ANGLICISM IN THE ROMANIAN POLITICAL LANGUAGE

Diana PÎRLOGEA (MA student)
University of Craiova

ABSTRACT

This article is intended to bring into attention some English terms, *less known*, *which are prevailing used in Politics. Due to this idea*, *I have proposed a list of English terms with use in Politics and I have analyzed them in 2 stages: firstly*, *I have noticed the semantic aspect with the view of knowing their significances both in English and Romanian*; *secondly*, *I have paid attention to their orthographic and orthoepic aspect because during the borrowing into Romanian*, *some of these terms suffered some modifications worthy to be mentioned. In addition*, *I have also included in this analysis those Romanian borrowed terms characterized not by their English form*, *but by the meaning of the English terms. However*, *it is to be expected that in a few years the English terms will replace the translated terms following the example:* politică de stânga < leftism *as a consequence of the English terms` clarity and accuracy.*

Key words: *English influence*, *adapted borrowings*, *partial adapted borrowings*, *vocabulary*, *semantic analysis*

The present Romanian vocabulary is facing an "avalanche of Anglicism"[1] (English lexical borrowings) that gradually comprises most of the activity fields, especially specialized languages. When we discuss about massive English borrowings, we particularly refer to the post communist era (ever since 1989), and the analysis we conduct will prove that we have generally used the term *Anglicism* according to Adriana Stoichițoiu Ichim's definition: "recent borrowings from British and American English, which are incompletely or hardly adapted (as a consequence, they are written and pronounced in Romanian in a very similar manner to that in the original language)"[2].

The political language abounds in such terms borrowed from English into Romanian, in the context of the global politics, ubiquitously promoted by the media, in this era of the computerized technology, which is why it has awaken the interest of many scholars who have conducted research concerning this matter. Some of these scholars who have given a special attention to these borrowings (and particularly to those belonging to the political jargon) are: Mioara Avram, Angela Bidu-Vrănceanu, Adriana Stoichițoiu Ichim, Rodica Zafiu, George Irimia and others.

---

[1] Adriana Stoichițoiu Ichim, *Vocabularul limbii române actuale. Dinamică. Influențe*, *creativitate*, Bucureşti, Editura ALL, 2008: 83.

[2] Idem, *ibidem*.

BDD-A3772 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:04:30 UTC)

In what follows we integrate a list of English borrowings, which we analyze from a lexical perspective (specifying the meaning/-s in English and that/those in English) and from on orthographic and orthoepic perspective as well (in order to notice the possible changes in meaning and pronunciation: *behavioralism*, *board*, *board-room*, *commonwealth*, *domino theory*, *fabian*, *fabianism*, *filibuster*, *grey area*, *labourism*, *leftism*, *impeachment*, *rightism*, *self-governing*. On this line, we have used the *Oxford Advanced Leaner's Dictionary of Current English*, *Dictionar explicativ ilustrat al limbii române* and Sergiu Tamaş, *Dicționar politic: instituțiile democrației şi cultura civică*. Furthermore, the terms are illustrated in specific contexts; as a source, we have used the online Romanian and English written press.

I. Semantic analysis

American English offers to Romanian language an interesting term not only as form, but also as meaning, especially regarding from the point of the meaning that modifications have produced. We refer to the meaning of the term *behavioral* (*behavioural* in British English): "the theory that all human behaviour is learnt by adapting to outside conditions and that learning is not influenced by thoughts and feelings" (*Oxford Dictionary*: 100). However, the borrowed term with the form *behavioralism* suffered a significance extent, being used most frequently in Politics: "American political direction which studies, by multidisciplinary means, the political behaviour" (*DEXI*: 209).

"The *behavioralism* is retrieved at the commencement of the political theory trend appeared in USA which shift off the accent from the study of institutional problems and the analysis of political processes, viewed in all their complexity". (*Adevarul*, 9.05.2007, *The European Integration and Its Theories*)

The polisemantic term *board*, used in English with a specific meaning in Politics: "a group of people who have power to make decision and control a company or other organization" (*Oxford Dictionary*: 124) is encountered in Romanian language with the same meaning (a little compacted), but as a monosemantic term, specialized: "management, committee, commission" (*DEXI*: 232). Apart from this meaning, *Oxford Dictionary* also offers the following definitions: "a long thin piece of strong hard material, especially wood, used, for example, for making floors, building walls and roofs and making boats; (especially in compounds) o piece of wood, or other strong material, that is used for a special purpose; used in the name of some organization; the meals that are provided when you stay in a hotel; (American English) exam that you take when you apply to go to college in the US; the stage in a theatre", but the lexicological necessities of Romanian language have not reclaimed, for now, the borrowing of the afferent collocation. In addition, when analyzing Romanian political discourses, about the word *board*, we could say that it is a beginner

BDD-A3772 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:04:30 UTC)

because it has not been used frequently. This fact justifies the absence of this collocation *board-room* from this development stage of the political language. However, it might be said that, under the development of English as a language of international use, specialized languages, and not only, will use borrowed term and collocations which have the advantage of a concise and objective communication. As a result, we are entitled to believe that the *board-room* expression is going to be used instead of the meaning: "room in which take place the meetings of a company's committee".

