

Carmen OPRIT MAFTEI & Iulia Veronica COCU
„Dunărea de Jos” University of Galați, Romania

COVID-19 AND ITS IMPACT ON HIGHER EDUCATION. AN UPDATE ON ENGLISH BORROWINGS IN ROMANIAN

Introduction

Extensive research has been recently conducted in order to explore the widespread impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our lives. In addition to severely affecting the health system, it has also profoundly impacted the labour market, the social as well as the economic life, triggering massive economic disruptions. One strict control measure was the full or partial lockdown of cities and countries. Consequently, all social events were cancelled or postponed, deeply affecting people's lives. Remote work relocation was another challenge that numerous people had to face, whose long-term effects are unknown and unpredictable.

This pandemic has also caused unparalleled disruptions in education as well, since schools were closed in an attempt to prevent the spread of the virus. UNESCO (2020) speaks about a *reconceptualization of education* whereas statistical studies show that more than 94% of the world's student population has been affected and that massive dropout is expected.

In order to cope with this pandemic, remote education programmes have been implemented but the transition period from traditional to online learning has been tough. Nevertheless, distance learning solutions have been developed in a very short period of time. Educators had to tailor their teaching materials to meet students' needs, to strive to motivate them and to find more interactive materials that could stimulate communication. On the other hand, it was also difficult for students to readjust to the temporarily suspension of classes, online meetings and self-based learning.

E-Learning – Pros and Cons

In Romania, the entire system of education faced an unprecedented situation and was forced to switch to online teaching, in an attempt to protect both students' and teachers' health. Accordingly, higher education institutions were also forced to adjust their programs and to massively rely on technology; as a result, students and educators alike had to adapt to this

online system, fact which has been extremely challenging, strenuous and time-consuming.

Indisputably, COVID-19 triggered the development of digital learning, which resulted in modernized learning. One of the main advantages is that it saves time and money as students stay home and don't have to commute any more. Among other advantages of the online system of education, mention must be made of the easy access to online education for students who are dispersed across the country, especially for those enrolled in Master's and PhD degree programs, who are, more often than not, mature people, with jobs.

Moreover, people who are more reticent might enjoy online education, having access to available online courses without much social interaction, this fact leading to a reduction in their anxiety level.

In addition to easy access to online sources, this system has led to increased interconnectivity as well as to social solidarity. Another challenge of this system was acquiring or updating the necessary technical skills in order to cope with this new situation, since new digital technologies have been developed to meet the new requirements. Hence, we can speak about the upskilling and reskilling of both students and educators.

Conversely, even if web-based learning involves the participation in online lectures and seminars, it also has its limitations. Thus, various problems have emerged, ranging from login problems to slow Internet connections. There are students who are introverts, camera-shy or have poor digital skills or are even technology-challenged. Moreover, these activities are not as dynamic and stimulating as the in-person, traditional ones. Even if real-time interactions are crucial, these cannot ensure the full attention of students and cannot keep them engaged, as they can get easily distracted by other activities available on the Internet and become rather passive. In addition, students have been complaining of missing social interaction and that the online system is not a stimulating learning environment.

English Borrowings. Literature Review

The importance of English as an international language, as well as its influence on other languages of the world, is undeniable due to the fact that it enables international communication. It is widely known that English has exerted its powerful lexical influence on the Romanian language as well, especially after 1989, enriching the Romanian vocabulary, facilitating

communication and turning it into a modern and dynamic language. This is the reason why the presence of English borrowings in specialized terminologies enables communication, accelerating the transfer of knowledge.

On the other hand, the tendency to use English words instead of the already existing Romanian ones has infiltrated into virtually all sectors of the contemporary society but particularly in the business environment, the press, education, science and technology as well as in the healthcare system. Dumistrăcel (2017) mentions a special role played by English borrowings in the healthcare system, where they have a two-fold purpose: to enhance communication between healthcare professionals and to withhold information in order to protect the patients.

