

A BIRD'S EYE-VIEW OF ENGLISH INFLUENCES UPON THE ROMANIAN LEXIS¹

ANDREI BANTAȘ

University of Bucharest

0.1. Alongside many differences between English and Romanian — considered on the whole, a Germanic and a Romance language respectively — there are nevertheless some similarities which cannot be overlooked, especially as regards certain aspects of their vocabulary.

By way of an elementary introduction to the analysis of the current status of the English element in the Romanian lexis, we should like to recall a few general points about the Romanian vocabulary (for the benefit of those unfamiliar with the history of Romanian).

What seems to us to be a common feature that contemporary English and contemporary Romanian share is the strength of the old vocabulary, of the element which existed in the primary form of the language, before either Romanian or English was actually shaped.

We are not referring to the *earliest stock* = the autochthonous/vernacular element — (which for Romanian means Dacian-Thracian) as only several score of such words are presumed to have resisted in Romanian down to our days, but to the *Latin stock* (brought to Romania's old territory called Dacia in the second to the third centuries A. D. while the Roman occupation lasted), comparable through its hardiness, productivity and currency with the German-Saxon element in English.

Another point which the Romanian lexis has in common with the English one is the recurrent nature of the Latin impact upon it. But while English is said to have undergone ten waves of Latin influence, for Romanian we can assume that there was a long pause from the above-mentioned Roman occupation until the time of the Romanian illuminists — called the "Transylvanian

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school" — 1750 — 1825 — (occasional earlier contacts apparently not leaving a strong mark upon the language). Then the "classical" vocabulary had a strong impact upon Romanian throughout the 19th century (mainly through the agency of French, and particularly during the democratic and cultural revival known under the name of the 1848 Movement), while the rapid development of science and technology — fairly well assimilated and integrated by Romanian scholars, scientists and technicians — has enormously increased this section of the Romanian lexis since the turn of the century. After a new upsurge of the Greek-Latin international vocabulary in the various fields of the humanities in the inter-war period and since the Second World War, the explosion of the neologistic social-political vocabulary connected with the advent of the new economic and social system is nowadays paralleled by a tremendous absorption of the international scientific and technical vocabulary brought about by the scientific and technical revolution in the world and in the Socialist Republic of Romania.

0.2. As French was for a long time the main foreign-language learnt, known and used by Romanians, it is but natural that after the Latinizing influence (mainly in the wake of "The Transylvanian School") it should have served for more than a century as an intermediate, as the principal channel for the assimilation of the Greek-Latin and international vocabulary into Romanian. The influence of French itself was very strong (though occasionally ridiculed in the literary and linguistic works of the 19th century) leading to a *précieux* jargon which seems to have died down after the Second World War together with other vestiges of the past.

0.3. Yet, with the intense development of mass-media since the War and as part of Romania's multilateral and open foreign and cultural policy, in recent decades, with the rush for new words which parallels the rush for new literature and culture generally, English itself — and directly too — has come to account for a substantial share of the newly-introduced words. *The ways and degree of their assimilation* — alongside occasional "crude" calques of phrases and idioms — form the main object of the present study.

1.0. All this evolution has naturally been mirrored by the various Romanian dictionaries, among which bilingual dictionaries have played a rather important part. Without boasting a very long tradition, Romanian lexicography, including bilingual dictionaries too, has seen an almost constant development since its timid beginnings in the 18th century and its taking a more definite shape in the 19th. Nowadays, a wide range of monolingual, bilingual and polyglot dictionaries record the general vocabulary as well as the specialized one — in a rather large number of fields of science, technique and the liberal arts including also dictionaries of dialects, of neologisms, of the language of Eminescu and other writers, etc.

