SOME OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE LANGUAGE OF THE INTERNET AND THE CZECH LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

A professional specialist vocabulary has a significant share in the expression of new scientific observations and knowledge. The need to exchange expert information in IT (Informatics) and Economics has multiplied in correlation with globalisation.

Key words: Internet, language, informatics (IT), economics, competitive ability, globalisation.

INTRODUCTION

The representative of new media has become the Internet, which has brought new dimensions to communications. On the one hand, it enables the global character of communications, while on the other, its network-like structure enables one to communicate in ways similar to inter-personal communication systems – i.e. not only "one-to-one" or "one-to-many", but also "many-to-many".

Information and Communication Technology (further only ICT) are, today, the key agents for innovation and creativity, stimulating and encouraging advances in every scientific discipline. New technologies intermingle with our lives and are, to an ever greater extent, changing our behaviour and view of the world.

Among other things, these changes are also apparent in the validation and use of special terminologies – which may, and can, lead to shifts in significance in professional forms of expression. Terminological differences can often lead to misunderstanding or a lack of comprehension; it can mean the slanting or other deformation of the content aspect of the information in question, or even to breakdowns in the coherence and continuity of communications.

Such breakdowns in coherence or continuity in the information flow can, as a final consequence, influence the trust and faith of a commercial partner or even cause financial losses.

In a globalised world, the Internet has become a phenomenon not only of employment opportunities, working tools and medium, but also the source of easily and readily accessible information. Working with information and its reasoned use and exploitation represent a powerful competitive advantage whether in the labour market or in the business world.

Through the intermediary of IT, it is currently possible to make use of dozens of information and intelligence provider servers and monitoring services. A whole range of on-line mutations (versions) of foreign magazines and professionally-oriented journals and magazines are freely, widely and easily accessible. Digital libraries and interactive multimedia tuition tools and instrumentaria also exist on the net. This (massive) expansion of information has been caused by a tide of foreign language lexical sources (so-called "loan words"). Looking at professional and other expertise-oriented texts, it is absolutely clear that the Czech language – just like the other European languages, is being subjected to extra-linguistic factors and pressures.

In this paper, we wish to draw readers` attention to the appearance and expression of a dynamic tendency in the Czech language among IT businessmen (among many others). A similar attempt to address these problems and issues here in the Czech Republic is being made by others too, for example: J. Bartošek, I. Bozděchová, F. Čermák, F. Daneš, M. Dokulil, J. Filipec, K. Horálek, J. Hrbáček, O. Martincová, B. Rudincová, S. Žaža, etc.

Through the use of the Synchronomous Confrontational Analysis Method, we demonstrate how, among a variety of types of descriptors, both competitive and synonymous relationships arise – which are themselves the stimuli for changes. Our starting-point is based upon excerptions from a varied range of sources whose content is mainly oriented on IT (e.g. magazines and journals with an IT theme, professional IT literature, popular informative educational literature, web pages, on-line texts, and dictionaries). In view of the sheer complicatedness and difficulties involved in investigating the full breath and depth of this linguistic problem and issue, in this paper we have chosen to limit ourselves to mentioning only some of the subsidiary and partial aspects of our research investigations.

Over the past fifteen years, Anglicisms (and Americanisms) have been penetrating ever-more intensively into all other languages. For this very reason, we have concentrated our attentions on foreign language lexical sources (i.e. loan words) and media and their morpho-syntactical differentiation in selected IT texts.

As is clear from the outcomes of our investigations, the (Anglo-American) nouns with the highest (Czech) frequency-rates are: *internet, implementace (implementation), program,*

technologie (technology), integrace (integration), mail, trend, monitoring. outsourcing. notebook, spam, vir (virus), monitor, displej (display), médium (medium), software, hardware, server, konfigurace (configuration), standard, laptop, skener (scanner), processor (processor), bonus, modem, menu, design, adaptabilita (adaptability), update, decoder (decoder), player, homepage, cluster, chat, source, spyware (ibid), hacker, rootkit, mystery shoppers, etc. In the analysis, nouns were in first place making up almost 50% of the total, while adjectives finished in second place with 20% of the total.

As regards adjectives, there is a preponderance of derivatives drawn from the nouns mentioned above: e.g. *internetový (Internet-related), implementovaný (implemented), integrovaný (integrated), programový (programme/programme-related), naprogramovaný (programmed), internetový (Internet-related), digitální (digital/digital-related), mobilní (mobile), monitorovaný (monitored), mediální (medial/media-related), redundantní (redundant), licenční (licensing/licence-related), upgradovaný (upgraded), and many more* (Martincová 1998).

