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Instances of linguistic contact. The impact of French on Romanian maritime terminology

Instances of linguistic contact. The impact of French on Romanian maritime terminology

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Abstract. The linguistic contact between French and Romanian has long been validated. The neologisms borrowed from French seem to have a privileged status, being dominant in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. The contact between the two Romance languages contributed not only to the formation of the modern Romanian language, but also to the innovation of specialized languages. French was the language of diplomacy and international trade several centuries prior to the standardization of English as the international maritime language. As a result, many terms of French origin have entered the Romanian maritime vocabulary since the eighteenth century and continue to show strength today, in spite of the English influence. In this paper, we will demonstrate how linguistic contact has influenced the development of Romanian maritime terminology, focusing on the external means of vocabulary enrichment, namely the loan and the calque.

Key-words: *linguistic contact, Romanian maritime terminology, French influence, calque, loanword*.

1. Introduction. Factors that influence language dynamics

Throughout history, languages have been influenced by the changing world around them. A language is therefore a dynamic entity that is shaped by a variety of factors, including historical, social and technological. These are external factors that are associated with the cultural connections between various linguistic communities. Historical events and cultural interactions have always had a significant impact on the development and evolution of languages. When different cultures interact, they often exchange ideas and concepts. As a result, words from one language may be borrowed and integrated into another language. Also, the social context in which a language is used, the way in which people from different linguistic backgrounds interact with one another, and the power dynamics between different groups can influence the development of a language. Moreover, scientific advancements and emerging technologies can deeply shape a language. One way this happens is by introducing new terms and phrases that reflect the latest innovations.

2. The modernisation of Romanian language and the French influence

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Romanian literary language underwent modernization through the adoption of lexical loans. During this period, many foreign words were borrowed to name concepts related to emerging fields and domains. These loanwords subsequently became

commonplace means of expression and an essential component of the Romanian basic word stock. It was during this period that Romanian language borrowed extensively from modern Greek, scholarly Latin, French, Russian, German, and Italian. These loans were primarily used in translations of textbooks, fiction, and scientific works, which played a significant role in modernizing the literary Romanian language. Nowadays, the classical lexical heritage has become increasingly important, as it provides the foundation for international terms that are shared across many different languages worldwide. The rapid advancements in science and technology, along with the frequent cultural and social exchanges, have led to a convergence of languages, even across vast geographic distances, resulting in the adoption of virtually identical terminological and reference systems based on Greek and Latin.

During the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century, Romanian language underwent a shift in influence, with the dominance of French surpassing earlier influences, such as those from modern Greek. This was not just a linguistic occurrence, but a social one that reflects the status of the donor language. In fact, at that time, France was considered the model for the formation of modern states, while French was the language of diplomacy and culture in Europe. The cultural esteem of France during the beginning of the 19th century and the political, economic, and cultural connections between France and Romania were significant factors in facilitating the linguistic exchange. [1] The impact of French on the Romanian language was so substantial that it significantly altered the language's lexical appearance. This substantial linguistic influence was also highly facilitated by the kinship between the Romanian and French people, both stemming from a Romance origin. The situation was especially advantageous due to the genealogical relationship between the two languages, sharing numerous words of Latin origin. The Romanian language, with its Latin character and cultural affinities with the Western Romance world, was highly receptive to the assimilation of French neologisms, leading to an unprecedented level of openness. [2] This influence was amplified as Romanian intellectuals of that era began to adopt and incorporate French cultural, social, moral, and political values.