The outbreak of COVID-19, its effect on education and its related vocabulary have also had an impact on world's languages as new meanings have been added to the existing words and new words have been coined to denote new realities. Even the term COVID-19 (the acronym of corona virus disease 2019) was coined by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses and made public by the Director of World Health Organization on February 11, 2020. Subsequently, an avalanche of COVID-19-related words emerged and slowly invaded our lives via all communication channels. These newly-created words have been adopted by other languages almost instantly and have been extensively used in the print and social media so that they have become familiar to the public at large in a very short period of time.

The Romanian language has always been regarded as a permeable language that incorporates new words easily, usually with their original spelling and pronunciation. The permeability of the Romanian language has caused much debate among linguists and English borrowings have been extensively researched from various perspectives. Pivotal studies (Avram, 1997, Ciobanu, 2004, and others) as well as more recent research (Athu, 2011, Fircă, 2013, Condruz-Băcescu, 2017, Cenac, 2017, Bogdan, 2017, Ivan, 2017, Oprit-Maftei, 2018, Cocu, 2019, among others) have emphasized the massive presence of English borrowings in various compartments of the Romanian language.

Numerous linguists see this linguistic phenomenon as a threat which might lead to language alteration. Others (Catelly, 2013, Fircă, 2013, Ivan, 2017, Condruz-Băcescu, 2017, Cenac, 2017, Oprit-Maftei, 2018, Cocu, 2019,

Bogdan, 2020, among others) welcome it on condition that they denote new realities for which there are no Romanian equivalents, thus covering a semantic void. Sorin Ivan (2017: 215) emphasizes that English borrowings “refresh and enrich the Romanian vocabulary”, upgrading and updating it.

Classification of English Borrowings

Over the decades, this phenomenon has aroused the interest of a lot of linguists, who have suggested various ways of investigating English borrowings. Consequently, an extensive body of literature exists on the possible classifications of English borrowings, ranging from the well-known classification of Pușcariu, who back in 1976, distinguished between *necessary* and *luxury* (or *needless*) borrowings to that of Stoichițoiu-Ichim (2007), who classifies them into *necessary borrowings*, which can be *denotative* or *stylistic*, and *luxury borrowings*, which are seen as a threat to the Romanian language. Also, others divided them into *denotative* and *connotative* (or *stylistic*) borrowings. Buzea (2017) speaks of *core borrowings* and *luxury loans*. Constantinescu, Popovici & Șefănescu (2004:172) explain the use of *luxury* or *superfluous Anglicisms* as being motivated by the prestige of the English terms.

At first, the emergence of the pandemic has led to an explosion of new words and phrases to denote COVID-19-related issues. The fact that social media has bombarded the audience with these new words has precipitated their adoption, in an unassimilated manner, in other world languages. These words transgressed boundaries and have been adopted in other languages of the world, as well as in Romanian. Then, the same phenomenon became all-pervasive regarding the terminology used on e-learning platforms. In a very short period of time, there appeared a lot of English terms that were taken as such in all languages, Romanian included.

The present study aims at making an inventory of the English borrowings adopted into Romanian related to the digital technologies developed for remote learning as a result of the newly-emerged COVID-19 disease.

The following classification is relevant for and adapted to the targeted terminology introduced in this paper.

1. *unassimilated lexical borrowings*, which are adopted with their original written form and pronunciation. They denote new concepts that do not have a Romanian equivalent or which require a long paraphrase to render their meaning. Their use facilitates communication in the host

language as they are unambiguous, internationally-recognized words or compounds: *application sharing, authoring tool, avatar, backbone, backlink, benchmark, blended learning, branching, breadcrumb(s), breakout rooms, (content) chunking, course builder, course catalogue, courseware, curation, flash, flipped learning, gamification, Google calendar, Google meet, Google classroom, Google forms, Google vault, hamburger, jamboard, learning analytics, learning locker, live-stream, micro learning, opt-in and opt-out, plug-in, print screen, scaffolding, screen reader, serious game, storyboard, storyline, Stream, tele-tutoring, thread, wearable, Word Cloud*

2. lexical borrowings that co-exist with the Romanian words – these words duplicate lexemes that already exist in the Romanian language, most of these English borrowings are unnecessary and are used out of snobbism, as they sound more fashionable: *assignment (temă), attendance list (listă de prezență), badge (insignă), end user (utilizator final), scroll (a derula), self-study (studiu individual), self-quarantine (carantină autoimpusă), share screen (a partaja ecranul)*

