BOUNDARIES OF ACCEPTABILITY OR *A APLICA PENTRU O SLUJBĂ* (APPLYING FOR A JOB)

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the current paper is to approach some Romanian words which make possible a discussion about nuances. A particular phrase (***applying*** *for a job*) *has attracted our attention due to the fact it is frequently used in oral discourses and also in different forms of the written media*, *but it is not listed in the Romanian dictionaries. If the noun job could be considered adapted*, *there being no hesitation regarding its association with one gender class or in indicating a plural form and the verb to apply could be adopted with the English meaning*, *in the case of registering a new synonym for the word place* (*Rom. loc*) *the label would be possible acceptance.*

Key words: *shades*, *adaptation*, *adoption*, *acceptance*, *linguistic inquisitiveness*

The current article begins with a query: does the linguist, in his intercession to inspect the language and its governing principles of construction and evolution, abide by all conventionalisms? Is the linguist a partisan of convenient perceptions, of depersonalized adherences to clichés institutionalized by tradition? Is the linguist a relentless person who only practices correction, an unyielding barrier standing against innovation? Isn't he, the linguist, constantly engaged in contending at a feverish pace against wilted patterns? With the wariness needed to inscribe outside lavishness, we daresay that a linguist does not always let himself ensnared by statements, that, in his attempt to disseminate the particles of the traditional mental frame, he does not let himself intimidated by the existence of a plan of mathematical tight-fitting inferences. There are linguists who upbraid the actual being of a flaunty and hubristic wall of the aggressive and exclusivist individual[1], who plead for desisting from some of the linguistic prejudices[2], who blame the insertion in linguistic units of expressions that contradict the logic of the message, or alter the evoked reality[3], who fervently criticize equating between *deviation* (a *variation* that

[1] G. Gruiță, *Moda lingvistică 2007. Norma*, *uzul şi abuzul*, Piteşti, Editura Paralela 45, 2006: 197.
[2] Idem, *Gramatică normativă. 77 de întrebări. 77 de răspunsuri*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia, 1994: 46.
[3] *Ibidem*.

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deviates from the standard or norm[4]) and *error*[5] (a *wrong* action attributable to bad judgment[6]) and who invest the term *deviation* as a prominent factor in the evolution of a language[7]. The compelling status of the norm does not incriminate in whatsoever context *deviation* and does not suppress all attempts of *instating* deviation as a primary source in shaping the various segments of the language. Explaining the term *deviation* abstracts away from past essays to regard the language as a constant, immutable phenomena. Linguistic studies which have appeared after the influence exerted by the purist ideas had changed magnitude, resent this strict and highly prescriptive approach[8]. The Romanian Literary language is not immutable and evolves greatly by accepting some of the deviations[9].

Moreover, the existence of controversial issues in Romanian Linguistics[10] sustains that language study is the result of what is known as linguistic inquisitiveness[11] and not of reformulating inferences unverified by the researcher himself.

Having in view these issues, could language documentation and description be labeled as a clear-cut framed system or rather as an assemblage in which *innovation* – term deprived of any derogatory hue – arouses a debate upon nuances, boundaries that can be transgressed, intellectual intuition? If there is possible to operate a distinction between *innovation* and *mistake*, if there is belief in the wary comprehensive attitude of the linguist, sciential of the entire language system[12], if the bondage to intransigent purism[13] is a highly debatable topic, could there be talked about customary, weakened formulas, about absurd and futile rules? The answer is predictable if we perceive the phenomena of accepting some words of foreign origin as being a component of an open system, in

[4] www.dictionary.babylon.com.

[5] Whereas language mistakes have been a label for an insufficient degree of training – G. Gruiță, *Eliminarea greşelilor de acord*, în LL, XXVII (1972), vol. I: 164, *deviation* is regarded as the source of every linguistic modification – Valeria Guțu Romalo, *Aspecte ale evoluției limbii române*, Bucureşti, Editura Humanitas Educațional, colecția Repere, 2005: 31. *A mistake* needs to be condemned as being incongruous with the linguistic norms, but the idea that in many cases linguistic modifications, *language renewals*, are deviations which have generalized – Valeria Guțu Romalo, *ibidem* should be accepted.

[6] www.dictionary.babylon.com.

