TERMINOLOGY OF MASS MEDIA IN CURRENT ROMANIAN. ASPECTS OF THE ASSIMILATION OF ENGLISH LEXICAL AND PHRASAL BORROWINGS

Roxana JOIȚA KHALIFA
University of Bucharest

Abstract

The Romanian terminology of mass media (TMM) follows the Anglo-American conceptual pattern. As a consequence, the lexical and phrasal borrowings from English are prevalent in the lexicon used in this field. Graphically/phonetically, most of the English borrowings in TMM have an ambiguous and fluctuating character – either they keep the form specific to the donor language, or they tend to adapt to the system of the recipient language (*crawl/crol*, *flash/flaş/flaş*). Morphologically, the inanimate lexical/phrasal English borrowings follow the general trend specific to the majority of the neologic borrowings in Romanian, being included in the category of neuter gender. The English borrowings with the trait /+Animate/, and denominating professions in TMM are classified as belonging to the category of masculine gender (*editor*, *producător*). The number of lexical/phrasal English borrowings in TMM included in the feminine gender is restrained. We mention from this category *mass media*, recorded in DOOM$_2$ as feminine singular (the former edition of DOOM mentioned *mass-media* as neuter plural). The semantic assimilation supposes a series of semantic extensions. This phenomenon is accomplished paradigmatically by keeping the semantic core and by ignoring some peripheral components of the lexicographic definition – *flash* (*ştire*), *lider* (from *lider de audienţă*). The situations of total assimilation are numerically reduced – *interviu*, *crol*, *videorecorder*, *media*.

Key words: *mass media*, *terminology*, *English influence*, *lexical/phrasal borrowings*, *linguistic adaptation/assimilation*

Résumé

La terminologie roumaine employée dans le domaine des médias (TMM) suit le modèle constitué par les notions respectives telles qu'elles fonctionnent dans la sphère anglo-américaine. Par voie de conséquence, les emprunts lexicaux et phraséologiques de l'anglais sont majoritaires dans le patrimoine lexical de ce domaine en roumain. Dans la TMM, la plupart des emprunts de l'anglais, sous leurs formes graphiques et phonétiques, sont ambigus et fluctuants: soit conservent-ils la forme qu'ils avaient dans la langue offrante, soit tendent-ils à s'adapter au système de la langue acceptante (*crawl/crol* ou *flash/flas/flas*). Les emprunts lexicaux et phraséologiques de l'anglais signifiant des inanimés suivent, en leur morphologie, la tendance actuellement générale de la majorité des emprunts néologiques acceptés par le roumain, à savoir celle de se faire inclure dans la catégorie du genre neutre. Les emprunts de l'anglais qui signifient des animés et qui dénomment des professions sises au domaine de la TMM sont encadrés comme appartenant à la catégorie du genre masculin (*editor*, *producător*). Pour le genre féminin, le nombre des emprunts lexicaux ou phraséologiques de l'anglais en roumain qui ont trait à la TMM est bien petit. De cette dernière catégorie nous avons à faire mention de *mass*

media, enregistré par le DOOM$_2$ en tant que féminin singulier (alors que la précédente édition du DOOM comptait *mass media* parmi les neutres pluriels). L'assimilation sémantique suppose une série d'élargissements pour les sens déjà existants. Ce phénomène est accompli paradigmatiquement de par la conservation du noyau sémantique respectif, accompagnée par le fait d'ignorer à dessein certaines composantes périphériques contenus dans la définition lexicographique de ladite notion: *flash* (*ştire*) ou *lider* (provenant de *lider de audienţă*). Les situations où l'assimilation est totale sont peu nombreuses: *interviu*, *crol*, *videorecorder*, *media*.

Mots-clés: *medias*, *terminologie*, *influence de l'anglais*, *emprunts lexicaux/ phraséologiques*, *adaptation/assimilation linguistique*

0. The terminology of mass media (TMM) is a less investigated area in Romanian linguistic research and is also a topic of interest for those studying or working in this field, but also for the public, considering the importance that mass media have acquired in the last 20 years. At the conceptual-semantic level, Romanian TMM follows the Anglo-American pattern and this is reflected at the linguistic level. Thus, from the etymological point of view, English is the prevalent influence in the specialized vocabulary of Romanian mass media.

