# ROMANIAN ANGLICISMS: FROM FULLY-FLEDGED LEXICAL ITEMS TO DISCOURSE MARKERS

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**Abstract**: Since some of the English items borrowed in Romanian are used both as fully-fledged lexical items and as discourse markers in the original, our aim in this paper is to analyse the way in which these borrowings behave in Romanian, i.e. whether they preserve their dual use; if not, we try to propose some possible explanations. The analysis is based on present-day Romanian written texts, digital corpora and Google searches in order to capture a complex, true-to-life image of the Romanian language.

**Keywords**: Anglicisms, discourse markers, borrowing, Romanian.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

That "English has turned into the first global language" (Crystal 2003: 3) is nowadays a commonplace of linguistics and beyond. This is why English borrowings and Anglicisms have become an important research topic over the last 30 years or so, both in Romanian and international linguistics. Most studies have been focused on recording such new borrowings and discussing their orthographic, morphological or phonetic adaptation to the target language (Ardeleanu Cruceru 2003, Rădulescu-Sala 2007, Cojocaru Andronache 2010, 2012, Vakareliyska and Kapatsinski 2014, Saugera 2017); they have tried to establish whether they are necessary or, according to researchers, they represent only *luxury* Anglicisms (Onysko and Winter-Froemel, 2011, Stoichițoiu-Ichim 2006 among others; for a more inclusive view for Romanian, see Avram 1997); and last but not least, attention was given to normative usage, i.e. whether such words should be embraced and adopted by the target languages, and if so, how they should be standardised.

Other studies (for instance, Cenac 2004, Petuhov 2002, Pacea 2005, Nevaci 2003) have tried to see which language registers or linguistics fields have been more prone to the English influence, such as IT, fashion, economics, etc. But overall, it seems that all language registers have been influenced by English during the last two decades, with social media intensifying the influence on ordinary, day-to-day languages.

In Romanian linguistics, Niculescu-Gorpin (2013) and Niculescu-Gorpin and Vasileanu (2016, 2018) have moved from a descriptive, normative approach of the English influence on the Romanian language to a more socio- and psycholinguistic one, trying to offer some possible psycholinguistic explanations for the massive expansion of English on

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present-day Romanian. For them, *Anglicisms* are all English-based borrowings, be they lexical or other type (spellings, pronunciations, syntactic structures) whose English origin is still visible and are not yet fully integrated in the target language.

While focusing on lexical Anglicisms, we have encountered an interesting phenomenon: several items seem to have two different (opposing?) functions depending on the contexts in which they appear, i.e. that of discourse markers (Jucker and Ziv 1998) and that of fully-fledged lexical items.

Section 2 is dedicated to a brief presentation of the English influence on Romanian, followed by several remarks related to discourse markers (Section 3). The analysis is to be found in Section 4, where we discuss our examples, contrasting the contexts where they are used as discourse markers and as fully-fledged words. Our conclusions (Section 5) draw on possible explanations of the phenomenon under analysis.

## 2. THE ENGLISH INFLUENCE ON (PRESENT-DAY) ROMANIAN

Once policies moved from nationalism to globalism after World War II, it has become more and more obvious that bi- and multilingualism are the *norm*, i.e. linguistic communities always interact with each other so language contact has always been present within human societies.

It is true that until the current advances in science and technology, with mass communication at great distances being a common place, language contact mainly occurred between different neighbouring linguistic communities or when a dominant power was conquering a weaker population. Nowadays, some form of linguistic contact takes place without such extralinguistic requirements, and this is the case of the current pervasive English influence on all other languages.

The contact between Romanian and English has had a long history, dating back to the 18$^{th}$ century when it was triggered by commercial relations (Niculescu-Gorpin and Vasileanu 2015). But it did not leave deep traces in the Romanian language, i.e. there were some words that made reference to Anglo-Saxon realities, such as *Ro. anglie*, a type of fabric or English steel, a word that occurred around 1700 and whose origin can either be the toponym Ro. *Anglia* (En. *England*) or the Hungarian *anglia* (DELR). Other words, such as Ro. *lord* (1788 in Romanian) or Ro. *lady* (1794 in Romanian), entered the Romanian language most probably through French, a phenomenon that continued in the 19$^{th}$ and 20$^{th}$ centuries.

