

IS THE MASS-MEDIA GUILTY FOR SO MANY ENGLISH LOANWORDS IN ROMANIAN?

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Title: Is the mass-media guilty for so many English loanwords in Romanian?

Abstract: Words like *fake news*, *like*, *face to face*, *feeling*, *start-up*, *take away*, *hairstylist*, *low cost* and others are among the 3,600 new entries in the Romanian language dictionary (DOOM3) published in 2022. Most of the borrowings can be found in technical language, while others are used in media language or in colloquial language. It is discussed whether the anglicisms in lexicographical works nowadays. While the head of the editorial team speaks of linguistic enrichment (Mortu 2023), other researchers (including Popescu, Iordan, Florescu and others) see the many new anglicisms more as language impoverishment and even language decline. Based on the example of the Romanian language, various aspects are discussed, including the frequency of newly recorded words. The article focuses on the proposed changes in the new lexicographical work in order to answer the question of what role foreign words play in language and if mass-media is an accelerator for this linguistic and social development.

Keywords: *linguistic loans; English influence; lexicography; mass-media; Romanian language;*

English loanwords in Romanian

English loanwords are not a new phenomenon in Romanian; they are already mentioned in the second half of the 18th century (Firică 2016, 10). Firică believes that replacing Romanian words that come from Latin or French with anglicisms is the same process as years ago when Turkish or Greek words were replaced from Romanian because they were perceived to be outdated. Firică (2016, 10) interprets today's "Anglomania" as a fad because it gives the appearance of being trendy or of a certain level of cool, although it can also be an expression of superficiality. This fashion of using English words is also observed in other languages, for example Italian (Popescu 2015, 5).

Over time, there has always been a rather critical attitude towards anglicisms in the Romanian language. In 1971, H. Pârlog found that anglicisms had "invaded" the Romanian press, while as early as 1954 the well-known Romanian linguist Iorgu Iordan pointed out the excessive use of neologisms. In the print media, film,

television or concert reviews are particularly affected by anglicisms (Pârlog 1971, 58), although even back then a distinction was made between necessary borrowings such as *computer*, *jazz*, *designer* and unnecessary anglicisms such as *show* (rum. *spectacol*). The reason for the exaggerated use of Anglicism is a pronounced snobbery. The use of English words in everyday life is also reported negatively in the press today (Florescu 2002, 1).

Pârlog (1971, 56) criticizes the fact that anglicisms are used without fixed rules in Romanian; the only adaptation to the language is the plural endings or the use of the definite article. This is how nouns come about like: *slumsuri* (“the slums”) or *new-look-ul* (“the new look”), which leads to double morphemes in the formation of the plural form: *tenismeni*, *businessmeni* (*men* plural form in English for *man*, plus *i* - plural ending for male nouns in the Romanian language). Verbs are adapted to the Romanian language system by adding an infinitive ending, usually *-a*: *a targheta* – “to target”, *a printa* – “to print” or *-are* as a sign of the infinitive that has become a noun: *targhetare* (“targeting”), *printare* – (the) “printing”.

Other researchers also criticize the adoption of anglicisms in Romanian. The influence of English is massive and sometimes even aggressive, occurs in an uncontrolled manner and is supported by the often careless translation of English texts (mostly press releases) (Manea 2017, 90). According to Codruz-Băcescu (2017, 19), the reason for the abundance of Anglicisms is the American film industry. She also emphasizes that the abundance of Anglicisms is a main feature of today’s media language (Codruz-Băcescu 2017, 23). The danger here is that journalists who are not linguistically competent will spread unnecessary anglicisms or inappropriate borrowings, which lead to pleonastic structures, but which reach many readers or viewers/listeners through mass communication (Florea 2015, 17-19). Journalists’ preference for Anglicisms can be explained by the phatic function of media language (Mureșan 2008, 45).

According to Enăchescu (2005), the change in vocabulary is a necessity. Nowadays, borrowings include *charter*, *dumping*, *doping*, *baipas*, *surf*, *scotch*, *shop*, *laser*, etc. firmly anchored in language usage and have no Romanian equivalent. There are areas, such as finance, where anglicisms are unavoidable (Codruz-Băcescu 2017, 22).