1.1. To convey an idea of the proportions of the Romanian vocabulary,

and of its evolution, we should mention that the largest dictionary at the end of the last century (*Dicţionarul Român-Francez* by Frédéric Damé, four volumes, 1893—1895) included nearly 40,000 words and variants and a fairly large amount of phrases; that the best dictionary at the turn of the 20th century (*Dicţionarul Român-German* by the scholar and etymologist H. Tiktin, three volumes, 1895—1925) — while deliberately leaving aside neologisms — incorporated about the same number of words with an enormous amount of idioms and proverbs; that the first Romanian-Romanian dictionary to devote attention to the increasing number of neologisms (the vocabulary section of *Dicţionarul enciclopedic ilustrat* by I. A. Candrea and G. Adamescu, 1931 — a sort of Romanian Larousse) — counted some 38,000 words (43,269 including variants). Post-war dictionaries rose to 50,000 words and variants (*Dicţionarul limbii române moderne*, 1958 and the latest Romanian-Romanian dictionary (*Dicţionarul explicativ al limbii române*, 1975) brought the number of words recorded to 56,568. Bilingual dictionaries increased the stock of Romanian words to about 48,000 entries (— e.g. *Dicţionarul Român-Englez* by Leon Leviţchi revised by Andrei Bantaş), while the new *Dicţionarul Român-Englez* (now being compiled by the same authors) will probably exceed the figure of one hundred thousand entries. On the other hand, *Dicţionarul Academiei* (a thoroughgoing work of which only a few volumes have come out so far) boasts a corpus estimated at 150,000 entries and variants.

1.2. It goes without saying that neologisms and Romanian creations based on neologistic elements are largely responsible for this spectacular rise in the number of words recorded and used in Romanian in recent decades. Imported elements certainly account for the bulk of the technical vocabulary (probably rising to more than 150,000 items since 120,000 of them have already been entered in large *Romanian-English* and *Romanian-French* technical dictionaries), of medical terms (probably exceeding the figure of 30,000) and of other registers — specialized, journalese, literary criticism, sports and even familiar terms.

Taken all in all, a "Concise Oxford Dictionary of Romanian" (to speak metaphorically) would reflect the *current* Romanian vocabulary if it included a number of words similar to that in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*.

1.3. *Dicţionarul de neologisme* — in its revised, substantially corrected edition — has over 20 thousand entries and shows their origin in various foreign languages (English accounting directly or indirectly for about 10% of them). Sometimes, two sources are indicated — for instance one or more direct and one or more indirect — in confirmation of the theory developed by Academician Alexandru Graur and Professor Theodor Hristea (see references) that when a clear distinction cannot be made between the actual source (etymon) of a new word and the channel of its penetration, the concept of "multiple

etymology" should be applied to be on the safe side. Moreover, in many cases, within a matter of years or decades several foreign sources may combine (sometimes also together with internal ones) in introducing a new word, in consolidating it in our language (and in establishing one form for it out of the several ones originally in circulation).

In this light, we can see the upwards of one thousand words of English origin recorded in the *Dictionary of neologisms* cannot be said for certain to have penetrated directly from English, because the interference of French channels and the creation of some of them in Romanian proceeding from some English etyma may bias our judgement. Still, this need not prevent us from investigating their current status in contemporary Romanian.

1.4. As regards the currency of foreign words in Romanian, although the spreading of neologisms is a self-evident phenomenon (sometimes assuming astonishing or even alarming proportions when people seem to have forgotten traditional words) — we have to resort to earlier assessments. For instance, the scholar A. D. Chihac, who published in Frankfurt in 1870—1879 a substantial *Dictionnaire d'étymologie Daco-Romane*, managed to disprove as early as at that time the allegations of those who contested the Latin nature of Romanian. He showed that out of the vocabulary which he recorded in the Dictionary — relying on texts as well as the language spoken by Romanians before and after the Union of the Romanian Lands in 1859 — Latin words (for the most part incorporated a long time before, as shown in 0.1) indeed formed only a minority (the actual figure ranges between one fifth and two fifths — for his means of accurately establishing etymologies were inadequate). Slavonic and Turkish, German, Hungarian and other elements indeed accounted for the majority. However, the important point which he managed to make was that the actual frequency in texts and speech reversed the situation pictured by the inventories in dictionaries: the 20 to 40 per cent Latin words became 60 to 80 per cent in point of currency, while the currency of the elements later incorporated by Romanian remained rather limited.

The scholar George Călinescu (1899—1965), who was not a philologist but a great literary historian, made a fine linguistic analysis of the various elements incorporated in Romanian speech, showing that (at the time of his writing *The history of Romanian literature*, 1941) an unschooled peasant could fairly well speak about himself, his body and soul, his family and relatives, his house, his farm, his farming work, as well as about part of his spiritual life, while using mainly Latin words and their derivatives. (Further on he showed the semantic areas where the superposed languages exerted their influence upon the Romanian vocabulary).