3. hybrid constructions, which combine English and Romanian words: *aplicație Google, aplicații software, boxe wireless, căutare în Cloud, conținut off-the-shelf, opțiune web, pachete software, soft educațional, test PCR*

4. initialisms and acronyms: ADDIE - Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation, ADL - Advanced Distributed Learning, API - Application Programming Interface, xAPI - Experience Application Programming Interface, AR - augmented reality, BYOD - bring your own device, CAI - Computer-Assisted Instruction, CBT - Computer Based Training CDN - Content Delivery Network, CMI - Computer-Managed Instruction, CMS - Content Management System, COD - Content on Demand, CRS - Classroom Response Systems, CSS - Cascading Style Sheets, DVI - Digital Video Interactive, FAQs - frequently asked questions, FTP - File Transfer Protocol, GIF - Graphics Interchange Format, HTML5 - Hypertext Mark-up Language version 5, ID - Instructional designer, ILS - Integrated Learning System, ILT - Instructor-Led-Training, IDE - Integrated Development Environment, JIT - Just-in-Time, K -12, LETSI - Learning Education Training Systems Interoperability, LMS - Learning Management System, LRS - Learning Record Store, LTI - Learning Tools Interoperability, LXP - Learning Experience Platform, MOOC - Massive Open Online Course, ODBC - Open Database Connectivity, OJT - On-the-Job Training, OLX - massive open online course, OER - Open Educational Resource, PLE - Personal Learning Environment, PNG - Portable Network Graphics, SaaS - software-as-a-service, SCORM - Shareable Content Object Reference Model,

SME – Subject Matter Expert, SOAP – Simple Object Access Protocol, SPOC – Small Private Online Courses, SSL – Secure Socket Layer, SSO – Single Sign-On, TBT – technology-based training, UI – user interface, URL – uniform resource locator, UX – User Experience, UUID – Unique User Identifier, VILT – virtual instructor-led training, VLE – Virtual Learning Environment, VOIP – Voice Over Internet Protocol, WAP – Wireless Application Protocol, WBT – Web-based training, W3C

5. *words formed by blending/clipping: AppStore, EdTech – Educational Technology, E-portfolio, E-reserves, mLearning (mobile learning), netiquette (net from the Internet and etiquette), transponder (transmitter responder), unicasting, vortal (vertical portal).*

This study cannot be exhaustive, since, obviously, if this type of investigation is conducted in the near future, it will reveal an increased number of English borrowings adopted into Romanian, given the fast pace of technological advancements in online education.

Conclusions

Technical innovation triggered by the emergence and spread of COVID-19 has undoubtedly led to lexical innovation, thus enriching the specialized languages.

An avalanche of new words has been created or new meanings have been added to the existing words to denote new digital technologies and their related concepts, tools or applications. Since English is seen as the language of computers, numerous English words have been recently adopted to fill lexical gaps in Romanian and to streamline communication.

One may notice a tendency towards the use of initialisms and acronyms, due to the need to compress a lot of information in a limited number of words, and of unassimilated lexical borrowings, due to the need for a rapid adaptation to the online environment and to the lack of time to find a suitable translation for these terms. A noteworthy remark is that database, Web and programming terminology is used a lot in online learning/teaching.

As demonstrated, the e-learning industry is rich in jargon, which can be, at times, challenging not only for educators and for learners, but also for content developers and programmers.

SELECTIVE GLOSSARY:

