

MARCIN ZABAWA
University of Silesia

THE INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH ON THE POLISH LANGUAGE OF INTERNET MESSAGE BOARDS: INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AND THE CONTEXT

The paper focuses on the analysis of the lexical borrowings of English origin used in the Polish language of Internet message boards. First, general information is given about typical features of the language used in Internet texts, followed by the summary of various understandings of the term 'borrowing'. The main part of the paper focuses on the description of the loans found in the texts taken from Internet message boards. Both the differences between individual users as well as between different topics of conversation (i.e. context) are taken into account. Finally, the findings of the present analysis are compared with those for the spoken spontaneous Polish (Zabawa 2006) and the Polish language of hip-hop songs (Bartłomiejczyk 2008).

1. Introduction

It is a well-known fact that English nowadays is in contact with many European languages, including Polish. Such contact is normally manifested through the influence of one language upon another (or both mutually influencing each other). As might be expected, the Internet is far from free from such influence. It must be added here that the Internet, being a heterogeneous medium, contains texts of various genres. Consequently, it seems only natural that some kinds of texts published there are affected by English to a greater extent than others, in exactly the same way as in the case of texts published outside the Internet: the borrowings are distributed unevenly among different types of texts.

Indeed, it can be stated that most of the texts published on the Internet can be said to be the mutated versions of the genres outside the Internet (cf. Witosz 2005; for more information about different types of Internet texts, cf. Grzenia 2007). However, there is one important difference: it appears that there is a much higher percentage of informal texts in the Internet than outside it. In fact, the Internet texts can even be said to be on the borderline between speech and writing, although – from a purely technical

perspective – they belong undoubtedly to the written mode of expression. Nevertheless, many of Internet text genres (that can be found e.g. on instant messengers, chats, Internet forums, blogs) can be at least partly characterized by some of the features typically belonging to the spoken mode of expression, such as interactivity, greater personal involvement, lower structural complexity, lower concentration of new information, fragmentation, lower level of internal organization, greater dependence on background situation and shared knowledge, spontaneity, the wide use of colloquialisms and slang expressions, among others (for more information about differences between speech and writing, cf. Akkinaso 1982, Biber 1988, Poole and Field 1976, Grzenia 2007, and a general summary in Zabawa 2006: 5–14).

The Internet, being truly a global medium, seems ideal for studying the influence of one language upon another, as – so it seems – new linguistic phenomena appear frequently first on the Internet, and only then are they copied into the language of newspapers and television. The aim of the present study is thus to estimate the influence of English upon Polish used on the Internet message boards.

First, however, it would seem necessary to establish the general definition of ‘a loan’ (also referred to as ‘a borrowing’) as the term is perceived differently by various linguists.

2. Theoretical aspects of language contact and borrowing

Traditionally, language contact was defined as ‘the situation in which two or more languages coexist within one state’ (Bussman 1998: 260). Bussman has also added that the contact between languages happens only when ‘the speakers use these different languages alternately in specific situations’ (ibid.). When such a definition is to be adopted, then it appears that language contact would exist only in bi- or multilingual countries, preferably where more than one language has the status of an official language, such as e.g. in Switzerland. However, as was noted in one of my earlier papers (Zabawa 2007: 89), this is no longer the case nowadays, as today the contact between languages does not have to imply the coexistence of two languages within one state. Rather, the contact between languages (English and Polish in our case) may and does happen via the satellite or cable television, the press and books, the process of teaching and learning foreign languages (English in our situation) and, last but not least, via the Internet.

