is to be expected that almost all possible functions of Anglicisms are revealed in this type of discourse.

4.3.3. Technical Discourse

Scientific and technical discourse, defined as the exchange of ideas among specialists in the fields of science and computer technology, interacts with the mass media, thereby serving as a source of specialist terminology for the latter. It is a common practice in publications that detail scientific achievements and developments to employ borrowed vocabulary, as proficiency in English is a prerequisite for both computer literacy and scientific activity. In scientific and technical discourse, the prevalence of catachrestic Anglicisms is notable. These Anglicisms are introduced into the Italian language alongside their referent, and no local alternative has been developed to accompany them:

Il settore dei notebook Windows ultra-portatili è ormai da tempo ben popolato, ma è evidente che, da quando Apple ha portato sul mercato le sue soluzioni dotate di chipset Apple Silicon, trovare una alternativa valida al MacBook Air da 13 pollici è davvero molto complesso. (3).

As we can see, there are five Anglicisms in a single sentence, most of which are the names of IT companies' products. When translated, they remain unchanged in most languages of the world, as in scientific and technical discourse they primarily serve a naming function. In addition to naming an object or phenomenon, English terms also serve the function of integration into the global scientific community. The communicative strategy of using English-language scientific and technical vocabulary fulfils the communicative intention of facilitating communication between specialists from different countries, as the form and meaning of the terms are universally accepted at the international level.

4.3.4. Political Discourse

The most important functional tasks of political discourse are propaganda, persuasion and influence. In order to achieve these communicative aims, politicians select the appropriate linguistic and non-linguistic means to convey a particular message in their speech. According to A. Taglialatela (Taglialatela, 2012), politicians' language is characterised by ambiguity and veiled meanings. It therefore contains many Anglicisms, which the author argues make political discourse difficult to understand and overly specialised. Another Italian researcher, G. Antonelli (Antonelli, 2007), notes that Anglicisms in political discourse primarily raise the

speaker's prestige, which is difficult to achieve through other communication tactics. From a pragmatic point of view, English borrowings appear more credible than native words, and their non-standard graphic and phonetic form is more appealing alongside familiar words. The following example is taken from a speech by former Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi:

“Per venire incontro alle esigenze delle famiglie abbiamo deciso già nel decreto legge di oggi di garantire il diritto al lavoro agile per chi ha figli in didattica a distanza o in quarantena. Per chi svolge attività che non consentono lo smart working sarà riconosciuto l’accesso ai congedi parentali straordinari o al contributo babysitting.”
(4)

The pseudo-anglicism “smart working” and the anglicism “babysitting” are terms used in the professional sphere and can be expressed descriptively in Italian using the phrases “lavoro a distanza” and “sorveglianza dei bambini,” respectively. The use of these anglicisms in this context indicates that they have already penetrated even the legislative sphere. In addition to their prestige function, these terms also serve a stylistic and euphemistic purpose, concealing the harsh reality of the quarantine era behind an obscure foreign-language form.

Another example comes from the speech of the current Prime Minister, Giorgia Meloni:

Riguarda il tema della politica estera, chiaramente, che voi seguite. Le posizioni per quello che mi riguarda si prendono e si mantengono sulla base di quello che è giusto e non sulla base di mutare degli umori. Vale per l’Ucraina, vale per il Medio Oriente. Ma realmente perché questo è quello che distingue i leader dai follower. (5)

The communicative goal of this speech is self-presentation. In this context, Meloni repeatedly uses Anglicisms (leader, follower, etc.), which are a subconscious communication tactic designed to create a more prestigious, positive image of herself in the eyes of her listeners, as well as manipulating the voters’ consciousness. Mrs. Meloni’s use of English reflects a generation that grew up on the values preached by Anglo-Saxon popular culture.

Having examined examples of English borrowings in different types of discourse, we found that their pragmatic component can vary. In scientific and technical discourse, for example, Anglicisms mainly perform nominative and other linguistic functions. However, in other types of discourse, such as the mass media or politics, their functionality shifts towards greater expressiveness and manipulateness.

5. CONCLUSION

There is a correlation between the functions of Anglicisms and the reasons for their borrowing. Thus, the internal linguistic reasons for borrowing: the need to name new concepts, differentiate them from those already existing in the language, and the desire to economize

speech effort correspond to the nominative, differential, and compression functions of Anglicisms, respectively. Similarly, extralinguistic functions are associated with extralinguistic reasons for borrowing: the fashion for everything English-speaking, the desire to simplify international communication, the need to hide undesirable content, the search for means of self-expression, and the desire to influence the consciousness of the addressee.

The nominative function of Anglicisms is the main one and is present in all types of discourse, since a borrowed linguistic unit in any case first of all names a concept, sometimes simultaneously differentiating it from other synonymous terms or replacing it with a shorter foreign-language form. Similarly, the pragmatic functions of Anglicisms can overlap within a single sentence. For example, a speaker uses an Anglicism in an attempt to express themselves better, with the aim of appearing more significant in the eyes of the addressee and thereby exerting a certain influence on them.

Based on the opinion of Italian linguists and observing the high presence of English borrowings in virtually all spheres of Italian public life, we can conclude that the main reason for the widespread use of unadapted Anglicisms by Italians is a subconscious desire to be part of a strong, flourishing, and prosperous civilization, the image of which has been created over decades under the influence of the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture and economy.