After World War II, Romanian was almost completely isolated from the Anglo-Saxon world, with English being forbidden in most Romanian schools; instead, Russian and French were the commonly taught foreign languages (Niculescu-Gorpin 2015). The West and the United States of America were presented as the enemy of the people and of Communism, so their language and culture were also pretty much outcast. There were a couple of movies in English on the national television, but they were scarce.

After 1989 the situation has completely changed: everything has been in English – from computer software to cartoons and movies on TV (they were not dubbed, but subtitled), from advertising to TV shows; Romanian children start English in early kindergarten and later in school they may even have 5 hours of English/week, not to mention additional private classes. The English infusion has been so great that Romanian linguists (among others, Stoichițoiu-Ichim 2006: 7–25) have coined the term *romgleză*, a

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combination of Romanian and English that seems to be spoken more or less by everyone. Romanian kids as young as six express their amazement with *Whaaat?* (personal communication, AGNG) or 70-year olds talk about their Ro. *job* (personal communication, AGNG). So, Romanian purist tendencies are doomed to failure (for an overview of the gap between these tendencies and the actual use, see Niculescu-Gorpin and Vasileanu 2016).

Therefore, over the last three decades, the expansion of the English language has reached all levels of Romanian language due to different factors – social, political, economic and cultural (for an overview see Niculescu-Gorpin 2013: 32–42).

The pervasive influence of English has left deep traces at the lexical level, which is to be expected in the current circumstances. Unlike other past linguistic influences (e.g. Slavonic, Greek, German, French etc.), the current English influence affects the Romanian language when it has achieved regional unity. Therefore, it acts mainly as a literary, scholarly influence being spread by media, writings, modern technology and less by community-to-community contact, thus having a massive impact on jargons and standard language.

In trying to identify and create a corpus of Romanian Anglicisms, we have observed that most Anglicisms are nouns, and fewer are verbs and adjectives. The finding is supported both by the literature on the subject, e.g. Constantinescu *et al.* (2002, online version) show that "the majority of English loanwords in Romanian are nouns", and by dictionary counts, e.g. in DOOM-2, 439 words marked as 'angl.' (=Anglicism), out of which 409 are nouns, 28 are adjectives, 2 are adverbs. Verbs of English origin, such as Ro. *a printa* 'to print', are present in this dictionary, but are not marked as Anglicisms; our guess is that they have been considered fully-integrated in the Romanian language, since they have Romanian inflection.

We have also noticed that several Romanian Anglicisms display an interesting phenomenon: they are both full-lexical words and discourse markers in English; we wanted to see if this were also the case in Romanian. One would expect that people borrow mainly lexical items that describe new realities, and not so much expressive ways to verbalize their attitudes and emotions. But this assumption seemed to be contradicted by the actual usage.

Among the numerous Romanian lexical Anglicisms, we have noticed a number of words that occur as discourse markers (see below, **3**). We chose to focus on five items: *OK*, *cool*, *great*, *shit* and *fuck*. In English, the five items are fully-fledged lexical words that turned into discourse markers over time. However, we noticed that in Romanian they are mostly used as discourse markers. In this context, we wanted to see whether in Romanian these Anglicisms are used both as discourse markers and fully-fledged lexical items; then, we have tried to establish whether the behaviour has been borrowed from English or whether it has developed in Romanian; and last, but not least, based on their Romanian occurrences, to establish some syntactic-semantic-pragmatic features that could differentiate between the two uses.

Before turning to the actual analysis, we will briefly outline the characteristics of discourse markers.