"The PSD president, Mircea Geoană, stated that on 4 May the FMI *board* will decide on the agreement, in this case the financing of Romania could start relatively soon". (*Adevarul*, 24.03.2009, *Free to Unemployment*)

An interesting observation can be made if we analyze comparatively the meanings of the term *commonwealth* from both English and Romanian, it can be made an interesting observation: during the process of borrowing this term into Romanian vocabulary, the guidelines of the political language as well as the necessity of development and enrichment have acted together with meaning stints with a view on specializing in a certain language. As a result, the term *commonwealth* is used in English as a proper noun and has the following meanings: "1. an organization consisting of the United Kingdom and most of the countries that used to be a part of the British Empire; 2. used in the official names of, and to refer to, some states of the US (Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Virginia); 3. (American English) an independent country that is strongly connected to the USA; 4. used in the names of some groups of countries or states that have chosen to be politically linked with each other" (*Oxford Dictionary*: 243). In Romanian, there are only two meanings, the first having a political and economical character, whereas the second one derives from English: "1. a group of states which form an association with political and economical benefits for all the states involved; 2. (proper noun) a association of Great Britain with states that have been under the British Empire's domination" (*DEXI*: 407).

"Al-Qaeda terrorists, disguised in journalists have planned a attack against the Queen of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, Elisabeth the II-nd by introducing explosive substances at the *Commonwealth* Summit on November 2007 at Kampala". (*Ziua*, 14.01.2008, *Great Britain's Queen Almost Assassinated by Al-Qaeda*)

The English collocation *domino theory* or *domino effect* is borrowed into Romanian with a use in the political area: "a theory that if one nation comes under Communist control, then neighboring nations will also come under Communist control; (*Gaskell's Dictionary*); "if a country is under the communist regime the neighboring countries will also be under the communism control" (Sergiu Tamaş, 1993: 286). Apart from the Romanian language, and also apart from this meaning, in English this collocation is

BDD-A3772 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:04:30 UTC)

used with an unspecialized meaning: “a theory that one event will set off a train of similar events” (*Gaskell’s Dictionary*).

“The economical war was won because the Russians were deterred to broaden their influence in South-Western Asia. In Vietnam they spent the largest part of their resources. The *domino theory* was right. Its application in ’89 is fresh” (*Ziua*, 25.08.2007, *End of warrants at Kremlin*).

The terms *fabian* and *fabianism*, borrowed from English are used in both languages as specialized terms as a consequence of the significance of the proper noun from which they were created: Fabian < Quintus Fabius Maximus, also known as Cunctator, “temporizatorul” a roman general well known for his tactics fighting against Hannibal (*DEXI*: 705). So, the common noun *fabian* has the following meanings: “1. partisan of fabianism; 2. member of the English organization “The Fabian Society”, and the fabianism refers to “the doctrine of the Fabian Society from England, at the end of the XIX-th century which stipulated the gradual change from capitalism to socialism through reformation and registration in the existent legal background” (*DEXI*: 705).

“In this way, Mitrany is situated in the British stem of the movements which, as well as *fabianism*, have a incredulous reporting to the capacity of the political to welfare” (*Adevarul*, 21.02.2007, *The European integration and its theories* (*I*)*: David Mitrany’s functionalism*).

The term *filibuster* borrowed from the American English is consigned in both idioms with the same specialized meaning for Politics: “a long speech made in a parliament in order to delay a vote” (*Oxford Dictionary*: 472); “the practice of saying endless discourses in the USA Congress by those who tried to block the adoption of unwanted laws” (*DEXI*: 730). In addition, Romanian language formed from the noun *filibusterism* “tactic of those who use filibuster” (*DEXI*: 30).

“For the moment, the democrats have 49 as well as the republicans, beneficing of the vote of the two independent senators from the forum, Joseph Lieberman and Bernard Sanders. However, the majority is fragile in what concerns a procedure as *filibuster* (method of gradual obstruction) (*Gândul*, 4.11.2008, *The American Congress as Important as the Presidency*).

