THE ASSIMILATION OF ANGLICISMS AND THEIR MOVEMENT TOWARD COMMON LANGUAGE

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Abstract

The appearance and the spread of new and dynamic terminologies in the EU, the frequent use of *anglicised terms* and the frequent use of abbreviations as part of professional jargon, made us select three English loans – *green job*, *bitcoin* and *cookie*, in order to describe not only their usage in various electronic texts, but also the determinologisation process of their specialised meaning. These terms are incompletely assimilated by the system of the *receiver language* and, in order to make the analysis herein, we noticed two aspects worth mentioning: on one hand, the morphological and the graphic assimilation of the mentioned terms is a long process due to objective and subjective reasons and, on the other hand, the *paraphrase* is the most frequent method to explain the specialised meaning. The differences are relevant and depend on the type of text, author and field.

Key words: *bitcoin, cookie, green job, English loan, vulgarisation*

Résumé

L'imposition de certaines nouvelles terminologies dans le paysage de l'Union européenne, l'utilisation fréquente d'une terminologie anglicisante et du jargon professionnel qui abonde de formes siglées, nous a déterminé de choisir trois emprunts d'anglais – *green job*, *bitcoin* et *cookie* pour décrire leur usage dans divers textes électroniques, mais aussi le degré de déterminologisation du sens spécialisé. Ces termes sont incomplètement assimilés par le système de la langue réceptrice et on a remarqué deux aspects: d'une part, l'assimilation morphologique, graphique de ces termes représente un processus de durée dû à des causes objectives et subjectives et, d'autre part, la *paraphrase* qui est le procédé le plus fréquent pour expliquer le sens spécialisé. Les différences apparaissent en fonction du type de texte, de son auteur et du domaine.

Mots-clés: *bitcoin, cookie, green job, emprunt anglais, vulgarisation*

1. "Anglicised terminology"

Linguistics is a major contributor to the individual or the comparative characterisation of terminologies, including the description of professional terminologies, in the sense that it establishes and emphasises their specific points and their aspects of general interest. The investigation of terminologies and terms affiliated to these terminologies, with the support of linguistic methods is correlated with a descriptive perspective. The description of the English loans usage in various types of discourse, focuses on a semantic analysis concerning not only the precision level, but also the process of determinologisation of the specialised meaning and methods used for its proper identification, also taking into account the influence of English on

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Romanian and the use of professional jargon in Romanian media. The type of communication and discourse, the level of determinologisation and, especially the *relation denotation-connotation* are the only relative criteria that indicate the distance between a *term* and *a word* (Bidu-Vrănceanu, 2010: 24-25).

Moreover, the relation term-word can be considered a dynamic relation between terminology and vocabulary, but specialists have outlined several features of languages at the terminological level, expressing their special interest in the cultural-historical background, for instance the English term *common law*, the Arabic term. *sharia* (Lerat, 1995: 48). This aspect was also analysed by other specialists (Depecker, 2002: 35, 54-55; Gaudin, 2003: 61) who signalled the difference between French and English in expressing the specialised meaning (for instance, the French *avant-bras* does not designate in English the same part of the *arm*). Therefore, finding a method to interpret the specialised meaning which enables the non-specialist to decode it and the role of semantic relations in setting objectives for a description are major concerns of *the external terminology*.

The relation of the specialised language with the common language indicates the dynamics of the relation between terminology and vocabulary. By obeying the rigid knot of the specialised meaning and by indicating the distance from the specialised meaning, one can manage to compare the actual situations of updating terms in texts with their definitions from general dictionaries available to ordinary speakers. Thus, the non-specialist's interest in the specialised language can be emphasised by certain fields of study, such as computer science, economics, short-term events that involve scientific and technical fields or aspects of general interest for the established terms. From the perspective of the linguistic norm, the assimilation of Anglicisms is characterised by two contradictory trends: to keep the original form or to adapt it to the system of the Romanian language; to use many fluctuating or divergent forms.

Among the causes that generate difficulties in the assimilation of Anglicisms we mention, first of all, the objective causes – recent loans, limited circulation in certain language registers (specialised, colloquial), and the distance (difference) between the English linguistic system and the Romanian linguistic system. The subjective causes that have a great impact on the assimilation process are the following:

Insufficient knowledge of English and/or insufficient knowledge of Romanian which leads to misspelling and pronunciation mistakes, pleonasms, mistranslations as a consequence of using false friends (*crude*, *sympathetic*, *eventually*, *candid*, etc) and improper contextual associations.