In Romanian TMM, the absence of corresponding lexical, semantic and stylistic units and the necessity to integrate this specialized lexicon into a mass media global context linguistically motivate the phenomenon of taking over a large number of English lexical borrowings.

1. Types of lexical borrowings from English in TMM. Trends of assimilation

Linguists establish three categories of English borrowings in current Romanian, even though the dynamic system of the language does not allow a strict categorization of these classes (see Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006: 29, *idem* 2001b: 83-84; Constantinescu, Popovici, Ştefănescu, 2002b: 187-188, apud Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006: 63): *Anglicisms*[1], *completely assimilated lexical borrowings* and *xenisms* (*foreignisms*)[2].

In the Romanian TMM, all these types of lexical borrowings are identified, but unequally represented as share and stability in the lexicon. Specific terms as *teaser*, *live*, *insert*, *reporter*, *editor* with unique etymology (English) or multiple (Lat., Fr., Engl., Germ.) are recorded in dictionaries, but *stand- up*, *lead* – having a great frequency in the literature of specialty and a high conceptual-semantic importance in TMM – do not occur in Romanian dictionaries. From the linguistic normative perspective, general observations on contradictory trends in the assimilation of Anglicisms (see Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006: 34, Topală, 2006: 425-427) keep their validity in Romanian TMM, too. Thus, there are terms with Anglo-American etymology that tend to retain the original form or tend to adapt to the Romanian

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[1] MDN defines the *Anglicism* as a word or a phrase proper to the English language; a word borrowed by a foreign language and unadopted to its own linguistic system/"cuvânt, expresie proprie limbii engleze; cuvânt pătruns într-o altă limbă şi încă neintegrat în aceasta", from here resulting that it is in a process of adaptation to the system of the Romanian language/"în curs de adaptare la sistemul limbii române" (Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006, p. 29).

[2] Guilbert defines the *xenism* as "terme étranger qui reste toujours étranger" (Guilbert, 1975, p. 93, apud Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006, p. 63).

linguistic system. Also, the parallel use of divergent, fluctuating forms is noted in Romanian TMM (*ibidem*).

2. Aspects of adaptation and assimilation of English linguistic borrowings in TMM

In TMM, the Anglicisms in different phases of assimilation are prevalent, as the graphical and phonetic specific of the lexical unit in the donor language that does not allow the application of the Romanian morphological government or of the rules of pronunciation specific to the Romanian language (see Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2001: 100-101): *lead* – is recorded in DEJ as *synonymous to the news*, mentioning the conceptual-semantic differences that individualize this term in the specialized lexicon. DEX, DCR₃ and MDN do not mention this lexical unit. The terminological dictionary offers an extensive semantic description of this term by the paradigmatic analysis *ştire/ştire hard/ştire soft/lead*, after the Anglo-American pattern. *Lead* appears as phonetically and graphically not adapted, but with a beginning of morphological assimilation as it is included in the category of the neuter gender, plural form and as it gets an article – "o trecere în revistă a formelor pe care le îmbracă *lead-urile* poate fi considerată instructivă" (Coman, 2001a: 176); *stand-up* – does not appear in any dictionary, but has a high frequency in professional use – *De aceea, unele posturi de televiziune recurg la stand-upuri de câte ori este posibil* (see Coman, 2001: 251), with some contexts where it is joined by the translation *relatare în picioare*. DEJ does not record it. One could conclude that *stand-up* is a very recent lexical unit. Its absence in the dictionaries does not surprise us considering the specific dynamics of TMM as a consequence of the conceptual novelty and the fact that it appears joined by the Romanian translation *relatare în picioare*. The chances of this term to be assimilated are disputable. On the one hand, we appreciate that the Anglicism will not fix in the Romanian language, even in the specialized contexts. On the other hand, taking into consideration that another specialized lexical unit – *stand-by* (that belongs to the financial terminology), from the same lexical group, but with a higher frequency in use and with phonetic, morphological, structural similitudes to *stand-up* is recorded in DEX (p. 1872), DCR₃ (p. 493) with the variant *standby* – without a hyphen – and MDN (p. 884), we consider that the lexicographic status of *stand-by* will be established by use; *flash* – appears in DEJ with an extensive definition from which we mention *anunţarea în câteva cuvinte a unui fapt de o importanţă excepţională*, but it is not recorded in MDN or DEX. In the specialty papers, *flash* appears as morphologically not adapted – "*Flash-ul* are structuri şi dimensiuni diferite (Coman, 2001a: 227), "*flash-uri* de aproximativ 10-30 de secunde" (Coman, 2001a: 247). Morphologically, *flash* is at the beginning of the assimilation process considering the definite article and the inflexion of plural, with a hyphen; *prime time* is recorded in DEJ, DEX, MDN and DCR₃ with the definition *ora maximă de audienţă în televiziune*, mentioning the specialized sense in the journalism of television - *audienţă în televiziune*. In specialty papers it appears in contexts such as – "o emisiune de *prime time*", "difuzat în *prime time*" (Zeca-Buzura, 2005: 145).

