Elena DOCHINOIU, Universitatea "Babeş-Bolyai," Cluj-Napoca

AN APPROACH TO THE ROMANIAN GENERAL LEXICON FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE SPECIALIZED MILITARY TERMINOLOGY

In the era of constant scientific and technological progress, the need for new terms is always present. As it is well known, the lexicon is the most responsive compartment to the changes imposed by a multitude of social and cultural factors. In his analysis of the causes and types of semantic changes, Alexandru Graur emphasized the fact that a word's meaning represents one of the most mobile elements of a language. [1] It has been ascertained that most words from the basic word stock of a language are used in the specialized lexicon, with different meanings. The general lexicon is adapted to the requirements imposed by the military, social, economic and political relations. Under the influence of the functional-stylistic factor, all the lexical units that make up the most interesting language compartment, the lexicon, can be divided into two sections: one that belongs to the general lexicon and another that belongs to the specialized lexicons. There are permanent connections between these two sections. If the general lexicon is usually defined as the ensemble of words and groups of words currently used, the specialized lexicon consists of all the lexical elements related to a particular scientific field of activity. [2]

According to A. Canarache and C. Maneca, the technical terms are words or combinations of words that designate notions from a certain specialized area. Unlike the words contained by the general lexicon, they have a well-defined lexical meaning. [3] The difference between a word and a term can be explained by means of the difference between the scientific and the general notions. [4] In her paper entitled *Lexicul specializat. Aspecte generale,* Valeria Nistor states that terms represent the most responsive compartment of the specialized lexicon. It is these terms that make the difference between the general lexicon and the lexicon used in various specialized fields. [5] Unlike words, that have also the role of grammatical tools, such as the prepositions and conjunctions, the terms always define a notion. The fundamental distinction that can be made between a term and a word is related to the domain of reference. Any word or lexical unit represents a term if the notion that it designates can be defined within the sphere of a specialized field and if it is part of that field's conceptual system. [6] I. Coteanu and Angela-Bidu Vrănceanu explain that the combination between the situation and the topic of communication renders a lexicon that consists of a number of currently used words, related to the general lexicon and technical terms, related to the specialized lexicon. They go on by sustaining that all the words specific to a certain profession form relatively unitary lexical ensembles, where instructive semantic associations, metaphors, metonymies and loan words are reflected. [7] Many words from the general lexicon are used within different terminologies, where they acquire well defined, technical meanings. [8]

Lexically speaking, the Romanian military terminology can be divided into two categories of words: the so-called terms (military terms) and terms derived from words (cuvinte-termen). The terms have well-defined meanings and are used only in the military field. They can be: words: **"armată,"** (army), **"baionetă,"** (bayonet), **"dezertor,"** (deserter), **"cartuş,"** (cartridge), groups of words**: "muniție de artilerie,"** (artillery ammunition), **"artilerie anti-aerian,"** (anti-craft artillery), **"unități şi subunități de divizie,"** (division troops) and expressions: **"a arunca în aer,"** (to blow up), **"a deschide focul,"** (to open fire), **"a lovi ținta,"** (to hit the target). [9] The terms derived from words are words from the general lexicon, semantically specialized. Used independently, (as terms derived from words), or as part of compound words or phrases, words from the general lexicon acquire new, semantic meanings, when they become part of the specialized lexicon. [10]

There are many nouns from the general lexicon that can become terms. For example, the noun **"încărcător"** [11] (magazine case), that in the general lexicon designates a worker that loads

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a container or a furnace, which supplies a steam machine with fuel, "persoană care încarcă un recipient, un cuptor, etc., care alimentează cu combustibil o maşină cu aburi," is used in the military lexicon with a different meaning, nameley, "dipozitiv în formă de cutie, disc sau tambur, în care se introduce un anumit număr de cartuşe…," (that part of a gun that holds the bullets). The noun **"pat,"** (bed) defined in the general lexicon as "mobilă de lemn sau de metal prevăzută de obicei cu somieră sau cu saltea," (a wooden or metal furniture usually equipped with a spring mattress or mattress), is used in the military specialized lexicon to indicate the thick wooden end of the handle of a gun, called butt, where the mechanism and the barrel are mounted, more precisely, "partea de lemn a puştii sau a pistolului pe care sunt fixate mecanismul şi ţeava…" As we can easily notice, the term does not stand for the piece of furniture anymore, but for the component part of a gun.

