

The *Usage Dictionary of Anglicisms in Selected European Languages*: a report on progress, problems and prospects*

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Abstract

This is a short report on the *UDASEL* project, its field of study, objectives, methodology, and the structure and internal organization of information in the dictionary entries. Some specimens are included.

Key words: Anglicisms, European languages, Lexicography.

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1. Introduction

It is a well-known fact that the impact of English on all the major languages of the world is of overwhelming proportions, that it has been for the past few decades, and that it may in fact be increasing —as is certainly the case right now as far as, e.g., Eastern Europe is concerned. However, it is all the more surprising that there has never been a comprehensive attempt to compare this influence across cultural and linguistic boundaries. There have of course been various dictionaries of anglicisms in individual languages, such as those for Polish (Manczak-Wohlfeld 1995) or German (Carstensen and Busse 1994-96), for Croatian (Filipovic 1990) or French (Höfler 1982). However, the aims and methods of the compilers of these dictionaries diverge a great deal, and the projects date from different dec-

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ades; as a consequence, no proper comparison of the data of the individual languages is possible on the basis of these published books—even if a linguist has the rare competence to read Croatian and is thus able to make proper use of Filipovic's dictionary. The need for a comparative dictionary of anglicisms was seen by the great Dutch linguist Zandvoort (1970) some thirty years ago (who also suggested a companion volume of gallicisms), but he did not start the promising project, nor did any European colleague take up the challenge. (R. Filipovic's comprehensive project begun in the 1960s had a different focus and has not come anywhere close to completion.) So there was room for a new dictionary project when I started my preliminary work some six years ago. I felt it was about time to go ahead, and do so quickly, considering the rapid political, cultural and linguistic changes happening around me, which might, thus my impression, make the European languages very similar within a short time, as far as the impact of English is concerned, especially after the Iron Curtain had come down. Therefore, after various pilot studies (cf. Görlach 1994) and a contract offered from Oxford University Press, the *UDASEL* project was officially launched. Work on the dictionary has been going smoothly ever since so that there appears to be a realistic hope to publish the dictionary, with accompaniments, in 1998 as scheduled.

2. Aims and methods

I will here try to give a succinct survey of the project, discussing the methods and problems relating to the types of data included, and will do so with reference to a few provisional entries. The specimens were chosen to illustrate as many points worthy of discussion as I could think of. At the end I will try to summarize the state of play by indicating a few insights that have arisen from our work so far—some of these confirmed former expectations, but some came as a real surprise. I should add that these findings are very preliminary not just because the data are not yet quite complete, but also because we have not had the resources so far to transfer our entries to a data bank system and make them properly searchable.

The *UDASEL* includes 16 European languages from different language families, but excluding those in close contact with English, e.g. Irish, Welsh and Maltese: it is quite obvious that Welsh, for instance, will borrow from English specific items (such as household goods and parts of motorcars) from domains which are quite different from those affected in more distant language contacts. The cultural and sociopolitical backgrounds being as different as they are, we did not see any point in including languages spoken outside Europe, either.

Data, then, is being collected from four Germanic languages (Icelandic, Norwegian, Dutch and German), four Slavic (Russian, Polish, Croatian and Bulgarian), four Romance (French, Spanish, Italian and Rumanian) and four other languages (Finnish, Hungarian, Albanian and Greek). These were

selected partly because competent collaborators were willing to join the project and partly because this selection allowed the analysis of a maximal number of contrasts —an investigation of puristic vs. open speech communities, Western vs. Eastern countries, regional comparisons (Scandinavia, the Balkans) and the impact of mediating languages mainly in the 19th century (French and German in particular). The selection also fits into a 'grid' which is beautifully iconic of the geography of Europe:

Ic	Nw	Po	Rs
Du	Ge	Cr	Bg
Fr	It	Fi	Hu
Sp	Rm	Al	Gr

The *UDASEL* is intended as a documentation of the lexical input of English into European languages up to the early 1990s (cut-off date 1995); earlier loans will be included, but we will concentrate on modern lexis imported after World War II. The linguistic situation is rapidly changing, so there is a need to collect the dictionary data in much less time than is usually accorded such projects.

