NATIONAL LINGUISTIC IDENTITY IN THE INTEGRATION/GLOBALIZATION CONTEXT

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Abstract

This work deals with two basic aspects in nowadays life: integration and globalization and the consequences of the two processes upon national identity, upon native languages. In this respect, the paper focuses on the changes occurred both in the Romanian language and in the English one, the modern tendencies in the two languages and their possible evolution.

Key words: integration, globalisation, national identity, national linguistis identity, evolution.

Globalization seems to be the main characteristic of the century in which we are living and the regionalisation tendencies are its consequences. Following the objective of accession to the European Union, Romania is nowadays in the process of substantially reforming its own organization system. The Europeanization process determines at the national level the adaptation of the processes, policies and institutions to the new practices, norms, rules and procedures that are the result of the European system of governance.

The present socio-political and economical context is governed by an increasing tendency towards *integration* – which is considered to be taking place along two tracks: through the pooling of sovereignties by formulating a common policy at the intergovernmental/confederal level and through the transfer of competences to the supranational Community institutions (Popławska,1995:136) and which can also be understood as a common solving of a series of problems specific to the European nations (Ştefan,2007:XXI), and more than that, towards *globalization* (which refers to the increase of the interactions at a global level, an increased interdependence at economical, social, technological, cultural, political, ecological level) especially in economy, but also in other domains, including language, everything being interconnected and each action creating interdependences. On the other hand, there is another tendency, towards a political crumbling and an invasion of nationalisms, which may lead to the idea that the national identity loses ground.

The term *identity* has been so frequently used lately that its meaning became more and more ambiguous, mostly because even scientifically speaking, the sense of this concept

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hasn't been completely clarified, still being debated by specialists. Identity may refer both to the distinctive features of a grup as a nation (same descent, language, culture, religion) and to the individual's feeling of appartenence to these (manifested by respecting the specific customs, traditions etc.). However, in sensu largo, identity represents the feeling of appartenence to a social group in which an individual shares a series of feelings with the others. The appartenence feeling can aim at family, language, homeland, nation, ethny, ideology, professional group etc. and therefore we can speak of national identity, linguistic identity, ethnical identity, group identity, and even of European identity.

The national identity is focussed on the nation and on the national feeling. There is a type of national identity based on ethnical principle, specific to national countries where the majority of the population is characterized by a common conscience generated by language unity, culture, religion, common ancestors, cultural productions etc., and there is another type of national identity based on citizenship principle. The ethnical identity represents an identification process through which an individual grows up according to the ethnical group pattern and to its interests and standards. The most outstanding characteristic of the ethnical group is the feeling of ethnical identity with a common cultural tradition, with common specific language, customs and religion.

Apart from the national identity, specific to each nation, the present European context requires a new identity for Europe, with a new content and form, characterized by a moral dimension. European identity has to be a moral identity based on the values of democracy and human rights. European identity, as well as democratic identity, has to be open and dynamic, with universally accepted values. There is an obvious relation between the universally accepted values and the cultural differences in Europe. Nationalisms are real religions of the contemporary epoch. They express nations' desire to have their own differentiated cultural sphere, their need to preserve their traditions. Nationalism is the answer to one of the international rights, that of selfdetermination. Differences between linguistic or religious identities give answer to the good and tolerable collective options, and they do not contradict the fundamental universal values.In fact, the respect for other languages and cultures means nothing else but to respect the right of freedom and equality (Horga, 1998: 200).

In the globalization context there is a tendency towards uniformity, towards standardization, in most domains, especially in economy (the international large chains or corporations gain ground to private independent trade detriment), but also in culture since intercultural changes lead to the replacement of some elements of cultural identity (for instance, in Romania, the celebration of Valentine's Day to Dragobete's detriment). On the

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other hand, referring to a national language, Romanian or English for example, it is obvious that they have changed in time but that does not mean that they represent the two nations less. On the contrary, it is believed that globalization, by putting together, in common, different cultures forces them to distinguish their identity very clearly. It is believed that neither the traditions and the customs, nor the languages will disappear in time for at least two reasons: the competitiveness among countries, i.e. people's interest in the specificity of a nation, and each nation's vanity, i.e. everything that comes from outside may seem imposed and therefore, is not easily assimilated or accepted.

As previously mentioned, the globalization process makes different domains suffer a series of changes, but as far as language is concerned the influence of this process is not so evident in a short time. For example, at the moment, the EU official languages are all the official languages of the EU countries and therefore all the decisions of the European institutions are translated in all the official languages and during the sessions of the European Parliament and of the European Council a professional service of simultaneous translation in every language is provided. Outside the formal meetings the communication is more flexible, the most frequently used languages being English, French and German.