Convenience or the rule of minimum effort (also known as *operation facility*) which justifies the redundant use of abbreviations and, above all, the imitative spirit of speakers which justifies the English loans without making a slight effort to find Romanian equivalents or without adapting them to the Romanian linguistic system (Stoichițoiu-Ichim, 2006: 34-35).

The analysis herein is defended by the great impact of English terms on the Romanian economic terminology, as well as on the computer science terminology. Moreover, we take into consideration the lack of loan translations in Romanian dictionaries, their frequent use in the media, whereas the issues related to their historical background and etymology will be addressed in this article partially.

Rodica Zafiu, an outstanding linguist, has relevantly expressed her point of view concerning the Anglicisms from professional jargons *Neither necessary loans nor the*

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loans in fashion can be eliminated, because if they begin to move, this means they are not completely useless: *they replace a longer formula, specialise themselves for a shade of meaning or designate something additional. We can trust our language because it will select the best solutions. Sometimes, the Anglicism will remain but we no longer consider it as an intruder and, on other occasions, its translation is frequently used. Many Anglicisms are accepted in the specialized/professional jargon. It is normal for people belonging to smaller groups with common concerns to use a particular language, the language of their job. The problem arises when this jargon enters common language. Jargon has a practical function, but it is also a sign of belonging. When Anglicisms are just a way to show that you are part of a circle of connoisseurs, their use can be very troublesome, because it is excessive, unnecessary, fake*. (Lucian Popescu HotNews.ro Interview with philologist Rodica Zafiu about words in fashion, snobbery and clichés).

2. The assimilation of Anglicisms *green job, bitcoin, cookie*

The terms chosen by us – *cookie, green job, bitcoin* display special peculiarities even from the perspective of the *external terminology*. Significant economic changes in Europe have imposed not only the introduction of these new terms – English loans, but also the semantic change (acquiring new meanings or other values). At the same time, most speakers are very interested in these terms; this approach requires a careful and conscious attitude, concerning the assimilation and the knowledge of economic meanings or computer science meanings. Under such circumstances, given the wide interest in the terms of the *green economy*, we noticed that the media gave a special attention to these terms, more precisely journalists frequently use them in interviews and online articles; thus contributing to the spread of this terminology and its terms – *name of professions in the field of green economy* (*electrician for solar panels installation, plumber of solar panels and photovoltaic solar panels, technician for the maintenance of wind farms, hydrogeologist, collector, separator and biomass sorter, evolutionary biologist, urban ornithologist*).

"Green job" (*job verde* in Romanian) was firstly used in 2009; in the beginning, it was used as a loan translation of the collocation, and back then readers considered it pretty unusual, even odd, but linguists mentioned that their reaction was normal, because most readers were familiar with *eco* and with the collocations it is part of (*eco food, eco drink, eco person*). Currently, journalists have the tendency to respect the origin of the word or prefer to translate the collocation into Romanian.

Thus, we noticed the high frequency of collocations which contain the term *green* in the electronic press (from the common language meaning to various specialised meanings, which sometimes are metaphorical). Some of these collocations have a relative frequency and an insufficient stability, even if they satisfy some of the proposed criteria, being relatively free collocations: *green ideas, green actions, green fashion, eco fashion*. Unlike them, collocations like *green economy and green job* meet all the requirements and are considered fixed collocations:

"Acțiuni verzi, idei verzi"/"Green actions, green ideas"; "Lucrează pentru viitor! Alege jobul verde"/"Work for the future! Choose the green job"; "Și moda verde își are victimele sale…/"Green fashion has its victims...."; "Iată tendințele în materie de modă… ecologică"/"These are the trends in… ecological fashion".

As shown in the examples above, terms are reproduced in Romanian in the form of loan translations, which are often met in electronic articles either by translating both

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terms of the collocation (*monedă digitală* < Engl. bitcoin, *economie verde* < Engl. *green economy*) or by translating only one word of the collocation, the other word being borrowed as such (*acțiuni green/green actions, moneda bitcoin/bitcoin currency, fişier cookie/cookie file*).