- ADDIE – Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation
 - a framework used to direct instructional designers and training developers when building effective online tools for learning, training and performance
- ADL – Advanced Distributed Learning - a US government program that conducts research and development on distributed learning and coordinates related efforts broadly across public and private organizations
- xAPI – Experience Application Programming Interface – a data standard referring to how learning activities should be reported between different technical systems
- authoring tool – desktop or browser-based tools that allow instructional designers to integrated an array of media formats to create e-learning that is engaging and interactive
- backbone – a primary communication path connecting multiple users
- backlink - also known as an inbound link, this refers to an outside link that points to your website or webpage
- badge – in online learning, badges can be issued to learners for actively participating in a course and displaying certain soft skills, thereby encouraging these behaviours
- benchmark – standard for comparative purposes
- blended/hybrid learning – educational syllabus that combines multiple media types with a combination of offline and online learning, often a blend of classroom environments and e-learning
- branching – the learner is given a few choices that will lead their learning experience down a different path
- breadcrumb(s) - links at the top of a webpage or in a search result, that better help the user navigate the site/the online learning platform
- breakout room – sessions that are split from the main meeting that allow the participants to meet in smaller groups and are completely isolated in terms of audio and video from the main session
- BYOD – bring your own device – means that the learning software can be run on your own, preferred device
- (content) chunking – a method of sorting and organising course content into smaller, more manageable pieces of information

- CDN - Content Delivery Network - a global network of proxy servers deployed in multiple data centres to enable the high availability and high performance of content being viewed by the learner
- CMS - Content Management System - a system that facilitates the creation, organisation and consumption of digital content
- COD - Content on Demand - enables users to decide when and where they access the available content, when it suits their schedule
- courseware - refers to any instructional software that is delivered on a computer
- CRS - Classroom Response Systems - commonly known as clickers, record students' responses in real time
- CSS - Cascading Style Sheets - a mark-up language that defines the design of an HTML web page
- curation - a core part of creating online courses in which a diverse range content is collated from internal and external sources
- DVI - Digital Video Interactive - a format for recording digital video onto CD
- E-reserves - printed materials, usually journals and articles that have been requested for course use by a faculty member
- Flash - a small program that plugs in to your browser allowing for media-rich interaction, animation, sound, and video integration over the web. Browsers usually have it already installed and it is used to provide media-rich content for courses
- flipped classroom/learning - an instructional design approach that involves self-guided activities and e-learning assessments that are then reinforced in the classroom
- gamification - the use of point scoring, trophies and badges, various "levels" and leader boards to increase engagement with and retention of educational content
- hamburger - three stacked lines, usually in the top left- or right-hand corner of a website, which people can click to see a menu of pages on the site/online learning platform
- HTML5 - Hypertext Mark-up Language version 5 - the standard mark-up language in the E-learning industry; also able to create mobile-friendly e-learning content

- ID - Instructional designer - They redesign courses, develop entire courses or curriculums and create training materials, such as teaching manuals and student guides
- IDE - Integrated Development Environment - a software application that includes tools like source code editors (text editors specifically designed for writing code), debuggers (tools for testing code), and build automation tools (tools for compiling code into machine-readable format and running automated tests)
- Jamboard - a digital interactive whiteboard developed by Google to work with Google Workspace, formerly known as G Suite
- JIT - Just-in-Time - applies to learners looking to access specific info that would immediately help them in their job tasks
- K -12 - the creation of educational and learning content for children in kindergarten through to Grade 12
- learning analytics - the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of data accumulated during an online learning activity
- learning locker - a conformant open source LRS, a type of data repository designed to store learning activity statements
- LETSI - Learning Education Training Systems Interoperability - an international non-profit federation dedicated to improving individual and organisational learning and performance
- LMS - Learning Management System - a software platform for the delivery and reporting of training courses or educational programs
- LRS - Learning Record Store - a database that stores, manages and performs analysis on learning data; it can be part of an LMS
- LTI - Learning Tools Interoperability- a standard of cross-system operability to connect learning systems with external tools in a standardized manner, allowing enhanced accessibility of learning content across many institutions
- LXP - Learning Experience Platform - a cloud-based learning solution that focuses on delivering a personalized user experience
- micro learning - a method of delivering content in small, specific bursts, allowing users to control what and when they learn
- MOOC - Massive Open Online Course - A massive open online course is an online course aimed at unlimited participation and open access via the Web