[7] See Valeria Guțu Romalo, *ibidem*: 30-35 *passim*, the difference between *mistake*, meaning a rather isolated alteration, with the collocation *linguistic deviation* – susceptible to lead to linguistic *modifications* is being highlighted.

[8] Valeria Guțu Romalo, *Abaterea lingvistică*, in LR, X 6/1961: 528.

[9] *Ibidem*, p. 532.

[10] Mioara Avram, *Studii de sintaxă a limbii române*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, 2007: 114.

[11] *Ibidem*: 115.

[12] Al. Niculescu, *Între corectitudine şi greşeală – sau despre „cultivarea" limbii române standard actuale*, in LL, 3/1972: 343-344.

[13] *Ibidem*: 348.

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perpetual and intense evolution. The dynamic character[14] of the language is given by *deviations*, innovations which avert and contradict linguistic organization existent at a certain point[15].

However, if we admit the fact that the language has to change, this does not mean that we accept all changes without exception. We consider that giving a discourse an ostentatious neological character or bestowing some words with the titles of omnipresent and omnipotent, for example: *vis* ***cool*** (*cool dream*), *ceaşcă/cană* ***cool***, (cool *cup*), *tunsoare* ***cool*** (cool *haircut*), *persoană* ***cool*** (cool *person*), *fonturi*[16] ***cool***[17] (cool *font*, etc.) is a mere proof of artificial "originality". An argument in the favor of the permissive[18] character of the linguistic norm is the plurality of answers to the question: *Which terms do we accept*, *which terms do we adopt and which terms do we adapt?* The answer lies in accepting or resenting terms such as *possible*, *tolerant*, *accepted*, *official.*

As follows, we will focus on the words: *a aplica*, *job*, *locație* (*to apply*, *job*, *location*), in an attempt to demonstrate that the Romanian language is dynamic and subject to change, which implies *a great mobility of the vocabulary*[19]. *Introducing new vocabulary items* and *developing new meanings* are factors of paramount importance which contribute to the perpetual renewal of the vocabulary[20].

The approach upon the above mentioned words was based on consulting prominent Romanian dictionaries as these represent a source of linguistic analyses regarding meaning, the usage of words, their interpretations from the perspective of varied speakers and in varied communicational backgrounds[21], but also on the comparison of some contexts in which the lexical units we have made reference at had been actualized.

Job is the one of the words which drew our attention due to its frequent use in oral discourses, but also in written communication: ***Joburi*** *în cazinouri şi hoteluri din Nevada şi California* ("Jobs in casinos and hotels from Nevada and California")[22]; *Un* ***job*** *în care nu sunt admise greşelile*

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[14] For the definition of the phenomena known as *dynamic*, see Angela Bidu-Vrănceanu, *Dinamica sensurilor în româna actuală*, in LL, XLII, 3-4/1997: 39.

[15] Valeria Guțu Romalo, *Aspecte ale evoluției limbii române*, 2005: 42.

[16] Word registered in *ibidem*; see s.v. *font*.

[17] Word registered in ****Dicționarul ortografic*, *ortoepic şi morfologic al limbii române*¸ ediția a II-a revăzută şi adăugită, Bucureşti, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 2005; see s.v. *cool*.

[18] We consider that this word, used without any pejorative shade, is justified because it is opposed to the idea of *coercion*, *constraint* – usually associated with the norm.

[19] Angela Bidu-Vrănceanu (coord.), *Lexic comun*, *lexic specializat*, Bucureşti, Editura Universității din Bucureşti, 2000: 7.

[20] See *ibidem.*

[21] *Ibidem*: 10-11. For a detailed description about dictionaries, see *ibidem*: 10-15.

[22] Taken from the article *Slujbe de vară în străinătate*, 29.06.2009, posted on the site of the newspaper *Evenimentul Zilei* – www.evz.ro.

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("The job in which mistakes are not forgiven")[23]; *Mulți vizitatori au plecat resemnați de la târgul de **joburi*** ("Many visitors left resigned from the **job** fair")[24]; *Studii sociologice arată că peste jumătate din români îşi schimbă **jobul** mai des*, *cel puțin o dată la trei ani* ("Sociological studies show that over half of the Romanians change their **job** more often, at least once every three years")[25]. This word is not a *lexical novelty*[26], fact proven by his recording in a lexicographic study from *1978*[27], where, apart from the definition, synonyms are given: Rom*. slujbă* "employment", Rom*. serviciu* "occupation". This word is in the present-day Romanian in free variation with these synonyms[28], fact that is certified by the possibility of using them in the contexts exemplified above.

