

'Ovidius' University of Constanța
Doctoral School of Humanities
Domain Philology

DOCTORAL THESIS

'Hidden' Anglicisms of the Romanian Language

SUMMARY

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CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	7
1.1.	The context of the research	7
1.2.	The premises of the research.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 5
1.3.	The objectives of the research.....	20
1.4.	The importance of the subject	Error! Bookmark not defined. 24
2.	THE LINGUISTIC INTERFERENCES – A CONSEQUENCE OF CULTURAL INTERFERENCES.....	34
2.1.	Overall view. Socio-cultural aspects	34
2.2.	The influence of English on Romanian: historical perspective	42
2.3.	Terminology and basic concepts.....	45
2.4.	Synchrony and diachrony.....	56
2.5.	Direct etymology and indirect etymology.....	58
3.	THE TYPOLOGY OF LINGUISTIC INTERFERENCES.....	61
3.1.	Research directions in North-American linguistics.....	62
3.2.	Main classifications in the European research	65
3.3.	Other taxonomic suggestions.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 9
3.4.	The Romanian tradition and its current debates.....	71
3.4.1.	The interference.....	76
3.4.2.	The borrowing.....	77
3.4.3.	The adaptation.....	80
3.4.4.	The contamination.....	84
4.	THE INTEGRATION OF ANGLICISMS IN THE ROMANIAN LANGUAGE.	86
4.1.	Models of classification of Anglicisms.....	Error!
	Bookmark not defined. 6	
4.2.	The study of Anglicisms in Romanian linguistics: past and present.....	90
4.3.	Phone tic adaptation	114
4.4.	Graphic adaptation	116
4.5.	Morphosyntactic adaptation.....	119
4.6.	Semantic adaptation....	121

5.	Classification criteria..	124
5.1.	Oral borrowing and written borrowing.....	125
5.2.	Phonetic particularities of adaptation in direct borrowing..	128
5.3.	The treatment of vowels.....	129
5.4.	The treatment of consonants.....	130
5.5.	The onomasiological criterion.....	131
5.6.	The morphological classification.....	138
5.7.	The phonomorphological classification.....	143
5.8.	Forms (apparently) integrally borrowed.....	143
5.9.	Partially changed forms.	148
5.10.	Modifications of the vowels and of the diphthongs.....	148
5.11.	Modification of the consonants.....	149
5.12.	Entirely changed forms.....	150
5.13.	The oral adaptation.....	150
6.	THE LINGUISTIC CALQUE IN THE ROMANIAN WORD FORMATION.....	156
6.1.	The structural calque.....	156
6.2.	The literal calque.....	158
6.3.	The semantic calque.....	159
6.4.	The hybrid calque.....	160
6.5.	The analogous calque.....	161
6.6.	The homologous calque.....	164
7.	CONCLUSIONS.....	167
	HIDDEN ANGLICISMS OF THE ROMANIAN LANGUAGE.....	171
8.	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	175
9.	APPENDICES.....	181
9.1.	APPENDIX 1 – Index of Romanian words of English origin	181
9.2.	APPENDIX 2 – Index of donor English words in Romanian.....	182

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the introductory chapter, the social, economical and political background of our research is described, with the crucial year 1989 as a turning point, which divides the fifty-year period we analyzed from the viewpoint of the relationship between the Romanian language and the English language, in two: 1965-1989 and 1989-2015.

The events which occurred in 1989 generated profound changes throughout Eastern Europe, and it was only normal that these should influence the language in various ways, at various levels. The privatization of the economy, the introduction of the multiparty system, the recognition of fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, freedom of movement, etc. are all developments that took the Romanian society completely by surprise. Nor was the Romanian language prepared, after 45 years of economic and cultural isolation, to readily reflect the realities of the Western world which had been hitherto fiercely opposed by the communist regime, i.e. information technology, globalization of the economy, globalization of tourism, etc.