The comparative method and the time schedule also preclude basing currency values (ie. extent of usage) on text corpora. For lexical studies, these have to be of enormous size —and the data also have to be sorted out by hand and interpreted in the second stage of analysis. Moreover, there are doubts about the representativeness of corpora even for national dictionaries, a problem increasing in cross-linguistic analysis. Finally, for many languages here included, such corpora would have to be put together from scratch —so there was really no choice but to base statements relating to style and currency values on the introspection of the collaborators and their informants. Data from recent dictionaries —where available— were, however, very helpful for checking the evidence collected in a more impressionistic way. (Ideally, collaborators had finished a national dictionary of English loanwords or were working on such a project.) However, the best test for the currency of anglicisms and their acceptability remains the judgement of educated language-conscious native speakers.

Modern technology will make it possible —if there is any demand — to produce a second edition a few years after publication which might then include more recent anglicisms in the sixteen languages and thus permit contrasts of the growth of this type of lexis —the European languages are likely to become more similar to each other in due course, but there will also be special developments, such as those illustrating the consequences of recent French language legislation. Such diachronic analysis will be feasible especially if the data are transferred to a data bank system.

In the past there have been numerous monographs devoted to anglicisms in special fields, such as in the language of sports or music, covering the evidence for one particular language or, much more rarely, contrasting selected data in a few languages. The *UDASEL* will not make such studies superfluous; rather, it may provide some aid for future investigations. The project is also likely to spark off sufficient interest among linguists and word-watchers to inspire them to supply additions and corrections. Finally, the data will be of interest to the compilers of bilingual dictionaries for the evidence they contain about *faux amis*; anglicisms have increasingly moved away from their 'original meanings' (or at least connotations) —which means that an anglicism can often not be properly translated by its etymon.

The data are geared to the most recent edition of the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (COD, 1995). Each entry includes a variety of information in a fixed sequence and in highly condensed form. The English etymon, as a headword, is followed by all the meanings recorded for loanwords in the various languages. The data on the word's history and its spread across Europe are then summarized for the more important items in a few sentences intended to guide the reader to the detailed evidence. Information for the individual language, say Po(lish) or Ge(rman), includes spelling and pronunciation, gender attribution and pluralization in nouns, approximate date of adoption and, where relevant, the mediating language. The most important data follow: is the word part of the language, and how well integrated is it in terms of currency, style value and acceptability? An equivalent term is named especially if it is a loan translation or some other form of calque, replacements which are frequent in puristic languages. Derivatives will be nested in the same entry if they are not found in English, otherwise they will have separate entries.

It may be useful to give a more detailed summary of the structure of the data provided. The information contained in an entry is organized in up to fifteen units as will be evident from the specimen below. The numbers appearing over each line of the example are included here as a guide to the reader of this report and refer to the information unit types which are explained and commented on below:

dandy n. 1 'man unduly devoted to style and fashion'

The word is a cultural shibboleth of 19th c. British society, which was in vogue in London in the Regency period, 1813-19. Spread throughout the Continent, the term is now obsolescent or historical but still well-known (though seldom used to refer to present-day dandies).

Ge [dendi] M, pl. *-ies*, beg19c (2 obs) Du [dEndi:] M, 19c (2)
 Nw[=E] C, pl. *-er*, mid19c (1) Ic *dandí* [tanti] M, pl. *-ar*, 1950s,
 1(2 coll) → *dandílegur* adj. Fr [] beg19c (1 obs) → *dandysme*
 Sp [dandi] M, mid19c (2<3) → *dandismo* It [dɛndi] M
 beg19c (2) Rm *dandí* [dɛndi, -a] M, end19c, via Fr (1 obs)

Rs *dendi* M, uninfl., 19c, 1 (fac/obs) **Po** *dandys* M, mid19c (2) → *ek* \bar{M} , *-owaty* adj. **Cr** *dendi* M, pl. -i, 19c (2) → *-jevski* adj.
Bg *dendi* M, pl. *-ta*, beg20c (1 mod) **Hu** *dendi* [=E] pl. *-k*, beg19c (2 arch) **Gr** *dhandhis* M, 19c, via Fr (3 obs); *dady-*/
 <=E> cp 1, end20c (1 tech)

- (1) **The English etymon** (lemma) is given in its BrE spelling.