## 3. DISCOURSE MARKERS. A FEW CONSIDERATIONS

Our purpose here is not to embark on an exhaustive review on the literature of *discourse markers* (Schiffrin 1987), as such an endeavour is almost impossible, and the

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debate in the literature is still on-going. We will only outline those elements that are of help for our analysis as we are concerned with those discourse markers that behave as attitudinal and emotional and pragmatic markers. For instance, a complex list of features for pragmatic markers was drawn by Brinton (1996: 33–35), but later on the author showed that it "was never intended as a definite list" (Brinton 2017: 3), but was mainly a structured compilation of the literature available at that moment. The author herself has stated that "subsequent research has cast doubt on some, or might point to the need to revise others" (Brinton 2017: 3), a thing that she does further on (Brinton 2017: 3–ff). Again, our purpose here is not to discuss the literature on the subject, but to pinpoint that the jury is still out. So, the classification and subclassification of *discourse markers* are another topic of great examination in the field, but for the present article we will also leave it aside.

Thus, there is no clear cut definition of discourse markers (Blakemore 2002: 1–2, Brinton 1996: 30–31, 2017: 2–3, Jucker and Ziv 1998: 1–2) and this is reflected in the numerous terms that have been employed to refer to the linguistic phenomena falling under the umbrella term *discourse markers*: besides the already mentioned one, there are *discourse particles, pragmatic particles, pragmatic expressions, connectives*, *linking words*, *linking phrases* or *sentence connectors* etc. (Blakemore 2002: 2–3, Brinton 1996: 29–30, Jucker and Ziv 1998:1). In different contexts, discourse markers fulfill different functions: they can be discourse connectors, turn-takers, confirmation-seekers, intimacy signals, topic-switchers, hesitation markers, boundary markers, fillers, prompters, repair markers, attitude markers, and hedging devices (Jucker and Ziv 1998: 1).

In a nutshell, discourse markers are a heterogeneous class, with certain phonological, lexical, syntactic and semantic features. According to Hölker (1991: 78–79, in Jucker and Ziv 1998: 3), there are four basic features that define discourse markers: (1) they do not affect the truth conditions of an utterance (semantic feature); (2) they do not add anything to the propositional content of an utterance (semantic feature); (3) they are related to the speech situation and not to the situation talked about (pragmatic feature); (4) they have an emotive, expressive function rather than a referential, denotative, or cognitive function (functional feature).

These features are of great interest to us because they underline the fact that some elements that fall under the umbrella term *discourse markers* are ultimately employed by speakers to convey their attitudes and emotions in the speech situation; other things being equal, communication would be successful without these elements, the message would go through, but it would lack some non-propositional content that speakers feel would enhance the overall communicative situation. Ultimately, people want to convey not only information, but also their attitudes and feelings.

Starting from Brinton's (1996: 33–35) list of characteristic features of discourse markers, Jucker and Ziv (1998: 3) retain what they consider to be the most relevant diagnostic features, but here we remind only those we use in the analysis: discourse markers are usually phonologically reduced; they form a separate tone group; they can hardly be placed in a traditional word class; they are loosely attached to a syntactical structure, if at all; they are optional, and discourse markers have little or no propositional meaning.

These features are important for the analysis proposed in the next section, especially when trying to differentiate between instances of discourse markers and fully-fledged lexical items as will be seen below.

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## 4. FROM DISCOURSE MARKERS TO FULLY-FLEDGED LEXICAL ITEMS

As stated above, the English influence on Romanian is most visible at the lexical level. The analysis of lexical Romanian Anglicisms has shown there are several items that seem to behave as discourse markers and fully-fledged lexical items.

Trying to identify which are the lexical Anglicisms that behave in this way, we have found that the Romanian Anglicisms *great, cool, ok*, *shit*, *fuck* are the best candidates for the analysis.

