Foreignisms in the Romanian Linguistic Terminology

Floriana Popescu [*]

Abstract: *Since its crystallization, the Romanian linguistic terminology has constantly evolved either through the creation of words which imitate the patterns or the mechanisms of foreign models or through the borrowing of certain terms of different origins, such as French, English or other European languages. This evolution of the terminology was closely interrelated with the development of the scientific field in focus.*

The current study presents the results of an exploration of the Romanian metalanguage of linguistics. This exploration starts with the first Romanian specialist dictionaries of linguistic terminology gradually augmenting its research corpus with the lexicographic works in published quiet recently. We shall also include herein the dictionaries of the language sciences as well as the other Romanian dictionaries published recently, which have been included in the bibliographical notes. Our approach also involved a certain degree of difficulty because the dictionaries used for the compilation of our corpus have no etymological reference. In spite of this disadvantage, our results indicate the flexibility of the Romanian vocabulary, in general and that of linguistic one, in particular.

Résumé: *Dès sa cristallisation, la terminologie linguistique roumaine, a évolué constamment soit par la création des mots après des modèles étrangers soit par des emprunts soit par l'adaptation des certains termes d'origine française, anglaise ou des autres langues européennes. Cette évolution terminologique a été étroitement liée par le développement du domaine scientifique en question.*
Notre étude présente les résultats d'une exploration du métalangage linguistique roumain. Cette exploration commence avec les premiers dictionnaires linguistiques roumains en augmentant graduellement sa base de recherche avec les œuvres lexicaux des dernières années. On y introduira aussi les dictionnaires des sciences du langage tout comme d'autres dictionnaires roumains publiés récemment. Notre démarche a impliqué un certain degré de difficulté parce que les dictionnaires qui ont utilisés pour la compilation de notre corpus ne font aucune allusion étymologique. En dépit de ce désavantage, nos résultats démontrent la flexibilité du vocabulaire roumain, en général, et du celui linguistique, en particulier.
Mots-clés: *la terminologie linguistique roumaine, métalangage, la création des mots, l'emprunt lexical*

Introduction

This study explores the vocabulary of linguistics and language sciences with a view to highlighting the words of foreign origin (foreignisms [1] from now on) implanted in Romanian. As a matter of fact this is a new stage of a broader research performed on this comprehensive terminology peculiar to scientific field.

The corpus devised for this previous scrutiny [2] was so enriched as to provide answers to the following questions: (a) Are there foreignisms in the Romanian terminology of linguistics and language sciences? (b) Which are the sources of these foreign elements? (c) Are these words exclusively loans proper or have they also been recorded as "Romanianisms"? (d) Do foreignisms represent a considerable percentage within the specialist vocabulary of linguistics or more generously, language sciences?

The paper concludes with a few considerations, resulting from the analysis of the corpus interpretation, which actually give the answers to the above questions.

Background

The vocabulary of the Romanian language has been the object of research, description, analysis and interpretation from different perspectives.

Thus, on the one hand, theoretical approaches considered specificities of the Romanian vocabulary in terms of the words belonging either to the word stock or to specialist vocabularies, (see Bidu-Vrânceanu 2002, Bidu-Vrânceanu (coord.) 2002). Within the same theoretical framework, Stoichitoiu-Ichim (2008) and Felecan (2004) described it in terms of its dynamics, influences from other languages as well as its creativity.

On the other hand, both general and specialist lexicographic works have been compiled to account for the Romanian lexical heritage and to mirror the language changes of the last two decades.

---

[*] Professor, PhD, "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galati

Although this literature, with many other manifestations which are not mentioned here, reflects a particular interest in the evolution of the Romanian language and the phenomenon of borrowing, aspects of the English language impact upon Romanian were also examined (Avram 1997, Stoichitoiu-Ichim 2009, Trif 2006). Nonetheless, we considered it interesting to survey recent specialist dictionaries in an attempt to notice whether terms from other languages as well have become part of the linguistic terminology, either through terminological borrowings or through other word building processes.

