

## SOCIOLINGUISTIC MOTIVATION OF USING ENGLISH BORROWINGS IN THE ROMANIAN BUSINESS TERMINOLOGY

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În acest articol, autoarea încearcă să motiveze împrumuturile din limba engleză în terminologia de afaceri a limbii române din perspectiva sociolingvisticii. Limba business-ului mondial este cea engleză. Pentru a avea acces la piața mondială și a reuși, orice om de afaceri ar trebui să cunoască terminologia de afaceri, care, în majoritatea limbilor, este împrumutată din limba engleză. Limba română nu face excepție, mai ales în prezent, când se încearcă tot mai insistent să ne integrăm în Uniunea Europeană.

Nowadays we witness exciting economic times. We are experiencing evolutionary and in some instances – revolutionary changes in our economy and in the world. We know that change will certainly continue to be a fact of life in the years ahead, yet the fundamental principles of business remain virtually the same from year to year. Social, economic, technological, and regulatory developments have introduced new ideas, words, and methods into business practices and have therefore impacted the study of business. Every person interacts with business – through the products we buy, the advertisements we see and hear, the jobs we have, and the money we invest. We observe that thousands of new businesses begin every year, so obviously it is not too difficult to embark on a new venture. But the vast majority of these start-ups are out of business within three to five years. For many business people it takes two or three attempts before they learn all the critical steps in the start-up process. One of the important steps is to speak the language of the business world, speak the language of the money men, and they will listen to you. The language accepted as a language of global business is English. The breathtaking economic development of Great Britain and USA contributed to this situation. But the countries which wanted to have access to the American and British scientific and economic discoveries began to accept the English language in business, commerce and communication. A very good example is Japan, which after 1945 wanted to renew economically. It accepted the communication in English, initiated measures for the extension of the English study in schools, allowing in this way the direct access to information. This means that the economic interest of Japan won upon the linguistic and national pride. In the same situation is Israel, which was conscious of the fact that only through the learning of the language of those who do business you can realize a true financial prosperity. Republic of Moldova and Romania tend to be in the same situation and to participate in the world economy with the help of English or at least of English borrowings.

The Romanian language, in spite of relatively sporadic direct contacts with English speaking communities, has borrowed a great number of words from English. Throughout the centuries, due to its geographical position, Romanian has been influenced directly by various languages belonging to different genetic types – Slavic, Germanic, Romance, Fino-Ugric: this has turned Romanian into a generous receiver, a heterogeneous language, with an international mixed background, able to assimilate words from various languages. The impact of various linguistic influences has favoured the “openness” of our language to borrow foreign words, including English words. The English language has enriched the Romanian language with Latin elements, contributing to the re-Latinization of contemporary Romanian. The Latin elements present due to the English borrowings name concepts of science and technology, art and culture, they do not belong to the general vocabulary and are not frequently used. They usually belong to the class of learned, cultivated words. The English elements were introduced into Romanian mainly by cultural borrowing or intermediary borrowing, beginning with the second half of the nineteenth century; the first clear contact occurred at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and continued until the First World War. The period the first words were borrowed from English coincides with the wave of numerous French borrowings. Many English loans in Romanian have been adopted through the mediation of French.

The borrowing process of English words is favoured by the peculiarity of Romanian to preserve its Latin (Romance) character unaltered, and the penetration of English elements into Romanian is a dynamic process.

All in all, we can consider that most words borrowed from English have already been integrated or are going to be integrated in the Romanian language system.

This process is conditioned sociolinguistically. First, we should consider the fact that English is a world language. It is the language for international communications and as such it evolves around commercial activities. In trade dealings, usually there is a buyer (customer) and a seller (supplier) and over time the buyer's language prevails. This stems from the natural law of "the customer is the king." In today's world, the USA is still the largest buyer in terms of dollar value of its market, so English is the leading-brand tool of communication. That could change over time after (if) other markets surpass the US in buying power. Every business should follow "Customers first" rule.

English is the major language of news and information in the world. It is the language of business and government even in some countries where it is a minority language. It is the language of maritime communication and international air traffic control, and it is used even for internal air traffic control in countries where it is not a native language. American popular culture – primarily films and music – carries the English language throughout the world. As we have mentioned above, English is the language of global business, which is why we can consider this fact another sociolinguistic motivation of using English borrowings in the Romanian Business Terminology. There are numerous arguments in favour of this assertion. The six countries – members of the European Free Trade Association – communicate in English, none of them being an English-speaking countries. In 1977, four companies from France, Italy, Germany, and Switzerland started Iveco (a truck-making company). They chose English as Iveco's official language. When the Swiss company Brown Boveri and the Swedish company ASEA merged in 1988, they decided to use English in the new company. When Volkswagen opened a factory in Shanghai it found that there were too few Germans who spoke Chinese, and too few Chinese who spoke German. So now German engineers and Chinese managers communicate in English. One set of findings reveals that at least six of the largest German corporations use English from 50% to nearly 100% of the time in their business communication. We can also mention here some Moldovan companies such as "Moldcell", "Price Water Cooper" in which the language of communication is English.

English is also the official language of many international organizations, including the United Nations and many professional organizations. It is frequently the language of international conferences, and it is the language of international athletics. Throughout the world, many professional papers are published in English. Even papers that are published in other languages often have abstracts in English. Thus, many businessmen from the Republic of Moldova use English Borrowings from the business field and build their success upon their good knowledge of them. They even use them at their meetings. In other words, using English in an activity related to business brings "benefit". English Borrowings in the Romanian Business Terminology open a way to another world, to the world of business, to success.