A word is to be included in the *UDASEL* if it is recognizably English in form (spelling, pronunciation, morphology) *in at least one language*. This excludes in particular most internationalisms coined with the help of Latin or Greek elements (*administration*, *telephone*) and many words from other languages transmitted through English (*avocado*, *anorak*). Words ought to be common and frequent enough to be found in newspaper language; they must have a referent in the national culture and must be part of the national language (thus excluding quotation words). Derivatives also found in English and homonyms (especially those involving different parts of speech) will normally have separate entries. Names provide a special problem, as they do in other dictionaries. When does a name become generic, as *Scotch* (tape) has become in French?

- (2) **Part-of-speech label.** The classification works without greater problems apart from some uncertainty about how to deal with pre-modifying elements (which are sometimes misleadingly called 'adjectives' in English dictionaries). I have decided to use cp¹ or cp² designating 'first/second part of a compound'. Whereas most loanwords occur as independent units and are freely combined in compounds (*fan*), others are restricted to the first position in N + N compounds (cp¹: *last-minute-*, *non-food-*) or the second position (cp²: *-shop*, *-look*), types which often occur in hybrid formations.

It is obvious that this notation works better for Germanic than for other languages, but it is also true that this type of N+N compound is increasingly becoming accepted outside Germanic, thus creating a new type of word-formation for many languages.

- (3) **Meaning.** Meanings are, as would be expected, the great problem area. Structuralists rightly insist that 'meaning' is determined by intralinguistic oppositions so that in every borrowing process and during the subsequent integration of the loanword the English meaning(s) cannot possibly be preserved. However, there is enough referential closeness to identify, in most cases, the meaning of a loanword with one of those of the English etymon. If a meaning is not found in English but is very close to one indicated in the *COD* a new letter is added; otherwise an additional number follows the ones used in the *COD* (say +7).

Cross-references to other entries are indicated by ↑ followed by the italicized lemma: ↑ *fan*.

The second block analyses the evidence and lists the full details for the national data:

- (4) For some 20-30% of the entries the major facts of **the word's history** and its spread across Europe are summarized in a few sentences accompanied by a

'grid' to show how widely the individual anglicisms are distributed. The grid consists of a square showing the four Germanic, Slavic, Romance and other languages in blocks, indicating regional patterns as well as language-group specific clusters.

The third block contains the evidence provided for the individual languages.

The lemma is marked —, 0, Ø if it is not part of the language. The distinction is between total absence, restricted knowledge in *English* texts, and in *English* cultural contexts. Since absence must be marked, in the process of data collection every lemma must have some kind of response from all collaborators — only thus can we make sure that all contributors checked the entry for their languages. The dashes have been removed in the final stage of the redaction.

- (5) **Language sigil** (sequence: **Ge Du Nw Ic Fr Sp It Rm Rs Po Cr Bg Fi Hu Al Gr**)
- (6) **Spelling**, if different from English. Items written in non-Latin alphabets are *always* transliterated using the conventions established for transliteration into English (**Rs, Bg, Gr**). If this transliteration reflects the pronunciation unambiguously, this is not indicated. If the English and a different spelling co-exist in the language, both are given, the more frequent first.
- (7) The **pronunciation** of the loanword is either [=E], if (near-)identical with that of the English lemma, or given in IPA [...] if different. Main stress is indicated by double underline, secondary stress by single underline.
- (8) In nouns: **gender** is always indicated (F, M, N; C = common where M & N, or M & F are merged); alternatives are, again, noted for words for which usage is unsettled, e.g. M/N.
- (9) **Pluralization** with nouns is consistently noted. [U] means 'uncountable'; by contrast Ø = zero morph as in **Ge 1 Teenager, 2 Teenager** and often found in unmarked plurals in Italian etc. For words which do not inflect at all, 'uninfl.' is used as in **Rs dendi**.
- (10) **Dates** are important to reconstruct details of cultural history and ways of transmission, but they frequently have to be indicated by rule-of-thumb. The time when a term (or one of its meanings) became frequent or accepted is considered more important than the first recorded occurrence as found in dictionaries; therefore no exact dates are indicated, but beg19c, mid19c, end19c, 1970s, 1980s are used instead.
- (11) **Channel of transmission**. If the word is likely to have been transmitted through French we use 'via Fr' —note (5Fr) if it is not an anglicism at all, but **from** French. To distinguish the two categories one needs etymological information which may not be available; therefore, '?' is used in cases of doubt.
- (12) **Number of the meaning** indicated in the first block (unit 3) refers to numbers in the *COD* which mark the different meanings.

