

ON THE 19TH C. BILINGUAL FRENCH-ROMANIAN, ROMANIAN-FRENCH DICTIONARIES

OANA AURELIA GENCĂRĂU, ȘTEFAN GENCĂRĂU

RESUMÉ. *Les dictionnaires bilingues Français-Roumain, Roumain-Français du XIXe siècle.* Dans notre article nous essayons de mettre en évidence l'importance d'un projet de réévaluation des dictionnaires bilingues du XIXe siècle roumain, où le français est tantôt langue source tantôt langue cible. Nous considérons que ces dictionnaires bilingues sont importants non seulement pour l'histoire de la lexicographie roumaine, mais surtout pour les recherches concernant les emprunts d'origine romane du roumain.

Speaking about the relationship between dictionaries and lexicography, Jean Dubois and Claude Dubois¹ accept from the very beginning that dictionaries are essentially pedagogical products attempting to bridge the distance between the knowledge of their user and that of the entire community, *be this knowledge of language or of science*. Dependent, *fundamentally on the development of written communication*, dictionaries *imply a literature considered by the members of the community as the expression of their own culture*². Dependant, at the same time on the practice of writing, the development of dictionaries *certifies the existence of a national language and its use in all forms of social communication*.

Bilingual dictionaries are, according to Dubois, *the direct follow up of glossaries*. The practice of glossing, that is to say of creating glossaries, lists of words, as well as comments, or translations of unknown words from the same language or different languages, precedes the age of the dictionaries proper. The same practice is the proof of the fact that *the appearance of dictionaries is a response to a situation of bilingualism*³, or, under the circumstances of the Romanian 19th century, that of a shift in the direction of linguistic contact, of a turn of Romanian towards a language for which, in the same century, the dictionary constitutes *a specific object: a textual, metalinguistic and cultural one*.³

In an article published in 1995, Fl. Dimitrescu observed that the issue of the Romance lexical element preponderance in Romanian is important for all the stages of the evolution our language passed through. We have approached on the occasion of different interventions and we are attempting to resume our quest concerning the role French has played in the modernization of the Romanian

¹ For all the quotations in this section, please see Jean Dubois et Claude Dubois, *Introduction à la lexicographie*, Librairie Larousse, p.7

² Ibidem, p.34.

³ Alain Rey, *Le lexique. Images et modèles. Du dictionnaire à la lexicologie*, Librairie Armand Colin, p.6.

vocabulary within the Days of the Romance Languages, which will be hosted this May by the University of Aix en Provence.

In order to highlight the changes in Romanian lexical physiognomy during the 19th century, we have resorted to sources and statistical resources in the Romanian linguistic bibliography, but we have always yearned to resume the discussion on the French lexis that penetrated into Romanian, that is to discuss that again, on the basis of all the dictionaries that present themselves today, both as a source for the presence of French on the Romanian territory during the 19th century and as a source of knowing Romanian and the domains of Romanian life in need of French words.

Aspects such as the increase of lexicography entries in the monolingual, bilingual and polyglot dictionaries, as well as the attitude of the dictionary authors with respect to borrowings have been frequently discussed, especially by Mircea Seche⁴, Flora Șuteu⁵ and Coman Lupu⁶. Aspects such as the presence of borrowings within the space of lexicographical definitions or the equivalence of a word to an adapted form of the same word, such aspects and not only these – have been less touched upon.

In order to present the preponderance of the Romance words, the research since Hasdeu⁷ to Macrea⁸, legitimately turned towards the languages which have exerted a certain influence on Romanian. The study concerning the vocabulary of the press, met, in its turn, with considerable interest. In this direction, Klaus Bochmann⁹ noted in his study, *Der Politisch-Soziale Wortschatz des Rumänischen von 1821 bis 1850*, the role of the press in doing away with the archaic aspects of the Romanian language.

The preponderance of the Romance lexis through researching the lexicographical works should have deserved much more interest in our opinion. The concern for the modernisation of Romanian was manifest in all the stages of Romanian lexicography. That is the reason why we consider it is necessary to resume the topic of the circumstances and instruments which have offered Romania a new physiognomy. Considered *genuine documents* by Coman Lupu¹⁰, alongside lists of words, glossaries, and grammars, the bilingual and multilingual dictionaries after 1825 lead to a real alteration of the linguistic mentality, marking the beginnings of modern Romanian lexicography.