1.5. This is what we meant when stating that there were several points of similitude between English and Romanian: the subsequent, superposed or imported vocabulary is an ample reality of both languages, while the old,

traditional stock remains the essence, the fundamental part of their lexis (which reminds us of the poems of Swinburne, Hopkins, Dylan Thomas or of Wilde's poetical prose dominated by the vernacular lexis).

It is with this concept in mind that we can approach the problem of the impact of English upon the Romanian lexis, not forgetting the qualifications involved by the notion of multiple etymology (described under 1.3; cf. also Graur and Hristea in the references) — that is, we will refrain from stating for certain their direct penetration.

1.6. The paper is concerned mainly A) with the corpus of English words identified by us in contemporary Romanian writings and speech, in various domains ranging from technology to slang and B) with the different procedures (used consciously but mainly unconsciously) for the incorporation of English words into Romanian.

2.0. Among the about sixty linguistic phenomena associated with the influence of English upon the Romanian lexis, some are detected more easily, while others are more difficult to identify, especially because of the above-mentioned situation of indirect penetration (in most cases through French channels), because of multiple etymology and of the blending or crossing of several procedures or phenomena. Some of the phenomena or aspects are restricted to a certain specialized domain, register or jargon (technical, sporting, etc.) while others are fairly widespread; some are more amply represented, while others have a limited exemplification.

2.1. I. Among lexicological phenomena, greater or smaller attention is claimed by the following:

2.1.1. *Importation of words as such*. Out of the many examples we shall quote at random: *consulting* (together with the respective notion, like *engineering*, etc.), *boss*, *input*, *output*, *non-stop* (adjective and adverb), *mass media*, *top* (in various domains), *superlong* (now applied even to Romanian cigarettes), *king-size* (of limited circulation for the time being).

2.1.2. *Importation as such of phrases* — e. g. *on the rocks*, *bye-bye*, *fly and drive*, *rent-a-car*.

2.1.3. *Importation as such of abbreviations* — e. g. *GMT*, *NATO*, *SEATO*, *BBC*, *TV*, *WC* (while others are reframed after the Romanian translation of the respective formula — e. g. *OZN* > *UFO*).

2.1.4. *Partial assimilation of English imports* — e. g. *slogân* (probably owing to its importation through French, believed by many people to be its original language); *western* (with initial [w], exceptional in Romanian phonetics in front of [e] — yet given a Romanian neuter plural).

2.1.5. *Total assimilation of English words*, which have acquired Romanian forms — e. g. *martingală*, *padelă* (> "paddle"), *singlă* (through apocope or ellipsis from "single-bedded room"), *lider* from "leader", *vampă* from "vamp" (also appearing in the redundant compound *femeie-vamp* "vamp-woman").

2.1.6. *Apocope* or *ellipsis* (sometimes misleading) — e. g. *trenci* from “trench-coat” (perhaps the oldest example in this category), *dancing*, from “dancing floor” (possibly Romanian imported the already clipped form in French), *cross(s)* from “cross-country race”, *parking* from “parking lot/ground”, *camping* from “camping ground/site” (also appearing with hesitations in pronunciation as well as in the corrupted form *campi*).

2.1.7. *Aphesis* or *aphesis* — e. g. *set* from “twin set of sweaters” (besides the earlier word in the language of sports), *shop* from “tourist shop” or “hard-currency shop” (incidentally a productive root forming new Romanian words without English correspondents), *closet* (only with the meaning of “water closet”, earlier pronounced in a presumed French manner).

2.1.8. *Apocope plus translation: receptie* from “reception desk” (also superposition over an earlier Romanian word with the meaning of “official party/reception”).

2.1.9. *Calque* or *loan-translation*, e. g. partial one in *coşaveraj* and *coşgeter* (in basket-ball, after the model of “goal-average” — R. *golaveraj* and “goal-getter” — R. *golgeter*), *tremurici* from “quakers”.

2.1.10. *False Anglicisms*, (that is, lexical elements thought to be English, although not present in the E. lexis), evincing several aspects, explained in detail by professor Theodor Hristea: 1) wrongly ascribing English origin to French words — e. g. *taxi* (now usually stressed on the first syllable); 2) coinage of words in Romanian or French in keeping with English models and ascribed to imaginary English sources — e. g. *recordman*=record-holder, *clubman*=club member, *tennisman*=tennis player, *cupman*=“participant in a world cup contest”; 3) other imports and coinages wrongly ascribed to English — e. g. *handbal* and *strand*=swimming-pool (both actually coming from German).