When examining the impact of French loans on the Romanian language, it is important to consider the fields in which they are present. Many French neologisms have made their way into everyday language, serving as expressions for concepts that are necessary for daily life, such as Rom. *restaurant* "restaurant" < Fr. *restaurant*, Rom. *ciocolată* "chocolate" < Fr. *chocolat*, Rom. *bluză* "blouse" < Fr. *blouse*, Rom *tablou* "painting" < Fr. *tableau*, Rom. *voiaj* "voyage" < Fr. *voyage*, etc. However, at a conceptual level, French terms have primarily been inserted into the scientific, technical, political, and cultural terminologies. It is safe to say that the majority of French loanwords found in the Romanian language are specialized, scientific and technical terms that are utilized in diverse professional fields such as military, maritime, law, medicine, commerce, etc. as well as terms that denote concepts related to a particular sphere of material culture. Terms such as *armament* "weaponry", *greement* "rigging", *juridic* "legal", *avocat* "lawyer", *celulă* "cell", *organ* "organ", *factură* "invoice", *tarif* "price", *chitanță* "receipt", *comision* "commission", etc. are all of French origin, and have now become an essential component of the Romanian language.

The studies and statistics conducted on this topic are highly relevant. For example, Dimitrie Macrea found that 38.42% of the words in *Dicționarul limbii române moderne* (DLRM) were of French origin (49,649 words). [3] Florica Dimitrescu, in her study of *Dicționar de cuvinte recente* found that 19.3% of Romanian words were of French origin (3,749 words). [4] There are even studies which argue that 27% of all technical and scientific terms in Romanian are of French origin, while 73.39% seem to have multiple etymologies, French included.[5][1]

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[1] See also C-I. Mladin (2019). [6]

3. The impact of French on Romanian maritime terminology

Maritime communication requires a certain degree of multilingualism, given the diverse linguistic contexts in which it is used. Romanian sailors have always been compelled to communicate in foreign languages to ensure mutual understanding, and as a result, they have frequently imitated the languages with which they came into contact, such as Greek, Turkish, French, Italian, German, Spanish, English, and others. Therefore, Romanian maritime terminology is characterized by a notable heterogeneity, as it has assimilated a considerable number of loanwords. The first Romanian maritime terms were primarily derived from the terminologies of major maritime powers and were mainly related to river and inland navigation, as Romanians were more accustomed to freshwater fishing in rivers and lakes, and only in recent times have started to engage in sea fishing. The terms borrowed at this early stage were primarily fishing-related terms from the languages of those who held a monopoly on sea fishing, including the Greeks, the Turks, and others. The terms borrowed from Western languages, particularly Romance languages, spread in Romanian maritime terminology mainly through the literary language. If the older lexical influences of Slavic, Turkish and Greek origin enriched the internal structure of the Romanian maritime vocabulary, it was the more recent lexical borrowings of Latin, Romance, and German origins that modernized it.

The development of navigation determines, starting with the second half of the nineteenth century, the establishment of specialized schools, and the increase in the number of technical studies: textbooks, studies, lectures, official documents, technical texts with a strong applied character (instructions, regulations, codes, etc.), as well as works on related subjects, such as marine geography, astronomy, meteorology, mathematics, physics, trade, transport, telecommunications, port operation, etc. Like many other terminologies in Romanian, the maritime terminology developed in the second half of the nineteenth century, through the translation of textbooks from languages with tradition in the field of navigation, such as French. Due to its historical dominance in trade, exploration and naval power, French has had a significant influence on other maritime languages, particularly in Europe. It was not until the latter half of 19th century that the Romanian maritime terminology felt this influence, and, although it came about later than expected, its effects were substantial and prevailed for a certain period of time. In fact, even terms of German, Italian and English origin entered Romanian through French intermediaries during this time (i.e. Rom. *afeliu* "aphelion" < Fr. *aphélie*, Germ. *Aphelium*, cf. Gr. *apo* "far", *helios* "sun"; Rom. *amiralitate* "admiralty" < Fr. *amirauté*, It. *amiralita*, Germ. *Admiralität*; Rom. *brigantină* "brigantine" < Fr. *brigantine*, It. *brigantino*, Eng. *brigantine*, Germ. *Brigantine*; Rom. *scafandru* "diver" < Fr. *scaphandre*, It. *scafandro*, cf. Gr. *skaphe* "boat", *aner* "man"; Rom. *sistem* "system" < Fr. *système*, It. *sistema*, Eng. *system*, Lat., Gr. *systema,* etc.)