The language contact is manifested through the existence of borrowings (also known as loans) in one or both language(s). It is interesting to note that some linguists seem to restrict the notion of borrowing to words only and define the process as ‘the taking over of a word from a foreign language; a word so borrowed (also called a loanword) [...]’ (Chalker and Weiner 1994: 49). Others, by contrast, define it in a very broad way, cf. the definitions given by Haugen and Pisarek:

The heart of our definition of borrowing is then the attempted reproduction in one language of patterns previously found in another. (Haugen 1950: 163)

Wszelkie elementy (głoski, fonemy, części słowotwórcze, wyrazy, wyrażenia, zwroty, znaczenia, konstrukcje składniowe) przejęte z innego języka. Zazwyczaj charakter z. [=zapożyczeń] bezpośrednich mają tylko z. [=zapożyczenia] leksykalne, które z kolei umożliwiają lub ułatwiają z. [=zapożyczenia] wtórne w postaci głosek, fonemów, części słowotwórczych itp. [...] (Pisarek, in Urbańczyk and Kucala 1999: 440)

All the elements (speech sounds, phonemes, word-formation elements, words, phrases, meanings, syntactic structures) taken over from a different language. Usually lexical borrowings alone have the character of direct loans, and they make the way for indirect loans, i.e. speech sounds, phonemes, word-formation elements etc. [my translation]

Consequently, one has to note that the term in question is a very broad one and borrowings do not form a homogeneous group. Rather, certain subtypes can be distinguished (cf. Arabski 2004, Haugen 1950, Mańczak-Wohlfeld 1993, 2006, Markowski 1992, 2004, Zabawa 2004a, 2004b, 2005, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a, 2009b, Otwinowska-Kasztelaniec 2000):

- lexical borrowings (e.g. Polish *komputer*, *ice tea*, *weekend*, *bukować* from English *computer*, *ice tea*, *weekend*, *to book*)
- semantic borrowings (e.g. new meanings of Polish words *album*, *ikona*, *mysz* on the model of English *album*, *icon*, *mouse*)
- morphological borrowings (e.g. the morpheme *-e*, taken from *e-mail*: *e-firma*, *e-sklep*, *e-zakupy*, *e-podpis*)
- syntactic borrowings (e.g. the use of noun+noun clusters, e.g. *komputer świat*, *auto naprawa*, *biznes telefon* or the incorrect use of adjectives in the attributive position, e.g. *komediodowy serial*, *żeglarskie obozy* instead of correct *obozы żeglarskie*, *serial komediowy*)
- spelling borrowings (e.g. *jush*, *qmpel*, *Sylwoosia* instead of *już*, *kumpel*, *Sylwusia*)
- punctuation borrowings (e.g. the use of quotation marks on the model of English “ ” instead of Polish „ ”; the use of a dot, instead of a comma, in decimal fractions: *0.5* instead of *0,5*)
- pragmatic borrowings (e.g. using the informal form *ty* instead of the formal one *pan*, *pani* in e.g. television quizzes and commercials; changes in compliment responses).

Additionally, lexical borrowings can be further subdivided into three groups (Haugen 1950):

- loanwords, where both the form and meaning are borrowed, e.g. Polish *komputer* from English *computer*
- loan blends (hybrids), where only part of the form is of foreign origin, while the rest is native, e.g. *ciucholand*
- loan translations (calques), where the morphemes are translated one by one, e.g. *pranie mózgu* from English *brainwashing* (sometimes the reproduction is not exact, though, e.g. *drapacz chmur* vs. *sky scraper*).

Loanwords, in turn, can be subdivided according to the degree of assimilation (for more on this, cf. Mańczak-Wohlfeld 2006):

- unassimilated loans (quotes), e.g. *ice tea*, *non stop* used in Polish on the model of English
- partly assimilated loans, e.g. *weekend*: the spelling is not assimilated but the word is inflected and can serve as a base for new derivatives, e.g. *wyjazd weekendowy*
- assimilated loans, e.g. Polish *mecz*, *dżem*, *komputer* taken from English *match*, *jam*, *computer*.