⁴ Mircea Seche, *Schiță de istorie a lexicografiei române*, Editura Științifică, 1966.

⁵ Flora Șuteu, in *Istoria științelor în România. Lingvistica*, Editor Iorgu Iordan., Editura Academiei, București, 1975.

⁶ Coman Lupu, *Lexicografia românească în procesul de occidentalizare latino-romanică a limbii române moderne (1780-1860)*, Editura Logos, 1999.

⁷ Bogdan-Petriceicu Hasdeu, *Etymologicum Magnum Romaniae. Dicționarul limbei istorice și poporane a românilor*, Editura Teora, 1998.

⁸ Dimitrie Macrea, *Studii de lingvistică română*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1970.

⁹ Klaus Bochmann, *Der Politisch-Soziale Wortschatz des Rumänischen von 1821 bis 1850*, Akademie-Verlag Berlin, 1979.

¹⁰ Coman Lupu, pp.63.

The number of dictionaries, grouped according to the target language, prove the importance given to French. The period we are going to research registers the following dictionaries:

1 (one) Italian-Romanian dictionary, 2 (two) Greek-Romanian dictionaries, 2 Hungarian-Romanian dictionaries, 6 German-Romanian dictionaries, 4 Romanian-German dictionaries, 6 Latin-Romanian dictionaries, and, what highlights the role of French, **6 French-Romanian dictionaries, 3 Romanian-French dictionaries**. Among the multilingual dictionaries, there are **3 trilingual dictionaries** where **French** is present as one of the languages, and 1 dictionary where **French** is one of the four languages.

We should underline the fact that we have initiated the investigation of the bilingual lexicography of the 19th century due to the great number of lexicographical entries which is registered by the majority of the dictionaries.

The bilingual French-Romanian, Romanian-French dictionaries are the richest from this point of view. The least ample among these, *The Romanian-French Dictionary* and its equivalent, *The French-Romanian Dictionary*, elaborated by Nifon Bălăşescu and published in Bucharest in 1859, register **3000** entries each.; *Vocabular franţezo-românesc* [French-Romanian Vocabulary] published in two volumes in Bucharest between 1840 and 1841, owing to P. Poienaru, F. Aaron and G. Hill, is an outstanding work for the Romanian lexicography of the age and has **45000** entries.

Professor J. A. Vaillant, who settled in Bucharest and Raoul de Pontbriant elaborated works of 10,000 entries, in Vaillant's case, and 28,000 words respectively, Pontbriant's case.

The fact that the bilingual and multilingual dictionaries where French is present had the merit of having changed the attitude towards neologisms has been recognised. Vaillant's dictionary introduces a large number of neologisms into Romanian from among which a great number are still active. We find with Vaillant *absorber, captiver, préoccuper, a alia, alizee, anacreontic, anexa, apostrof, atmosferic* etc. An issue to be discussed, and our research will undertake its discussion, is whether we could attribute to Vaillant's dictionary the statute of a lexicographical work capable of certifying Romance borrowings, especially French ones, into Romanian.

The fact that in some bilingual dictionaries, among which the one published between 1840 and 1841, the desire to transpose the French form into Romanian leads to an *artificial Romanianisation* of the French word is obvious.

For example, the verb *fanfaronner*, registered already as *a fanfaronă*, is explained as *a tăia palavre, a se lăuda, a se fali*, namely cutting words, boasting, bragging. The same procedure is to be found with Nifon Bălăşescu as well: he creates words systematically in order to have a Romanian correspondent for the French word; we consider that is the situation with words like *attentionat, attentiv, attritiune augura* etc. With Nifon Bălăşescu, in his French-Romanian, Romanian –French dictionary, the

French forms which are partly adapted to Romanian appear as Romanian equivalents of French words; e.g. *allumette*, for which Nifon Bălășescu gives as a Romanian equivalent *allumetă*, to the French *allumineux –euse* with Nifon Bălășescu, the Romanian correspondent is *aluminos*, for the French *antivermineux,-euse* the Romanian correspondent is considered to be *antiverminosu*.