Including among its synonyms the word *business* (Rom*. afacere*[29]) is materialized in current conversation by the tendency to add to the already existent meaning the characteristic: *profitable*. As a result, *job*, synonym with *business* (meaning an activity with a favorable result[30]) is sometimes used for designating a lucrative employment. Phrases such as: *a most wanted job*[31], *a successful job* [32] are frequently used. The word *job* is, in our opinion, a necessary borrowing, being integrated among lexical units which, in spite of having an equivalent in Romanian, have certain advantages in comparison to the Romanian term (breviloquence, precision, expressivity, international use, etc.)[33]. If this was only a term "in trend", used out of

[23] The title of an article, 9.05.2009, posted on the site of the newspaper *Jurnalul Național* – www.jurnalul.ro.

[24] Taken from the article *«Vânătoare» pentru locuri de muncă. Aşteptările şi calificarea multor participanți nu s-au potrivit cu posturile oferite*, 25.04.2009, posted on the site of the newspaper *Gardianul* – www.gardianul.ro.

[25] *Şefia la români. Patru metode pentru a avansa pe scara ierarhică într-o firmă*, 2.09.2009, posted on *ibidem*.

[26] The expression belongs to Mioarei Avram, *Noutăți reale şi noutăți aparente în vocabularul românesc actual*, in LL, XLIII 1/1998: 31-34 *passim.*

[27] See Florin Marcu, Constant Maneca, *Dicționar de neologisme*, ediția a III-a, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, 1978; see also *ibidem*, 1986, s.v. *job* and Florin Marcu, *Marele dicționar de neologisme*, Bucureşti, Editura Saeculum I. O., 2000.

[28] The words *serviciu* and *slujbă* are also given as synonyms for *job* in Maria Păun, *Dicționar integral de sinonime*, Bucureşti, Editura Saeculum Vizual, 2007. It is added, though, the word *business*.

[29] See Elena Ciobanu, Maria Păun, Magdalena Popescu-Marin, Zizi Ştefănescu-Goangă, *Dicționar de neologisme*, Bucureşti, Editura Floarea Darurilor, Editura Rotech Pro, 2000, s.v. *job*, where the given synonyms are: *slujbă*, *serviciu*, *afacere.*

[30] www.dexonline.ro, s.v. *afacere*.

[31] See *CONCURS*: *Concediază-ți şeful*, 1.06.2009, posted on the site of the newspaper „Financiarul" – www.financiarul.ro; see also *Caută site-ul potrivit pentru jobul dorit*, 10.02.2008, posted on www.evz.ro; *Bursa Locurilor de Munca Online. Aici gasesti Jobul Dorit*, 17.03.2009, posted on www.comunicatemedia.ro.

[32] *Concediază-ți şeful! Învață cum să-ți găseşti jobul pe care îl meriți*, 1.05.2009, posted on www.financiarul.ro.

[33] Adriana Stoichițoiu Ichim, *Observații privind influența engleză în limbajul publicistic actual* (*II*), in LL, XLI, 3-4/1996: 25.

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unjustified display of some foreign elements, it would have passed in the category of *Barbarisms* (unadapted lexical borrowings and, after a while, abandoned"[34]). Although *job* is integrated in the class of *Anglicisms*[35], recent borrowings from British English and American English, *not adapted or not fully* adapted[36], the plural form being *joburi*[37] entitles us to consider it *adapted* to Romanian language system, as the formal changes are concerned, as it follows the same inflection pattern as Romanian neuters: (for example: *jug*, pl. *juguri* – Latin word[38]). Furthermore, the enclitic Article is attached *without* hyphen, the borrowing finishing in a letter of the Romanian alphabet, pronounced exactly like in Romanian: *jobul*[39]. This contributes to solving the dilemma related to the status of this word in Romanian. Therefore there are not uncertainties regarding its grammatical gender, its plural or its articulated forms.