Moreover, in electronic texts we noticed the analysed terms were treated in Romanian as having the neuter gender (*un cookie/un job verde*). Therefore, when the English loans increased, this Romanian gender spread considerably in comparison with the other two genders, but the desinence for the plural form *-uri* is quite frequently used, being also attached to nouns in the feminine gender (*cookie-uri*). If one ignores the morphological value of the ending in the plural *-s*, then attaching the desinence *-uri/i* leads to tautological forms (*joburi*, *bitcoini*):

"Dezvoltarea industriilor care vizează protejarea mediului înconjurător a dat naştere unui nou segment pe piața muncii: joburile *verzi*./"Industrial development aiming at protecting the environment has created a new segment in the labor market: *green jobs*."

"SUA: *Joburile verzi* susțin redresarea economică"/"USA: *Green Jobs* support economic recovery"; "Falsa promisiune a *slujbelor verzi*"/"The false promise of *green jobs*"; "Eurobarometru: IMM-urile devin *mai verzi* pentru a fi competitive"/ "Eurobarometer: SMEs become *greener* to be competitive"; "*Bitcoin* este o monedă privată care a apărut în 2009. Are multe facilități, căci se transmite direct între oameni, fără intermediari care să impună costuri de tranzacționare"/"*Bitcoin* is a private currency which appeared in 2009. It has many facilities, as it is transmitted directly between individuals without intermediaries imposing transaction costs"; "5 Mituri demascate despre *Bitcoini*"/"5 unmasked myths about *Bitcoins*"; "*Bitcoin* se dezvoltă impetuos în America de Sud cu ajutorul unui club de noapte din Santiago care acceptă *valuta digitală bitcoin* ca formă de plată pentru beri, burgeri şi cocktailuri"/"*Bitcoin* is growing impetuously in South America with the support of a nightclub in Santiago which accepts the *digital currency bitcoin* as a form of payment for beer, burgers and cocktails"; „Economistul foloseşte *cookie-uri* proprii pentru a furniza vizitatorilor o experiență de navigare cât mai bună şi servicii adaptate nevoilor şi interesului fiecărui vizitator."/"The Economist uses its own *cookies* to provide visitors with a better browsing experience and services to meet the needs and interests of each visitor"; "Daimler foloseşte aşa-numitele *cookies* şi tehnologii similare, ca de exemplu HTML5 Storage sau Local Shared Objects pentru a recunoaşte preferințele vizitatorilor şi a optimiza astfel paginile de internet."/"Daimler uses the so-called *cookies* and similar technologies, such as HTML5 Storage or Local Shared Objects to recognize the preferences of visitors and thus to optimize the websites."

3. The movement of the specialised language towards the common language

From the perspective of an *external terminology*, the role of the *context* and the role of the *text* as a whole is very important. It is admitted that terms are autonomous only in nomenclatures (in this case they are given a strict definition for the field they are part of, a fact that leads to monosemy). When they are used beyond the specialised communication, the terms mix with terms of the common language and allow contextual changes which trigger *collocation liberties having consequences on the specialised meaning* (Cabré, 2000: 34). Under such circumstances, terms can become virtually *polysemantic* (id.), whereas the context (especially in *de-specialised texts* in different stages) is *a fundamental way to identify the specialised meaning*.

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"Green economy is a type of economy which increases social welfare and human capital, significantly reducing environmental risks and other ecological issues, in order to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication."

"The year 2013 caused a tremendous drop in transactions that used Bitcoin as currency and this situation did not hinder the speculators who supply the market with illegal transactions".

The movement of the specialised language (SP) toward the common language (CL) is a phenomenon signalled by linguists and their contributions related to this aspect are significant research arguments we included in *external terminology* (Bidu-Vrănceanu, 2007: 88). In order to explain this complex phenomenon, various terms are used to cover aspects more or less peculiar to this phenomenon: *causes* (democratisation of knowledge, special generalised communication, overcome the knowledge barriers, laicisation of sciences); *semantic and lexical effects* (determinologisation) or the process and the spread of SV – scientific vulgarisation (id). These terms which seem at the first sight to be equivalent refer to more or less heterogeneous aspects, but they have many important aspects in common. In all these situations, the movement of the specialised terms toward the common language is signalled, and this phenomenon leads to smaller or larger semantic and contextual changes. The texts in which these phenomena appear, are not fully specialised, they have a very reduced level of specialisation or belong to the common language (id).