According to Manea (2017, 79), the degree of embedding of a loan into the Romanian language after adaptation can be described in form and meaning. The same case can also be observed in other languages, for example in the French language spoken in Canada, in which more or less adapted borrowings can be found (Pamfil 1972). Manea identifies foreign words that have been adopted unchanged, such as *trimmer*, *best-off* or even idioms (*show must go on*). The linguist notes that some borrowings, viewed diachronically, are older Anglicisms that are, however, newly “discovered” or reused (e.g. *CV* has been in use since 1966 or *D.J.*). He also observes that many borrowings, especially in media language, arise through careless translations, rather than through semantic calculation (Manea 2017:80), which often leads to barbarisms such as: *expertiză* - specialist knowledge from the English “expertise”, instead of *experiență* – “experience” in the sense of (special-

ist) knowledge. He emphasizes that Anglicisms can form a technical language, but also a sociolect that is typical, for example, of the language of young people and can be seen as colloquial: *Ce faci bro/men?* in the sense of: “How are you, man?” or expressions like: *Ok, Whatever, What? WTF! E horror!* (“It’s terrible!”) etc. Although technical terms are adopted (such as *cruiser, trailer, roadster*, etc.), they are sometimes used in extremes and are therefore perceived as colloquial, e.g. *a fotoșopa* (the verb describes changing a photo with Photoshop).

Manea shows that the process of form adjustment leads to uncertainty in writing. Newer borrowings are written with a hyphen - *intelligence-ul* (the secret service), *start-up-urile* (“the start-ups”), older ones without a hyphen (*online*, formerly *on-line*). Other uncertainties concern pronunciation, often a mixed one, e.g. *masterplan* is read in Romanian half etymologically (as in English), half phonetically (as written), i.e. as /'ma:stə ˌplan/ instead of /'ma:stə ˌplæn/. The word *manager* has a double pronunciation, which is based either more on the phonetic principle /manadžer/, or on the etymological /'mæn.ə.dʒer/.

There are also errors or double forms (*hostess, hosstes*) in the writing, but also in the meaning. Structures like *cascada Niagara Falls* (“The Niagara Falls waterfall”) or confusing double forms (*preconcepție* from the English “preconception”, instead of *prejudecată* – “prejudice”) arise. Semantic and idiomatic lime forms are also formed: *măsuri prietenoase* - “friendly” measures, according to Eng. “friendly”, *mamă singură* - “single mother” from the English “single mother” or even morphological and syntactic borrowings (Manea 2017, 79-90). An example would be the use of possessive adjectives under the influence of the English language - *Găsește destinația ta de vacanță* – “Find your (own) travel destination” (Paraschivescu 2017).

In conclusion, it can be said that, on the one hand, linguists viewed anglicisms as language enrichment (including Hristea 1978, Graur 1978, Avram 1997, Zarojanu 2002, Manolescu 2002 - see Fircă 2016, 11), and, on the other hand, unnecessary anglicisms were severely criticized (Paler 1997, Slama-Cazacu 2005, Pruteanu 2006 after Fircă 2016, 11). It seems that a mixed perspective is more appropriate, whereby linguists can draw attention to the borrowings adapted to the Romanian language, so that as few errors as possible, which - as noted above - occur especially in the media, but which can be avoided (Fircă 2016, 11).

English words in the Romanian dictionary DOOM3

The last third version of the Romanian spelling dictionary was published at the beginning of 2022 by the Linguistic Institute of the Romanian Academy. Under the title *Dicționar ortografic, ortoepic și morfologic al limbii române*, the 3rd edition, abbreviated DOOM3, the dictionary contains 3,600 new entries, including many anglicisms such as: *fake news, like, face to face, feeling, start-up, take away, hairstylist, low cost* and many others. While the head of the editorial team speaks of linguistic enrichment, there is also the opinion that the new Anglicisms should be seen more as language impoverishment and even as language decline. It is not

the first time that Anglicisms have been viewed as an abuse of language, but this time politics also took part in this dispute. When DOOM2 was released in 1996, the linguist Rodica Zafiu (2005) assessed the fact that Anglicisms were included in a general dictionary for the first time as particularly positive, as it corresponded to a pragmatic attitude. However, the appearance of Anglicisms in the new dictionary was exploited politically for their own goals in 2022 by posting a provocative stance: “Romanian language mocked in DOOM: Do you think it is right that globalization even influences the dictionary?” (Negreanu 2022).

Rodica Zafiu commented on the allegations that DOOM3 was abusing the Romanian language with an excess of anglicisms in 2022. She emphasizes how diverse the new entries are and cites the new words introduced under F as an example. In addition to the anglicisms of everyday language (*Facebook, facelift, face to face, fake, fake news, fashion, feeling*), there are borrowings from the French language (*en fanfare*) and other foreign languages (such as *feng shui, falafel*). She also emphasizes the inclusion of neologisms from technical/high-level language that come from the Romance heritage: *fabulatoriu/fictional, facondă/eloquence, factual/objective, faeton/phaeton(carriage), fenopic/phenotypic, feromone/phermone, fibroză/fibrosis, fișional/fictional*.