Work hypothesis
Although the Romanian language has been lexically resourceful with its impressive amount of affixes, compounding patterns and conversions, the publications of the last twenty-five years show a certain degree of openness towards foreign lexemes and lexical formations, which is easily noticeable at dictionary entry level (see, for example, Bidu-Vrânceanu (coord.) 2002).

The hospitability of the Romanian lexical heritage embraces foreignisms originating both in English and in several other languages. The current approach attempts at presenting the donour language contributing to the enrichment of the Romanian linguistic vocabulary.

Corpus presentation
When an investigation of whatever specific terminology is intended, two corpus-compiling directions may be followed. The former would consider the vast specialist literature published since the first modern dictionary of linguistic terminology (Constantinescu-Dobridor 1980) and which includes not only volumes authored by Romanian academics (Ionescu 1992, Munteanu 2005) but also several of the landmarks in the literature of European linguistics which were translated into Romanian: Benveniste (1999), Humboldt (2008), Lyons (1995), Robins (2003), Saussure (1998), Saussure (2004). If the contributions collected in conference proceedings volumes, in inter/national periodicals would be considered, then the number of resources would probably double, to say the least. The latter, would consider only the lexicographic works in general, and the specialist ones, in particular. This was actually our choice, for we strongly believe in the righteousness of one the opinions expressed by the authors of the DSL (2006: 6) who say "[A]s the terminology of contemporary linguistics is extremely wide and diversified, each linguistic model being apt to provide on its own basis, enough material for an independent dictionary, the authors were in a position to make a certain selection of the terms to be included…" (our translation) [3].

As a consequence of what is said in the foregoing paragraph, our corpus-creating principle was to select only those words which do not have a Romanian spelling or ending, i.e., some of which are written in capitals irrespective of their position at the sentence level, or those whose diacritic signs or endings which are peculiar neither to our familiar declension or conjugation systems.

The collection of terms especially made for the purpose of the current study was extracted from the following dictionaries:
(a) Constantinescu-Dobridor's *Mic dicționar de terminologie lingvistică* (1980)
(b) Constantinescu-Dobridor's *Dicționar de termeni lingvistici* (1998)
(c) Ducrot, and Schaffer's *Noul dicționar enciclopedic de științe ale limbajului*, trad. de Anca Măgureanu, Viorel Vişan and Marina Păunescu (1996)
(d) Bidu-Vranceanu, Angela, et. al. *Dicționar de științe ale limbajului*, Bucureşti: Nemira (2001).

Research procedures
In our terminological pursuit, the study unfolded in three steps, as follows:
i)   a list of dictionary entries describing foreign items (all of them in italics, in the case of the (d) in the corpus list above) was drawn from all our sources
ii) after a minute comparison of the extracted items, a table was created for practical reasons, i.e., to include our findings and to have a synthetic presentation of the data
iii) a list of concluding observations finalized the whole analysis.

Findings and discussion
The total number of dictionary entries around which the whole discussion is constructed amounts to

54. The sum total could have been considerably richer (over 250), if the solutions presented in a glossary of German-Romanian terminological equivalence had been considered (Humboldt 2008: 391-6). Nevertheless, since this is actually a glossary at the end of a volume and they have not become 'dictionary entries' yet, they have been waived in this particular case study of the Romanian linguistic terminology.

The tabular inventory in the annex distinguishes terms/lexical formations coming from over six languages, English, French, German, Latin and Japanese. As the marks in the table show it, the representations in the case of each donour language are rather unbalanced. With its 18 dictionary items, English seems to have been the most generous of these languages, with the French element (12 such items) closely following the first, but rather far from the German (8 dictionary elements). Latin places itself immediately after French with 11 elements, while Sanskrit and Japanese have come with scarce contributions, i.e., 5 and 1, respectively.