Among the challenges facing the Romanian language after 1989, alongside reconstructing the public discourse, which had been entirely perverted by the 'wooden tongue' of the communist propaganda, and cultivating the new generations' respect for the truth, a competition appeared between the Romanian language and the English language as the universal donor of terminology and discourse in practically all spheres of human activity.

In the first chapter of our thesis, we outlined the opinions of some important contemporary authors regarding the role of English as a 'lingua franca' in today's world, and the consequences of what has already been termed the 'cognitive hegemony' of the English language in the world. Our own position concerning this state of affairs is somewhat subjective, in that it is not always reinforced with quotations from relevant works. Instead, we relied, to a certain extent, on our first-hand experience as witnesses to the last five decades of expansion of the English language (1965-2015). Moreover, for the latter part of this period (around 35 years)

we have been, by the nature of our profession, constantly interested in the relationship between English and Romanian.

In the above-mentioned period, first in the United States and then in the United Kingdom, an artistic and cultural movement was born (called the *counterculture of the sixties*) which drew the world's attention to the new modes of thinking and of existence in the English-speaking world, a kind of avant-garde, spearheaded by the new cinematography and by the American and British pop music. Central elements of the entertainment industry, demanded and exported intensively starting with the sixties, the American movies and pop music, British or American, clearly dominated the spirit of the epoch, through the seventies and the eighties, almost everywhere in the world. An expression of a new way of thinking, they helped create a new attitude, opposed to any traditional forms of authority and current ideologies.

It was then that the ideals and tastes of the new postwar generation were radically changed, in record time, by the magnetism of the powerful Anglo-American personalities of the screen and of the stage. Today's global success of the English language is due, largely, to the exceptional postwar generation of British and American film directors, actors and musicians. For more than six decades, the impact of the so-called counterculture of the sixties has not been counterbalanced by any other cultural area of the world. Associated with the attitude and image of the movie heroes, with the ethos and the dynamics of the British and American music, the sound of the English language became gradually imprinted on the minds of the new generation on all continents, and somehow ended up evoking a better world.

In Romania, after the withdrawal of the Soviet occupant army, during the short period of ideological relaxation at the end of the sixties of the past century, the country's economic and cultural relationships with the West were swiftly resumed, especially with France, thus reviving the Romanians' traditional francophilia. In parallel, the Romanians' interest and admiration for the Anglo-American world was generated by the massive and irresistible invasion of British and American products of all kinds: American comedies and super-productions, TV series, picturized novels, alongside an avalanche of musical hits with English lyrics. At that time, Anglo-American names of people and places became commonplace around the world: the names of actors and pop stars, the titles of movies and of songs and, at the same time, the brand names of products imported or smuggled (cigarettes, beverages, clothes, cosmetics, accessories, etc.). With such apparently harmless means, in less than ten years the younger generation of Romania,

and of the entire world, for that matter, was conquered by the Anglo-American culture. One might say, indeed, that it was the first conquest in history achieved with artistic and cultural means exclusively. English became, and remains to this day, the irreplaceable background of our spare time, at home, in front of our TV or computer, in shops, on holidays, a familiar presence, ever more persisting, parallel to that of the mother tongue, although still unintelligible for many Romanians.

Perfectly aware of our inherent limitations and of those imposed by the length and nature of our thesis, we chose to analyze but a small part of the influences that the English language has been exerting on the Romanian language over the past fifty years. This appears to be the period of maximum spread of the Anglo-American culture and civilization in the world, which is actively supported by the expansion of the entertainment industry and by the constant development of the Internet.

Since the phenomenon under discussion is a vast and extremely complex one, we decided to take into consideration, for the time being, only words and phrases transferred from the English language into Romanian which are, as a rule and for various reasons, mistakenly thought by the monolingual majority to be Romanian creations. We called these ‘hidden Anglicisms of the Romanian language’, a syntagm which, for that matter, became the title of our thesis.