As well, the English collocation *grey area* is used by the Romanian vocabulary thanks to its meaning: “an area of a subject or situation that is not clear or does not fit into a particular group and is therefore difficult to define or deal with” (*Oxford Dictionary*: 564). In other words, our language did not borrow the lexical construction, but only its meaning.

“The use of white phosphorus (WP) and other incendiary weapons such as napalm against civilians is prohibited; this *grey area* gives the US more of a get-out clause” (*The Independent*, 17.11.2005, *Incendiary Weapons: the Big White Lie*).

BDD-A3772 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:04:30 UTC)

The English term *impeachment* has the same situation as *grey area*. So, Romanian language does not use this term, only its meaning: “a court or an official body, especially in the US” (*Oxford Dictionary*: 649).

“Kucinich announced his intention to seek Bush's *impeachment* Monday night, when he read the lengthy document into the record” (CNNPolitics.com, 11.06.2008, Kucinich introduces Bush impeachment resolution).

The name of an English party represented an important source of borrowing terms for the Romanian political language. It is about the *Labour Party* “one of the main British political parties, on the political left, that had traditionally represented the interests of working people” (*Oxford Dictionary*: 717). Connected to this name, *laburismul* is “the political doctrine with reformer social-democratic character of some Labour Parties, initiated in Great Britain” (*DEXI*: 1013). Using the devices of vocabulary enrichment, were formed common nouns, differenced by their gender: *laburist*, *-ă* “1. *Partid Laburist* = social-democratic party from England and some Anglophone countries; 2. member of a Labour Party; 3. which belongs to Labour Party or to the Labourists, which refers to the policy and ideology of a Labour Party or to the Labourists”.

“The British prime-minister, Tony Blair, reinvested with the 3rd warrant in Downing Street is contested by the members of the Parliament from inside of their own party, the *Labour Party*” (*Ziarul financiar*, 13.05.2005, *Labourists Critics of Blair Feed His Replacement in Downing Street*).

If in Romanian there are no peculiar terms for the so called *political right* and *political left*, the English dictionaries present the terms *rightism* and *leftism* which will probably substitute the Romanian lexical constructions (*politică de dreapta*, *politică de stânga*) in the possibility of the existence of a global policy. Furthermore, the two English terms have the advantage of concision and accuracy. These characteristics are necessary for the political language, in general, and the political discourse, in particular. As a result, the meanings of the two words are: “1. the ideology of the political right/left. 2. belief in or support of the tenets of the political right/left” (*Gaskell’s Dictionary*).

The Next Radicalism: *Rightism* without Jingoism, *Leftism* without Political Correctness (Attackthesystem.com, *The next radicalism rightism without jingoism*, *leftism without political correctness*).

In addition, the meaning and not the form of the word *self-governing* is used in Romanian; *self-governing* “having the right and the authority to control something such as a country or an institution” (*Oxford Dictionary*: 557).

“A new page of history is about to turn for Greenland, as the Danish province becomes a *self-governing* country on June 21” (*The Epoche Time*, 20.05.2009, *Greenland to Become Self-Governing*).

As showed above, we can group the terms presented into:

BDD-A3772 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:04:30 UTC)

- borrowings with the same or almost the same form and the English meaning: *behavioralism*, *board*, *commonwealth*, *fabian*, *fabianism*, *laburism*;

- borrowings with Romanian form, but the meaning is from English (the translations of the English terms): *cameră de şedinţă* (*board* room), *teoria dominoului* (*domino theory*), *subiect greu de rezolvat*/*subiect tabu* (*grey area*), *politică de stânga* (*leftism*), *politică de dreapta* (*rightism*), *corp diplomatic* (*impeachment*), *autoguvernare* (*self-governing*).

Therefore, from the semantic analysis of these terms we can observe that there are situations in which the borrowed terms preserve their meaning or are subjected to modifications. Hence, the meaning modifications have been: *meaning extension* (when from the basis meaning was produced a widening of its field) and *meaning reduction* (some meanings from the mother-language do not appear in the language which have borrowed the terms).

Moreover, the meaning modification of these terms have some advantages for scientists and for language because they show how the rules of our language have influenced them (they have not been only borrowed), emphasizing the meaning modifications for the continuous development and innovation of a language.

II. Orthographic and orthoepic analysis

Considering the fact that the present analysis presents both English word forms and English word meanings lent to Romanian, we will analyze from the orthographic and semantic point of view those words completely and partially borrowed from English.

Therefore, from the perspective of orthographic rules, it can be observed the following situations:

- terms which appear in both languages with the same form: *board*, *commonwealth*, *fabian*, *fabianism*, *filibuster*;

- terms which in Romanian have a slightly different form, unlike the English form: *behavioralism* (in English: *behavioural*/*behavioral*), *teoria dominoului* (in English: *domino theory*), *laburism* (in English: *labourism*).

