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The German weekly news magazine Der Spiegel has long been a favourite object of research in the lexicography of English borrowings in German. One of the most influential and widely read print periodicals in the German language, comparable in prestige to the American Time Magazine or Newsweek, Der Spiegel has a reputation of exerting a significant influence on present-day German at large, not least in the field of lexical innovation. Its trend-setting use of anglicisms has been the object of several previous studies, which together have covered more than forty years of diachrony in the language of the German press, most notably Carstensen (1965, 1971) and Yang (1990). The new monograph by Alexander Onysko, based on the author’s PhD dissertation submitted to the University of Innsbruck in 2006, comes as a sequel to these studies as far as its empirical coverage is concerned, extending the period under study to the time between 1994 and 2000.

1 Structural overview

The book is organised in three parts: a theoretical introduction discussing definitions and classifications of anglicisms within an overall theory of contact-induced language change; a data-oriented part introducing the design of the study, its corpus and methodology; and the third and main part presenting the bulk of the corpus-based analysis. Within the theoretical part, following a brief overview (chapter 1), chapter 2 introduces a discussion of various models and classification schemes of loan formations, referring back to the seminal works of Betz (1936), Weinreich (1953) and Carstensen (1965), and then pursuing an approach within the framework of Van Coetsem (2000). A good amount of discussion focuses on the difficulties inherent in the definition of indirect loan influences, such as loan translations and semantic interference. This discussion provides the backdrop for Onysko’s methodological decision to exclude such phenomena from the practical scope of the following corpus study. Chapter 3 serves to place his approach into the wider framework of contact-induced language change, again drawing heavily on Van Coetsen (2000) and also on Myers-Scotton (1993). Its main interest lies in a discussion of phonological and morphological adaptation of loan elements (ch. 3.2).

Chapter 4 is devoted to problems raised by “pseudo-anglicisms” (anglicisms formed in German based on English material) and “hybrid anglicisms”. The latter part deals mostly with English-German compounding. It provides the theoretical foundations for an important part of the data analysis to follow, which deals with lexical productivity of nominal compound elements. Chapter 5 contains a discussion of diachronic trends in the assimilation of English loans in German, and of empirical problems in reconstructing the precise etymologies and paths of borrowing with some items. Chapter 6, rounding off the theoretical part of the work, synthesises the results of the preceding chapters by presenting the author’s definition of anglicisms within a “model of transmission” from a source language to a target language.

In Part 2 (chapters 7 and 8), the author presents his database and discusses his research questions and methodology. Chapter 7 introduces the news magazine Der Spiegel as the object of the study. It contains a description of the electronic corpus edition employed, but also serves to introduce the magazine to the non-German readership, with a detailed discussion of its distribution, readership, and previous studies regarding its role in German society, its stylistic preferences and its linguistic
influence. The discussion comes out in support of the hypothesis that *Der Spiegel* may continue to exert a significant trend-setting role with respect to establishing novel anglicisms in German, an observation that echoes a continuous theme of related studies since Carstensen (1965). This hypothesis, on the one hand, underlines the importance of *Der Spiegel* as an object of linguistic study, while, on the other hand, leading to the necessary proviso that findings about its usage may not automatically be representative for the whole register of German newspaper language, let alone German as a whole.

Section 7.2 deals with the methodology of the study, returning to the issue of practical definitions of how and what to count as an anglicism. Chapter 8 then presents a summary quantitative breakdown of the occurrence of anglicisms in the corpus, comparing token counts for the year 2000 (the main focus of the study) with those for the previous six years, and finally with findings from earlier lexicographical studies, especially Yang (1990). This allows some conclusions about long-term trends in anglicism usage in German. Its main result is a (not particularly surprising) confirmation of the hypothesis that there is a constant growing trend in the use of anglicisms (p. 146), and that significant recent shifts in usage have mostly been related to technological innovations in the field of computers and electronic communication (p. 147).

Part 3 is entitled “Types and integration of anglicisms: structural patterns, word formation productivity, and codeswitching”. Its three large chapters, 9–11, together make up about half of the body of the book and present the bulk of the discussion of corpus data. Chapter 9 contains a detailed and insightful discussion of inflectional patterns observed in nominal anglicisms (by far the largest group of words under study and the one most extensively analysed). It covers patterns of gender assignment, plural inflection and genitive inflection. Chapter 10 deals with the rest of morphology, with a focus on word formation and lexical productivity: nominal compounds, other processes of nominal word formation, verbal morphology, and adjectives and adverbs. Finally, chapter 11 tackles the problem of codeswitching and the integration of multi-word borrowed units. This chapter again starts out by dealing with some problems of definition in distinguishing borrowing from code-switching. Onysko makes the important point that such a distinction cannot easily be made on the basis simply of single-word versus multi-word syntactic units. He deals with this problem by providing a detailed analysis of the types of syntactic units that allow English multi-word material to occur, and the complex interaction between English and German syntactic patterns governing them. A particularly interesting discussion, in light of the fact that codeswitching in the written medium is subject to quite a different set of principles than spontaneous codeswitching in spoken language, covers the textual strategies employed by the newsmagazine authors, their stylistic and sociolinguistic values, and textual cues employed for integrating them into the German discourse and making them accessible to German-speaking readers.

In his concluding chapter (ch. 12), the author returns to an issue that was also the opening theme of his introduction: that of language purism and popular concerns over a perceived inundation of German with foreign linguistic elements. Based on his quantitative findings, Onysko reassures the reader that the English-German situation is merely characteristic of a “stable language contact scenario” involving a gradual expansion of the German lexicon (p. 317), and that German still “stands undisputed in its integrity on the lexical and structural level” (p. 322). On a more theoretical level, the author concludes with a call for further research into the psycholinguistic mechanisms governing lexical choice, which could serve to integrate a psycholinguistic approach with typological models of contact-induced change.

2 Critical evaluation

The book contains a wealth of observation, based not only on a solid investigation of overall quantitative patterns but also many careful and often highly insightful analyses of individual tokens in context. While in large parts it confirms findings about lexical borrowing made in earlier