CHAPTER 2

THE LINGUISTIC INTERFERENCES – A CONSEQUENCE OF CULTURAL INTERFERENCES

Once established the perimeter of our research, the first questions arose as to the contemporary thinking around the main concepts relevant to our field of research - *bilingualism*, *languages in contact*, *linguistic influence*, *linguistic interference*, *linguistic borrowing*, *neologism*, *Anglicism*, etc. – and their respective roles in our studies. Two of these concepts occupy a central position in our thesis, i.e. *the interference* and *the Anglicism*. They are discussed in separate chapters which also include our opinions concerning their definitions and use in specialist literature.

In the second chapter, entitled *Linguistic Interferences – a Consequence of Cultural Interferences*, we follow the evolution of the concept of linguistic interference from its first mentions, in the nineteenth century, down to its universal recognition in the works of linguists Kristian Sandfeld (1936) and Uriel Weinreich (1953). Weinreich's argumentation concerning the close relationship between the linguistic and the cultural interferences was taken over, confirmed and developed in Europe two decades later by the French researcher K. A. Goddard, who states categorically that interlinguistic interferences cannot take place in the absence of the contact between languages. Hence, any analysis of linguistic borrowing, be it semantic or strictly formal, is always the result of linguistic contact. Which entails that the borrowing, whose nature has undoubtable affinities with the creation *ex novo*, as remarked by researchers like Einar Haugen and others, originates in an individual linguistic act which, once adopted by other speakers, spreads, in time, around the entire community. Such language facts, whose neological character does not consist in the creation, but in the adoption of a new sign, is not, as a rule, studied as a neological form, being considered rather a more general aspect of linguistic interference.

As far as the cultural interferences between the Anglo-American world and our country are concerned, from 1945 to 1965, the period when the English language was actually launched as an international *lingua franca*, the Romanians' perception of the Anglo-American culture and civilization was heavily distorted by the Communist propaganda, opposed to the Western world in general, and especially to the United States, the undisputed leader thereof. Throughout this period, the economic and cultural exchanges with the English speaking countries were scarce, which explains the limited number of words or expressions borrowed from English into Romanian. The English words that entered the Romanian language in that period and were used with certain frequency belonged either to the sports' world, or were the names of the few products imported from The United Kingdom of the United States of America.

The economic and cultural relationships with the English speaking countries entered a new era after 1990, after Romania's integration into the Western structures, and with the liberalization of the movement of persons, ideas and goods between East and West Europe. Today, the international communication networks and the mass-media allow the instant spread of the American and British cultural products, which are sources of linguistic influences over the languages of the countries of their destination.

In a subchapter entitled *Terminology and Fundamental Concepts*, the evolution of the term *linguistic borrowing* is reviewed, and comparisons are drawn with parallel concepts such as *cultism, foreignism, xenism, barbarism* or *internationalism*.

Re-visiting the various definitions and implications, sometimes misleading, of the concepts of *borrowing* and *interference*, we felt tempted to set up our own classification of linguistic influences, in which we chose *linguistic transfer* as a generic term, and saved the concepts of *borrowing* and *interference* for two subcategories together with other two concepts – *adaptation* and *contamination*. Yet, when we analysed our list of hidden Anglicisms of the Romanian language, we resorted to the classification of Louis Deroy, as completed by Josette Rey-Debove.

CHAPTER 3

THE TIPOLOGY OF LINGUISTIC INTERFERENCES

The third chapter of our thesis deals with the classification of linguistic interferences, and consists mainly of a review of the most relevant taxonomic approaches in the United States of America, in Europe, as well as classifications suggested by contemporary Romanian researchers.

In the United States, the main ideas concerning the linguistic interference were expressed at the middle of the twentieth century by linguists Einar Haugen and Uriel Weinreich. The classification suggested by Einar Haugen, the importance of which resides mainly in the stress laid on the degree of departure of the borrowed element from the original, was later on developed by Uriel Weinreich. He emphasizes the need for an interdisciplinary method of research and highlights the relationship between the linguistic and the social and cultural aspects of interferences.