It is also possible to distinguish between necessary and unnecessary loans (for more on this, cf. Mańczak-Wohlfeld 2006):¹

- necessary loans, used to designate new concepts and things that had no names in the recipient language. The loans of this type roughly correspond to ‘cultural borrowings’ (Myers-Scotton 2002: 239, cited in Haspelmath 2003) or ‘items of acculturation’ (Brown 1999, cited in Haspelmath 2003). This group includes also exotics and internationalisms (for more information on internationalisms, cf. Maćkiewicz 2001: 555–562). The examples of necessary loans in Polish include *pendrive*, *szeryf* taken from English *pendrive*, *sheriff*
- unnecessary loans, borrowed for some other reason, such as linguistic fashion, e.g. *shopping*. Such words have native counterparts.

3. Research design

The aim of the study, as was noted at the beginning, is to estimate the influence of English upon Polish used on the Internet message boards. The study concentrates on lexical borrowings (loanwords), both assimilated and unassimilated, both necessary and unnecessary. The data base for the research is the Internet forum *Forumowisko* (www.forumowisko.pl). The forum in question has been chosen as the base since it is very large both in terms of the number of registered users (94,084) and posts (2,176,769).² What is more, the forum comprises posts on various topics, including (among others): politics, elections, conflicts and wars, world affairs, religion, philosophy, health, diets, computers and the Internet, blogs, modern technology, mobile phones, science, photography, school and studies, medicine, fashion, music, cars, bicycles, movies and TV, theatre, books and newspapers, games, business and money, work, love, friendship, feelings and emotions, marriages, divorces, habits, addictions, military issues, subcultures, gossip, famous people, jokes, holidays, sport, cooking, animals and gardening and many more.

¹ This distinction is, however, based not solely on linguistic grounds; instead, it takes also into account individual perspectives, the ideas of giving priority to native elements, etc. Besides, for some linguists this division is invalid, cf. e.g. Hope (1963, cited in Mańczak-Wohlfeld 1995: 19), who notes that any reason for borrowing a particular word is sufficient. Consequently, no loans can be described as unnecessary.

² The numbers are valid through 6th October 2009.

To correlate the results of the study with both the differences between individual users as well as between different topics of conversation (i.e. context), two small corpora have been collected. The first one comprises the newest 2,000 words (regardless of the topic) written by 7 randomly chosen users. Thus, the group consists of 14,000 words in total. The second one consists of randomly chosen posts taken from the subforum on computers (dealing with both hardware and software, but not the Internet as such). This corpus comprises 5,000 words. The division of the material into two corpora enables us to trace the differences concerning the level of the influence of English both between individual users (Corpus 1) and between topics (Corpora 2 and 1, i.e. computers as opposed to general topics).

However, during the analysis of the corpora, certain problems have arisen; these are described in the next section.

4. Problems connected with analyzing data

When one decides to construct a corpus of texts taken from Internet message boards and analyze it in terms of borrowed words, two difficulties are predominant: first, it is not clear how to treat derivatives of English borrowings. As an example, one could quote the word *komputer*, noted both in Mańczak-Wohlfeld's work (2006: 128) and in *Wielki słownik wyrazów obcych PWN* (2003: 658) as a lexical borrowing from English. However, the question about such forms as *komputerowy* or *komputerowiec* remains unsolved. On one hand, such words are created in Polish and as such are not borrowed from English. On the other hand, however, a text which contains, say, three occurrences of the form *komputerowiec* (but not *komputer* itself) cannot be said to be free from the English influence, either. To solve this, it was decided to count such derivatives as borrowings, not as separate types, however, but only tokens of the same type. Thus, forms such as *komputerowy*, *komputerowiec*, *komputerowy* and *komputerowo* will be counted as four tokens of the same type.