Regarding the degree of assimilation of different Anglicisms, the variants of use in the jargon as a specific language of the professional groups who work in mass media are illustrative. Thus, one can notice the change of the morphological category of some lexical units recorded in dictionaries as adjectives or adverbs and used with a noun value: *live* is used in the jargon of this professional group as a noun, as a result of the abbreviation of the syntagm *transmisie live*, with the ellipsis of the noun, where one can notice the projection

of the semantic content exclusively on the determiner which behaves as a neuter noun (morphological government specific to English lexical borrowings) – *am un live/echipa e plecată la live-ul de la DNA/materialul intră după live-uri*. *Live* is included in the category of the restrictions of sense, associated with the functional specialization as part of the denominative neology/"neologie denominativă" (see Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006: 106) specific to Romanian TMM; *off* is used in the jargon as a neuter noun – *a lăsa imaginile pe off/a vrea un off/a intra după off-urile de Extern*. One can also notice the use in neologic stylistic syntagms with a humorous connotation as *off chior* (*blind off*), denoting an assembly of images on a specific subject, without a script.

In the professional jargon, the assimilation of verbs with a specialized meaning in TMM is accomplished by including them in the first conjugation, with the suffix *-ez* in the present tense – indicative, conjugation well-known for its capacity of assimilation of neologic verbs from different languages (Stoichţoiu-Ichim, 2006: 50)[3]: *a pleia/pleiez* (< Engl. *play*; "a viziona un material filmat"), *a randa/randez* (< Engl. *render*; "a încărca un material pentru a fi trimis în emisie"), *a flota/flotez* (< Engl. *float*; "a scoate o ştire din desfăşurătorul jurnalului"). One can also notice the use of the old and popular suffix *-ui*, for the fourth conjugation, having the present tense – indicative with *-esc* – *a tizui* ("a face *un teaser* pentru o ştire"). The use of verbal phrases, as a result of partial loan translation following the Anglo-American pattern should also be mentioned: *a fi over/a fi under* ("a fi peste/sub durata jurnalului"), *a face un round-up* ("a recapitula principalele informaţii din jurnal"), *a lăsa în full* ("a viziona imaginile în întregime"), *a pune în share* ("a trimite materialele în baza comună").

2.1. Graphical and phonetic assimilation

From the perspective of the orthography, the adaptation of English borrowings is conditioned by a series of factors implied in the process of assimilation: the *objective factor* (the restrictive internal structure of the language system that gives certain rules) and the *subjective factor* (the *creativity* of the speakers as against the neologic term) (Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006: 398). In the context of the accelerated dynamics of the use (Avram, 2006:26-27, apud Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006: 399)[4], the subjective factor tends to prevail over the objective factor. This phenomenon is also identified in the case of English borrowings in TMM, where one can easily notice the fluctuating character of the orthography of English borrowings in Romanian dictionaries.