To sum up, we can say that the process of borrowing Anglicisms into modern Italian has reached unprecedented proportions and taken on new features at the beginning of the new millennium, when technological advances allowed the average speaker to directly access English-language information, passing it through the filters of their cognitive and communicative abilities, which undoubtedly affected the order of adaptive changes necessary for any borrowing.

. REFERENCES

- Antonelli, G. (2007). *L'italiano nella società della comunicazione*. Il Mulino.
- Beccaria, G.L., & Graziosi, A. (2015). *Lingua madre. Italiano e inglese nel mondo globale*. Il Mulino.
- Bombi, R. (2003, April 12-13). Anglicismi come banco di prova dell'interferenza linguistica [Conference presentation]. *Atti del Convegno "Italiano e Inglese a confronto: problemi di interferenza linguistica"*, a cura di A.-V. Sullam Calimani. Firenze.
- Canagarajan, S. A. (1999). *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Carrarini, G. (2015, April 26). *Gli anglicismi minacciano l'italiano? Quattro chiacchiere con Luca Serianni*. Huffpost. <https://www.huffingtonpost.it>
- Castellani, A. (1987). *Morbus Anglicus*. *Studi linguistici italiani*, 13, 137-153.

- Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- D'Achille, P. (2010). *L'italiano contemporaneo*. Il Mulino.
- De Mauro, T. (1980). *Guida all'uso delle parole*. Editori Riuniti.
- De Mauro, T. (1999). *GRADIT. Grande dizionario italiano dell'uso* (6 vol). Utet.
- De Mauro, T. (2014). *Storia linguistica dell'Italia repubblicana dal 1946 ai nostri giorni* (digital ed.). Laterza & Figli.
- De Mauro, T. (2016, July 14). È irresistibile l'ascesa degli anglicismi? *Internazionale*.
<https://www.internazionale.it>
- Fernandez Liria, C., & Fernandez Liria, P., & Alegre Zahonero, L., & Brieva, M. (2007). *Educacion para la ciudadanía. Democracia, capitalismo y Estado de Derecho*. Akal.
- Marazzini, C. & Petralli, A. (2015). *La lingua italiana e le lingue romanze di fronte agli anglicismi (La lingua italiana nel mondo)*. GoWare.
- Onysko, A., & Winter-Froemel, E. (2011). Necessary loans — Luxury loans? Exploring the pragmatic dimension of borrowing. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(6), 1550-1567. DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2010.12.004
- Pani, Y. (2020, May 26). *Perchè usiamo tanti termini inglesi*. Youtube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJvTJKZA1SA>
- Picchiori, E. (2006, February 15). *Gli anglicismi? No problem, my dear. The interview with T. de Mauro*. Treccani. <https://www.treccani.it>
- Rando, G. (1973). *Influssi inglesi nel lessico italiano contemporaneo*. *Lingua Nostra*, 51(3), 139–148.
- Rando, G. (1987). *Dizionario degli anglicismi nell'italiano postunitario*. Leo S. Olschki Editore.
- Rogato, G. (2008). *Anglicismi nella stampa italiana*. *Italica*, 85(1), 27-43.
- Sgroi, S. (2010). *I doni stranieri: tradurre o non tradurre gli anglicismi?* *Studi linguistici italiani*, 2, 284-293.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000). *Linguistic Genocide in Education-or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Tagliatela, A. (2012). *Governance e altri rimedi. Oltre l'utilità dell'inglese nel linguaggio politico*. *Europa vicina*, 25, 14-15.
- Uranga, B., & Maraña, M. (2008). *El futuro de las lenguas. Diversidad fuente a uniformidad*. Los Libros de Catarata.
- Vetorel, P. (2013). *English in Italian advertising*. *World Englishes*, 32(2), 261-278.
https://www.academia.edu/16468952/English_in_Italian_Advertisement

- Zoppetti, A. (2016). “Cocktail signature” e cocktail linguistici. Diciamoloinitaliano.
<https://diciamoloinitaliano.wordpress.com>
- Zoppetti, A. (2019). Il “Morbus Anglicus” di Arrigo Castellani: la profezia che si avvera.
Diciamoloinitaliano. <https://diciamoloinitaliano.wordpress.com>
- Zoppetti, A. (2023). Rapporto sull’anglicizzazione dell’italiano. Italofoonia.
<https://italofoonia.info>

EXAMPLE SOURCES

1. A cura di redazione. (2025, March 21). Baby gang terrorizza ragazzini di Fano con minacce, estorsioni e aggressioni: due arresti. Repubblica. <https://www.repubblica.it>
2. Valentina Vigato. (2023, October 5). Must have low cost. Organizzazione in cucina con Temu. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ZLfYpgRBMU>
3. Recensioni. (2023). Asus zenbook S13. HDblog. Retrieved from <https://www.hdblog.it>
4. Corriere della Sera. (2021, March 12). Smart working e babysitting, Draghi. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRJtUydL0k>
5. Agenzia Italia News. (2024, February 28). Il discorso integrale di Giorgia Meloni alla stampa estera. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0aBnWv3cSz8>