(13) **Acceptability/currency**, indicated within parentheses and preceded by number of meaning, thus: 3(1tech), +4(1mod) etc. These currency values are probably the most important piece of information in the entry and are therefore repeated in more visual form in the grids. The following symbols indicate a cline of increasing integration (often also of frequency and acceptability):

- The word is not known (no entry for the individual language, but a calque or other native equivalent may be provided): thus *gully* is absent from all languages except **Ge**
- 0 The word is known mainly to bilinguals, but is felt to be English (like *weekend* in **Ge**)
- ∅ The word is known but used only with reference to British or American situations (foreignism): *earl*, *county*, *public school* etc.
- 1 The word is in restricted use: the nature of the restriction is indicated by the abbreviation (or first letter of the abbreviation) following the number inside the brackets. The symbols were chosen in a form that can be easily memorized:
 - arch = archaic (known, but no longer used);
 - ban = banned, restricted by legislation (such as *franglais* items) but still current;
 - col = colloquial (informal, not normally written);
 - der = derogatory;
 - euph = euphemistic (used to avoid a term tabooed in the native language);
 - fac = facetious (not meant to be serious, playful);
 - hist = historical (referring to obsolete objects);
 - jour = journalese;
 - lit = literary;
 - mod = modish/modern (fashionable jargon, not expected to last);
 - obs = obsolescent (possibly going out of use, now rarer than a few years ago);
 - pej = pejorative;
 - rare = infrequent;
 - reg = regional (known to be restricted to national or regional varieties of the standard language, or to dialects);
 - sla = slang, substandard;
 - tech = technical (only used in special vocabularies like those of aviation, banking, computer technology, etc.);
 - wrt = written use;
 - you = youth language, usage being restricted to the younger generation.
- 2 The word is fully accepted and found in many styles, but still marked as English in its spelling, pronunciation or morphology.

- 3 The word is not (no longer) recognized as English; the fact can only be established etymologically.
- 4 The word is identical with an indigenous item in the receiving language, so that the contact resulted only in a semantic loan: English *ring* (in boxing) is Ge *Ring*; *mouse* (computer) Ge *Maus*. For obvious reasons, this category is found only with Germanic languages for 'simple' words; it can also occur with internationalisms coined from neo-Latin/Greek (which are normally excluded here).
- 5 The word is not from English (but from, say, Latin (5L), Greek (5Gr), French (5Fr) etc.). These cases must be provided for, since the same lemma may be an anglicism only for a few languages. Thus, *Aktion* is universal in its L/Fr form, but some languages have also more recently adopted E. [ekʃn] for 'lively activity'. If the entry is (5Fr) etc. no further data are needed.

Borderline cases can be indicated thus: (0 > 1 mod) 'incoming modernism, not yet accepted', (1 tech > 2) 'technical term becoming common', or exceptionally a question mark is used in case of uncertainty (1 tech?) 'technical term of doubtful status'.

Restrictive labels are most common with usage value '1', but can in principle be attached to *all* grades, so that '2 tech' (*computer*), '3 reg' (*fesch* s.v. *fashionable*) become possible.

Restrictions may also be combined: (1 tech mod) 'modernistic technical use', (1 you obs) 'obsolescent youth language' and (1 coll rare) 'rare colloquialism' etc. are used. Only where two distinct usages are to be indicated, is a slash employed: (1 tech/you) 'technical use for most, but also an item of youth language'. In combinations, the following sequence is suggested: the field label (tech; hist, lit) before medium (wrt) before region (reg) before formality (coll, jour, sla, you) before style (der, euph, fac) before currency (arch, mod, obs, rare) — many of the combinations are of course logically impossible.