Second, it is sometimes not easy to establish if a given word or phrase is of English origin or not. The dictionaries are sometimes of not much help, either, as they not infrequently give different etymologies for the same word. For example, the form *LSD* is treated in one source as a construction of English origin, abbreviated from *Lysergic acid diethylamide* (Mańczak-Wohlfeld 2006: 132) whereas in *Wielki słownik wyrazów obcych PWN* as the one of German origin, abbreviated from *Lyserg-Säure-Diäthylamid* (2003: 758). The second example of such a difficulty, provided by Piotrowski (2009), concerns the form *beton*, treated erroneously (according to him) in *WSWO* as the form of English origin. As he has asserted, the problem here lies in the fact that etymologies are usually treated as the least important piece of information in the dictionaries of Polish and often in dictionaries in general. Etymological dictionaries of Polish, on the other hand, are quite scarce; besides, they usually deal with a very limited number of words. In such problematic cases, the only solution was to consult additional dictionaries of Polish and of foreign words as well as monolingual dictionaries of English, primarily *Oxford English Dictionary* and *Oxford Dictionary of English*.

Additionally, it must also be stressed that all English proper names, such as the names of companies, products, titles of movies, books, computer games, etc. have not been counted as borrowings and have not been taken into account in the present study. However, some borrowings, e.g. *slim* as in *w wersji slim*, which are in fact modelled on the names of products (*Xbox 360 Slim* in this case), are nevertheless counted as borrowings, since they are no longer a part of a proper name, but rather they are used as common, and thus not capitalized, nouns.

5. The results of the study

All the English borrowings found in the corpora have been classified into two groups, the criterion being the existence (or non-existence) of a given loan in *Wielki słownik wyrazów obcych PWN*:

- old, noted in *Wielki słownik wyrazów obcych PWN*, e.g. *T-shirt*, *e-mail*
- new, not noted in *Wielki słownik wyrazów obcych PWN*, e.g. *sorry/sory/sorki*, *post*, *update* or noted in *WSWO*, but in a different meaning, e.g. *box*, *menedżer*.

As one can see, it is thus assumed that the borrowings noted in *Wielki słownik wyrazów obcych PWN* are treated as belonging to the older layer of borrowings in Polish, whereas those not noted as belonging to the newer one. It must be added, however, that some borrowings noted in the dictionary in question (and thus classified as the old ones) can in fact be felt as relatively new in language, e.g. *mail*.

Additionally, a class of abbreviations typical for Internet message boards and chats was distinguished. Examples include *IMO*, *OT*, *LOL*, *OMG*, *WTF*; sometimes, however, the constructions of this type are not capitalized: *lol*, *wtf*, etc.

The results of the study for Corpus 1 (general topics, 7 randomly chosen users) are presented in Table 1. The numbers indicate the amount of borrowings (divided into three groups: old, new and abbreviations or acronyms typical for Internet communication) used by a given writer (out of 7 chosen in this part of the study):

Table 1. The results of the study (Corpus 1) in terms of the number of types and tokens of borrowings of English origin

user	old		new		abbreviations/acronyms	
	types	tokens	types	tokens	types	tokens
1	12	18	4	9	6	10
2	6	9	4	4	0	0
3	2	3	3	4	2	4
4	3	6	4	6	0	0
5	4	6	2	2	0	0
6	15	25	12	21	1	2
7	11	13	2	2	0	0

Table 2 below shows the same data, but all the three groups are summarized (separately for types and tokens) and the results are presented in percentage terms. The percentages indicate the number of English borrowings in relation to the total number of words written by a given user. This enables us to trace the differences between individual users.

Table 2. The results of the study (Corpus 1) given in percentage terms

user	types	tokens	%
1	22	37	1.85 %
2	10	13	0.65 %
3	7	11	0.55 %
4	7	12	0.6 %
5	6	8	0.4 %
6	28	48	2.4 %
7	13	15	0.75 %
All	–	144	1.03 %

As Table 2 indicates, there exist great differences between individual users as to the number of borrowings they used in their posts. Some users (notably number 1 and 6) tended to use the constructions of English origin many times as often as the remaining users (cf. Tables 1 and 2). This would clearly indicate that the frequency of using words and abbreviations of English origin is to a large extent an individual feature. This is particularly well indicated in Table 1: user 1 has a clear preference for English abbreviations (he or she used more constructions of this type than all the other users taken together). Likewise, user 6 has a clear tendency to introduce new constructions of English origin, not (yet) noted in the Polish dictionaries of foreign words. The remaining users (particularly number 3, 4 and 5) tend to use the loans of English origin with a similar frequency, much lower than users 1 and 6.