Our analysis comprises the following steps: first of all, we have tried to establish when these items were first attested making appeal to several Romanian corpora such as CoRoLa, other transcribed spoken Romanian material (IVLRA), two in-house corpora compiled at the Institute of Linguistics, i.e. an all-time corpus (mostly literature) and a recent corpus of periodicals (after 1996), and we have also checked Google books, forums, blogs, extracting as many contexts as possible; at this stage, we have also tried to see whether they are recorded in any dictionary and if so, how they are defined.

Then we have looked at the contexts in which they appear to establish their behaviour, i.e. fully-fledged lexical items and/or discourse markers.

As stated, our analysis focuses on five Romanian lexical Anglicisms – *OK, cool, great, shit, fuck*; they are strong attitudinal markers, expressing positive and/or negative attitudes and emotions, depending on the context.

In English, all of them function both as fully-fledged lexical items and as discourse markers, so we wondered whether the same behaviour was to be found in Romanian.

Starting from the characteristics of discourse markers briefly described above (Section 3), we have checked whether in Romanian these items belong to a certain word class and thus display syntactic integration (i.e. fully-fledged lexical items) or whether they are hardly assignable to a particular word class and have no syntactic integration (i.e. discourse markers). In this section, Romanian examples are given first; they are followed by English translations that capture the meaning, but they are not word-for-word, literal translations or glosses. Anglicism have been bolded.

The first Romanian lexical Anglicism under discussion is *ok/okay*. According to our resources, it was first attested in 1954 in a literary magazine (*Viața românească*), and spelled *okay* in a piece of Romanian literature, and it was used by an American character; this seems surprising as we were right at the end of the Stalinist era, and maybe writers had the courage to write about an American character, a journalist, coming to Romania and describing the Romanian realities of those times:

(1) **Okay**! îl întrerupse Clawhead - dă-i drumul! (V. rom., 1954, , no. 7, 306)
'**Okay**, Clawhead interrupted him. Go ahead!'

The occurrence is definitely not a case of code-switching, but a literary device employed by the writer to capture the character's American identity; the word was definitely a foreign element, and this was marked in writing by using italics.

Therefore, in Romanian, *OK* is first attested as a discourse marker, signalling agreement, a particular positive attitude towards the speech situation.

After the 1990s, there has been an explosion of *OK* occurrences with multiple functions that we have also found in our corpora. For example, in the oral corpus (IVLRA),

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only Ro. *OK* occurs out of the five Anglicisms under discussion, and it is extremely frequent. In speech, it is mostly used as a discourse marker signalling different attitudes towards the speech situation:

(a) agreement:

(2) Doamna secretar de stat, doriți să faceți o scurtă prezentare?
**OK**. (C. dep., 2006)
'Mrs. State Secretary, would you like to make a short presentation?
**OK**.'

(b) apparent agreement, in fact, discontent (*OK, but*):

(3) Ministerul Finanțelor Publice cu ceea ce a fost de acord alaltăieri nu mai este de acord azi. **OK**. Dar să ştim şi noi. (C. dep., 2010)
'The Ministry of Public Finances disagrees today with whatever it agreed with the other day. **OK**. But then we should also be informed about this.'

(c) phatic / confirmation:

(4) A: Da, şi cum se cheamă mai exact?
B: Panasonic se cheamă.
A: **OK**. Panasonic ((fîşîit)) **OK**, atunci vă mulţumesc mult. (IVLRA: 202)
'A: Yes. And what is it called more exactly?
B: It's called Panasonic.
A: **OK**. Panasonic ((noise)) **OK** then, thank you very much.'

(d) closing conversation:

(5) B: Tu un milion de dolari dac-aduci de la cineva, nu poți s-aduci de capul tău.
A: **OK**, bine. Hai să terminăm cu subiectul ăsta. (IVLRA: 193)
'B: Even if you wanted to bring a million dollars from somebody, you still can't do as you wish.
A: **OK**, fine. Let's put an end to this conversation.'