- (14) Native or non-English equivalents are restricted to one word (generally), preceded by **trsl** (calque translation), **rend** (calque rendition), **creat** (calque creation) and provided only if it is at least likely that a word was coined anew on the pattern of the English lemma, or **mean** (calque meaning borrowed, added to a pre-existing word). A symbol indicates the relative currency of the foreign and native equivalent. This is in the form of a wedge, <, opening to the more frequent item, or = if both are considered equal.

There is no need to stress that all these decisions cannot really be made on purely statistical evidence or the combined competence of language panelists. Rather, the statement is based on the collaborator's *Sprachgefühl* checked against that of other native speakers (and possibly dictionaries) in cases of doubt.

- (15) Derivatives, preceded by →. These are listed here if not found in E., i.e. if they cannot have been borrowed wholesale. (The situation in Ge *toast*^d n.,

*toast*² n., *toaster* argues for three entries for the nouns, besides those for the two verbs).

The example of *dandy* above, and the following specimens, provide a view of entries as they stand after three rounds, that is, after all contributors had the entry before their eyes and were able to correct and complement their data supplied in an earlier draft:

AIDS n. 1 (acronym of) 'acquired immune deficiency syndrome'

AIDS was identified, and became immediately known, in the early 1980s (first attestation in English in 1982). The threat of the disease and world-wide coverage in the media made a name for it necessary within a very short time. This can be the borrowed acronym pronounced as a word (**Ge Du Nw Po Cr Hu Gr**) or as individual letters (**It**), or a replacement of an acronym based on a translation (**Fr Sp Rm Rs Bg Al Gr**). The phonology and 'morphology' of *AIDS* has not allowed any derivations to be made from it as are recorded for new acronyms as in **Fr; Bg**.

Ge [eidz, e:ts] N [U] 1983 (2) **Du** [e:ts] C [U] 1980s (2) **Nw** also *aids* [eids, æids] M [U] 1980s (2) **Ic** [ei:ts] N [U] 1980s (2) < rend *eydni*; creat *alnæmi* **Fr** — or (Ø) < trsl *sida* M, 1982 → *sidéen* adj. **Sp** — < trsl *SIDA/sida/Sida* (rare) → *sidoso* n./adj. **It** [a-i-di-esse] M [U] (3) **Rm** (0) < *SIDA, sida* **Rs** (0) < trsl *SPID (sindrom priobrënno immunno defitsjtñosti)* **Po** [eits] M (2) **Cr** [=E] M [U] (2) **Bg** — < trsl *spin (sindrom na pridobita imunna nedostatachnost)* M [U] 1980s → *-ozen* adj. **Fi** [aIds] (2) **Hu** [eidz] [U] 1980s (2) → *-es* adj. **Al** *AIDS* M [U] (2) > trsl *SIDI/SIDA* **Gr** <=E> *eitz* N [U] (2) > trsl *SEAA (sindhromos epiktittis anosopiitikis aneparkias)*

airbag n. 'inflatable cushion in car accidents'

Although the object was developed in the early 1970s it became better known only in the late 1980s when it became a regular feature in private cars. The linguistic consequences are diverse, and partly unsettled: the E. term only may be used (**Du Sp It Rm**), or E with a less common native equivalent (**Ge Nw Fr Gr**); the equivalent may be more common (**Bg Fi Hu**) — or a native solution used exclusively (**Ic**)