The results of the study for Corpus 2 (subforum on computers, randomly chosen posts) are presented in Table 3. It must be noted, however, that the loans found in Corpus 2 do not necessarily belong to the semantic field of computers. Some of them, as could be expected, belong to other semantic fields (e.g. in off-topic posts) or do not belong to any specific semantic area. To avoid confusion in the statistical analysis, it was decided to divide all the borrowings found in the corpus in question into two groups: (1) those belonging to the semantic area of computers and modern technology and (2) those outside that domain (labelled in the table below as ‘general’). Additionally, they have also been summarized to give the full picture of the borrowings in Corpus 2.

Table 3. The results of the study (Corpus 2) in terms of the number of types and tokens of borrowings of English origin

loans	old		new		abbreviations/acronyms	
	types	tokens	types	tokens	types	tokens
connected with computers	19	57	13	32	0	0
general	7	12	4	6	2	2
All	26	69	17	38	2	2

In order to discuss the differences in the use of English borrowings between topics, it would be necessary to compare the results obtained for both corpora. This is illustrated in Table 4. As was mentioned before, Group 1 comprises posts on various topics, without any leading one (labelled as 'general') while Group 2 consists of posts on computers and modern technology.

Table 4. The comparison of the results obtained for Corpus 1 (general posts) and Corpus 2 (posts on computers and modern technology)

	tokens	% of the total number of words
Group 1 (general) 14,000 words	144	1.03 %
Group 2 (computers and modern technology) 5,000 words	109	2.18 %

Interestingly but perhaps not surprisingly, there is a great difference between the frequency of the use of English borrowings in the topics of general character and in the semantic area of computers. To be more precise, as the research has shown, there are more than twice as much borrowings (expressed in percentage terms) in the latter. It must be noted, however, that in the case of Group 2 both types of borrowings have been taken into account and counted together, i.e. (1) those belonging to the semantic area of computers and modern technology and (2) those outside that domain (cf. the remarks above). Interestingly enough, nevertheless, even if the borrowings not belonging to the semantic area of computers are to be excluded from Group 2, it is still much more richer in the constructions of English origin than Group 1. This is illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5. The comparison of the results obtained for Corpus 1 (general posts) and Corpus 2 (posts on computers and modern technology), with only borrowings from the semantic field of computers and modern technology taken into account in the latter case

	tokens	% of the total number of words
Group 1 (general) 14,000 words	144	1.03 %
Group 2 (computers and modern technology) – only borrowings connected with the sphere of computers are taken into account 5,000 words	89	1.78 %

6. The comparison of the results of the present analysis with other studies on the subject

The present study has revealed some interesting (as is hoped) data concerning the frequency of the use of English borrowings in the Polish language of Internet message boards. It would seem still more interesting to compare the results obtained in the present study with those for the spoken spontaneous Polish (Zabawa 2006) and the Polish language of hip-hop songs (Bartłomiejczyk 2008). The corpus for spontaneous spoken Polish consists of 60,564 running words, and is comprised of informal conversations both on computers and on general topics, thus making it possible to trace the differences between the two in terms of the number of borrowings of English origin (Zabawa 2006). The corpus of hip-hop lyrics comprises approximately 52,500 running words and it contains borrowings from the following semantic fields: (1) general, (2) referring to hip-hop music, (3) referring to illicit drugs, (4) referring to computers and modern technology. Additionally, a separate group of exclamations and phatic expressions was differentiated (Bartłomiejczyk 2006: 180). It is not possible here, however, to present the number of borrowings from the semantic area of computers as contrasted with those from other semantic fields, as this type of classification was not performed by the author of the article. This, however, is fully understandable, as this was not the primary purpose of the paper in question. To compensate for this, the borrowings from this corpus are presented together. The data is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. The comparison of the results obtained in this study with those for spoken spontaneous Polish (Zabawa 2006) and the language of hip-hop songs (Bartłomiejczyk 2008)