Therefore, it can be inferred that the majority of Romanian neologisms in maritime terminology from the late 19th and early 20th centuries originated from French. This was, in part, due to the fact that the foundations of the modern Merchant Marine and Navy were set by officers who graduated from the Naval School of Brest in France. *Manualul Gabierului*, published in 1881, is a prime example of this linguistic impact as it was an adapted translation of the first edition of *Manuel du gabier* belonging to the French Navy. The translation of such documents was done in several ways, allowing the creation of new maritime terms by different means: by lexical borrowing, by paraphrasing, designed to render meaning for common speakers, by calquing foreign terms (loan translations), by using internal processes for language enrichment (derivation and composition), and through domestic loans (transition of common words into specialized vocabularies). While there are various methods for enriching vocabulary, two particularly noteworthy ones are the lexical borrowing and the calques.

3.1. Lexical borrowing

Lexical borrowing is the most basic method of enriching the vocabulary of a language. As mentioned before, this linguistic process contributed decisively to the structure of the Romanian maritime terminology.

French loans in Romanian maritime terminology can be organized according the following domains: ship types, ship parts, onboard mechanisms and instruments, rigging and sails, maritime

operations, manning and ranks, meteorology and marine geomorphology, port facilities, among others. Given below are only a few instances of such terms, although there are numerous other terms of French origin in Romanian maritime terminology that can be categorized according to these domains.

- **ship types**: Rom. *ambarcaţiune* "craft" < Fr. *embarcation*; Rom. *barjă* "barge" < Fr. *barge*; Rom. *cablier* "cable-layer" < Fr. *cablier*, Rom. *cabotier* "coaster" < Fr. *cabotier*; Rom. *dragă* "dredger" < Fr. *drague*, Rom. *petrolier* "oil tanker" < Fr. *pétrolier*; Rom. *portcontainer* "container ship" < Fr. *porte-conteneur*; Rom. *remorcă* "tugboat" < Fr. *remorqueur*; Rom. *şalupă* "motorboat" < Fr. *chaloupe*, Rom. *velier* "sailing ship" < Fr. *voilier*; Rom. *vapor* "steamship" < Fr. *vapeur*; Rom. *vedetă* "patrol boat" < Fr. *vedette,* etc.;

- **ship parts**: Rom. *babord* "portside" < Fr. *bâbord*; Rom. *bordaj* "shell plating" < Fr. *bordage*; Rom. *bulb* "bulbous bow" < Fr. *bulbe*; Rom. *cală* "cargo hold" < Fr. *cale*; Rom. *cambuză* "galley" < Fr. *cambuse*; Rom. *chilă* "keel" < Fr. *quille*; Rom. *coca* "hull" < Fr. *coque*; Rom. *dunetă* "poop deck" < Fr. *dunette*; Rom. *etambou* "stern post" < Fr. *étambot,* Rom. *etravă* "stempost" < Fr. *étrave*; Rom. *pavoaz* "dressing overall" < Fr. *pavois*; Rom. *pupa* "stern" < Fr. *poupe*; Rom. *sabord* "scupper" < Fr. *sabord*, etc.;

- **onboard mechanisms and instruments**: Rom. *accelerometru* "accelerometer" < Fr. *accéléromètre*; Rom. *alidadă* "alidade" < Fr. *alidade*; Rom. *anemograf* "wind gauge" < Fr. *anémographe*; Rom. *barograf* "barometer" < Fr. *barographe*; Rom. *barometru* "barometer" < Fr. b*aromètre,* Rom. *cabestan* "capstan" < Fr. *cabestan*; Rom. *ejector* "jet pump" < Fr. *éjecteur*; Rom. *girocompas* "gyrocompass" < Fr. *gyrocompas*; Rom. *periscop* "periscope" < Fr. *périscope,* Rom. *presetupă* "stuffing box" < Fr. *presse-étoupe*; Rom. *servomotor* "servo-engine" < Fr. *servomoteur*; Rom. *sextant* "sextant" < Fr. *sextant*, etc.;