 In comparison to nouns and adjectives, verbs are much less well-represented in (Czech) IT texts (only 12%), which only goes to proves that the Czech language tends to express time and action related issues through its own lexical resources. Using foreign language nouns as a base/root, Czechs tend to create verbs with typical Czech suffixes: e.g. *–ovat* ("To" + Infinitive suffix form): i.e. *mailovat (to mail/email), faxovat (to fax), skenovat (to scan). Further mutation examples without translation are: monitorovat, implementovat, vizualizovat, instalovat, mutovat, identifikovat, digitalizovat, synchronizovat, investovat, distribuovat, reprodukovat, aplikovat, legalizovat, optimalizovat, disponovat, navigovat, dekódovat, surfovat, generovat, simulovat, etc.*

In another investigation, we oriented ourselves on ways of enriching vocabulary. A significant role in word creation is played by derivation. The result of a derivative-driven approach is "a derived word". When deriving nouns and adjectives, there is a clear tendency to impose foreign language prefixes: e.g. **multi-** *(multimédia, multimediální notebook, multimediální projektory),* **maxi-** *(maximální disková kapacita, maximálně účinné řešení),* **mikro-** *(mikroprocesor),* **makro-** *(makroprostředí),* **mega-** *(Siemens disponuje megapixelovým foťáčkem, megabajt),* **super-** *(supercena, superpočítač Albert2),* **anti-** *(antivirové a antispamové kontroly),* **mono-** *(monochromatický displej),* **audio-** *(audioformáty)* **video-** *(audio- a videozařízení, videokonference, videokazety).* Through the intermediary (of the penetration) of English, the Czech language is being confronted with both Latin and Ancient Greek as the basis of an international terminology.

In the case of such assimilations, the time-line perspective is of great importance. The penetration of foreign language terminology (into Czech) is a historically-conditioned phenomenon.

At the current time, it has to do with an intensive process rendered more so as a consequence of the booming developments in the IT sector. To begin with, this new and unknown terminology stimulates distrust, uncertainty, accompanied by a lack of knowledge about its correct spelling and pronunciation *(e.g. rootkit, spyware, moving)* (Minihofer 1994). We call such items neologisms.

Rootkit – This is a special type of infiltration, which has the ability to hide its presence within the system under attack and in so doing, to evade detection. In the main, this has to do with a package of malicious code, designed to enable the attacker to misuse and exploit the weak points and chinks in a system and to gain full control over the infected computer.

Spyware – Unfriendly software, whose aim is to ensure information leakages from a victim's computer that will be of benefit to another, external organisation.

Moving – Users, in a way similar to computers, can connect themselves to the telephone of their choice within the framework of one company, or even, outside it (Bolz 2001).

These linguistic assimilations acclimatise themselves over time in the Czech vocabulary and gradually acquire specifically Czech graphical and phonetic forms (e.g. *byte - bajt*, *display - displej*, *business - byznys, scanner - skener, video-recorder - videorekordér, chip – čip, etc.).* Some are superseded immediately by their Czech equivalents – as long as they exist, others over time (e.g. *computer - počítač, memory - paměť, net - síť, team - tým).* In cases where Czech does not have its own equivalent to hand, nor is it able to create one, it enriches itself with by these Anglicisms (Americanisms), which are perceived as neologisms.

The following sentences document two antithetical tendencies, typical for professional languages in a globalised environment:

1. Dokáže můj antivirus detekovat rootkity?

  Is my antivirus programme able to detect rootkits?

 2.Vyvinuli jsme proaktivní řešení, které chrání uživatele před viry, červy, spyware, phishing, rootkity a dalšími hrozbami.

We have developed a proactive solution which protects users against viruses, worms, spyware, phishing, rootkits and other threats.

On the one hand this terminology is penetrating into the everyday vocabulary, while the general language base is becoming more professionalised. On the other hand however, this growing professionalism has as its consequence its generalisation, (since) we perceive these terms as being part of the general vocabulary. The Czech language is considered to be a flexive, synthetic language. Through the influence of English, it is possible to observe a deviation towards analyticitism. In the course of searching for equivalents to foreign word-creation sources, two significant tendencies have a contra-indicative effect one upon the other. The first struggles for the

greatest possible degree of explicity - requisite for the professional terminology. The second tendency is oriented on linguistic economy. Often, the Czech language finds it impossible to replace a foreign single-word term by its own single-word equivalent *(e.g. homepage – domovská stránka).*

The process whereby Anglicisms *(Americanisms)* are penetrating into languages is very dynamic, and in the case of the Czech language, happening very easily. No norms exist that would defend against or restrict the use of foreign-sourced linguistic sources. Linguistic self-regulation occurs spontaneously, with foreign language terminology undergoing similar processes in the course of their inclusion and assimilation into the domestic vocabulary. In the initial phase of this process - a certain schismatic unsteadiness is thus clear in the domestic (Czech) vocabulary. Two, sometimes even three variants may exist concurrently for a single term: e.g. *Internet - internet, e-shop - eshop, e-mail – email – e-Mail, on-line – online.* Over time, one variant imposes itself and is incorporated into the literary vocabulary.