In terms of accessibility, foreignisms fall into the following subcategories:

i) foreign words with no explanation whatsoever (66 dictionary entries);

ii) foreign words with a Romanian equivalent (6);

iii) one French word accompanied by its English equivalent;

iv) one French word with its Romanian equivalent;

v) one English word accounted for by both its French and its Romanian equivalent.

This final example has so evolved from the Romanian translation of Ducrot and Schaffer's work to the Romanian-authored dictionary that the French *embrayeur* together with *shifter,* its equivalent in English have come to be described in the latter dictionary under two entries: *ambreior* and *şifter*, respectively. These two calques with two different etymologies, but which share the same meaning (or with differences so slight that they have come to be negligible) seem to have had a different history in the Romanian terminology. While the Romanian authors refer to a considerably distant publication (Manea 1968) making use of the term *ambreior* (DSL 2001: 43), but which remains unacknowledged or disregarded by the translators of Ducrot and Schaffer's dictionary, *şifter* (DSL 2001: 526) hardly enjoys such previous experience in the terminological universe of linguistics and language sciences.

Conclusions

The object of the study case presented in the foregoing was the determination of foreign elements inserted in the Romanian terminology of linguistics and language sciences. Dictionaries were selected to be exclusively our source for the corpus compilation for the simple reason that they are the most widely used repository of such information which not only gives explanation but it also provides solutions which have already undertaken the test of the host language test of acceptance. If we consider, for example, the 2008 Romanian version of Humboldt's work, which has an annexed Romanian-German glossary, this will serve best for a comparison with our dictionary-based approach. Thus, while in the former case these terms may be applicable to a bounded literature of speciality, i.e., those works specifically referring either to the concepts or to ideas making the object of a certain subfield, the latter group of words enjoy a higher frequency of occurrence and hence, a higher need for their accurate understanding. The corpus underlying the research served our study purpose and the results indicate more English and French than German and Latin elements.

All in all, the foreignisms (54 items) represent a reduced percentage (3.6%), as compared to the sum total of dictionary entries (1500 entries in the DSL 2001). Although most of the foreignisms became part of the Romanian linguistic terminology in the mid-1990s, very few of them show diacritic signs, phonetic, or morphological features peculiar to the Romanian language.

Notes

[1] The term *foreignism* is part of the translation studies jargon, and it displays both broad and narrow meanings; we adopted it with its latter acceptance and used it as a generic referent for all the words coming from any other language but Romanian

[2] The communication delivered at the international colloquium"Journees de la francophonie: Canons et rituels dans les pratiques discursives", 8 -10 avril 2011, Galaţi, România presented a case study on the translational practices and their consequences upon the Romanian linguistic terminology

[3] The excerpt in the original: [C]um terminologia lingvisticii contemporane este extreme de amplă şi diversificată, fiecare model lingvistic putând oferi el singur material suficient pentru un dicţionar independent, autorii au fost puşi în

situația de a opera o anumită selecție a termenilor incluși".

Annex. Foreignisms in the Romanian linguistic terminology

	Foreignisms	Language they are accounted to originate in					
		French	English	German	Latin	Sanskrit	Other
1.	Ablaut*			x			
2.	Aktionsart			x			
3.	avant-texte	x					
4.	background		x				
5.	Bedeutung (= denotații)			x			
6.	Bedeutungslaute (= radical, element lexical)			x			
7.	Beziehungslaute (= element radical)			x			
8.	bhasha					x	
9.	centum				x		
10.	cluster(= aglomerare semantică)		x				
11.	comment vs topic		x				
12.	context sensitive		x				
13.	context free		x				
14.	cursus				x		
15.	deixis				x		
16.	destinateur	x					
17.	dhvani					x	
18.	embrayeurs* (= shifters*)	x	x				
19.	enjambement*	x					
20.	epistème	x					
21.	EQUI		x				
22.	Farbe			x			
23.	feedback		x				
24.	frames		x				
25.	infectum				x		
26.	item				x		
27.	innere Sprachform			x			
28.	linking (=enchaînement=înlănțuire)		x				
29.	nexus				x		
30.	mise en abyme	x					
31.	mise en relief	x					
32.	morphe-portmanteau	x					
33.	morpheme alternant	x					
34.	morphemic segment		x				
35.	muta cum liquida				x		
36.	non-testimonial		x				
37.	off-line vs on-line (analiză)		x				
38.	perfectum				x		
39.	phonemics		x				
40.	phrase structure		x				
41.	pidgin		x				
42.	plurale tantum				x		
43.	pose vs. présupposé	x					