Thus, *flash* appears in DEX, MDN, DOOM₂, but the former edition of MDN recorded also the forms *fleş/flaş*, graphically and phonetically assimilated (see Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006). In DEJ it appears as the form of the etymological orthography *flash*.

Crawl is mentioned only in DCR₃ and it appears in the specialty papers in parallel with the adapted form *crol*. One can notice that old dictionaries tended to establish in the language the phonetic orthography of English borrowings, preferring the phonetic/phonological principle (Constantinescu, Popovici, Ştefănescu, 2002: 170, apud Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006: 400). But the tendency of recent dictionaries is to

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[3] [Conjugarea I este– n.n.] "recunoscută pentru capacitatea ei de a asimila verbe neologice preluate din diverse limbi"/[The 1st conjugation] is "recognized for its capacity to assimilate neological verbs taken over from various languages" (Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006, p. 50).

[4] "dinamica accelerată a uzului"/"accelerated dynamics of usage" (Avram 2006, p. 26-27, *apud* Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006, p. 399).

establish the etymological orthography. Thus, the second edition of DOOM contributes to the reduction of the differences between the codified standard, out of use, and the real use of educated Romanians (see Vintilă-Rădulescu, 2003: 60)[5].

In TMM, the orthography of English borrowings is also conditioned by a series of factors such as the global linguistic context (see Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006a: 7-28), as specialized lexical units have as characteristic the integration into a universal language, specific to a certain domain of activity. We include here lexical units in different phases of adaptation such as *lead*, *flash/ştire flash*, *hard news/soft news*, *desk*, *breaking-news*, *insert*, *script*. From the normative perspective, both trends can be noticed in TMM: the tendency of keeping the form from the donor language (etymological orthography *crawl/lead*, *flash/ştire flash*, *desk*), and that of adaptation to the system of the recipient language as well (phonetic/phonological orthography – *crol*, *fleş/flaş*). Regarding the normative perspective, one can easily notice in TMM the ambiguous and varying aspects in the use of the logos borrowed from English, even if the general tendency is that of keeping the spelling and the pronunciation specific to the donor language: /ienpies/, /enps/, /enpies/ – ENPS, sistemul central de producere a ştirilor (Engl. Essential News Production System); /tece/ – TC, *secvenţa de timp* (Engl. *time code*).

2.2. Morphological assimilation

From the perspective of morphological standards, the difficulty of adaptation of Anglicisms to the Romanian flexional system could be justified by the fact that Romanian and English belong to different linguistic families. In the process of assimilation of English borrowings, the lexical conversions and occasional ones certified in specialty papers have an important role (see Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006: 43). In TMM the number of lexical conversions is reduced. In this category we include the term *off* which appears in MDN as a neuter noun. DEJ records the syntagm with Anglo-American etymology *off the record*, where *off* functions as an adverb. In specialty papers, *off* appears as an adverb preceded by a preposition in contexts such as "crainicul citeşte din *off*" (Coman, 2001a: 240), "ştirile din *off*" (Zeca-Buzura, 2005: 52), "sau se adaugă încă un text de *off*" (Zeca-Buzura, 2005: 87).

We also mention the use with a noun value of a series of syntagms borrowed from English: *What formula*: "ca model de organizare a informaţiei." (Zeca-Buzura, 2005: 43); "Materialele de tip *how to* spun cititorilor ce anume trebuie să facă." (Coman, 2001b: 131); "articole utilitare de tipul *how–to- do- it*" (Coman, 2001b: 127).

In the assigning of the grammatical gender of the nouns borrowed from English, the etymological criterion is respected, the gender of the nouns in the donor language being kept in the case of Anglicisms in Romanian (Topală, 2006: 426). Generally, the category of the masculine gender includes the Anglicisms that denote animate nouns: *editor*, *producător* (these nouns have a multiple etymology, but the specialized sense in TMM is given by the English etymon). In TMM, inanimate lexical units with English etymology follow the general trend of joining the category of the neuter gender (this is the general tendency, whatever the donor language may be[6]): *interviu* appears in

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[5] "[…] reducerea decalajului dintre norma codificată, rămasă în parte literă moartă, şi uzul real al românilor instruiţi din generaţia medie"/"the reduction of the gap between the codified norm, partly a dead letter, and the real usage of Romanian educated people of the medium generation" (Vintilă-Rădulescu, 2003).