The European researchers who showed particular interest in the issue of linguistic interferences are Werner Betz, Louis Deroy, Rey-Debove și John Humbley.

Thus, in the sixth decade of the past century, much at the same time with Einar Haugen and Uriel Weinreich in the United States, German scientist Werner Betz introduces his own precise terminology and new criteria for the classification of linguistic borrowing.

Louis Deroy distinguishes two large categories of borrowing, according to the degree of penetration, which is mirrored by corresponding differences in the degree of integration from the viewpoint of their pronunciation and spelling in the receiving language; these are the *total* loan, which corresponds to the lexical loan, and the *partial* loan, represented by the *calque* and by the *semantic loan*. Louis Deroy concludes his proposition with the idea that a loan can be considered perfectly integrated only when it can form derivates and/or compounds.

The contributions of other European authors are presented, among whom Josette Rey-Debove, Hohn Humbley, T.E. Hope, Roberto Gusmani and Charles Nicolas.

Works by Romanian linguists such as Iorgu Iordan, Al. Graur, Theodor Hristea and others are also mentioned in this chapter.

Starting from the avowed ambiguity of the term *linguistic interference* which, for linguists such as Uriel Weinreich, refers to a departure from the norms of the language, yet for others represents no more than linguistic overlapping or linguistic exchange, we suggested subordinating the concept to the more general idea of *linguistic transfer*, alongside three more categories of linguistic influences – *borrowing*, *adaptation* and *contamination*. Our own classification of linguistic transfer takes account of the different roles played in linguistic exchanges by the bilingual speakers, on the one hand, and by the monolingual speakers, on the other.

The terminology we are putting forward is not new in itself, but we are actually trying to shift the accent from an analysis of the interlinguistic influences *in abstracto*, towards the evaluation of palpable contemporary language facts, which are, more often than not, a source of controversy, not only among linguists, but also in the public space. Thus, without claiming the discovery of new territories, we have succeeded in creating the theoretic platform for tackling the problem of Anglicisms in the Romanian language. The *Anglicism* is, in our view, a much narrower concept, and also far less elucidated, than the linguistic interference. At first sight, the term *Anglicism* seems transparent enough not to leave any doubts in the minds of researchers attempting to clarify the ways of access and the presence of certain features of English in other languages. And yet, the large number of categories of anglicisms identified by specialists invites more caution in defining this type of linguistic transfer.

CHAPTER 4

THE INTEGRATION OF ANGLICISMS IN THE ROMANIAN LANGUAGE

This is yet another theoretical chapter of our thesis, in which we introduced the main types of classification of Anglicisms, offered by American and European scientists over the last fifty years. We analyzed various definitions of the Anglicism, in parallel with the definitions of other similar concepts like Germanism, Italienism, Gallicism, etc., to be found in some prestigious Romanian, French, English, Italian and Spanish dictionaries. Our main conclusion was that the simpler definitions are rather incomplete, leaving much to the imagination, whereas the more elaborate ones are, at times, misleading or downright inadequate. In other words, they may offer the lay person a vague idea of a certain type of interlinguistic transfer, but cannot be seen as a landmark or a starting point for the applied study of this phenomenon.

Visiting the dictionary definitions of this type of linguistic transfer allowed us, among other things, to insert some personal remarks and some hypotheses concerning the statute of Anglicisms in the process of study of English in Romanian schools. For instance, we suggested that the structures of English that do not have a syntactic equivalent in Romanian be included among the hidden Anglicisms of Romanian, since, even though they are not actually used in Romanian, they represent as many difficulties for the Romanian students of English. The examples include the particles that accompany the English phrasal verbs or the progressive aspect of verbs. These features are not likely to be adopted by the Romanian language, but for the Romanian student of English they are an important category of *hidden Anglicisms*, so much so that we are inclined to redefine the words and phrases which are taken over by Romanian as *Romanianisms of the English language*, rather than *Anglicisms of the Romanian language*, the more so as borrowed words and phrases tend to retain only one connotation from the source language, and to acquire new connotations and contexts in the receiving language.