- **rigging and sails**: Rom. *balansină* "topping lift" < Fr. *balancine*; Rom. *balon* "type of sail" < Fr. *balon*; Rom. *bonetă* "studding sail" < Fr. *bonnet*; Rom. *capelaj* "rigging" < Fr. *capelage*; Rom. *ghidon* "burgee" < Fr. *guidon*; Rom. *ghiu* "boom" < Fr. *gui*; Rom. *manevră* "rope" < Fr. *manœuvre*; Rom. *nod* "knot" < Fr. *noeud*; Rom. *vergă* "yard" < Fr. *vergue*; Rom. *voltă* "veering" < Fr. *volte*, etc.;

- **maritime operations**: Rom. *amara* "to tie up" < Fr. *amarrer*; Rom. *acosta* "to moor" < Fr. *accoster*, etc.;

- **manning and ranks**: Rom. *aspirant* "midshipman" < Fr. *aspirant*; Rom. *cadet* "cadet" < Fr. *cadet*; Rom. *căpitan* "officer" < Fr. *Capitaine*; Rom. *comandant* "captain" < Fr. *commandant*; Rom. *contra-amiral* "rear admiral" < Fr. *contre-amiral*; Rom. *echipaj* "crew" < Fr. équipage; Rom. *gabier* "topman" < Fr. *gabier* ; Rom. *magazioner* "storekeeper" < Fr. *magasinier*, etc.;

- **meteorology and marine geomorphology**: Rom. *ciclon* "cyclone" < Fr. *cyclone*; Rom. *curent* "current" < Fr. *courant*; Rom. *gren* "squall" < Fr. *grain*; Rom. *hulă* "swell" < Fr. *houle*; Rom. *maree* "tide" < Fr. *marée*; Rom. *muson* "monsoon" < Fr. *mousson*; Rom. *trombă* "spout" < Fr. *trombe*; Rom. *canal* "canal" < Fr. *canal*; Rom. *ecliptică* "ecliptic" < Fr. *écliptique*; Rom. *ecuator* "equator"< Fr. *équateur*; Rom. *efemeride* "ephemerides" < Fr. *éphémérides*; Rom. *flux* "flood tide" < Fr. *flux*; Rom. *golf* "bay" < Fr. *golfe*; Rom. *litoral* "shore line" < Fr. *littoral*; Rom. *plajă* "beach" < Fr. *plage*; Rom. *pol* "pole" < Fr. *pôle*; Rom. *rechin* "shark" < Fr. *requin*; Rom. *reflux* "ebb" < Fr. *reflux*; Rom. zenit "zenith" , Fr. zénith, etc.);

- **port facilities**: Rom. *cală* "slipway" < Fr. *cale*; Rom. *chei* "quay" < Fr. *quai*; Rom. *debarcader* "wharf" < Fr. *débarcadère*; Rom. *deroşeză* "dredger" < Fr. *dérocheuse*;

Rom. *dig* "pier" < Fr. *digue*; Rom. *far* "lighthouse" < Fr. *phare*; Rom. *platformă* "platform" < Fr. *plate-forme*; Rom. *ponton* "raft" < Fr. *ponton*; Rom. *radă* "berth" < Fr. *rade*; Rom. *radiobaliză* "radio beacon" < Fr. radio-balise; Rom. *sonetă* "piling hammer" < Fr. *sonnette*, etc.