	% of the total number of words
Internet message boards – written Group 1 (general)	1.03 %

Internet message boards – written Group 2 (computers)	2.18 %
Spoken Polish Group 1 (general)	0.19 %
Spoken Polish Group 2 (computers)	0.80 %
Hip-hop lyrics (Bartłomiejczyk 2008)	1.65 %

Interestingly enough, the differences between varieties of Polish (in terms of the frequency of English loans) are clearly visible. First, there exist a clear-cut distinction between general language and the semantic area of computers, both in the case of written language of Internet message boards and of spoken spontaneous language. Second, surprisingly as it may seem, there are much fewer borrowings in the spoken variety of Polish than in the written one, be it the language of Internet forums or of hip-hop songs. The difference in question is even better shown in Table 7, where the loans from both groups (general and belonging to semantic area of computers) are counted together and the percentages are counted accordingly.

Table 7. The comparison of the results obtained in this study with those for spoken spontaneous Polish (Zabawa 2006) and the language of hip-hop songs (Bartłomiejczyk 2008), with English borrowings from all the semantic areas counted together

	% of the total number of words
Hip-hop songs (Bartłomiejczyk 2008) 52,500 words	1.65 %
Internet message boards 19,000 words	1.33 %
Spoken Polish 60,564 words	0.37 %

As indicated in Table 7, the highest number of borrowings can be detected in hip-hop lyrics (1.65 %), and the lowest – in spontaneous spoken Polish (0.37 %). Coincidentally, the three groups analyzed above correspond to three varieties of Polish: written (Internet message boards), spoken (spontaneous informal conversations) and written-to-be-spoken (hip-hop lyrics). On the other hand, all the three varieties do have a common feature, as all of them can be labelled as very informal. It is thus possible to say, as was noted above, that informal written Polish tends to contain many more English lexical borrowings than the informal spoken variety. It would be very interesting to compare these results with the ones for formal written and formal spoken Polish. To the present author's knowledge, however, this type of analysis have not been carried out so far.

7. Examples of borrowings found in the corpus

As was mentioned in Section 5, the borrowings found in two present corpora (comprised of the texts taken from Internet message boards) can be classified into two different groups: (1) words and (2) abbreviations or acronyms typical for Internet communication. Additionally, the group of words was further subdivided into 'old', comprising words noted in *Wielki słownik wyrazów obcych PWN* and 'new', consisting of words not included in the dictionary in question. Examples of the borrowings found in the corpora are presented in Table 8. The constructions preceded by an asterisk belong to the semantic field of computers and the Internet. It must also be noted that some of the words, e.g. *post*, are polysemous in English; an asterisk in such cases indicates that the word was used in the corpus in the sense connected with computers ('an entry in an Internet forum', in this case). When derivatives appeared in the corpus, the base form is given in square brackets. In the case of abbreviations and acronyms typical for Internet communication, there is a full phrase given in square brackets.

Table 8. Examples of lexical borrowings found in the present corpora

words and abbreviations		abbreviations and acronyms typical for electronic communication
old	new	
baseball	casualowy [casual]	btw [by the way]
beat	*edit	IMO [in my opinion]
billboard	emo	lol [laughing out loud]
*blog	energy drink	OMG [oh my God]
budżet	*firmware	OT [off-topic]
*bug	free	plz [please]
CD	*net	wtf [what the fuck]
chipsy	part	
design	*post	
DJ	*real	
DVD	sorry/sory/sorki/sorka	
*e-mail	tracki [track]	
film	tracklista	
*firewall	*trial	
*hacker	*update	
hip-hop		
*Internet		
joystick		
*link		
news		
non stop		
*OEM		
paintball		