2.1.11. *Superposition over Romanian words* — e. g. *a testa* (originally meaning in Romanian “to give evidence”), *rată* (originally meaning “instalment” but now used as “rate of unemployment, inflation, etc.”), *taxă* (originally meaning “fee” but now used for “impost”), *convenție*, *corporație*, *administrație*, *congres* (in translating press items on the USA, instead of the exact equivalents existing earlier in Romanian: *congres al partidului*, *societate pe acțiuni*, *guvern*, *parlament*).

2.1.12. *Multiple etymology* — e. g. *rober* (from the bridge term “rubber”, probably through French), *alo* (from “hallo” with two possible ways of stressing, but anyhow usually without the initial [h], which points to the French channel), *biftec* (now obsolescent but probably taken through French from “beefsteak”; sometimes it was employed as *biftec tocat*=“minced meat roll”), *building* (most probably taken through French though the pronunciations has always been similar to the original English one), *jerseu* (through the French *jerse* which is preserved for the material, not for the item of clothing).

2.1.13. *Dubious etymology* — e. g. *geamblac* (sounding like a Turkish word

and making the English “crown-block” almost impossible to recognize; it seems that Polish was the channel for importation), *tramvai* (probably through French from “tramway” but meaning only the vehicle — parallel to the now obsolete form *tramcâr* — but spelt according to the Romanian pronunciation — in which there used to be also the corrupted form *traivân*).

2.1.14. *Productive prefixes* or “*prefixoids*” — e. g. *tele* (in *telecinematecă*, *teleenciclopedie*, *teledjurnal*, etc.), *super* (in *supermagazin*=approx. “super-market”, etc.) and *mini* (now applied by journalists to practically any noun).

2.1.15. *Productive suffixes* — e. g. in *concertoman*=“concertgoer” and other infrequently used jargon words similar to the above-mentioned models in the sports vocabulary (but also smacking of back-formations from words including the suffix-*mania* — e. g. *toxicoman*, *process-oan*=“caviller, law-suit maniac”) or in *trustman*=“big businessman” (for which Russian also seems to be responsible).

2.1.16. *Productive roots and stems*—e.g. *bişnit* from “business” (therefore evincing corruption too, but adopted enthusiastically in colloquial Romanian and leading to the derivatives *bişniţar*, *bişniţărie*, *bişniţăreală*, etc.), *fitingărie* from “fittings”, *a stopa* from “stop” (used in sports, motoring, as well as tailoring), *bărmănită* (used as the feminine from *barman*), *a şuta* and other derivatives from the English sports term “to shoot” (also leading to the Romanian back-formation *şut* corresponding to the English “shot”), *shop* (curiously enough preserved with its English spelling when used as such but changing to Romanian spelling for the derivatives *sopist*, *sopistă*).

2.1.17. *Productive words generating idioms* — e. g. *a merge/a face fifty-fifty* (to go halves), *a juca la event* (as a racing phrase meaning “to take chances in an event gamble”).

2.1.18. *Revival or introduction of Greek/Latin words under English influence* — e. g. *a expanda* (as a technical term), *excerpt* (now occasionally used in the elevated register instead of the earlier *fragment*).

2.1.19. Words which have already become obsolete — e. g. *bacon*, *high-life* (with the mistaken meaning of “high society”), *five o'clock* (idem, for “tea-party”).

2.1.20. Parallel forms (duplication of Romanian words) — e. g. *pickles şi murături* (with the same meaning in fact), *pulover/pulovăr/plovăr* and *sweter* (most often used, especially the former — instead of the former *flanelă*).

2.2. II. Among *lexical-semantic phenomena*, we should like to quote.

2.2.1. *Narrowing of meaning* — e. g. *drink* (by apheresis from “strong/short drink”).

2.2.2. *Extension of meaning* — e. g. *bar*-now meaning 1) “bar-room”, 2) “night club”, 3) “pub”, 4) “hotel-bar”, 5) “drugstore”, 6) “coffee-house”, 7) “drink-cabinet”.

2.2.3. *Degradation of meaning*.

2.2.4. *Elevation of meaning.*

2.2.5. *Distortion of meaning* — e. g. the now obsolete *high life* = "high society" and *five o'clock* = "tea-party".