The word *a aplica* (*to apply*) caught our attention due to its usage in the expression a aplica pentru un job/o bursă/o perioadă de probă (*to apply for a job/for a scholarship/for a probation*): *Mai mult de 300 de studenți diin toată țara pot aplica pentru o perioadă de probă în timpul verii* ("More than 300 de students from all over the country can **apply** for a probation in the summertime.")[40]; *Pentru a putea aplica pentru slujbă*, *candidații trebuie să aibă studii universitare* ("In order to **apply** for the job, candidates need to have University Degrees.")[41]; *Era deja aststent universitar când a aplicat pentru o bursă de doctorat* ("He was already a University Assistant when he **applied** for a doctorate scholarship.")[42]; *Pentru a aplica pentru un job în acest domeniu*, *trebuie să ai scrisori de recomandare* ("In order to **apply** for a job in this domain you must have letters of recommendation.")[43]; *Poți să aplici pentru o bursă de doctorat în Istoria medicinei până la 14 aprilie* ("You can **apply** for a doctorate scholarship in the History of Medicine until 14 April").[44] The verb *a aplic*a ("to apply") is not registered with this meaning

[34] Petru Zugun, *Între atitudine antineologică şi realitate lingvistică*, in LL, XLIII, 1/1998: 36.

[35] See ****Dicționarul ortografic*, *ortoepic şi morfologic al limbii române*, s.v. *job*.

[36] Adriana Stoichițoiu Ichim, *Observații privind influența engleză în limbajul publicistic actual* (*I*), in LL, XLI, 2/1996: 37.

[37] See ****Dicționarul ortografic*, *ortoepic şi morfologic al limbii române*, s.v. *job*.

[38] See Alexandru Metea, *Limba română actuală*, Deva, Editura Emia, 2008: 37.

[39] See ****Dicționarul ortografic*, *ortoepic şi morfologic al limbii române*, capitolul *Principalele norme ortografice*, *ortoepice şi morfologice ale limbii române*: XCII.

[40] *300 de stagii pentru studenti in companii ca IBM*, *Oracle sau Microsoft*, 20.05.2009, posted on the site of the newspaper „Ziarul Financiar" – www.zf.ro.

[41] *Se caută director la Europol. Salariul oferit: 13.500 de euro lunar*, 7.05.2009, posted on www.financiarul.ro.

[42] *Un român studiază la NASA inundațiile din România*, 16.10.2008, posted on www.ziare.com.

[43] *Oracle scoate la bătaie 160 de posturi pentru toate nivelurile de experiență*, 2.05.2007, posted on the site of the newspaper „Cotidianul" – www.cotidianul.ro.

[44] *Burse. Medicină la Newcastle*, 26.03.2008, posted on the site of the newspaper „Gândul" – www.gandul.info**.**

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in the Romanian Dictionaries[45], even though the usage confirms its presence in the semantical sphere of the verbs *to ask*, *to submit*, *to subscribe* (Rom. *a se înscrie*). If we adopt this meaning, the verb *to apply* enriches its semantic area and changes its morphological status (it *also*[46] becomes intransitive). Thus, in the context *I have applied for a scholarship abroad.*, the verb loses its possibility of receiving a Direct Object, the noun situated on the second position in the verbal phrase having the syntactical function of a Prepositional Object[47]. The word *to apply* comes from Fr. *appliquer*, Lat. *applicare*[48], reality which does not contradict the opinion that the meaning *to subscribe* comes from English, where the verb *to apply* also means "submit a request"[49], apart from "put to practical use" (meaning which can be found for the Romanian verb *a aplica*[50]). Besides, the phenomenon that words acquire *new* meanings is well-known. A relevant example would be Rom. *cârtiță* (Engl. *mole*), a loan from Bg. *kărtica*, Scr. *krtica*[51], which borrowed the meaning "spy" from Engl. *mole*[52].