From the perspective of orthoepic rules it can be observed the following situations:

English		*Romanian*
- *behavioralism*	/biheiviorəlism/	/biheivioralism/
- *board*	/bə:d/	/bord/
- *commonwealth*	/komənwelθ/	/komănwels/
- *fabian*	/feibiən/	/fabian/
- *fabianism*	/feibiənism/	/fabianism/
- *filibuster*	/filibʌstə(r)/	/filibaster/
- *impeachment*	/impi:tʃmənt/	/impičment/
- *labourism*	/leibərism/	/laburism/

BDD-A3772 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:04:30 UTC)

As it can be noticed, the borrowed terms are spelled identically or almost identically as they are in English.

However, it may be seen that in the case of these terms we discuss about *unadjusted borrowings* in general because even if the form is the same as in English the spelling tries to copy the spelling from the original language: *behavioralism*, *board*, *commonwealth*, *fabian*, *fabianism*, *filibuster*, so the phonetic principle is not applied: "the correspondence between spelling and pronunciation on which the system of the Romania spelling was framed"[3]. In spite of these things, the term *laburism* is a borrowed term adapted to the rules of our language: *labour*/leibə(r)/, *labourism*/leibərism/ (in English), *laburism*/laburism/ (in Romanian), pronunciation being congruent with spelling.

Takink into consideration all of the above, the modalities of adaptation to Romanian language are extremely important, because they offer much information concerning the assimilation of some foreign terms, mainly according to their non-conformation to the rules of the target language, and to the frequency of their use in the speech.

Moreover, we noticed that, since the terms that have made the object of this analysis are less used, there are not major changes in meaning or in spelling/pronunciation.

As a final remark, we consider that the question of the lexical borrowings into Romanian is extremely interesting and useful for the comprehension of the functional mechanism of the language: "the borrowing being irrefutably favored by the profound changes of the Romanian society, as well as of the *outside world* the development of the means of communication facilitates all kind of international contacts, thus diversifying the centers and fields of influence and similarity to a corollary , the sources of borrowings"[4].

BIBLIOGRAPHY

*** *Dicționar explicativ ilustrat al limbii române*, Iaşi, Editura ARC şi GUNIVAS, 2007.

*** *Oxford Advanced Leaner's Dictionary of Current English*, Oxford University Press, 2000.

Borchin, Mirela, *Manual de ortografie şi punctuație*, Timişoara, Editura Excelsior Art, 2005.

Guțu Romalo, Valeria, *Corectitudine şi greşeală*, ediția a III-a, revizuită şi adăugită, Bucureşti, Editura Humanitas, 2008.

Tămaş, Sergiu, *Dicționar politic: instituțiile democrației şi cultura civică*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, 1993.

[3] Mirela Borchin, *Manual de ortografie şi punctuație*, Timişoara, Editura Excelsior Art, 2005: 209.

[4] Valeria Guțu Romalo, *Corectitudine şi greşeală*, Bucureşti, Editura Humanitas, 2008: 239.

BDD-A3772 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:04:30 UTC)

Stoichițoiu Ichim, Adriana, “Influența engleză în terminologia politică a românei actuale”, în *Aspecte ale dinamicii limbii române actuale* (coord. Gabriela Pană Dindelegan), Bucureşti, Editura Universității din Bucureşti, 2004.
Irimia, George, “Surse ale coeziunii textuale în discursul politic”, în *Limba română. Aspecte sincronice şi diacronice* (coord. Gabriela Pană Dindelegan), Bucureşti, Editura Universității din Bucureşti, 2006.
Bidu-Vrănceanu, Angela, “Structură şi funcționare a lexicului specializat – termeni politici”, în *Limba română. Structură şi funcționalitate* (coord. Gabriela Pană Dindelegan), Bucureşti, Editura Universității din Bucureşti, 2005.
http:// www.specialist-online-dictionary. com/ political-dictionary. html (20.02.2009).
http:// people. virginia.edu/ ~rmf8a/gaskell/ poldict.htm (Gaskell, Arthur, George, *Compendium of Forms*, *Educational*, *Social*, *Legal*, *Commercial*, *The Whole Forming Of Encyclopedia of Reference*).

SOURCES

Ziarul *Adevărul*, 9.05.2007; 21.02.2007; 24.03.2009.
CNNPolitics.com, 11.06.2008.
Ziarul *Gândul*, 4.11.2008.
The Epoche Time, 20.05.2009.
The Independent, 17.11.2005.
Ziarul *Financiar*, 13.05.2005.
Ziarul *Ziua*, 25.08.2007; 14.01.2008.

BDD-A3772 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:04:30 UTC)