2.2.6. *Misinterpretation* — e. g. *miss* = 1) governess (from proper names, besides 2) prize-winner in a contest (from Miss Europe, etc.), *smocking* from "smoking-jacket" (but with the meaning of "dinner jacket", "evening dress"), *a escalada* (superposing the meaning of the English word "to escalate" over the Romanian meaning "to climb over a mountain"), *spicher* (through French and only with the meaning of "radio announcer", now replaced generally by the native Romanian word *crainic* = "harbinger, town-crier"), *scheici* (again probably through French, with the meaning "comic number" in a show, broadcast, amateur performance, etc.), *sparing-partner* (as a boxing term, believed by those conversant with English to be connected with the verb "to spare", without people thinking of the correct form "sparring-partner").

2.3. III. The following *grammatical* phenomena seem to be worthy of note:

2.3.1. *Gender alterations* — e. g. *pintă* (> pint), turned feminine by the addition of the -ă ending.

2.3.2. *Gender fluctuations* — e. g. *inci* (M) or *incie* (F), for "inch", *un/o pepsi* (cola).

2.3.3. *Gender differentiations.*

2.3.4. *Conversion produced in Romanian* — e. g. *fair play* used as an adverb or even an adjective (attributive or predicative as in *tipul e/se poartă fair play* = "the chap is decent/behaves decently").

2.3.5. *Romanian plurals* — e. g. *westernuri*, *draifuri* from "drives" (in tennis), *beci* from "full backs" (in football), *biftece/biftecurei* (with the alternation of possible Romanian neuter forms).

2.3.6. *Hybrid plurals* — e. g. *teniși*, *bascheți* (through apocope from "tennis/basket shoes" — therefore employed only in the plural in this sense); *un/o star* (depending on sex) — *două staruri* (only feminine).

2.3.7. *Double plurals* (that is, the addition of the Romanian neuter plural through ignorance of fact that the English form is already a plural) — e. g. *dropsuri*, *rolsuri*, *rocsuri/roxuri* (all three sweetmeats = "chops", "rolls", "racks"), *comicsuri* (= "comic strips"), *stic(k)suri* (from "salt sticks"), *best sellersuri*.

2.3.8. *Fluctuation in number.*

2.3.9. *Change in number* — e. g. (*slip* from "bathing-silps", *șort* from "shorts" (though the other kinds of trousers are used in plural form, including *blugi/blue-jeans*, *tangarezi/dangarezi/dangalezi* from "dungarees").

2.3.10. *Forms invariable in the plural* — e. g. *o lady* — *două lady*, *o miss* — *două miss*.

2.3.11. *Imitation of English word-forming devices* — e. g. *student-club*, *orchestră-pop*, *vocal-grup/group*.

2.4. IV. *Phenomena of form, that is connected with the pronunciation and/or spelling*, are also numerous enough.

2.4.1. *Attempts at fitting English pronunciation to Romanian phonetics* — e. g. *flash-back*, *cake* (also evincing variations of spelling — *chec* being now the predominant Romanian form).

2.4.2. *Attempts at adapting Romanian sounds to English pronunciation* — e. g. *smeci* for "smash hit", (probably also through contamination from the earlier imported *meci* > "match"), *snack* or *snak* for "snack-bar" — the last being the official form in Romanian too.

2.4.3. *Variations of form* — *design/designing/dizain* (for the activity).

2.4.4. *Corrupted pronunciation* (sometimes its spreading being due to its jocular use, fascinating for young people) e. g. *blugi* from "blue jeans" (even when not blue, the form "jeans" — current in French for instance, fails to appear); *ciungă* (cf. Italian *sciussia* > "shoeshine") from "chewing gum" (the latter form also appearing, perhaps in a Romanian transcription — *ciuingum*), *pantihoz* from "pantyhose", *ius* for the tennis term "deuce" also used formerly in other sports), *plovăr* as a highly familiar form (criticized but gaining ground) for "pullover", through syncope — a phenomenon apparently on the increase in casual speech.

2.4.5. *French influence as an intermediate between English and Romanian pronunciation* — *suspense* pronounced [süs'pans], *struggle for life* [stro'e'gl for laif], *rugby* pronounced ['rügbi] or ['roegbi] as well as ['ragbi] which is the elevated form or ['ruibi] which seems to be only a suburban form — evincing the same slurring of hard consonants as 'forbal, the suburban form of "football" usually pronounced and spelt 'foibal), *hol* also pronounced [ol] by Frenchified people; the same applies to many proper names such as Huxley — appearing also in the variant ['oekslei] besides the popular form ['hukslei] and the elevated form ['hakslei] or Shakespeare, whose traditional pronunciation [[eks'pir] is now gradually being replaced by its correct stressing and pronunciation among intellectuals.