3.2. Calque (loan translation)
The vocabulary of a language is a dynamic system that is continuously expanding with new words, expressions and phrases as the communicative necessities of its users evolve and vary over time. In the process of shaping a language, and borrowing terms from one language to another, imitation plays an important part. When a borrowing language does not have a pre-existing word for a new concept or object, it may borrow the term directly from the source language, or it may choose to imitate the sound or structure of the source term to create a new word in the borrowing language. E. Coşeriu speaks of *linguistic permeability* as the phenomenon whereby a language is willing to adopt structural features from another language. This phenomenon is especially noticeable in the "weak points" of a language, which are structures that exhibit certain limitations in terms of expressive capabilities. [7] In such cases, the language transfer is favoured by the "incompleteness" of existing paradigms.

Imitation is an important strategy in borrowing terms, as it allows borrowing languages to create new words that are easily understandable and consistent with the structure of their own language. In a particular historical context, we may encounter an external imitation where we adopt a linguistic model from another language that holds great cultural prestige. [8] For example, in the case of Romanian maritime terminology borrowed from French, many terms were not simply borrowed outright, but rather were created through imitation or "calquing". This involves taking a term or phrase from the source language and translating it literally into the borrowing language. In Romanian maritime terminology, the calques of French origin are also very numerous, even if not as easily detectable as loanwords. For instance, the Romanian term *costier* "coaster" was formed as a calque from the French term *côtier*. The Romanian term was created by directly imitating the structure of the French word, without adapting it to the Romanian language. The term *crucişător* was formed by calquing the French term *croiseur* "cruiser". The first part of the Romanian term was created by translating the French verb "croiser", Rom. *a (în)crucişa* "to cross, to intersect" to which the native suffix "-ător" was added to denote the action or function of the verb. This term is now widely used in Romanian to refer to a type of warship that is designed for extended missions, such as protection, escort, and reconnaissance. Similarly, the Romanian term *distrugător* "destroyer", follows the lexical pattern of the French term *destructeur*. Other such examples include the terms *aliniament* "range", from the French *alignement*; *suprastructură* "superstructure", from the French *superstructure*, *afurca* "to moor", from the French *affourcher*, etc.

Calquing is also evident in the borrowing of noun phrases, where the component terms are translated word-for-word from one language into another. The impact of this linguistic process is extremely common in the Romanian literary language and particularly in the scientific lexicon. For instance, the Romanian term for *corvette sailing ship* is *corvetă cu pânze*, which literally translates to "corvette with sails", following the structure of the French term *corvette à voile*. In the same manner, the terms *navă de linie* "liner" and *bric cu pânze* "brig", imitate the structure of the French phrases *navire de ligne* and *brick à voile*.

Calquing verb phrases, that is translating a verb phrase directly into Romanian, is a particularly productive means of creating new Romanian maritime terms. The following are examples of how loan translations have been used to create new maritime verb phrases in Romanian: Rom. *a arunca ancora* "to drop anchor" after Fr. *jeter l'ancre*; Rom. a face escală "to make a stopover" after Fr. *faire escale*; Rom. *a fi în derivă* "to drift" after Fr. *être en dérive*; Rom. *a pune pe uscat* "to ground" after Fr. *mettre à sec*; Rom. *a ridica ancora* "to weigh anchor" after Fr. *lever l'ancre*; Rom. *a sta la ancoră* "to be at anchor" after Fr. *être à l'ancre*; Rom. *a trage la mal* "to pull ashore" after Fr. *tirer à terre*, etc.

4. Conclusion
French-origin words are dispersed throughout the general lexicon of the Romanian language and serve as a foundation for specialized terminologies utilized in various scientific and technical domains. A lexical analysis of Romanian words of French origin demonstrates that the majority of lexical items belong to the most important branches of science, technology, and culture, areas where significant progress and innovation have been achieved. While Romanian maritime terminology has been influenced by other languages, French has had a noteworthy impact on its development, especially during the late 19th and early 20th centuries when numerous new terms and concepts were introduced. The influence of French on Romanian maritime terminology is primarily reflected in numerous linguistic loans and calques. Overall, the influence of French on Romanian maritime terminology is a reflection of the historical and cultural ties between the two countries, as well as the importance of French as a language of great prestige, international diplomacy, and maritime commerce.

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