44.	pro-drop		x				
45.	sabir	x					
46.	satem				x		
47.	sandhi					x	
48.	Singulare tantum				x		
49.	Sinn (= sens, la Frege)			x			
50.	sphota					x	
51.	stemma/stemă	x					
52.	vagueness (= indeterminare semantică)		x				
53.	virtuem				x		
54.	waka						x
	Sum total	**12**	**18**	**8**	**12**	**4**	**1**

References:

Avram, Mioara, *Anglicismele în limba română actuală*, Editura Academiei, Bucureşti, 1997.

Benveniste E., *Probleme de lingvistică generală*, traducere de Magdalena Dumitru, vol. I-II, Universitas, Bucureşti, 1999.

Bidu-Vranceanu, Angela, Călăraşu, Cristina, Ruxăndoiu-Ionescu, Liliana, Mancaş, Mihaela, Pană Dindelegan, Gabriela, *Dicţionar de ştiinţe ale limbii,* Nemira, Bucureşti, 2001, (=DSL).

Bidu-Vrânceanu, Angela, *Lexic ştiinţnific interdisciplinar,* Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2002.

Bidu-Vrânceanu, Angela (coord.), *Lexic comun, lexic specializat,* Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2002.

Bidu-Vrânceanu, Angela, *Lexicul specializat in mişcare de la dicţionare la texte*, Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2007.

Constantinescu-Dobridor, Gheorghe, *Mic dicţionar de terminologie lingvistică*, Editura Albatros, Bucureşti, 1980.

Ducrot, O., Schaffer, J.-M. *Noul dicţionar enciclopedic de ştiinţe ale limbajului*, traducere de Anca Măgureanu, Viorel Vişan and Marina Păunescu, Editura Babel, Bucureşti, 1996.

Felecan, Nicolae, *Vocabularul limbii române*, Editura Mega, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2004.

Manea-Manea, Maria, *Sistematica substitutelor din româna contemporană standard*, EARSR, Bucureşti, 1968.

Humboldt, W. v. *Despre diversitatea structurală a limbilor şi influenţa ei asupra dezvoltării spirituale a umanităţii*, traducere de Eugen Munteanu, Humanitas, Bucureşti, 2008.

Ionescu, Emil, *Manual de lingvistică generală*, Editura All, Bucureşti, 1992.

Lyons, J., *Introducere în lingvistica teoretică*, traducere de Alexandra Cornilescu şi Ioana Ştefănescu, Editura Ştiinţifică, Bucureşti,1995.

Munteanu, Eugen, *Introducere în lingvistică*, Polirom, Iaşi, 2005.

Robins, R.H., *Scurta istorie a lingvisticii*, Polirom, Iaşi, 2003.

Stoichitoiu-Ichim, Adriana, *Vocabularul limbii române actuale*, Editura All, Bucureşti, 2008

Stoichitoiu-Ichim, Adriana, *Aspecte ale influenţei engleze în româna actuală*, Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2009.

Trif, R.-N, *Influenţa limbii engleze asupra limbii române in terminologia informaticii*, Academia Romana, Fundatia nationala pentru stiinta si arta, Institututl de lingvistica "Iorgu Iordan – Al. Rosetti", Bucureşti, 2006.