2.4.6. *Adoption or adaptation of a Frenchified form of English words* — e. g. *feribot* from "ferryboat", *cargobot* or *cargou* from "cargoboat", *pachebot* from "packet boat" (now apparently obsolete).

2.4.7. *Hesitations and fluctuations in pronunciation* — e. g. *musical*, *yacht* (also appearing with the spelling *iaht*, reproducing the respective Romanian pronunciation), *xerox* and *a xeroxa*, *chec/cake*, *sef/seif/safe* (puzzling for many people in point of origin and pronunciation), *brek/breik/brec* from the sports term "break", *flirt* (believed to be French, it used to be pronounced [floert] which generated the fanciful spelling *fleurt* — also evincing a change of meaning: 1. love-affair 2. boy/girl one goes out with).

2.4.8. *Attempts at transliterating English words* — (e. g. *iolă* from "yawl"), *snaip* < "snipe" also applied to trade marks and other proper names.

2.4.9. *Application of preconceived ideas about English pronunciation* — e. g. ['plaimut] for the Plymouth car, ['lainda] for Linda, [mert] for the name March, ['mengarət] for Margaret.

2.4.10. *Hesitations and fluctuations in spelling* — e. g. *gentleman*, *jam* (now apparently stabilized as *gem*), *knock-out*, *tweed* and the above-mentioned *safe cake*, *football*.

2.4.11. *Hesitations and fluctuations in spelling and pronunciation combined* — e. g. *flash/flesh/fles/flas*, *sandvici/sanviş/sandviş/sandwich/senviş/sendviş/sendivici* (a puzzling coexistence of all these forms in speech and occasionally in writing), *picup/pick-up* (in fact evincing also a semantic phenomenon — its utilization only for "record player"), *ketchup* (with two forms and pronunciations).

2.4.12. *Jocular pronunciation (and spelling)* — e. g. *vizichi* [vi'ziki] for "whisky".

2.4.13. Replacing the initial cluster /st/ or /sp/ by /sht/ and /shp/ respectively in some English words (probably owing to the German influence but also to the assumption that the English also have this pronunciation of the initial clusters) — e. g. *ştrand*, *şprai*, *şstart*, *şving* (for "swing" in boxing, not for the dance, which is pronounced more or less as in English), *şstress* (even among physicians) and *şstandard* (though for a long time it used to be pronounced correctly — without the English [æ], however). These "hyper-Germanisms" have been amply discussed by Prof. Theodor Hristea in *Probleme de etimologie*.

2.5. V. *As is easily noticed, many of the phenomena are mixed or combined.* We should like to add some more of these:

2.5.1. *Lexical+phonetic+spelling+corruption of form* — e. g. *tachet* from "tappet" (through French, however) besides the above-mentioned *geamblac*.

2.5.2. *Lexical+historical (transient borrowings)* — e. g. *sportsman/sportman*, besides the above-mentioned *five o'clock*.

2.5.3. *Semantic+grammatical* (occasionally leading to wrong usage) — e. g. *faul/fault* from "foul play" (corruption is also present, very much as in *faulita* "to play foul" used as a transitive verb and appearing as productive).

2.5.4. *Lexical+stylistic* (rapid or slow spreading, limited, broad or general spreading, in jargon, in the technical vocabulary, etc.)

2.5.5. *Stylistic phenomena* — specialized as against nonspecialized terms, popular usage (e. g. redundancy in **week-end de sfârşit de săptămână* — literally **"weekend at the end of the week"* — probably through the interpretation of "week-end" as "holiday" or "leisure"), scientific, educated borrowings (e. g. *versatil*, *cuplet* used by English-speaking Romanians in a sense different in this language from the traditional — i.e. French — one).

2.5.6. *Changes in grammar and usage* (especially syntagms and phrases) only in the speech and writing of people conversant with English (occasionally

leading to calques: *a oferi cursuri*, *a întreprinde paşi*, "to undertake steps", etc.).

2.5.7. *Lexicological+grammar+spelling phenomena* — e. g. *coctail/cocteil* /*cocktail/coctel* (through apocope from "cocktail party", never used in the plural "cocktails", though the Romanian plural *cocteiluri* may appear for the drinks alone; variations of spelling are also noticeable).