Ge [e:rbek] M, pl. *-s*, 1970s (2 mod) > creat *Prallsack* **Du** [E:rbEk] C, 1990s (1tech) **Nw** [e:rbæg] M, 1990s (1 tech) > rend *kollisjonspute* **Ic** — < creat *loftpúdi*; rend *öryggispúdi, I_knarbelgur* **Fr** [] M, 1990s (1 tech) > *coussin gonflable*,

sac gonflable **Sp** [eɪrbaɡ, eabag, erbaɡ] M, pl. Ø, -s, 1990s (2)
It [aɪrbaɡ] M, pl. Ø (1 tech >2) **Rm** [erbaɡ] N, 1990s (1 tech)
Rs (0) **Po** (1 tech) **Cr** — **Bg** *erbaɡ* M, 1990s (1 tech) < trsl
vazdushna vazglavmitsa **Fi** [aɪrbaɡ] 1980s (2) < *turvatyiny* **Hu**
 [eɪrbaɡ] [U] end20c (1 tech) < trsl *légszák* **Gr** <=E> *airbaɡ* N,
 end20c (1 tech) > trsl *aerosakos*

flop² n. 2 ‘failure’ (of an action or person)

The term was adopted in highly colloquial youth language, esp. relating to pop music and entertainment, from the 1960s on, but has spread to various contexts in spoken, informal usage. The related verb (probably independent derivations) is notably rarer.

Ge [=E] M, pl. -s, 1970s (1 coll) < *Misserfolg, Versager* **Du**
 [flOp] C, pl. -s/-pen, 1960s (3 coll) **Nw** *flopp* [=E] M, pl. -er,
 1970s (2) **Ic** *flopp* [flohp] N, pl. Ø, 1970s 2(2 coll) **Fr** [flOp]
 M, 1970s (1 jour sla) **Sp** — **It** [flOp] M, pl. Ø, 1980s (1 coll
 jour) < *insuccesso, fiasco* **Fi** *floppi* 20c (2 coll) **Al** < *dâshtim, fiasko*
Gr *flop* N [U] (1 mod/coll/you) < *fiasko*

handicap n. 3 ‘thing that makes success difficult’, 4 ‘physical or mental disability’, +5 ‘privilege’, +6 ‘in sports (originally in horse-racing, later extended to golf)’.

The term spread as a late 19c horse-racing term for the weight added not to favour light-weight jockeys. It then developed into the meaning ‘impediment, encumbrance’ more generally, which is now the most prominent sense throughout —also in E. Note that derivatives are much less frequent.

Ge [hendikep] N pl. -s, 19c, 3(2) **Du** [hEndikEp] C, 1940s,
 3(2); 1970s, 4(2 euph); beg20c, +6(2 tech) **Nw** *handikap* [=E,
 handikap] N, pl. Ø, beg20c, +5,+6(1 tech); mid20c, 3,4(2) **Ic**
 [=E] N, mid20c, 1b(1 tech) 3,4(1 sla) < *forgjóf F, forskot* N
 (=1a,1b); *fötlun F* (=4) **Fr** [] M, 1827, 1930 (2 sport, general)
 → *handicaper* v.; *handicapé* adj./n.; *handicapant* adj. **Sp** [xan-
 dikap] M, 3(2) **It** [ˈɛndikap, ˈandikap] M [U] 1890s, 3(2) +5(1)
Rm [handikap] N, beg20c, via Fr, 3(1 tech); 1950s, 4(3) **Po**
 [hendikap] M, beg20c, 3(1 tech) +5(2) → v. **Cr** *hendikep* M,
 mid20c, 3(1 tech) → *-irati* v. **Bg** *handikap, hendikep* M [U]
 end20c, +6(1 tech) **Hu** *hendikep* [=E] [Ø] end19c, +6(1
 tech,obs) 2(1) **Al** *hendikep* M [U] 3(1 rare) **Gr** *chantikap* N, 3(2)

mixer¹ n. 1 'device for shredding and mixing food', +5 'person mixing drinks', +5a 'for mixing cast iron', +6 'a person who likes to make or repair things (usu. from miscellaneous things); a mechanically minded person'

The word is almost universal as a household gadget, but comparatively seldom used for the person mixing drinks at a bar etc. Some of the words could have been independently derived from the widespread v. *mix* (which is either partly native, or supported by similar loanwords from Latin). Contrast the more even distribution, but more limited frequency, of the modern technical term in relation to recording (next entry).