In the domestic (Czech) vocabulary, word linkages like (*pilotní project – pilot project, pilotní tým – pilot team, mobilní čip – mobile/cell phone chip, mobilní operator – – mobile/cell phone operator, mobilní komunikace - – mobile/cell phone communications, mobilní řízení - – mobile/cell phone management),* have come into being which never existed before. These are compound words - lexemes. In the majority of cases, they are nouns, where the definitive article is replaced by an adjective instead.

Terms, professional terms and even slang terms are assimilated. This assimilation is usually for internal linguistic reasons (e.g. a missing equivalent in the native tongue, or for economies of speech) as well as for external reasons (e.g. the simplification of international communication, or the transparency of terminology). Apart from the tendency to retain and preserve international terminology, there is also an endeavour to express oneself both economically and in a professional manner.

The characteristic feature of ICT is its use of metaphorical and metonymic descriptive naming, created under the influence of depictive descriptive naming (further only "denominator") in English. This denominator comes from expressions that people come across on a day-to-day basis, or from such terms which people are used to using in other professional fields: i.e. *myš - mouse, červ - worm, vir - virus, okno - window, operace - operation (e.g. vojenská operace – military operation, lékařský zákrok – medical operation), paměť - memory, síť - network, pirát - pirate, pirátství - pirating, surfovat – surfing (a sports activity), menu – ibid (jídelníček), trojský kůň – trojan horse, díra - loophole (for instance in the latest version of Microsoft - Vista), prostředí internetu – the Internet environment, špion - spy, špicl – informer or sleuth, koš - basket, infikovat – to infect, filtrovat – to filter, zahltit – to overwhelm (drown, devour, swallow, gulp), etc.* The

depictive qualities of denominators in such cases fulfil the tendency to simplify and to make approachable complicated technologies to normal everyday users.

The most widely extensive resource for so-called (in Czech) "univerbisation" (i.e. at the lexical level, the transformation of multi-word denomination to single-word denomination) is the creation of abbreviated descriptive denominators of various types.   Professional terminology is significantly enriched by abbreviations and abbreviated words, which occur in professional texts with a greater than 10% frequency.

This discovery corresponds with the (degree of) linguistic rationality in the Informatics (ICT) field. The quantity of abbreviations in professional texts bears witness to the tendency to condense descriptive denomination. The majority of these abbreviations do not originate directly from the Czech language, but rather they are assimilated predominantly from the English language. In our (Czech) vocabulary, we perceive (these) abbreviations as being neologisms. Over the passage of time, they loose the "mark" of novelty, and are incorporated into the common everyday vocabulary and are understandable even to the lay public (e.g. *TV, PC, CD, DVD, IT, ICT, SMS, USB, MP3).*

Despite users coming into ever greater contact with abbreviations and abbreviated expressions, they often neither know nor even understand their full forms. Here, let us give some examples of abbreviations and abbreviated words (Collins 1992).

HTML - Hyper Text Markup Language – the basic (computer) language of the Internet

XHTML – eXtensible Hyper Text Markup Language – a (computer) language of the Internet, the successor to HTML

IST – Information Society Technologies

BRM – Business Rapid Management – the rapid management of businesses and enterprises

PPM – Project Portfolio Management – the management of project portfolios

NPV – Net Present Value – the "clean" current value of something

PMO –Professional Managers Oriented – products directly-intended for managers

EVM –EasyVirus Monitor – a simple virus search and destroy programme

ITIL – IT Infrastructure Library – a set of tried-and-tested approaches to and procedures for the field of the management of IT services

ERP – Enterprise Resource Planning – an enterprise's business information system which covers the management of all of the processes within an enterprise or business

CRM – Customer Relationship Management – a strategy oriented on an understanding of both the needs and the behaviour of customers/clients

EDM – Enterprise Document Management – the management of an enterprise or business` documents

DAM – Digital Asset Management – the administration of digital (multi) media

WCM – Web Content Management – the administration of web content

iPod – a multimedia player of music and video content files

Intranet – the internal network within an enterprise/business designed for the sharing and transmission of files, information and data and for using web pages

Helpdesk – a place where the customer/client can turn to with their problems, an important such source is for instance a database with frequently asked questions (FAQs) and the (standardised) given responses to them

Groupware – software which supports working in teams, especially for users who are geographically distanced from each other

Some sample company names:

IBM – International Business Machines – the largest manufacturer and provider of IT services in the world

BroadNet Czech – a telecommunications operator, daughter-company of the American Comcast Corporation

The "univerbisation" (see above) process is closely associated with the tendency for linguistic economy and compactness of self-expression. These processes are realised especially there where the necessity for precision ad simplified expression is needed (Rudincová 2001).