2.6. A detailed analysis of the corpus could always increase the inventory of phenomena, though the number of examples for each may not be very great.

3.0. The question naturally arises: What could explain such a flow or even a flood of English words into the Romanian vocabulary lexis in recent decades? (or should we say the "input" of English vocabulary — as this is now a Romanian word too?)

For the time being we could ascribe this phenomenon — or rather the abundance of phenomena included in it — to a number of objective and subjective factors.

3.1.1. Among *objective factors* we could enumerate:

- a. the appearance of some new notions — combined with the urgent need of rendering them in Romanian (e. g. in the mass media)
- b. the birth of entirely new (branches of) sciences in the English-speaking world (or their reflection in the International Scientific Vocabulary).
- c. the liberalization and intensification of cultural as well as economic and political contacts, of the exchange of mass media,
- d. the appearance of some fashion in society life (too swift to wait for the coinage of Romanian equivalents).

3.1.2. *Subjective factors*

- a. the desire for brevity/conciseness,
- b. the desire to expand the vocabulary,
- c. the eagerness/love/mania for novelty,
- d. snobbishness.

3.2. Of course some of these tendencies (especially the subjective ones) need not have led to such a mass of new words, but for the flexibility of the Romanian lexis.

4.0. The three inventories we have been able to compile — of devices and phenomena leading to the input of English words into the Romanian vocabulary, the main domains of penetration and the reasons or sources explaining this input — testify to a few tendencies which seem to us to be characteristic of the Romanian vocabulary nowadays. One need not be a specialist in order to discern:

- 4.1. a. a great power of absorption which could be called "eagerness for novelty" if it were a subjective phenomenon.

- b. the almost incredible variety of devices employed for this absorption (more than sixty have easily been identified).
- c. the great productivity of various lexicological, grammatical and phonetic devices which show Romanian as a very vivid linguistic organism.
- d. the great flexibility proved by the Romanian lexis as well as grammar (naturally, to a much smaller extent) in the assimilation, adaptation or creation of new words.
- e. a certain amount of fluctuation and hesitation, corresponding to a period of transition, before the new element is established in the vocabulary (or dies out).
- f. all these phenomena and tendencies do not apply to the English element alone, but to other foreign elements as well.
- g. the English element influencing the Romanian lexis in recent times is so ample that ordinary people and even linguists occasionally exaggerate its impact, ascribing an English etymology to several kinds of "false Anglicisms".

4.2. The interpretation of these phenomena as illustrative of some general characteristics of modern Romanian would probably become more graphic in the light of a comparison with other languages — e. g. Russian (where the adoption of English words, though apparently substantial, particularly during a certain period, involved a rather limited number of domains and quite foreseeably relied mostly on transliteration) or Hungarian, Finnish, etc. (in which the number of English impacts compares unfavourably with the over 4000 lexical items of the "Franglais" or the almost equal amount in Romanian — if we reckon also with the technical vocabulary).

5.0. Of course it would be easy to describe some of these reasons — especially among the subjective ones — as superfluous, or to share the view of those who condemn the borrowings as unnecessary, barbarous, jarring, ridiculous, erroneous, harmful, etc.

5.1. Yet, we should not overlook the following points:

— Very much as in other cases, we have to take these borrowings and other English influences as realities of the language (which cannot be denied and have to be recorded by dictionaries, etc.).

— Seen in these terms, some of the borrowings, etc. may prove more or less ephemeral — as is but natural with the lexis of any language, and as has already happened in the case of a few Anglicisms.

— The final verdict about their fate rests with the evolution of our language, as we know that it always happens (usage being the supreme arbiter — and not fashions, linguists, elegance, norms, etc.).

— Not all English words have joined the Romanian vocabulary in the same way. Among the various devices of penetration we can distinguish some which

should hardly be described as leading to barbarisms (if such a notion may be accepted, though probably we ought to speak rather of superfluous/redundant neologisms).

— If we are to combat or condemn anything, then we should do our utmost to eliminate the erroneous superpositions, the misinterpretations, the corruptions, sometimes proliferated precisely by those who ought to know better.