DOOM3 also adds word families of neologisms, e.g. *facilitator/facilitator* to *a facilita/to make easier*, *a falimenta/to go bankrupt* to *faliment/bankruptcy*, *a faza/to bring into phase* to *fază/phase* or *fertilizant, fertilizator/fertilizer*, to *a fertiliza/to fertilize* and *fantomatic/ghostly* to *fantomă/ghost* etc. Last but not least, there are new entries older genetic material (archaisms or regionalisms): *făloșenie/pride, fată-mare/virgin, ferfeniță/rag, fedeleş/barrel*.

It is clear that new words that gain usage influence dictionaries, not only in the Romanian language but also in other languages. The new words in Romanian include handmade, carry-out, trigger or happy, or the verbs adapted to the language: *a (se) focusa - to focus, a minimaliza - to minimize* (Manea 2017, 78).

But there are also new words whose use has declined. Language development is mostly reflected in DOOM3. The verb *a zapa (zapping)* and the corresponding noun *zaping-ul*, which was incorporated into Romanian via French (Dimitrescu 1995, 97), are no longer used today and in DOOM3 only as a noun under the form *zapat (zapping)* entered. The noun *xerox* (photocopier) can be found in DOOM3, but not the very often used verb *a xeroxa* (to photocopy).

Today's fads also include the series of nouns *coach, coachee, coacher* and *coaching* (Neamțu 2023, 91-101), with the words *coach* and *coaching* being included for the first time in DOOM3. The noun *coach* today denotes an officially recognized profession, while in the Romanian language you can find different types, such as *business coach, family coach, vocal coach, life coach, fitness coach, financial coach*, even *spiritual coach*, among others. (Neamțu 2023, 91-101). However, Neamțu emphasizes that the adapted forms can only be found colloquially or on specialized websites, such as: *coach-ul* as a noun with a definite article - *the coach*, the plural forms *coachi* or *coacheri* (from *coacher* - the coach), the form *a coachui* (to coach, to train), with the inflection forms: *coachuiesc, coachuiesti, coachuieste*

(I train/coach, you train/coach, he trains/coaches). These forms are more likely to be perceived as barbarism (Neamțu 2023, 91-101).

The English borrowings are now spread through technology, business, commerce, administration, entertainment, but also through the everyday language of young people, through advertising and the Internet (Firică 2016, 20). When borrowing words, especially with the large number of anglicisms, special attention must be paid to the meaning, as inappropriate transfers lead to “false friends” if the application is wrong, as in *preconcepție* (from the English “preconception”), instead of *prejudecată* (“prejudgment”). Other transferences lead to barbarisms, such as a *se focusa* (from the English *to focus*), *locatie* (English “location”), *oportunitate* (English “opportunity”) (also in Firică 2016, 10). However, what ultimately counts, as the researchers also emphasize (see Codruș-Băcescu 2017, 23), is the renewal of the language and its correct use.

Conclusions

It can be said that borrowing words from the English language is the most productive enrichment option in today’s Romanian language. The anglicisms included in the spelling dictionary of the Romanian language correspond to their use in the contemporary language. Most of the borrowings can be found in technical language, while others are used in media language or in colloquial language. Neologisms in technical language are: *delete*, *e-mail*, *audiobook*, *bitcoin*, *selfie*, *an updata* (*to update*), *a upgrada* (*to upgrade*), *hacker*, *browser*, *cookie*, as well as many anglicisms in everyday language: *hairstylist*, *low cost*, *brand*, *shopping center*, *show business*, *voucher*, *take away*, *best of*, *fast-food*, *fresh*, *check-in*, *cache*, *black friday*, *hand-made*, *bullying*, *antibullying*. These or other specific borrowings are used in media language, such as: *blog*, *blogging*, *breaking news*, *fake*, *fake news*, *flyer*, *news alert*. Nevertheless, not all current anglicisms were included, some that already existed in other dictionaries, such as *blender* (Firică 2016, 11).

Since there are many new developments in technology, culture, politics, etc., many of the anglicisms are considered indispensable terms in the Romanian language. As a result, it is practical and useful for such new releases to be included. Regarding the last spelling dictionary of the Romanian language (DOOM3), it must be said that the editors reflect the contemporary language as faithfully as possible. However, the new entries are not limited to borrowings from the English language. Anglicisms are mostly denotative names. The spelling corresponds to language development and adaptation to the Romanian language, such as that *online* and *offline* are no longer written with a hyphen or that new plural forms replace outdated forms (such as the form *eclere* instead of *ecleruri* - French desert). However, double forms are still permitted (the correct form of media, plural, genitive-dative is both *mass-media* and *mass-medie*).

Mass-media plays an important role in the use of English loanwords and also in the development of the Romanian language. Unfortunately, the journalists don’t know always the correct use of Anglicisms. They can accelerate not only the cir-

cultation of English words, which is necessary for the renewal of the language, especially in more specialized domains, but also the improper meaning of the loan-words.

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