partner *pecetowy [PC] *RAM *skaner SMS T-shirt		
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As was mentioned earlier, the label ‘old’ might possibly be misleading in some cases, such as in e.g. *link*, *OEM* or *blog*, since such constructions are probably felt as still relatively foreign by an average native speaker of Polish. Nevertheless, as they have been included in *WSWO*, they have somehow been officially sanctioned in Polish. Additionally, it can be stated that some of the lexical borrowings found in the corpus can be described as nonce borrowings (the term has been borrowed from Poplack et al. 1988: 52), i.e. they were used only once by one user in the entire corpus. The majority of them, however, tended to be repeated by other users.

8. Other examples of the influence of English found in the corpus

Apart from the lexical borrowings discussed above, the corpus contains some other instances of the influence of English upon Polish. They will, however, be mentioned here very quickly, as they clearly fall outside the scope of the present paper. They include:

- semantic borrowings, i.e. the borrowing of meaning, e.g. *okienko* (used in the new meaning of ‘an area within a frame on a computer screen’³, on the model of English *window*), *sieć* (used in the new meaning of ‘the Internet’, on the model of English *net*, *the Net*), *pamięć* (used in the new meaning of ‘the part of a computer where information is stored’, on the model of English (*computer*) *memory*), *pulpit* (used in the new sense of ‘the working area of a computer screen’, on the model of English *desktop*), *wirus* (used in the new sense of ‘a piece of computer code, typically having a detrimental effect’, on the model of English *virus*), *konsola* (used in the new meaning of ‘a small machine for playing computerized video games’, on the model of English (*games*) *console*), *pirat* and its derivatives *piracki*, *piracić* (used with reference to CDs, DVDs, copied and sold illegally, on the model of English *pirate*, *pirated*), *strona* (used in the new sense of ‘a web page’), *system* (used in the new meaning of ‘a set of programs that control the way the computer works and runs other programs’, on the model of English (*operating*) *system*),

³ English definitions of Polish words are formulated with the help of or quoted from English monolingual dictionaries: *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, 6th edition and *Oxford Dictionary of English*, 2nd edition.

dokładnie (used to express agreement with what somebody has just said, on the model of English *exactly*). As one can see, most of the semantic loans found in the corpus belong to the semantic field of computers and the Internet. For more information about semantic borrowings, cf. Zabawa (2004b, 2008a, 2008b), Markowski (1992, 2004), Otwinowska-Kasztelanic (2000), Witalisz (2007).

- loan translations, also known as calques, which are, however, rare, e.g. *laptop z drugiej ręki* (instead of *używany*)
- loan blends, also known as hybrids. Only one such borrowing, however, was found in the corpus, namely *tracklista*.
- spelling borrowings, i.e. the phenomenon of using English letters or sequence of letters, e.g. *maksymalna cena*, *Szarex*, *Misoor*, *Przemax*. For more examples of this type used in the language of Internet, cf. Zabawa (2009a).

9. Conclusions

The aim of the present paper was to analyze English lexical borrowings used in the Polish language of Internet message boards, with special emphasis placed on the role of individual differences and the context. It can be summarized that both the topic of the conversation and individual preferences play a very important role in connection with the usage of the borrowings of English origin. Altogether, as was shown above, the frequency of the use of English borrowings in the Polish language of Internet message boards is quite high, much higher than in the case of spontaneous spoken Polish. It should be stressed once more, however, that many of the borrowings found in the present corpus belong to computer jargon and are not very likely to be understood by the people not dealing with computers. Examples of such highly specialized loans include *CRT*, *DDR*, *firmware*, *trial*. If we exclude such borrowings from the analysis, it will turn out that the number of English borrowings approximates 1% of the words from the entire corpus. It can thus be concluded that the influence of English upon general Polish used on Internet message boards is noticeable, but not as great as one might have expected.

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