The noun **"mină,"** (mine), defined in the general lexicon as "loc subteran special amenajat de unde se extrag minerale," (deep hole or series of holes under the ground that are dug in order to find coal, gold, tin, etc), designates in the military specialized lexicon a type of bomb, consisting of an explosive charge that is hidden just below the ground or under water and that explodes when it is touched, "mijloc de luptă, compus dintr-o încărcatură de exploziv şi un dispozitiv de producere a exploziei…" The noun is used to create proper military terms, under the form of terminological groups of words or expressions, such as: **"mină maritimă,"** (mine), that indicates a type of mine used against the enemy's ships and submarines, "mină folosită împotriva navelor de suprafaţă sau a submarinelor inamicului," "mină antiinfanterie," (antipersonnel mine), that represents an explosive charge, with firing pin and primer, which explodes when it is touched, "încărcătură explozivă, cu percutor şi capsă acţionată la apăsare," **"mină antitanc,"** (antitank mine), that explodes under a weight of at least one hundred and twenty kilograms and "mină asigurată împotriva deplantării," (activated land mine), equipped with devices that make it impossible to deactivate.

The specialized military terms contain words belonging to all the categories of armed forces (land forces, air forces and naval forces), to military branches (infantry, artillery). They have a limited usage, particular to all the scientific languages.[12] The terminological feature of a word is established by adapting the word from the general lexicon to a terminological system. The word's semantic conversion is obtained on the basis of a change of meaning, through metaphorical or metonymical transfers. In the syntagm **"vitalitatea navei,"** (the ship's vitality), which designates a ship that continues to sail, in spite of a number of flooded compartments, more exactly, "capacitatea acesteia de a pluti, având un număr de compartimente pline cu apă, inundate," the word **"vitality"** is used with a meaning different from that in the general lexicon, where it symbolises great energy, cheerfulness, dynamism, "caracterul a ceea ce este viu; putere de viaţă, energie, dinamism."[13] In the case of the polysemous word **"câmp,"** (field), present in the military lexicon in such syntagms as: **"câmp de luptă,"** (battlefield), that indicates the place where there is fighting in a war**, "câmp de mine,"** (mine field), which describes a rectangular area of land where a number of mines are fixed, according to certain rules, "porţiune de teren, de regulă de formă dreptunghiulară, în care este plantat un număr de mine, pe mai multe linii, dispuse după anumite reguli," the terminological meaning represents the extension of only one of its multiple meanings, namely place, space, parcel, "întindere vastă de pământ fără accidente însemnate de teren," (a large area of land without undulations of the ground). As it is mentioned in the work entitled *Limba română contemporană. Vocabularul*, there are cases when one or more meanings of some polysemous words are used in contexts specific to a certain language or style. [14]

The polysemous word **"cap,"** (head), defined in the general lexicon as: 1. "extremitate superioară a corpului omenesc sau cea anterioară a animalelor, unde se află creierul, principalele organe de simţ şi orificiul bucal," (the top part of our body which has our eyes, mouth, brain in it), 2. "capăt," (end), 3. "minte, gândire," (intelligence, thinking), 4. "şef, conducător," (the leader in charge of a group or organization), is used in the military terminology too, with different meanings, in the following groups of words: **"cap de autoghidaj,"** (homing head), which stands for a device mounted on a missile to search for and find the target…, "dispozitiv montat în

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partea anterioară a unei rachete pentru căutarea şi descoperirea ţintei…," **"cap de pod,"** (bridgehead), which describes a conquered area of land, situated on the bank of a river, archwayed, having the middle part situated under a bridge, "porţiune de teren cucerită pe malul unui curs de apă, având forma aproximativă a unui arc de cerc, cu centrul în zona unui punct de trecere (pod)" and **"cap mobil,"** (head), which designates a component part of the breechblock of some infantry fire arms, "parte componentă a închizătorului la unele tipuri de arme de foc de infanterie…"

Changes of meaning can also take place at the level of the constituent element of a compound term. In the case of the term **"contraamiral,"** (rear-admiral), the element **"contra"** lost its meaning of "împotriva," (againt, contrary), which is nevertheless maintained in the following words: **"contraatac,"** (counter attack), **"contrarevoluţie,"** (counter-revolution), "a contracara," (to counteract). In Paul Miclău's view, there is a permanent interaction between the general lexicon and the terminological systems. This interaction emphasises particular aspects concerning the specificity of the field of activity.[15] The noun **"buzunar,"** (pocket), defined in the general lexicon as a small bag sewn onto or into a coat, trousers etc, so that we can put things such as money or keys into it, "un fel de pungă interioară cusută la haine, în care se ţin lucruri mărunte," modifies its meaning in the specialized military lexicon, where it indicates both a parcel of land where the hostile army is surrounded, "porţiune de teren în care armata inamică este încercuită," and a gap on the enemy's teritory, "breşă în adâncimea teritoriului inamic." There are also adjectives from the general lexicon that can become terms. The adjective **"rece,"** (cold), that in the general lexicon indicates a low temperature, "care are o temperatură mai scăzută faţă de o limită dată, faţă de un mediu oarecare sau faţă de căldura corpului omenesc," is used in the military lexicon in the terminological syntagm **"război rece,"** (Cold War) to render the tense, strained situation existing between the capitalist and the socialist countries after the Second World War, "situaţia de încordare, tensiune şi neîncredere existentă între statele capitaliste şi cele socialiste în perioada care a urmat celui de-al doilea război mondial."