People need to communicate, to express and share their ideas with others, and, consequently, as noone is able to know all the languages spoken in the world, a global language had to play the role of communication language, and this is English, considered the global lingua franca (i.e. a language of wider communication among people whose mother tongue may be quite different) of modern era, being spoken across the planet either as the first language, or as the second official language in some countries, or it is only tought in schools in order to make people able to communicate (Graddol, 1997: 10).Another popular approach to English as a first, second and foreign language is the one called the "circles" of English: the inner, the outer and the expanding circles (Crystal, 2003: 61). Most people speak lingua franca as their second language, not their first, which means that their mother tongue is not usually endangered, although it may be influenced without losing the national linguistic identity. Unification of communication, technological development and travel have had a great impact on just about all languages, and the globalisation process deepens this impact. On the one hand, English as an international communication language influences most of the languages, and on the other hand, all of the improved ways of travelling and communication have been and continue to be standardizing influences on the English language. Contemporary English is characterized by two major features: internationalization and diversification. The internationalization of English entails the diversification of English.

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As English is a widely spread language in the entire world, it is considered the dominant international language in communication, science, business, aerial and maritime communications, diplomacy, entertainment etc., a language that is absorbing aspects of cultures worldwide as it continues to grow. In order to ease the international use, basic English (especially American English) is simplified. Therefore, we can find restricted vocabularies for communication in specific areas: seaspeak, airspeak, policespeak, tunnelspeak etc., which means diverse ways of speaking English.

In the globalization context, some of the changes and the tendencies in English are the following:

- as a result of internationalization, English is penetrated by words coming from other languages: *aperitif, cliché, debutante, elite, motif, prestige, resume* etc. (from French), *confetti, fiasco, vendetta* etc. (from Italian), *leitmotif, hinterland, zeppelin* etc. (from German) etc.;
- translation-loans in English, i.e. compounds, derivatives and phrases translated from another language: *surplus value*, *thing-in-itself, world market, world outlook* (from German), *New Economic Policy, springization* (from Russian) etc.;
- spelling simplifications used in order to be closer to the pronunciation: *humor* (humour), *center* (centre), *thru* (through), *program* (programme), *medieval* (mediaeval) etc.;
- the tendency towards the loss of inflections: ***Who*** *did you see?* (*Whom* did you see?);
- the tendency to use Accusative pronominal forms *me, him, her, us, them* in emphatic position instead of *I, he, she, we, they: It's* ***me*** (It's *I*);
- the tendency to generalize the use of *will* in the Future Indicative: *I* ***will*** *phone him.* (I *shall* phone him);
- the tendency of replacing a Subjunctive form by an Indicative or by a Subjunctive equivalent: *If the weather* ***was*** *fine we would swim.* (If the weather *were* fine we would swim), or *I suggested that he* ***should take*** *the medicine regularly.* (I suggested that he *take* the medicine regularly);
- the tendency to ignore the rules concerning Sequence of Tenses or Indirect Speech: *He said that he* ***intends*** *to leave the country.* (He said that he *intended* to leave the country);
- the tendency towards the growing importance of word order.

The changes which have been taking place throughout the evolution of the English language are due both to its internal laws of development, and to some external factors which occur in the globalisation context.

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As we mentioned above, a consequence of using English as an internationalized language is that all the other languages, including Romanian, have suffered some influences, without losing its national linguistic identity.

Among these influences and tendencies the most noticeable ones are the following:

- the New Romanian Grammar system has been reorganized, partly based on English linguistic theories, i.e. on Structuralist, Generative-Transformational Grammar and Fillmore's Case Grammar approaches: the inclusion of morphological categories into classes, the new syntactical function of Object Complement, the restriction of Indirect Object to Dative case, the description of words in terms of [± features], the thematic roles of Romanian cases (Agent, Instrument, Pacient etc.) a.s.o.
- English words penetrated Romanian language mostly because of technical, economical social etc. development and we distinguish between necessary and luxury English borrowings. Necessary borrowings are words and phrases that had no correspondent in the Romanian language or that present certain advantages compared to the native term They have the advantage of precision, monosemanticism, concision and, moreover, international circulation: *football – fotbal, basketball – basket, ski – schi, match – meci,* (in sport); *airbag, hard, Internet, laptop, pager, site, soft, to scan – a scana, to print – a printa* (technical terms)*, curriculum curricular, grant, master* (in education), *management, sponsor, dealer, broker* (economical terms)*, chips, fast food, hamburger, hot dog.* Most of the words included in this category have denotative functions, but some of them have a conotative or stylistic function, used in paralel with an already existing word, to express certain stylistical nuances: *party – petrecere, happy-end – sfârşit fericit, week-end – sfârşit de săptămână, live – transmisie în direct, summit – întâlnire la vârf* etc.
- The use of Luxury English borrowings is the result of the subjective tendency of certain social categories to gain linguistic individuality: *advertising, band, gol-getter, hairstylist, fashion, lider (leader), team, toast, trend* etc.

Some of the denotative English borrowings can seldom be adapted phonetically: *brandy, hobby, lobby, thriller, western* etc. Other words are misused, and therefore are considered morphologic pleonasms: *pachet de snacksuri/sticksuri, mijloacele mass-media*, or semantic pleonasms: *bani cash, henţ cu mâna, hobby preferat* etc. In some cases a depreciation of meaning is obvious: *know-how – transfer de tehnologie, business – bişniţă.*

In conclusion we may say that there is nothing new in the fact that English is The Language of the world today and that the globalization process gave it more power and influence upon the other languages, including Romanian, without losing their national

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linguistic identity though. A certain system evolved based on English as an international language which would be hard to remove, at least not in the close future and at least not in this globalization process.

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