In our corpora, Ro. *OK* occurs in the following contexts as a fully-fledged lexical item that can be assigned to a particular grammatical category, displaying its morpho-syntactic characteristics:

(i) as an adverb:

(6) Cu excepția celor două foișoare, terasa arată **OK**. (Rom. lib., 19 June 2007)
'Except for the two gazebos, the terrace looks **OK.**'

(ii) as a syntactically integrated invariable adjective:

(7) Toate debuturile sunt brusc **OK**. (Trib., 2007, nr. 111)
'Suddenly, all debuts are **OK**.'

(8) Prețul e **foarte ok**. (Softpedia, 2016)
'The price is **very OK**.'

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(iii) as a noun:

(9) Dl. Mareş mă grăbeşte să dau **"OK"-ul** – ca cică să fie lansat la nu ştiu care Târg de carte. (Goma, Jurn. VIII, 28 April 2002)
'Mr. Mareş is pushing me for my **'OK'** – so that they can launch the book at I don't know what bookfair, he says.'

From our corpora search, we can conclude that *OK* was first attested in Romanian as a discourse marker and later on as a fully-fledged lexical item, thus following a reverse path in Romanian than it did in English. In speech, it seems that it is mainly used as the former and it has several pragmatic functions. Interestingly, Ro. *OK*, which mainly expresses agreement and positive attitudes, can also be used to convey disagreement (example 3 above). The same situation is present in English, but it is extremely difficult to pinpoint whether the behaviour was borrowed or it developed in Romanian.

The difficulty is manifold, and applies to all items under discussion here. First of all, our corpora are biased, in the sense that for the 1950–2000 period they comprise mostly literary texts; moreover, periodicals were strictly censored before 1989, so they did not reflect real speech. Thus, we cannot accurately follow the evolutionary parcourse of these items.

The second Romanian lexical Anglicism that has drawn our attention is *cool*. It was first registered in dictionaries as a noun that referred to a certain manner of interpreting jazz – 1978 $DN^3$, a dictionary of neologisms. Its current meaning is that of 'trendy' and it mostly expresses a positive attitude, being an invariable adjective. We wonder whether we could actually talk about two different lexemes, $COOL^1$ and $COOL^2$, but this will be dealt with in future research.

As a discourse marker, Ro. *cool* is a positive attitude marker, almost always signalling great appreciation towards the subject under discussion:

(10) De asemenea, la "room-service", apa este permanent oxigenată, purificată şi menţinută la temperaturile optime.
**Cool**! ( V. lib., 5.12. 2003)
'Moreover, with room service, water is always oxygenated, purified and kept at the best temperature.
**Cool**!'

In our corpora search, the fully-fledged lexical item RO. *cool* (meaning 'trendy') belongs to the following two grammatical classes.

(i) invariable adjective:

(11) Jocurile Olimpice care se vor desfăşura aici anul viitor au făcut ca Beijingul să fie deja pe lista **celor mai cool** locuri de pe planetă. (Gândul, 3.10.2007)
'The Olympic Games that will take place in Beijing next year have put the city on the list of the **coolest** places on Earth.'

(ii) adverb:

(12) Este **cool** să bei suc şi să mănânci la fast-food. (V. lib., 4.09.2015)
'It's **cool** to drink juice and have a meal at a fast-food restaurant.'

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Ro. *great*, our third item, displays an interesting behaviour. It is pretty frequent in daily, spontaneous conversations, but it is almost inexistent in our corpora. We could only find two occurrences in CoRoLa, the reference corpora of contemporary Romanian language (http://corola.racai.ro). The first written attestation we could find is in an article by Rodica Zafiu (2000) where she discusses a number of Romanian Anglicisms widely used in spoken colloquial language.

In social media, Ro. *great* does appear as an invariable adjective, but this behaviour is not very frequent:

(13) Ai fost inspirat, sincer..... pentru mine eşti **GREAT**! (Facebook, https://bit.ly/3bx5w7C)
'Honestly, you had a great idea ... for me you're **GREAT**!'