[6] "[…]selectivitatea flexionară a inanimatelor pentru genul neutru s-a manifestat de-a lungul istoriei limbii române prin adaptarea preferenţială ca neutre a împrumuturilor aparţinând acestei clase semantice, indiferent de sursă"/"the flexional selectivity of inanimates for the neuter gender has

dictionaries (see DEX, NMDN, DEJ) as a neuter noun with multiple etymology – English and French – and it is used in specialty papers as phonetically, graphically, morphologically and semantically adapted to the system of the Romanian language; *script* is recorded in dictionaries (see DEX and MDN) with unique (English) etymology, mentioning the neuter gender (pl. *-uri*); *teaser* – neither DEJ, nor DEX records this lexical unit. MDN mentions it as a neuter noun *anunţ publicitar fără menţionarea produsului sau a mărfii, urmărind interesul publicului*. It appears in specialized contexts such as "*teaser-ul* sau şapoul trebuie să fie scris aşa încât să ofere o idee despre ce conţine articolul" (Coman, 2001b: 269).

The number of English borrowings in TMM included in the feminine gender is restrained. From this category we mention the noun *mass-media* which is recorded in the second edition of DOOM as singular feminine (the former edition of DOOM mentioned *mass-media* as plural neuter – see Zafiu, 2005). In the Romanian language, the inflexion is the formal criterion for the grammatical gender, prevalent for nouns. In the case of English borrowings, the inflexion for singular is zero, the root of the noun being the singular. In this case, in order to find the singular form the opposition to the plural is required. Mioara Avram identifies the singular with the ending, referring to the formal criterion (Avram, 1991-1992: 171, apud Topală, 2006: 427). Considering that endings of English borrowings have the same characteristics for all three genders, from the phonetic perspective, neither the singular inflexion, nor the ending gives the grammatical gender of the type-form of the noun (Topală, 2006: 427).

2.3. Semantic assimilation

The semantic assimilation of Anglicisms in TMM supposes a series of evolutions that are generally about semantic extensions. These are paradigmatically accomplished by changing the reference domain and this supposes that the semantic core is kept, while some secondary semantic units of the lexicographic definition are ignored. Thus, even if some terms are recorded in dictionaries with multiple etymology, the etymon of the specialized term in TMM is Anglo-American. From the category of semantically assimilated English borrowings in TMM we mention the following lexical units: *flash* – with the specialized meaning in TMM 1. *Pentru agenţia de presă este anunţarea încâteva cuvinte a unui fapt de o importanţă excepţională* (…). 2. *În audiovizual – titlurile ştirilorcare formează un buletin de ştiri. În televiziune – sumarul telejurnalului* (…). DEX mentions *flash* as *Tub electric care produce o luminaţie puternică de scurtă durată, folosit înarta fotografică, în construcţia laserelor etc.* ♦ *Informaţie importantă transmisă cu prioritate.* ♦ (Cin.) *Plan foarte scurt*, without suggesting any explicit meaning in Romanian mass media or journalism field. MDN gives the same definition as DEX and mentions in addition the sense (which is contextually, as a deduction, specialized in the field of mass media) 2. *informaţie importantă transmisă cu prioritate*; *informaţie radiofonică foarte scurtă*; *lider* (also phoneticly/graphically assimilated) in the syntagm *lider de audienţă* has a semantic extension in TMM. MDN mentions the senses 1) *conducător al unui partid politic, al uneiorganizaţii obşteşti sau al unei orchestre* and 2) *echipă, sportivi din fruntea unei competiţii*. The same definition appears in DEX, too. But, in the last decades, this lexical unit has a high frequency in use in the economic field (see Stoichiţoiu-Ichim

been visible throughout the history of the Romanian language by the preferential adaptation as neuter nouns of the borrowings belonging to this semantic class, regardless of source" (Topală, 2006, p. 426).