The remaining part of the fourth chapter is devoted to a detailed analysis of the phonetic, graphic, morphosyntactic and semantic changes which Romanian borrowings from English undergo. By choosing precisely those borrowings with a maximum degree of integration, we allowed ourselves to review a great majority of these changes. At the other end of our inventory of 'hidden' Romanian Anglicisms, there lie two more categories of English influences on Romanian: the linguistic calque, a type of linguistic transfer which does not, apparently, infringe upon any of the rules of the receiving language, but which, actually, constitutes the subtlest, and, in some linguists' opinion, the most dangerous form of language destabilization.

We also included on our list of hidden Anglicisms those English words that reach our language either because they came into English from French, a language with which Romanian has multiple affinities, or because their acoustic and/or written shape is sufficiently friendly to the users who do not speak English.

CHAPTER 5

CLASSIFICATION CRITERIA

At present, although not a member of the Latin languages family, the English language represents the most important source of modernization for the Romanian language. This chapter includes a description of the main categories of modifications undergone by Anglicisms during their integration into the Romanian language.

Any type of lexical assimilation involves, beside the semantic requirements, which motivate the transfer, adaptations from the formal point of view to match the nature of the phonological, grammatical and stylistic system of the receiving language. Of course, the transfer is easier between languages that belong to the same family. The history of the Romanian language stands proof of this fact, as in the nineteenth century a large number of words, which had been borrowed from languages of a different family (Slavic, Greek, Turkish) were abandoned in favour of Latin-Romance words, even if the former had long been in use, both in oral, popular speech, and in written form.

Most borrowings bear the stamp of the usual phonological adaptations¹ imposed not only by the objective differences between the language systems, but also by extralinguistic factors, such as:

- a) The type of transfer into Romanian (oral/written; popular/intellectual);
- b) Period of the transfer of foreign words into Romanian (old or modern, following the formation of the literary language);

¹For general issues concerning the adaptations undergone by words in the receiving language in the framework of linguistic contact, cf. Marius Sala, *Limbi în contact*, Bucharest, Editura Enciclopedică, 1997. De reținut este teoria lui L. Testière's theory is remarkable here, who maintained, in 1939, that the morphological system of a language can easily form an 'alliance' with the system of another language. (*apud* Liliana Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu; Dumitru Chițoran, *Sociolinguistică*, București, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1975.).

c) Frequency of use in Romanian (total assimilation by integration in the vernacular/partial assimilation by use restricted to specialist language).

In all these situations, the classification of the types of assimilation takes into consideration the principles of contrastive grammar.²

In Chapter 5 of our thesis, we present the manifestation of the extra-linguistic factors mentioned above in the relationship between English and Romanian, illustrated with Anglicisms from our list. The criteria used are the type of transfer (oral or written), the phonetic particularities of direct loans, the onomasiological, the morphological and the phonomorphological criteria.

One of our conclusions is that, indeed, writing is the more frequent ways of introduction of new terminology into Romanian. The Romanian phonetic criterion itself confirms this truth. If they had been orally transferred, borrowed words would have been given the shape that corresponded to their pronunciation in English, given that the principle at work in Romanian is the correspondence between sound and letter. Precisely those letters or groups of letters would have made the difference, which have different sound realizations in English, but are spelt according to the phonological principle.

When transferring words from English into Romanian, the translator or user makes a remarkable effort to find the best solutions to reduce these differences to the minimum, to substitute the specific sounds of the source language for the nearest sounds of the target language. But despite these efforts, in the process of borrowing there appear numerous oscillating, competing forms, and there are many phono-morphological doublets or even triplets.

CHAPTER 6

THE LINGUISTIC CALQUE IN ROMANIAN WORD-FORMATION

² For theoretical and practical problems of contrastive studies, cf. Teodora Cristea, *Eléments de grammaire contrastive. Domaine français-roumain*, Bucureşti, E.D.P., 1977, P.Gh. Bârlea; R.M. Bârlea, 2000; Th. Hristea, 1968.

