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Linguistic considerations about navy terminology in the 19th century

Alina Balagiu

"Mircea cel Batran" Naval Academy
alina.balagiu@anmb.ro

Corina Sandiuc

"Mircea cel Batran" Naval Academy

Abstract: The maritime terminology that had appeared before the 19th century on the territory that today is Romania, was certified and developed at the end of the 19th century, when the first Course Book for Seamanship was written. At the same time the first school for the future navy officers was established and the order for first brig ship "Mircea" was placed. Most of the terminology was of French origin but there were many terms formed by combining borrowings with words from Romanian vocabulary. Most of the terms are synthetic and they will suffer phonetic changes in the next century of development of the terminology.

Keywords: terminology, navy, ship types, borrowing

1. Introduction

The 19th century brought innovations for the navy ships. There were new methods of ship construction based on steel, new types of propulsion based on steam and new weapons to be used. In the second half of the 19th century the sailing ships were steadily replaced by armored ships with engines. All these changes were reflected into the language, being introduced into the new Romanian maritime terminology that was formed into the 19th century.

The linguistic constituent that undergoes foreign influence is lexis. The words are borrowed and adapted suffering formal and semantic changes. The rules of lexical borrowings and the formation of the maritime terminology in the 19th century will be briefly examined in this paper. The documents of the time from the archives and the maritime lexicographic works published in the 19th and the 20th century gives the evidence of the terminology. 'Maritime English' is defined as 'the entirety of all those means of the English language which, being a device for communication within the international maritime community, contribute to the safety of navigation and the facilitation of the seaborne business' (Trenkner 2000:7).

2. Theoretic considerations

There are terminologies of any type in all languages, but theories about this part of the vocabulary appear in the modern era. The terminology exists as a new domain of research at the beginning of the 20th

century¹ although the field had been searched by Leibniz, Linné or Louis Bernard de Morveau. By terminology it was understood “the totality of the special words that aid sciences, art, research and generally professions but also a researcher or a group of researchers”². The vocabulary is one of the factors that influence the division of the functional styles of a language besides phonetics, morphology and syntax. From this point of view, the scientific style is a sum of subsystems with similar grammar and syntactic structures but that can be differentiated by semantic construction. These subsystems or specialized vocabularies³ have a conventional character given by adapted words of literary language to whom special meanings are attributed, or by new words, which implies knowledge of the metalanguage and diminishes the area of usage to specialists in a certain field or related fields of activity. The characteristics of the specialized vocabulary, which is terminology, creates the separation among the specialized areas of languages. According to the more or less abstract status of the vocabulary, a terminology could be included into the scientific or technical style.

3. Navy ships terminology of the 19th century

An official letter from August 1847 mentions “**şalupele-canoniere**”⁴ (motor ships with cannons onboard) built in Muntenia (a south region of Romania), one of the first historical certifications of the neologisms that appeared starting with the middle of the 19th century. The term is made up of “**şalupă**” (motor ship) according to the French **chaloupe** and “**canonieră**” borrowed from the French word **canoniere**, and is the first time when a Romanian compound word from the naval terminology is confirmed in an official document. At the same time Turkish terms like **caic** and **şaică** can be found in the documents to designate certain types of military ships. Throughout the 19th century both borrowings from Turkish and their synonyms borrowed from French and Italian were used: **şalupă-canonieră** and **şaică**. In 1861 the government bought the first steam ship **navă cu aburi**⁵ for the flotilla. In 1877, during the Independence War the Romanian ships took part into fighting operations together with the Russian ships. In this context in a written order given on the 2nd of June 1877 is mentioned the term “**monitor**”⁶ (ship with artillery on board) borrowed from the French **monitor**.

In 1881 appeared the first seamanship course book for the sailing ships called ‘Manualul gabierului’ (Topsailman Manual), that was republished until the end of the 19th century, comprising terms about *ship parts*, the *names of all the sails*, the *names of the ropes*, and the *way the sails, ropes and their accessories* can be maneuvered. The year the Course Book appeared coincided with the year when the Seaman School was founded by royal edict, article 23, from October the 3rd, with the purpose of educating personnel for the flotilla. It was stipulated in the edict that the ‘training’ would be done aboard the School ship (“*instrucția practică se va face pe **bastimentul** Şcoalei*”). That was the reason for ordering in England, in the same year, the construction of the brig “Mircea”, which arrived as being operational in July 1882. One very important document for the naval terminology in the 19th century is the logbook of the brig, transliterated in 1902 according to the documents found aboard the ship starting with 1882. The ship types that can be noticed reading the document are: **avisou**, **bastiment**, **canonieră**, **bric** (1883); **şalupă** (1885); **vapo’re**, **corăbii**, **torpilo’re**, **fregată** (1886); **chiurasat**, **iacht de resboiu**, **crucişător**, **corvetă**, **barcă cu rame și vele**, **brigantină** (1888). Most terms come from French as borrowings or calques: **avisou** from the French **avis** (warship with low tonnage and high speed); **canonieră** from the French **canoniere** (small warship used for surveillance); **torpilor** according to the French **torpilleur** (light and fast navy ship equipped with torpedo launchers); **fregată** from the French **fregate** (warship with three masts and high speed, designed for reconnaissance and surveillance activities); **chiurasat** according to