As Daniela Rusu also remarks, many words from the standard literary language are used by the specialists to designate notions from a technical field of activity. Consequently, a great number of words from the general lexicon acquire different meanings in the scientifc and technical language. This is how the migration of various lexical units from the general to the specialized lexicon can be explained. The words from the general lexicon are selected according to their power of rendering a general, scientific notion or of designating a class of objects, phenomena, etc, which explains the frequent presence of abstract words. [16] The noun **"tunet,"** (thunder) is used in the general lexicon with the meaning of loud noise that can be heard during a storm, usually after a flash of lightning, "zgomot puternic care însoţeşte o descărcare electrică atmosferică," which is different from that in the military lexicon, where the noun indicates the middle part of an artillery barrel, "parte de mijloc a unei ţevi de artilerie."

The noun **"arici,"** (hedgehog), defined in the general lexicon as "mamifer insectivor cu botul ascuţit şi corpul gros, acoperit cu ţepi," (a small brown animal whose body is round and covered with sharp spines), modifies its meaning in the specialized military lexicon, where it stands for a movable artificial obstacle used to block the streets, roads…, trenches and other narrow areas, "baraj de fortificaţie transporatabil, destinat pentru întărirea obstacolelor naturale…închiderea rapidă a drumurilor, străzilor… tranşeelor şi altor locuri înguste." The noun **"pungă"** (bag) describes in the general lexicon a container made of paper, cloth or plastic which usually opens at the top and is used for packing various objects, especially food, "săculeţ făcut din hârtie, material plastic sau alt material, servind ca ambalaj pentru diferite obiecte, mai ales alimente." Nevertheless, in the terminological syntagm **"pungă de foc,"** (pocket of fire), it does not indicate the container anymore, but a fighting technique that consists in the arrangement of a space, where the enemy is to be drawn and hit concomitantly on the two flanks, "procedeu de luptă care constă în amenajarea unui spaţiu… în care inamicul să fie atras şi lovit concomitent în ambele flancuri, cu densitate maximă." If in the general lexicon the noun **"talpă,"** (sole), indicates the bottom surface of somebody's foot, especially the part he or she walks or stands on, "partea inferioară a labei piciorului la om şi la unele animale, de la degete până la calcâi, care vine în

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atingere cu pământul," it modifies its meaning in the terminological syntagm **"talpa patului,"** (butt plate), where it describes a metal device mounted on the gun's butt, "piesă din metal fixată la extremitatea patului de pușcă sau altei arme de foc individuale."

The noun **"cămaşă,"** (shirt) designates in the general lexicon a piece of clothing that covers the upper part of our body and our arms, usually has a collar and is fastened at the front by buttons, "îmbrăcăminte de pânză, de mătase care se poartă pe piele, acoperind partea superioară a corpului." In the terminological syntagm **"cămaşa glonțului,"** (bullet casing), the noun has a different meaning, that of metal, protecting cover of the bullet,… that gives the latter a rotary motion, "îmbrăcăminte a părții utile a glonțului, realizată dintr-un metal sau aliaj cu duritate relativ mică,… pentru a asigura astfel glonțului pe traiectorie o mişcare de rotație." The noun **"ciocan,"** (hammer) indicates in the general lexicon a tool with a heavy metal part on a long handle used for hitting nails into wood, "unealtă formată dintr-un cap de metal, de lemn sau de cauciuc dur, de forme şi dimensiuni variate, prevăzută cu un mâner, folosită manual sau mecanic la bătut sau prelucrat materiale rezistente." Used terminologically, it indicates that part of a gun that hits the explosive charge that fires a bullet. The noun is used to create proper military terms, under the form of groups of words, such as **"ciocan de foc,"** that describes a short artillery fire launched by surprise against one or more objectives in order to neutralize the enemy, "tragere de artilerie, dezlănțuită prin surprindere, de scurtă durată, ce se execută asupra unui obiectiv sau grup de obiective în scop de neutralizare sau de nimicire."