Ge M, pl. Ø, beg20c, +5(2); 1960s, 1(3) **Du** [=E] C, 1950s, 1,+6(2) **Nw** *mikser* (also *miksmaster*) [mikser] M, pl. -e, 1950s, 1(3),+5(1 rare). **Ic** [=E]/*mixari* [miksari] M, pl. -ar, mid/end20c, 1,+6(1 rare) = creat *blandari* M (=1) **Fr** <=E>/*mixeur* [miksøR] M, mid20c, 1(2) **It** [=E] M, pl. Ø, 1970s, 1(2 tech) < *frullatore* **Rm** [mikser] N, pl. -e, mid20c, via Fr?, 1(2 tech) **Rs** *mikser* M, pl. -j̄, mid20c, 1(2) +5a(1 tech) **Po** *mikser* M, mid20c, 1(2) → *ek* M, -ka F, -ski adj. **Cr** *mikser* M, pl. -i, mid20c, 1(1), +5(1 tech) **Bg** *mikser* M, pl. -a, -j̄, mid20c, 1(2) **Hu** [mikser] pl. -ek, 1920s, +5(2>3); 1960s, 1(3) **Al** *mikser* M pl. -â, mid20c, 1,+4(1 reg) **Gr** *mixer* N, mid20c, 1(2)

3. Conclusion

Where do we stand, then, and what do we expect to achieve? After having collected the evidence for 3,000 to 4,000 items, it may be useful to reflect critically on a few points which are weak spots in the enterprise but which proved impossible to solve —without endangering other aims. I would like to summarize these concerns again in four sections:

1. What belongs in a dictionary and what does not is an age-old problem. In our case I made a major decision that only those words should be included that qualify in two respects:
 - a) they should have something English in their *form* in at least one language concerned; this cuts out internationalisms coined on a neo-Latin-Greek basis, the 'telephone' words. However, it is very difficult to predict which formal features may qualify a word in which language, as in **Ge** *Action* 'lively activity' or **It** *Ace* as a tennis term, both clearly marked as anglicisms by their pronunciation.
 - b) The words should be known well enough by a general educated reading public, and be possible on a newspaper page devoted to politics, economics, science, sports, music or fashion. It is quite obvious that consistency for sixteen languages is almost impossible to expect.

2. Basing our data on personal competences (checked against the most recent dictionaries available) brings with it a certain degree of subjectivity. However, it permits us to capture in a snapshot way the state of play in the early 1990s and since the situation is changing rapidly, almost from week to week, this immediacy is one of the great advantages of *UDASEL*. Moreover, there was no alternative, either: corpora are not available for many of the languages covered, and the use of corpora would raise new questions as to their representativeness. Similar concerns can be raised against the employment of usage panels.
3. The succinct form of presentation is a necessary consequence of the space available. However, it is also a *must* required by the comparative nature of the enterprise: the more detailed the individual data are, the more obvious is the insight that comparisons are strictly not possible.
4. How far do the results confirm our expectations as far as statistics are concerned? In a field in which every word has its own history (as it has in dialectology), the value of overall statistical figures may well be questioned. However, a preliminary test made of 136 items (selected because I had produced grids for them, which in turn indicated that their distribution was significant) yielded results very close to my expectation: the Gmc. group clearly led the field with 122 to 110 loanwords, French came next possibly for the simple reason that it was the only 'western' country left. Figures for the East European languages **Rm**, **Po**, **Bg** were very similar, regardless of language type and comparative openness during the Communist years. There was a significant drop for **Gr**—although the country was western all the time: did the puristic attitudes, the long predominance of French or the relative isolation from Central Europe play a part here? It was, however, expected that **Al** would be found at the end of the queue: this country before 1990 had not only been sealed off against English words, but western concepts in general—you were not permitted to talk about certain topics such as *sex appeal*, and in consequence, no words existed for these, whether borrowed from English or as native equivalents.

I firmly believe that it is one of the scholar's jobs to describe in objective terms what is generally but vaguely known to a greater audience. The impact of English is a phenomenon much commented on, much reflected on, and much objected to, in present-day Europe. However, there has never been any solid data base for such statements, especially if these remarks were contrastive. *UDASEL* will place us in a greatly improved position for such judgments. Diachronically, it will also provide a basis for a description of later stages of this impact, in the likely case that a new and revised edition will be published after an interval of, say, ten years.

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