1 The bases of the terminological activity were set in 1930 by Eugen Würster member of Wien School.

2 Coteanu, I., Terminologia tehnico-ştiinţifică. Aspecte, probleme, p. 95-100.

3 Miclău, P., Dimensiunea semantică a limbajelor specializate, p. 68.

4 State Archive Bucureşti, fond Departament Ostăşesc, file 40/1847, f. 126.

5 Drăghicescu, M., Istorical Flotilei Române, in “Marea Noastră”, nr. 1/1939, p. 41

6 monitor ~ small river armored warship, low tonnage.

the French **cuirasse** (warship protected by an armour and provided with heavy artillery); **iacht** from the French **yacht** (small ship); **crucișător** calque after the French **croiseur** (fast warship, used for reconnaissance and other activities); **corvetă** from the French **corvette** (warship smaller than the frigate); **brigantină** from the French **brigantine** (small ship with sails and two masts); **bric** from the French **brick** (ship with two masts and square sails).

Only one term designating ship types is borrowed from Italian: **bastiment** from the Italian **bastimento** (large navy ship). Another term borrowed from Italian to define a ship was **gondolă**, (the term is internationally used because it is specific to navigation on a restricted area) that appeared in the manuscript no 1763/4 from Banat Museum, which contains “Travelling stories” (*Schitele de călătorie*) of Victor Vlad Delamarina. The author describes the voyage of “Mircea” brig in 1894.

The naval terms, disregarding the semantic placement, can be classed as *synthetic terms* and *periphrastic terms* or *terminological conjugation*. The synthetic terms form the great majority of the terminological vocabulary comprising ships from the end of the 19th century. Some synthetic terms would have been modified from the phonetic point of view during the second half of the 19th century, so that one of the two forms of the following terms could be found at the end of the century: **brik/bric**, **aviso/avisou**, **yact/iacht**. The influence of French is obvious for the first form of the words due to the fact that they were borrowed from that language. The synthetic terms were, in majority, borrowed from French. The only compound term is **șalupă-canonieră**, periphrastic term which is a calque after The French compound. The term **vaporaș** (little ship) a noun diminutive, was formed by derivation with the Romanian diminutive suffix *-aș* that was added to the word **vapor** (steamship).

Terminological conjugations were formed into Romanian language by the syntactic procedure generally following the French model: **iacht de resboiu**, **șalupă de poliție**, **șalupă torpiloră**, **navă cu aburi**. The compound terms are made of two nouns, the first one in the nominative and the second in accusative, joined by a preposition.

4. Merchant ship terminology of the 19th century

The freedom of navigation was obtained according to Adrianople Treaty signed in 1829, based on which the international law framework was created that permitted the development of the Romanian merchant maritime navigation. Taking advantage of the situation created the Romanian Principality steadily involved into the maritime traffic, enhancing the number of the ships sailing under the Romanian pennant. The ships sailing under that pennant at the middle of the 19th century were called: **brațieră**, **goeletă**, **bric**, **bombardă** și **caic**. The Romanian merchant maritime fleet could not develop but after national independence and regaining Dobrogea so that the exit to the Black sea to be free and not controlled by the powerful states of the time.

In 1895 the first passenger regular maritime line Constanța-Istanbul⁷ was inaugurated and a **vapor cu zbuturi** (paddle ship) is hired to transport passengers in good conditions. The compound words that designate merchant ship types, words like: **navă**, **vas**, **vapor** (ship, vessel) are used, trying to substitute the older terms **corabie**, **caic** și **șaică** of Russian and Turkish origin.

The terminology of the merchant ships is more divers in the 19th century according to the language the borrowings came from. Except from the terms borrowed from French, which form the great majority, **goeletă** from the French **goelette**, **șalupă** according to the French **chaloupe**, **bric** from the French **brick**, **mahonă** from the French **mahonne**, **ponton** from the French **ponton**, **remorcher** from the French **remorquer**, **vapor** from the French **vapeur**, **dragă** from the French **drague**, **elevator** from the French **elevateur**, from the Latin **elevator**⁸ etc., we could also mention one term borrowed from German **șlep** from the German **Schlepp**, one term of Slavic origin **pod** from the Slavic **podŭ**, three terms of Turkish origin **șaică**, **ceam** from the Turkish **çam** “fir tree”, **caic** from the Turkish **kayık** and some terms with unknown etymology **barc**, **navrat**, **craniță**, **scuna**.

7 Ciorbea, Flota, p. 52.

8 List of crafts of the Romanian navy (war and merchant) from the 1st of January 1898, Bucuresci, 1898, p. 3-15.

The phrases are generally made of two terms, both of them nouns, the first one in the Nominative and the second one in the Accusative with attributive function expressing the purpose of the ship **șalupă remorcher** (tug boat), **vapor poștal** (mail steamship), **vapor (de) mărfuri** (freighter). The second noun could be also in Accusative with preposition, mainly the preposition “cu” ‘with’: **vas cu aburi, navă cu aburi** (steam ship).

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