To conclude, this paper has dealt with the relations between the Romanian general lexicon and the military specialized lexicon, with emphasis on various common words, used terminologically. As our analysis shows, used as such, the lexical units from the Romanian general lexicon modify their meaning, but keep the same form. Specialized lexicons and their basic concepts are rendered by means of the general lexicon. The terminological usage of words from the common word stock remains an inexhaustible source of new terms.

NOTES

[1] Al, Graur (1960). *Studii de lingvistică generală*. Varianta nouă, Bucureşti: Editura Academiei, p. 212-215
[2] Dan, Sluşanschi (1971). *Studiul vocabularelor speciale. Probleme de metodă*. SCL, XXII, nr. 6, p. 587-593
[3] A. Canarache, C, Maneca (1955). *În jurul problemei vocabularului stiințific şi tehnic*. în "Limba română," IV, nr 6, p. 16
[4] Mihai, Nistor (2000). *Terminologie lingvistică*. Bucureşti: Editura Universității din Bucureşti, p. 93-95
[5] Valeria, Nistor (2004). *Lexicul specializat. Aspecte generale*, în Revista electronică "UniTerm" a Universității de Vest din Timişoara, nr. 1, p. 8 http://www.litere.uvt.ro/uniterm1_2004.htm.
[6] Dorina, Chiş (2004). *Termen şi cuvânt*, în Revista electronică "UniTerm" a Universității de Vest din Timişoara, nr. 1, p. 2
[7] Ion, Coteanu, Angela, Bidu–Vrănceanu (1975). *Limba română contemporană. Vocabularul*, vol II, Bucureşti: Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică, p. 101-102
[8] Ibid., p. 104
[9] For the examples given here, the following dictionaries were used: M, Nicolae (1972). *Dicționar de termeni tehnici utilizați de militari*. Bucureşti: Editura Militară; Paul, Baltagi (1973). *Dicționar tehnic militar ilustrat (român,francez, german, rus)*. Bucureşti: Editura Militară.
[10] Victor, Vascenco (1975). *Probleme de terminologie lingvistică*. Bucureşti: Editura Ştiințifică şi Enciclopedică, p. 13
[11] For the terminological definitions of the words, the following dictionaries were used: (basically) Stelian Staicu (1980). *Lexicon militar*. Bucureşti: Editura Militară, together with Paul, Baltagi (1973). *Dicționar tehnic militar ilustrat (român,francez, german, rus)*. Bucureşti: Editura Militară; Leonid, Cojocaru (1976). *Dicționar militar englez – român*. Bucureşti: Editura Militară; M, Nicolae (1972). *Dicționar de termeni tehnici utilizați de militari*. Bucureşti: Editura Militară. When the definition from the military dictionary was given a detailed account, containing too many descriptive elements, dots were added for the removed parts. As far as the definitions of the words from the general lexicon are concerned, we used: *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române,* (suport electronic) and Academia Română, Institutul de Linvistică "Iorgu Iordan," (1998). *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române*. Bucureşti: Editura Univers Enciclopedic. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (The Complete Guide to Written and Spoken English), (1995). Harlow

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Essex: Longman Group Ltd and Carmen, Nedelcu, Ioana, Murar, Andreea, Bratu, Andrei, Bantaş (2001). *Dicţionar român-englez*. Bucureşti: Editura Teora were also used.

[12] Victor, Vascenco (1975). *Probleme de terminologie lingvistică*. Bucureşti: Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, p. 10

[13] Anton, Bejan, Mihai, Bujeniţă (1979). *Dicţionar de marină*. Bucureşti: Editura Militară.

[14] Ion, Coteanu, Narcisa, Forăscu, Angela, Bidu - Vrănceanu (1985). *Limba română contemporană. Vocabularul*. Bucureşti: Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică, p. 125

[15] Paul, Miclău. *Dimensiunea semantică a limbajelor de specialitate*, în volumul "Semantică şi semiotică", sub redacţia acad. I. Coteanu şi prof. dr. Lucia Wald, p. 68-69

[16] Daniela, Rusu (1983). *Inovaţia lexicală în terminologia unor domenii ştiinţifice* în "Raţionament şi discurs," supliment la tomul XXIX al Analelor Ştiinţifice ale Universităţii "Al. I. Cuza," secţiile III e-f, Ştiinţe filologice, vol II, "Metalimbaj şi metaliteratură, Iaşi, p. 51-52

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ABSTRACT

The paper focuses on the relations between the Romanian general lexicon and the specialized military lexicon and the way these relations make possible the migration of various lexical units from the general to the specialized lexicon. The Romanian military terms are classified at the lexical level. We will stress those lexical units from the general lexicon, which are used terminologically, pointing out their semantic conversion, (obtained on the basis of a change of meaning), when they become part of the specialized lexicon.

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