

THE INFLUENCE OF FRENCH LANGUAGE ON THE ROMANIAN MARITIME TERMINOLOGY. ISSUES OF PRINCIPLE

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Abstract: *The purpose of this paper is to establish the premises for a research on maritime terminology meant to demonstrate that the French language has had a notable influence on the Romanian maritime language, a conclusion to be reached based on linguistic and statistical arguments. The analysis will be carried out, especially from a lexical terminology point of view. We will also observe the maritime terminology from a diachronic point of view, regarding it in terms of its evolution through time.*

Keywords: *scientific language, maritime language, lexical terminology, lexical loan*

In order to undertake a comprehensive study of a language, we must take into account the forces acting during its evolution. There are two types of factors that can shape a language: internal factors related to the language system, and external factors related to the cultural relations that different linguistic communities have with each other. Hence, imitation has played a decisive role in enriching language.

More intense and active during the beginning periods of the languages of culture, imitation has, from a linguistic point of view, a dual dimension: first, there is the imitation, within a certain linguistic and cultural community, of a model language already existing in the tradition of the culture in question - we might call this kind of imitation, an internal imitation; secondly, we can speak of an external imitation, determined by the acceptance of a linguistic model belonging to another language of culture, with a cultural prestige generally accepted in the given historical context."

This linguistic contact has as a corollary the mutual enrichment of languages, since the vocabulary is an open system, which is constantly enriched with new words, phrases and terms, as the communication needs of its users diversify and change.

Detailing the conditions in which, what he calls "linguistic interference" develops, E. Coșeriu talks about the phenomenon of linguistic permeability seen as the willingness of each language to accept the structure transfer from a different language. This permeability particularly affects the "weak points", i.e. those structures exhibiting certain voids in the global expressive possibilities, more specifically, the language transfer is favored by the "incompleteness of existing paradigms as such."

Some scientific terms appear in our language as early as the seventeenth century, in the chroniclers' writings, in documents, calendars, religious writings, and especially in the works of Dimitrie Cantemir. However, researchers agree on the fact that we cannot talk about a sustained interest in enriching the Romanian language with scientific terms until the arrival of modern culture towards the late eighteenth century and the first part of the nineteenth century.

Speaking of linguistic loans and the modernization of the Romanian literary language, S. Dumitrăcel also observes that, during this period, many foreign words have been borrowed to name the concepts related to new areas and fields, eventually becoming "current means of expression" and an integral part of the Romanian basic word stock.

Most of these loans are taken from the modern Greek, scholarly Latin, French, Russian, German, Italian, occurring at first mainly in translations of textbooks, fiction and scientific works that have contributed to the modernization of modern literary Romanian language. In our days, the importance of the classical lexical heritage is

greater as it underpins international terms, common to many different languages of the world, due to the acceleration of scientific and technical progress and the intensively frequent cultural and artistic contacts worldwide. This leads to certain processes of convergence between languages sometimes placed within large geographic distances, such as the adoption of virtually identical terminological and reference systems based on the Greco-Latin vocabulary.

According to a statistics made by Dimitrie Macrea, the words of French origin occupy the first place in Romanian language, that is over 30% of all recorded words in DLRM. D. Macrea argues that this phenomenon can be explained by the fact that the organization of the Romanian bourgeois state followed the French model. Therefore, most of the words borrowed from French are the technical terms of various professions (maritime, military, commercial etc.), and, in general, words designating concepts related to a certain sphere of material culture.

As far as the Romanian maritime terminology is concerned, this is fairly recent as well. There is an older fishing terminology, and a newer terminology comprising mostly words that refer to types of ships, their parts and their construction and design (boat *vas*, *bac*, *pescaj*, *salandră*, *prova*, *pupa*, *prora*, *etambou*, *chilă*, *operă vie* etc.). This terminology has been borrowed from the modern languages, especially Italian and French.

Indeed, the French influence on our sailing terminology is rather late, it having taken place beginning with the second half of the nineteenth century, however its effects were very strong and even dominant in a certain period when even the terms of German or English origin came into Romanian via French intermediaries. This phenomenon is due to the fact that in the second half of the nineteenth century, the foundations of the modern merchant marine and the navy are set by the officers graduating from the naval school of Brest. The best example of this linguistic impact is *Manualul Gabierului*, published in 1881, which was merely an adapted translation of the first edition of *Manuel du gabier* of the French Navy.

The need for research has increased with the emergence of the early maritime terminology textbooks and treatises, which have led to the first discussions about the appropriate terminology to be used, and the most suitable way to translate and adapt the foreign terms. The term-selection took place, at first, inside the basic word stock, then the need for new lexical creations was felt, the need for standardization and, more recently, for the integration within the European and international standards. Meanwhile, the terminological approaches have evolved steadily while the research methods have deepened and diversified - from the phono-semantic and morphological analyses to the etymological and from these, to the structural, statistical, and the pragmatic.

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