The notion of *calque* is always defined by contrast to the notion of borrowing. Strictly speaking, by *borrowing* we mean the total transfer of a foreign lexical element, while the *calque* involves the idea of translation and morpheme substitution. Bearing this distinction in mind, some European authors distinguish the *total borrowing* (by which the signifier and the signified of the foreign element are transferred) and the *partial borrowing* (a category that includes all types of calques, in which only a morphemic or semantic model is transferred)

The second part of our list of hidden Anglicisms of the Romanian language is made up of 50 Romanian words, syntagms and phrases calqued from English. Most Romanian calques from English appeared after 1990, introduced and circulated, preponderently, in the areas of journalism, technology and commerce.

The *structural* or *lexical calque* is the type of calque that mostly draws the attention of specialists in interlinguistic contact. Besides, this type of calque is widely documented, both in the context of cultural contact between peoples – a situation characteristic of Western Europe – and in cases of general bilingualism and interference. It is defined as the substitution of a word or nominal compound of the source language for morphemes or simple words, existing in the target language, in such a way as by putting together these elements a new phrase or compound is born, which was previously unknown in that language.

From the perspective of the transfer process, the structural calque is a special type of borrowing, which does not imitate the material phonetic entity (the signifier) of the source language, but two more intimate aspects, i.e. its structure or morphological construction, e.g. English *sky-scraper* > Romanian *zgârie-nori*, and its signified, e.g. English *gold rush* > Romanian *goana după aur*.

On the other hand, the *literal calque* is described as the exact translation, element by element, of the model, since each morpheme of the model is translated by the closest morpheme of the target language. Most Romanian calques from English are literal calques, e.g.: *agenda publică* < *public agenda*, *autoservire* < *self-service*, *axa răului*, < *axis of evil*, *bază de date* < *database* etc.

Yet another type of calque is the *semantic calque*, which, unlike the structural calque does not result in the formation of a new compound word in the target language; it only changes the function or meaning of a simple, already existing word of the target language,

usually by semantic extension. This mechanism of semantic transfer presupposes a conceptual similarity which, normally, refers to the basic or literal meaning of the two words. For instance, the Romanian word *escaladare* acquired, under the influence of the English language, beside its meaning of *climbing*, the new meaning of intensification (progressive extension of an action or conflict); the Romanian word *administrație* came to signify *government of a country*, besides the older meaning of totality of administrative organs of the state.

Other calques described in the same chapter are the *hybrid*, the *analogous*, and the *homologous* calques.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

The application of our thesis consists in the selection itself of the linguistic material that we analyzed according to the criterion of the degree of integration of the hidden Anglicisms into Romanian, as well as that of the respective roles played by the bilingual speakers of English and Romanian, who introduce the external loans, and by the monolingual speakers, who are responsible for the validation of these loans.

Based on our analysis, we may state that the English and the Romanian languages are, broadly speaking, languages in contact; their interferences are of an exclusively cultural nature. Indeed, they are interferences that appear mainly in writing and are, for the most part, lexical.

We consider that our systematic approach of *hidden* anglicisms of Romanian, though forcefully incomplete, might contribute to filling a small gap in Romanian lexicography. It could constitute, at the same time, a starting point in future personal of the same or of a different type. For instance, in a potential line of research, our list of anglicisms could be used to sound the receptivity towards the introduction of loan words from English into the Romanian normative dictionaries, or it could be used to trace down the advent of derivatives and of new meanings of words borrowed from English, once these are integrated in the language.

Starting from the assumption that linguistic interferences are a consequence of cultural interferences, the growing number of borrowings from English confirms the fact that the

extra-linguistic relationships between Romania and the English-speaking countries are rapidly acquiring a privileged status, a situation which, in its turn, is visibly reflected in our language.

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