Moldovan business people are conscious of the fact that in these not easy times it is really difficult to build a business and to survive. That is why having a strong business relationship is priceless. A business relationship is built on the personal relationships between the people of the two parties. Knowing and comfortably using English in Business is a requisite for moving your relationship to a more personal and therefore closer level.

In the past few years, Romanian has been the subject of many changes, as it has turned itself into a great importer of words, especially of English origin. After having followed the French and German trend, nowadays it seems that Romanian and Romanians try to keep up with Europe and Europeans and integrate, at least, linguistically as English origin words are spreading and penetrating our language more and more. We can even say that there is almost no field of activity in which such words have not penetrated; more than that, the tendency has become dominant. Many are the reasons facilitating the enrichment of our language with English-origin terms, among these we may quote just a few: the development of Business, of technology, of trade, and of the economy. Economic, social and political factors play an important role in enriching a language by means of borrowings; in countries where such relationships are non-existent, words of foreign origin penetrate with more difficulty, if at all. The boom in business, technology and industry smoothed the path towards the exchange of information between countries and, as a result, new terms are introduced in order to cover the new realities that are coming up in these domains fast.

Similarly, trade and population migration represent another cause of change, and many words belonging to commerce and transportation have entered Romanian: *voucher*, *trailer*, *discount*. The Romanian native speakers need to borrow such terms because these can facilitate communication between Romanian business owners and European / world traders. Nowadays, it is almost impossible for business owners of different origins to get along, sign contracts and establish business partnerships without resorting to terms connected with economics and business, mainly of English origin, which spread all over Europe and became international terms. Newly coined terms appear, some translated, some adjusted, brands (kodack) are turned into common nouns and used in daily speech, some of them have a short life and soon become obsolete (especially those belonging to daily speech), some others enter the common core vocabulary (standard language, specialized language).

So, in other words, the businessmen are forced to use English if they want their business to survive, globalize, internationalize, being aware (or not) of the fact that the pressures of competition force companies and economies to internationalize, otherwise they begin to wither.

The business success of our citizens depends, to some extent, on their capability of knowing and using English Borrowings in the Romanian Business Terminology. And we should not forget about the fact that those who aspire to influence also aspire to a command of English or at least to the use of English Borrowings. One can not go far in a business anywhere in the world without sooner or later encountering the desirability of using English Borrowings in Business Terminology.

Linguistic globalization is seen as a consequence of modern economic worldwide inter-dependency, economic trend that needs a sole means of communication; the choice of namely English language to fulfill this role is the result of a combination of historical circumstances. In this context the following question should be asked: do Anglicisms present a danger or a vocabulary enrichment for Romanian language? This question is more or less a rhetorical question. The influence of English upon Romanian can be either positive or negative, especially in those cases when the borrowed word is not interpreted correctly and its meaning is changed, thus having a misleading effect.

In some cases the meaning of the borrowed words is changed through ellipsis or truncation.

The ellipsis of the determined noun has as a result the restraint of the determinative meaning, which functions in the colloquial variant of the Romanian language, but also in press with the initial meaning of the compound. For the Romanian speaker, the meaning becomes in this way the bearer of a colloquial meaning. For example:

- **exchange** (birou de schimb valutar) (<exchange office): Patronii de *exchange*, politica unui *exchange* aflat chiar la coloane; (A, 19.07.2002, p.5);
- **duty-free** (scutit de taxe vamale) (<duty-free shop): Aeroportul Otopeni rămâne fără *duty-free* (A, 17.08.2001, p.8);
- **second-hand** (la mâna a doua) (<second-hand shop): *Second-hand-urile* vor fi închise (A, 3.05.1999, p.3).

The truncation of some English words has superposition of meaning as a result, which generates confusion, such as:

- **lobby** (grup de presiune, de influență) și **lobbyism** (activitate de presiune în domeniul politic, economic). In Romanian, the first term is used with the meaning of the second one as in *a face lobby*: Mușetescu și-a făcut *lobby* la grupul liberal (A, 19.03.2002, p.2);
- **racket** (stoarcere de bani prin intimidare și violență) și **racketeer** (pungaș, escroc). Through a semantic mutation the first term took over the meaning of the second one: *Racketeii* nu au mai apucat să își folosească prada (DCR2, p.194).

Another case is the modification of the method of writing which can be associated with certain semantic and/or stylistic mutations, for example:

- the model of writing of the word *leader* is not met in Romanian dictionaries and is not recommended. It is used very often in the domain of publicity, for example: Renault România continuă să fie *leaderul* pieței auto de import (A, 2.07.2002, p.6);
- the terms *business* and *businessman* appear in the written press in neutral contexts from the stylistic point of view, for example: asociația *businessman*-ilor din România (A, 27.11.1993, p.2).

In order to facilitate the assimilation of anglicisms and to prevent misunderstandings the following steps should be undertaken:

1) the elaboration of a dictionary of Anglicisms and Americanisms, with explanatory and normative character, containing indications of semantic, stylistic and functional order;

2) the monitoring of the language used in mass-media and the conscientiousness of the representatives of this domain concerning their role in the “ecology” of the public communication;

3) the extension of the given space in the school programs and Radio and TV programmes of “language cultivation” and neologisms assimilation.

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