- off-the-shelf content - a pre-made product that is ready for immediate sale and use
- OLX - massive open online course - an online course delivered to large numbers of users at a time
- OER - Open Educational Resource - materials for teaching or learning that are either in the public domain or have been released under a license that allows them to be freely used, changed, or shared with others
- Opt-in and Opt-out - Opting in means that a user will take an affirmative action to offer their consent while Opting out means a user will take action to withdraw their consent
- PLE - Personal Learning Environment - systems that help learners take control of and manage their own learning; this includes providing support for learners to set their own learning goals (with support of their teachers) and manage their learning, both content and process
- SaaS - software-as-a-service - software that is licensed to a company or individual on a subscription basis
- scaffolding - the collection of resources given to online learners to help them achieve their goals; that can include praise, dividing a task into manageable steps etc. As the online learner progresses, resources are slowly removed in order for the learner to become confident and empowered. The result is that they are able to participate in self-guided learning activities without assistance
- SCORM - Shareable Content Object Reference Model - a set of technical standards for e-learning software products
- screen reader - a form of assistive technology that renders text and image content as speech or braille output
- serious game - An online learning tool designed with a purpose other than for pure entertainment. It helps learners deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding by teaching them core concepts in a fun and engaging way
- SME - Subject Matter Expert - not to be confused with Small and Medium Enterprises - a person with a high level of authority and expertise in a certain field of application
- SOAP - Simple Object Access Protocol - an XML-based messaging protocol for exchanging information among computers
- SSO - Single Sign-On - a single set of credentials that allows users to access multiple applications while only needing to log once

- storyboard – a detailed document that is created at the beginning of an e-learning project, which highlights every e-learning course design element, from the learning goals to the specific e-learning activities; it provides a visual map that tracks every step a learner must complete
- storyline – an authoring tool used to create interactive e-learning courses; it enables sophisticated levels of interactivity including game-based solution and gamification elements
- thread – a series of messages on a particular topic posted in a discussion forum
- unicasting – communication between a sender and a single receiver over a network; e.g. an e-mail message sent from one person to one person
- UX – User Experience – an individual's reaction to the use of a particular product, system or service
- VLE – Virtual Learning Environment – a web-based platform to organise resources, courses and users, often within an educational institution
- VOIP – Voice Over Internet Protocol – a set of rules that allow for the use of the Internet to make voice calls or video calls
- Vortal – vertical portal – a portal that targets a niche audience
- Wearables – hardware that can be worn and interacted with on the body
- W3C – a World Wide Web Consortium, an organisation developing interoperable specifications, software and tools for the World Wide Web

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COVID-19 ET SON IMPACT SUR L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR. LE POINT SUR LES EMPRUNTS ANGLAIS EN ROUMAIN

Abstract: Le COVID-19 a radicalement changé l'éducation et, par conséquent, l'apprentissage en ligne (e-learning) a connu une croissance significative, influençant le vocabulaire de ses utilisateurs. De plus, l'utilisation des technologies numériques dans le processus d'enseignement a également eu une contribution majeure à la création et à l'adoption de nouveaux mots dans d'autres langues, y compris le roumain, car l'anglais est la langue des technologies de l'information et des communications et de l'Internet. Par conséquent, des outils de pointe pour les technologies de l'information, des applications et des plateformes en ligne ont été développés. Cet article vise à évaluer l'impact massif de COVID-19 sur l'enseignement supérieur en Roumanie, en effectuant une recherche sur les défis et les opportunités du système d'enseignement en ligne. Il vise également à faire l'inventaire des mots empruntés à l'anglais, récemment adoptés, liés aux technologies d'apprentissage en ligne, développés à la suite de la pandémie de COVID-19.

Mots-clés: COVID-19, enseignement en ligne, emprunts à l'anglais, technologies numériques.

Abstract: COVID-19 has dramatically changed education and, as a consequence, e-learning has shown significant growth, influencing its users' vocabulary. Moreover, the use of digital technologies in the teaching process has also had a major contribution to the coinage and adoption of new words in other languages, Romanian included, as English is the language of computer science and of the Internet. Hence, state-of-the art tools for information technology, online applications and platforms have been developed. The present paper intends to assess the massive impact of COVID-19 on higher education in Romania in terms of investigating the challenges and opportunities of the online system of education. It also aims at making an inventory of the recently-adopted English borrowings, related to online learning technologies, developed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: *COVID-19, online education, English borrowings, digital technologies.*