The overall goal of SV (scientific vulgarisation) is to adapt a primary scientific discourse to be received and decoded by an ordinary audience; its main focus is on the usage of an established terminology, which has to be redefined and explained. In order to achieve this goal various methods are used, by combining the text type, the mark of the field and the expressing forms. Computer science is a technical and scientific field and it is an example worth mentioning, in the sense that SV is highly interested in it. In the examples below, SV deals with the methods and procedures that contribute to the diffusion of the terms *cookie* and *bitcoin* enabling the laypersons' access to the scientific meaning, without stating the effects and results at the level of general vocabulary. Therefore, two types of paraphrases are met as (see the examples below):

- Short paraphrases which give a thorough explanation of the term and are used in texts with a reduced level of specialisation.

- Long paraphrases which are used in texts that have a medium level of specialisation and contain descriptions, definitions and functional explanations.

"Un *cookie* (se pronunță *cuchi*, e din limba engleză și înseamnă prăjitură) este un fișier creat de un sait web pentru a stoca informații pe calculatorul dumneavoastră, cum ar fi preferințele dumneavoastră pentru acel sait, limba preferată sau locația."/"A *cookie* (pronounced *cuchi*, comes from English and means *cake*) is a file created by a web site to store information on your computer, such as your preferences for that site, preferred language or location."; "Ce este un *cookie*? Un *cookie* este un mic fișier de date pe care browserul de Internet îl plasează pe dispozitivul dumneavoastră. Este ceea ce ai putea numi cu alte cuvinte "o carte de identitate". "Cookie" are rolul de a notifica site-ul că utilizatorul a revenit. Prin memorarea setărilor browser-ului, informațiile privind autentificarea și sistemul, utilizatorul beneficiază de o experiență optimizată pe site."/"What is a *cookie*? A *cookie* is a small data file that your Internet browser places on your device. It is what you might call in other words – *an identity card*. A cookie notifies the website the user has returned. By storing the settings of the browser, the

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information concerning the system and the authentication, the user benefits from an experience optimized on site."; "Moneda virtuală *Bitcoin*, *varianta alternativă la plățile on-line*, a suferit o cădere importantă, in ultimele zile, din cauza unor atacuri cibernetice."/"The virtual currency *Bitcoin*, *the alternative method for online payments*, has suffered a significant drop in recent days because of cyber attacks".

The determinologisation is defined (Meyer and Mackintosh, 2000: 209-211) as "a movement which has a unique direction, whose departing point is the *terminological meaning* and its arrival point is an adjacent meaning, which is more reduced in the common language. In other words, at the semantic level one can obtain a more reduced glosseme (*with less specialised glossemes*), which is subject to a *contextual extension*. We strongly believe that the indications concerning the relationship between specialist/semispecialist/layperson from the perspective of "knowledge socialisation" (Gaudin, 2003: 110), involves a "social dialogue". The relationship between sender-receiver or between the vulgarising party and the target audience has a heterogeneous character and leads to a *gradual interpretation of vulgarisation* (Gaudin, 2003: 140-142).

4. Conclusions

The spoken language is dynamic and the most important factors which influence this trend derive from economics, IT, internet and social networks. More and more English loans will be used by the Romanian media and some of them will be assimilated in various stages. Some of these English loans are already *in fashion*, are used in common language and are promoted on social networks (for instance, *selfie*, BYOD, *phablet*, *twerk*). Furthermore, the terms *bitcoin* and *green job* were included in the Oxford Dictionary, and the most popular term, *selfie*, was also included, after it had been declared *word of the year* 2013. At present it is still very popular and catchy, being mainly used when someone wants to capture a self-portrait by phone, or by any mobile device. As a rule, linguists collaborate fruitfully with terminologists and propose solutions for each word, but sometimes they cannot find ideal solutions and therefore the linguistic norm accepts the most general usage tendency detected in the language that received them.

Consequently, their usage is not imposed by a linguistic norm and some terms belonging to the computer science field do not adapt to the system of the language that borrowed them (i.e. *cookie*). It is spelt and pronounced as in English and the non-specialist's access to its meaning can be obtained by means of vulgarisation. The most widespread vulgarisation procedure is the *paraphrase*, which is mostly used in electronic texts explaining the terms *cookie* and *bitcoin* and their specialised features. Thus, the paraphrases rely on reformulations of the pivot term and these reformulations can be either enlarged or reduced.

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