Its few written occurrences show that Ro. *great* behaves mostly as a discourse marker, *i.e*. it displays loose syntactic integration, being an attitudinal marker:

(a) positive conclusive marker:

(14) - **Great!** Știi bine istoria. (Ostace, 13)
'**Great**! You know the story well.'

(b) positive attitudinal marker, expressing enthusiasm:

(15) Este mega nice să nu ai senzația aia de „frică" că pierzi o promoție bună … :)) **Great**! Îmi place challenge-ul acesta. (Coffentropy, blog, https://bit.ly/2XvEszY,)
'It's mega nice not to get off that feeling of 'fear' that you are missing a good deal … :)) **Great**! I like this challenge.'

(c) negative attitudinal marker: apparent manifestation of enthusiasm, in fact strong disagreement and discontent (ironical use):

(16) „Noi avem olimpici internaționali." Ya? **Great**! Și câți sunt ăia internaționali? Vreo 3? (AR, blog, https://bit.ly/39Z0oIU)
'"Our students participate in international competitions." Ya? **Great**! And how many of these internationals do we have? Around 3?'

Our analysis shows that Ro. *great* is used in spoken language (personal observation, AGNG, MV), but appears less in writing. When it does, it occurs in Anglicism-loaded texts. This may suggest that the new Anglicism is in a different phase of integration than Ro. *OK* and *cool*, an assumption supported by the fact that it has entered the Romanian language more recently, and mainly as a discourse marker, (un)consciously borrowed. Further data collection will help us shed some light on this matter.

The first three items discussed so far – Ro. *OK*, *cool*, and *great* – express mainly positive attitudes. But sometimes, in ironic and/or sarcastic comments they can be used as negative markers (see examples 3, 16 above). They behave as both fully-lexical items and discourse markers, with Ro. *great* still behaving more as the latter.

The last two items under analysis are negatively loaded; in fact, they belong to the taboo word group: Ro. *shit* and *fuck*. As such, they are not recorded in most dictionaries.

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Ro. *shit* is attested in a dictionary of drug-related words and expressions (D. drog., 2000), where it is a slang word for heroin or hashish, meanings that are not known by the vast majority of Romanians.

Because of our corpora bias discussed above (too little spoken language), its first attestation seems to be 2000, but our intuition is that it entered the Romanian language earlier on. Thus, it was only found in CoRoLa and only as a discourse marker, expressing strong negative attitudes:

(17) **Shit**. De două ori **shit**. Credeam că Paul n-o să afle niciodată de chestia asta. (CoRoLa)
'**Shit**. Double **shit**. I thought Paul would never learn about this thing.'

It does appear in spoken contexts, some infused with Anglicisms, a kind of oral *Romglish*, others where a lot of code-switching is present, i.e. speakers use a lot of English phrases to express their negative load. Thus, both the item and its use have been borrowed from English. We could not find any contexts in which the word is used as a Romanian noun, hence it seems to be employed almost exclusively as a discourse marker.

Ro. *fuck*, an even more taboo word than Ro. *shit*, exhibits the same behaviour as the latter. It appears only in a slang dictionary (D. arg., 2007) where it is defined as an interjection, expressing a strong negative attitude.

We could not attest a verb usage in Romanian. The verb appears only in English collocations such as *fuck you/him!*, used intercalated in Romanian contexts. However, these may be cases of code switching:

(18) […] că n-are nimeni operă de sertar... Du-te, mă, **fuck you**! De unde ştii tu că n-am, asta ce-i?! (MD, 2004, blog, https://bit.ly/39XTlzQ)
'no author has unpublished works lying about in a drawer… Stop it, **fuck you**! How would you know that? If I don't, then what do you think this is?'

(19) **Fuck him!** Asta era părerea lui despre ce se întâmpla în patul nostru! (Tabu, 2008, https://bit.ly/30urrsb)
'**Fuck him!** This is what he thought about what was happening in our bed.'

Again, since we do not have corpora that contain plenty of spoken language and the item is a taboo word, it is almost impossible to state when it first occurred in Romanian. Our analysis shows that it is always used as a discourse marker to express a strong negative attitude, close to despair.