If the noun *job* could be considered *adapted*, there being no hesitation regarding its association with one gender class or in indicating a plural form and the verb *to apply* could be *adopted* with the English meaning, in the case of registering a new synonym for the word *place* (Rom. *loc*) the label would be possible *acceptance*. The word *location* (Rom. *locație*) – as a contextual alternative for *place* retained our attention by its spontaneous usage: *Locația nu a fost aleasă la întâmplare*, *factorii geoclimatici au fost luați în calcul* ("**The location** was not chosen at random, the geoclimatic factor was taken into consideration")[53]; *Poți mânca bine şi destul de ieftin*, *dacă iei în calcul locația şi serviciul fără cusur* ("You can eat well and quite cheap if you have in view **the location** and the

[45] We have consulted the following dictionaries: Florin Marcu, Constant Maneca, *Dicționar de neologisme*, ediția a III-a, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, 1986, s.v. *a aplica*; Florin Marcu, *op. cit.*; Luiza Seche, Mircea Seche, *Dicționarul de sinonime al limbii române*, ediția a II-a, revăzută şi adugită, Bucureşti, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 1999; Maria Păun, *op. cit*; Elena Ciobanu, Maria Păun, Magdalena Popescu-Marin, Zizi Ştefănescu-Goangă, *op. cit.*; www.dexonline.ro.

[46] In Florin Marcu, *op. cit.*, the verb *to apply* (Rom. *a aplica*) the morphological values are: *tranzitiv* şi *reflexiv*.

[47] ******Gramatica limbii române.* II. *Enunțul*, [ediția a III-a], Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, 2005 names the *Indirect Object* with a preposition *Prepositional Object.*

[48] See Florin Marcu, *op. cit.*, s.v. *aplicá*.

[49] See ******Merriam-Webster's Pocket Dictionary***, Massachusetts, Incorporated Springfield, [1995], s.v. *apply*. For a complex definition, see www.dictionary.babylon.com, *where apply is defined*: "ask (for something): *He applied for a leave of absence*; *She applied for college*; *apply for a job*". We reckon that the examples are relevant to prove the semantic transfer from English towards Romanian.

[50] See *ibidem*.

[51] See www.dexonline.ro.

[52] See Mioara Avram, *Noutăți reale şi noutăți aparente în vocabularul românesc actual*: 33-34.

[53] *Echitație la malul mării*, 7.07.2009, posted on www.jurnalul.ro.

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faultless service")[54]; *Experiența va fi unică*, *cu un nou program şi o nouă locație pentru petrecerile în aer liber – terasa Coca-Cola* ("There will be a unique experience with a new schedule and a new **location** for the open-air parties – The Coca-Cola terrace")[55]; *Dezvoltarea zonei turistice situate pe malul Lacului Bâlea şi în jurul locației aflate la granița dintre județele Argeş şi Sibiu le-a determinat pe oficialitățile județului să încerce să creeze…* ("The development of the touristic area situated on the shore of Bâlea Lake and surrounding the **location** found at the boundary between the counties Argeş and Sibiu, had determined the county's officials to try to create…")[56]. By analyzing the above examples, we can conclude that *location*[57], registered as a juridical term[58] is currently used in unspecialized speech, becoming a synonym for *place*. The expansion of word usage beyond a strictly specialized domain is a generally admitted theoretical issue and an easily detectable aspect in every-day speech[59]. Nevertheless, a delimitation between the two registers must be made, for not encouraging the chaotic migration from one segment to another. In this case, we cannot talk about the development of a figurative meaning of a Romanian term, *location*, but rather about accepting a *homonym* for a term already present in the Romanian dictionaries, due to the semantic divergence.

In conclusion, we consider it safe to state that borrowings are of paramount importance as they are in accordance with the extralinguistic reality, but we are refractory in accepting terms whose presence in the realm of language is justified exclusively due to usage. We have to be selective, operating with semantic nuances: *to adapt – to adopt – to accept.*

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[54] *UNDE MÂNCĂM – Cină în doi*, 6.06.2009, posted on www.gandul.info.

[55] *Târgu-Mureş*: *The Prodigy*, *Nine Inch Nails şi Tiesto vin la Peninsula*, 23.04.2009, posted on www.adevarul.ro.

[56] *Sibiu: Centru de informare turistică la Bâlea Lac*, 28.06.2009, posted on www.adevarul.ro.

[57] The synonyms of the word we had in view are: *chirie*, *închiriere*, *simbrie* (Engl. *rent*) – see Gh. Bulgăr, *Dicționar de sinonime*, ediția a VI-a, Bucureşti, Editura Palmyra, 1995 and Luiza Seche, Mircea Seche, *op. cit.*, s.v. *locație*.

[58] Florin Marcu, *op. cit.*, s.v. *locație*.

[59] Angela Bidu-Vrănceanu (coord.), *op. cit.*: 67.

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