From the above, it follows that IT and economics and their terminologies intermingle. Here, the general rule is that an overabundance of abbreviations renders orientation (in what is being said) impossible and makes it impossible to understand texts. In Czech, abbreviated words arise based upon assimilated loan words (e.g. *CallCentrum – Call Centre)*. Even in such cases, the majority of loan words are of English (or American) origin, which corresponds to the origins of the country where the latest technologies come from.

The time-horizon is a very important issue for assimilated loan words. To begin with, new and unknown terms cause distrust, uncertainty, and a lack of knowledge about their spelling and pronunciation *(e.g. rootkit, spyware, moving).* We call these neologisms. Developments in the communications field of IT are influenced by many factors and mutually interlinked associations, the most important of which is the stormy evolution of both of these scientific disciplines – i.e. economics and IT. Both are subjected to the influence of English and both terminological systems

interpenetrate one another (Kontriková, Biriş 2008). The Czech language does not defend itself against the influx of anglicisms, but rather, it functions like an open system, capable and able to create new linguistic resources, and to adapt itself to (include) them.

From our research investigations- as well as from reality, it follows that universities should react flexibly to these changes in social needs and to create adequate study disciplines, to define the knowledge that students of individual disciplines require. From the students, we should expect flexibility and the ability to further educate themselves in a self-directed manner. As the schema here below makes clear, just how significant a phase of the educational process is made up of self-directed learning and the independent resolution of problems.
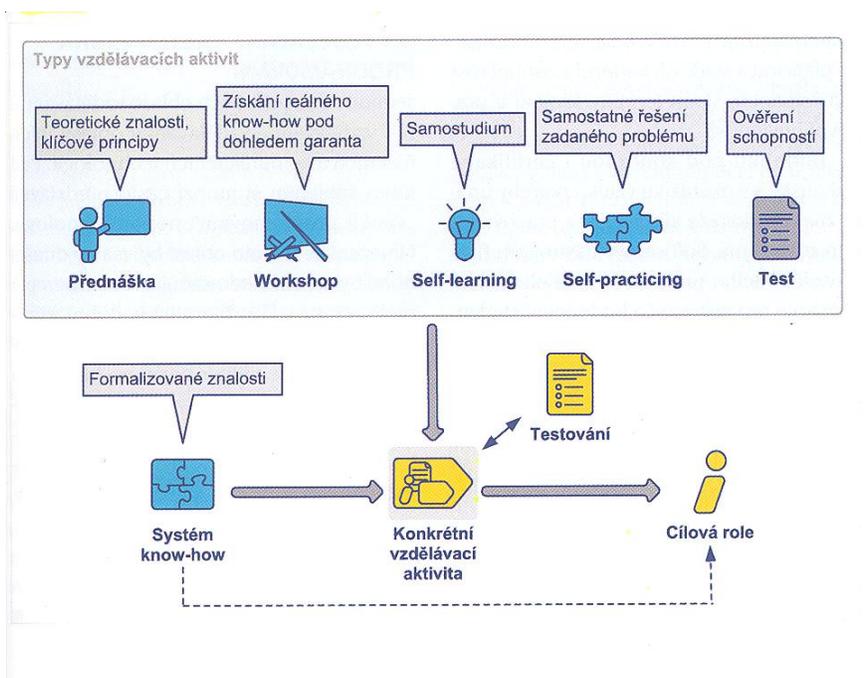

Schéma: Types of Educational Activities   Source: Seged, Martin. The Myth of the Paper-free Office. Business World. 12/2006.ps.37. ISSN 1213-1709

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this paper was to draw attention to the topicality of the problems and issues described herein and to describe how the Czech language is reacting to the influence of the influx of anglicisms, and how linguistic resources (loan words) describe new phenomena and reality. What is analytically clear is that there is a tendency towards the internationalisation of the Czech vocabulary. Changes in the contemporary vocabulary of the IT field are influenced by the most modern advances in technologies and the countries of their origins. At the present time, not only a knowledge of information technologies is expected of one, but equally an knowledge of economics

and of foreign languages – and especially of English. Their roles are irreplaceable for working with IT, in international teams, and for an understanding of inter-cultural differences.

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