(20) Sunt aproape la uşă. – **Fuck!** Connor se uită în jur căutând o scăpare. (CoRoLa)
'They're almost at the door. – **Fuck!** Connor is looking around, trying to find a way out.'

Ro. *fuck* occurs mostly in expressions of English origin or alone as a discourse marker used to communicate speakers' extremely negative attitude towards the situation described, the same as Ro. *shit*.

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## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Our brief analysis of five Romanian Anglicisms – *OK, cool, great, shit* and *fuck* – has shown that they are all used as discourse markers to express positive (*OK, cool, great*) and negative (*OK, cool, great, shit* and *fuck*) emotional and attitudinal information.

Following the Roschean (1973) prototype conception, some discourse markers discussed in the literature are more prototypical in that they retain many more characteristic features (see Section 3); others are more peripheral.

Going back to the characteristics specific to discourse markers discussed in Section 3, the Romanian Anglicisms under discussion are somewhere in between, because they are not phonologically reduced; except for Ro. *OK*, whose origin is still debated, but which is certainly an abbreviation, all others are full English words that acquired discourse marker uses and thus discourse markers' properties over time in the source language. From our analysis, especially looking at the case of Ro. *great*, it seems that Romanians first borrowed these words as attitudinal and emotional, pragmatic markers, and only in time they have evolved towards fully-fledged lexical items.

Going back to the main features of discourse markers proposed by Jucker and Ziv (1998), all five items occur as separate tone groups that can be observed in speech and are marked in writing either by using italics or punctuation marks (commas or exclamation marks). Moreover, they are loosely attached to a syntactical structure, if at all, and are somewhat optional, having little or no propositional meaning. As discourse markers, the Romanian Anglicisms under discussion contribute to the pragmatic level of communication and are there to signal the speakers' attitudes.

Our analysis started from the observation that in English these items are used both as fully-fledged lexical words and as discourse markers and in Romanian it seemed their behaviour was exactly the opposite. Our findings show that for the time being only the three positive attitudinal markers discussed can be placed in one or more traditional grammatical classes, but not the negative ones. So only the former can be considered, again for the time being, fully-fledged lexical items.

One pertinent question arises, namely what triggers this behaviour. Emotions and attitudes are an important part of our internal life and we try to find new ways to express them as best as we can, and this is why we may be turning to borrowings. As we start to use the positive ones in the target-language, maybe to capture some fine-grained emotion or even our positive attitude, let's say, towards using English, they are more quickly accepted by our peers and as such they slip into daily conversations, turning into fully-fledged lexical items.

When it comes to negative emotions, there is no doubt that Romanian has several ways – some more taboo than others – to express the type of attitudinal content embodied by Ro. *fuck* and *shit*, but as shown in the experimental literature, negative emotions expressed in a foreign language may be perceived as less negative and negative emotion(-laden) words are processed on a more shallow level (Jończyk *et al.* 2016). This is also the case for swearwords and taboo words which were rated by multilinguals as more emotionally loaded in their first language than in the other foreign languages (Dewaele 2004). This may be the reason for borrowing English taboo-words: the ones already present in the language are too emotionally-loaded and are labelled as taboo; their use impacts the audience; in some cases, by using Anglicisms, speakers protect their audience and try to remove the taboo veil and their vulgarity; in others, such Anglicisms may be used to create a more fine-grained range

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of expressions related to attitudes and emotions, as it also happens for the positive ones. Future experimental research may shed some light on the underlying causes of such borrowings.

To establish which is which, each occurrence should be analysed in the wider communicative context, and maybe in some experimental settings, but this is beyond our present scope. Nevertheless, the fact that Romanians have chosen to borrow not only words, but also linguistic ways to express their positive and negative emotions remains an interesting socio- and psycholinguistic phenomenon that calls for further research.

## ONLINE SOURCES, CORPORA AND DICTIONARIES

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