2006:104), the determined *lider* migrating from the field of politics or sports (*lider politic*, *liderul grupei* etc.) to other fields such as marketing, sales (*lider de piaţă*), and gets a new use in the field of mass media (*lider de audienţă*).

We also include in this category, the lexical units specific to the jargon as the professional language of the group working in the field of mass media, not only pragmatically illustrative, but also from the perspective of the denominative neology and of the semantic enrichment: *a flota/flotez* (*a scoate temporar o ştire din desfăşurătorul jurnalului*); *a converti* (recorded in DEX with multiple etymology – French and Latin and the senses: 1. Tranz., refl. *A adera sau adetermina pe cineva să adere la o anumită convingere - religioasă* 2. *Tranz. A schimba bancnota în aur sau devize*, the second sense suggesting the specialized meaning in TMM – about images – a transforma dintr-un format în altul, în vederea editării).

2.4. Aspects of total assimilation

In TMM, totally assimilated Anglicisms (phonetically, graphically, morphologically and semantically) are not numerous and are generally differently certified in dictionaries and specialty papers: *interviu* is recorded in dictionaries (see DEX, NMDN, DEJ8) as a neuter noun with multiple etymology (English and French) and is used in specialty papers as phonetically, graphically, morphologically and semantically adapted to the system of the Romanian language; *crawl* appears in use in parallel with the totally assimilated variant *crol*, but neither *crawl*, nor *crol* is recorded in dictionaries (see DEJ, MDN, DEX). DCR$_3$ is the only dictionary that records *crawl/crol*; *script* is recorded in dictionaries (see DEX şi MDN) with unique English etymology, mentioning the neuter gender (pl. *-uri*); *videorecorder* appears in DEX and MDN as neuter, having the plural *-e*, mentioning the English etymology. In specialty papers, it appears morphologically adapted – "*succesul unor aparate precum* (….), *videorecorderul se datorează în primul rânddorinţei receptorilor de a păstra pe alte suporturi mesajele fugitive*" (see Coman, 1999: 24); *media*, resulted by ellipsis from the English syntagm *mass media of communication*. In use, the general trend is that of considering it a form of singular feminine (accepted in DOOM$_2$), by virtue of the inflexion and of the synonymy with the noun *presă* (Engl. *press*). This form prevails over the plural neuter, according to the etymon (see Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006: 36). In specialty papers, *media* appears ambiguously used either as plural feminine – *media autonome* (see Coman, 1999: 23) or as plural neuter – *acestor*: *magnetofonul*, *casetofonul*, *videorecorderul media* (see Coman, 1999: 24).

3. Conclusions

In TMM, the English borrowings at different stages of assimilation are prevalent, by virtue of the graphical and phonetic form of the etymon, that does not allow the application of the Romanian morphological government or of the pronunciation rules specific to the Romanian language (see Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2001: 100-101): *lead*, *stand-up*, *close-up*, *traveling*, etc. In TMM, the spelling of English borrowings is conditioned by a series of factors such as the global linguistic context (see Stoichiţoiu-Ichim, 2006a: 7-28), as specialized lexical units have as characteristic the integration in an universal language, specific to a certain domain of activity. We included here lexical units in different phases of adaptation such as *lead*, *flash/ştire flash*, *hard news/soft news*, *desk*. From the normative perspective, both trends can be noticed in TMM: the tendency of keeping the form from the donor language and that of adaptation to the system of the recipient language as well.

From the perspective of morphological precepts, the difficulty of adaptation of Anglicisms to the Romanian flexional system could be justified by the fact that Romanian and English belong to different linguistic families. Generally, the category of the masculine gender include the Anglicisms that denote animate nouns: *editor*, *producător* (these nouns have multiple etymology, but the specialized sense in TMM is given by the English etymon). In TMM, inanimate lexical units with English etymology follow the general trend of joining the category of the neuter gender. The number of English borrowings in TMM included in the feminine gender is restrained. From this category we mention the noun mass-media which is recorded in the second edition of DOOM as singular feminine (the former edition of DOOM mentioned *mass-media* as plural neuter).

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