We shall bear in mind these lexicographical practices and we will look for answers with regard to dating such borrowings. We shall see to what extent such practices as these are common to other works of the epoch. With Nifon Bălășescu, numerous French words which were given a partly adapted form of the word in Romanian appear at the same time in paraphrases as well; for example, for *ardoise* the Romanian equivalent is indicated to be *ardoasiă, placă de piatră neagră [black stone plaque]*; for explaining the derivative *ardoisière* there is given *locul de unde se scotu ardoasiile, [the place where from the ardoasiile are mined]* while for *ardoisé* the explanation is *de culoarea ardoasiei [the colour of the ardoase]*; the approach of *anis* seems quite interesting, as the Romanian equivalent given for it is *anisu, anisonu seu anasonu* and which is explained by *plantă odoriferantă, fructul său, cofeturi fecute cu anasonu [odoriferous plant, its fruit, confectionary made with anison]*.

These, and not only these, are examples which prove Nifon Bălășescu's interest for introducing French words into Romanian, even by means of forcing the language. We would like the computerised version of our dictionary to allow for a selection of all situations in which the lexicographical work probes the endeavour of adaptation to Romanian. The bilingual dictionaries offer us the possibility of re-evaluating the destiny of several words for which an identical or almost identical Romanian correspondent to the French word is indicated; some of these have consolidated their position in Romanian (*antispasmodique/antispasmodicu, approvisionner / approvisionare, arbitrage / arbitrage/arbitriu, attraction*); others were not preserved (*aquiratoru* for *acquéreur, acheteur* or *affidatu* for *affidé, fidèle* or *arcbutant* for *arc-boutant*).

The bibliography concerning Romanian lexicology and lexicography considers such lexicographical entries lexicographical deficiencies. We will state our point of view concerning such practices, to which we will pay special attention, after their inventory, that is their IT treatment and after comparing the Romanian lexicographical practices with the European ones, especially with the French ones. In our opinion it is important to highlight the causes which have determined this approach of transposing words in a form which is almost alien to Romanian.

In contrast to explanatory dictionaries or strictly explanatory ones, the bilingual dictionaries are the expression of an immediate necessity to transpose the content of some words into another language. It may be stated that the bilingual dictionaries are the expression of an immediate lexical necessity of the speaking subject. The bilingual dictionaries reflect the necessity to communicate within new social domains, the mixture of the local lexis with the new one during a first stage, followed by a subsequent stage when the borrowed word imposes itself, and thus, the modernization of the Romanian lexis.

It has been noted, and we insist on highlighting this aspect, that for the majority of those who elaborated bilingual or multilingual dictionaries, the enrichment of the lexis constituted a declared objective. The concern for vocabulary enrichment meant giving science a chance, and, in particular, to philosophy, the chance that it could express itself in Romanian.

We are convinced that inserting the data of the main bilingual dictionaries into a single computerised lexicographical work, and its printed version respectively, will offer a different perspective upon the Romanian-French linguistic contact in the 19th century, upon the French borrowings, upon the Romanian productivity of the borrowings and, generally, upon the Romanian 19th century universe.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. BOCHMANN, Klaus, 1979, *Der Politisch-Soziale Wortschatz des Rumänischen von 1821 bis 1850*, Akademie-Verlag Berlin.
2. DIMITRESCU, Florica, 1995, *Dinamica lexicului românesc*, Clusium. Logos, Cluj-Napoca.
3. DUBOIS, Jean, Claude Dubois, *Introduction à la lexicographie*, Librairie Larousse
4. HASDEU, Bogdan-Petriceicu, 1998, *Etymologicum Magnum Romaniae. Dicționarul limbii istorice și populare a românilor*, ediție îngrijită și studiu introductiv de Grigore Brâncuș, Editura Teora, București.
5. LUPU, Coman, 2000, *Lexicografia românească în procesul de occidentalizare latino-romanică a limbii române moderne (1780-1860)*, Logos, Iași.
6. MACREA, Dimitrie, 1970, *Studii de lingvistică română*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, București.
7. REY, Alain, *Le lexique. Images et modèles. Du dictionnaire à la lexicologie*, Librairie Armand Colin,
8. SECHE, Mircea, 1966, *Schiță de istorie a lexicografiei române*, vol. I, Editura Științifică, București.