5.2. Out of the many devices and phenomena identified as part of these general problems of recent English influences upon the Romanian vocabulary, the only one which seems to us a source of concern — if not downright worry — is the emergence and spreading of various errors. We could enumerate a few types of errors — which in our opinion could and should be corrected:

a) the superposition of transliterations or adaptations of English words upon already existing Romanian words from the same Greek, Latin or international vocabulary, in some cases misleading, in a few cases absolutely wrong, perhaps ridiculous. Here are a few instances (connected mainly with Romanian mass media): "administratie" instead of *guvern*; "congress" instead of *parliament*; "convenție" instead of *congres*; "Corpofraie" instead of *societate pe acțiuni* or *trust*, *concern*; "decadă" instead of *deceniu*; "tehnologie" instead of *tehnică*; "persistență" instead of *perseverență*; "persuasiv" instead of *convincător*, etc. Of course, we could make discriminations among these and other examples, establishing a hierarchy of the errors, of their seriousness, of their harmfulness, etc. Yet, it is our opinion that explaining and combatting them may be more useful than allowing them to spread (alongside other errors which have no English source).

b) the superposition upon an already existing Romanian word of an English word which differs from it in both form and meaning. The worst example is in our opinion *a escalada* (and the noun *escaladare*) from the English word "to escalate" which should have been rendered merely by *a extinde*, yet seems to have irremediably conquered the minds of Romanian journalists.

c) the adoption of English phrases in a sort of loan-translation (a calque) in defiance of the current Romanian usage and, stupidly enough, in spite of the presence of normal standard Romanian phrases: "stare de urgență" as a translation for "state of emergency" while there is the Romanian *stare excepțională* as a less serious form of *stare de asediu*; *a avansa o propunere/definiție* which somehow smacks also of hyper-correctness. The influence is felt even in syntax (though because of misinterpretation too): *"*el este presupus a ști*" > "he is supposed to know"; *"*a întreprinde pași*" > "to undertake measures" instead of *a lua măsură* or *a face pași înainte* or *a întreprinde demersuri* (apparently, it is a mixture of the three which could in fact have occurred without the would-be help of the English vocabulary); *"*nu face sens*" > "it doesn't make sense" instead of *n-are (niciun) înțeles*.

d) the utilization of the English spelling or form of a word for which the Romanian vocabulary has a similar form in current usage: e.g. "spectacular" instead of *spectaculos* (there may be various reasons to explain this phenomenon, among which I could mention snobbishness, the speech habits of teachers or translators of English, the artificial language of translations).

e) the tendency of people more conversant with the English language to transfer English words into Romanian out of commodity, a sort of reluctance to make the necessary effort for translating or adapting words from English to good Romanian. E.g. *a performa*, *uteranță*, etc. — to be found among highly-educated scholars.

f) wrong pronunciations of English words spreading in Romanian usage because of various reasons: misinterpretation or misapplication of the English phonetic rules to exceptions, preconceived ideas about the pronunciation of English words (ex. "Plymouth" pronounced [ˈplaimut], the filtering of English pronunciations through French phonetics — or rather through the inaptitude or reluctance of French people to render English sounds correctly (e.g. *struggle for life*, "rugby" pronounced [rugi] or [regi], [rægi]) or the wrong application of French phonetic rules to English (e.g. Huxley [ˈhœkslei] or even [œksˈlei]; *hall* [ol], etc.), Gerald [zeˈral].

7.0. Besides the conclusions drawn all along this paper, we should like to make the following final remarks:

Among the many and varied dictionaries and other reference materials now elaborated or conceived in Romania, a place apart is claimed by a specialized *Vocabulary lexicon of Anglicisms in Romanian* — illustrating the fate of English words in Romanian, that is, their past and present life.

7.1. An entry in such a lexicon could include the following points: the Romanian word imported from English (directly or indirectly, calqued after or derived from an English etymon); its graphic or phonetic variants (if any); its English source (with the correct spelling and pronunciation); its meaning in Romanian and English (+that in French or any possible intermediate); deceptive and other lexicological aspects (elevation, extension of meaning etc.) and the necessary cautions (as regards meaning, grammar, style); historical and sociolinguistic considerations; aspects of spreading and currency; productiveness — its compounds and/or derivatives; special points (American usage, obsolescence, fluctuations and tendencies, etc.).

8. On a subsequent occasion we shall try to present in a counterpart of this paper the other side of the coin — that is the opposite transfer (or the circulation in the reverse direction). It will be not so much a matter of showing the fate of Romanian words in the English vocabulary, but rather of showing how English or American authors, journalists, translators, etc. writing about Romanian realities — historical and contemporary — have solved the difficulties of rendering the Romanian *realia*.

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