

THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF ENGLISH NEOLOGISMS IN ROMANIAN

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This paper is an attempt to sustain the necessity of adopting words of English origin whenever necessary and to prove statistically that English language is not a threat to nowadays Romanian in spite of the first impression a novice may have looking and hearing day-to-day Romanian language.

Words must necessarily appear in any language as it means that language is alive, not dead or dying. The progress of art, science, or any other domain, to pick up only few examples, brings along the creation of a new item capable to express the new concepts, ideas, objects etc. The first dictionaries did not mention these new words, the neologisms. Anyway, it is vital for someone to supervise and monitor this process of accepting or refusing words in a language.

Today the lexical borrowings are, generally speaking, of Latin origin, but the means of entering our language are different from case to case, sometimes using non Latin intermediaries such as German, Russian, English. This phenomenon may be the result of the intense economic, social, political and cultural connections established between Romanian speakers and the speakers of the languages already mentioned.

The modern Romanian language cannot be perceived properly without this intensive process of re-Latinisation of Romanian. This process has been developing continuously, even if nowadays the Romanian language accepts a lot of international, non-Latin words.

There have been numerous more or less legitimate lamentations about the English loans in Romanian. Still, in a number of cases, we consider plausible the autonomy and pertinence of some of the terms coming from English. A thorough research and analysis of the actual situation is what becomes really difficult: approximating the number of the borrowed terms, specifying the domain they belong to, their frequency in usage, the degree of their adaptation to the Romanian linguistic system etc.

It is not only Romanian language that nowadays faces a real flood of terms of English origin; it has become an international phenomenon. As a proof of the above stated, we can mention the three volume *Dictionary of European Anglicisms* (Oxford University Press, 2001), whose coordinator, Manfred Görlach, considered it interesting to approach this topic, choosing 16 European languages for his project: 4 Germanic (Islaz, Norway, Dutch, German), 4 Slavic (Russian, Polish, Croatian, Bulgarian), 4 of Latin origin (French, Spanish, Italian, Romanian) and 4 of other origins (Finnish, Hungarian, Albanian, Greek). This dictionary stands for an outstanding, extremely useful accomplishment, especially

because it includes Romanian language as well. It also comes to sustain my point that our language as hospitable as it may be, it does not absorb more of the English element than any of the other languages mentioned before. The compared research shows features that appear in almost all the studied languages.

Anyway, this phenomenon is rather well represented in Romanian, that is why the Romanian linguists have approached it lately discussing it in a quite intensive manner.

Coming as a sequence to a long series of works and dictionaries on specific terminology, on neologisms in particular, the present period is marked by some very important contributions among them we would like to point some such as that of Mircea and Luiza Seche, especially the famous *Dictionary of neologisms*. Another major accomplishment of the Romanian lexicography is the issue of *The Dictionary of neologisms* signed by Florin Marcu and Constant Maneca²⁰³, as well as *The DEX* which both offer a special perspective on the Romanian neological element.²⁰⁴ There is also another contribution to be mentioned: Florica Dumitrescu's *Dictionary of recent words* (1997) focusing on the evolution of the newest items in the language, being an essential landmark for both lexicographers, lexicologists and as well as for any other who studies the Romanian contemporary language. The new edition of *DOOM (Dicționarului ortografic, ortoepic și morfologic al limbii române)*, coming 23 years after the last edition has become an essential instrument in what the correctness of the language usage is concerned, outnumbering the previous edition with approx. 2500 items. What is really important about this new edition is that this new dictionary, playing the part of a guide, handbook authorises the use of certain neologisms, some of them of English origin such as: *broker, dealer, item, trend*.

Our research has a starting point in the dictionaries²⁰⁵ named above (both general and special dictionaries), dictionaries that turn into materials for a complex analysis. The priority objectives of our study are the general dictionaries as they offer a pattern of uprightness representative for different types of speakers or for an average lexical competence, and our attempt aims at getting an inventory of the English origin items of the present Romanian vocabulary.

²⁰³ It is easy to notice following these successive editions of *The Dictionary of neologisms*, that the number of the neological elements has increased constantly, growth that has been motivated by the current necessities, in perfect accord with the day-to-day social life, aiming at the raise of the cultural level of readers, especially due to the new international elements;

²⁰⁴ For the origin of neologisms in the Romanian language see Th. Hristea, *Probleme de etimologie*, E.Ș., Buc., 1968, p.108;

²⁰⁵ The following dictionaries were the basis of the present research:

Florin Marcu, Constant Maneca, *Dicționar de neologisme*, ediția a II-a, Ed. Științifică, București, 1966, Florin Marcu, Constant Maneca, *Dicționar de neologisme*, ediția a III-a, Ed. Academiei R.S.R., București, 1978, Florin Marcu, *Dicționar uzual de neologisme*, Ed. Saeculum I.O., București, 1997, Florin Marcu, *Marele dicționar de neologisme*, ediția VII-a, Ed. Saeculum I.O., București, 2004, Florica Dumitrescu, *Dicționar de cuvinte recente*, Ed. Albatros, București, 1982, *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române*, ediția a II-a, Ed. Univers Enciclopedic, București, 1996, J. Brémond, A. Gélédan, *Dicționar economic și social 100 articole tematice 1500 definiții*, Ed. Expert, București, 1995, Constantin Florescu, Petre Mălcomete, Nicolae Al. Pop, *Marketing dicționar explicativ*, Ed. Economică, București, 2003, D. Fundătură, M. Pricop, G. Bășanu, D. Popescu, *Dicționar de management. 1100 termeni, cei mai utilizați în activitatea comercială a agenților economici din România*, Ed. Diacon Coresi, București, 1992

The research presents a comparative historical inventory of the presence of the English element within the Romanian vocabulary, more and more significant every new edition.

The statistics to follow discussed terms specific to certain areas of activity: economic, musical, sports etc. One of the main features of our vocabulary is settled by the frequency of some new items in the economic field, words that are numerical dominant: nouns appearing in personification contexts, adjectives as metaphorical determinants, verbs expressing quality in order to underline the dynamism of motion, of some new words, neologisms of Latin origin also adopted by the vocabularies of other languages, such as English language.

The proposed tasks were accomplished by means of some methods and research proceedings used in the present linguistics practice: the descriptive method, the statistics method, the proceeding of testifying items in lexicographic sources etc.

Thus, Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 present the evolution of neologisms, their way in the vocabulary of the Romanian language, between 1961, when the first dictionary of neologisms of our language was issued, and 2004, the year of its latest edition, the VIIth²⁰⁶. As a whole, the tendency follows an ascending line as it is expected, mirroring the changes of our society as well as the need of the vocabulary to keep close to them.

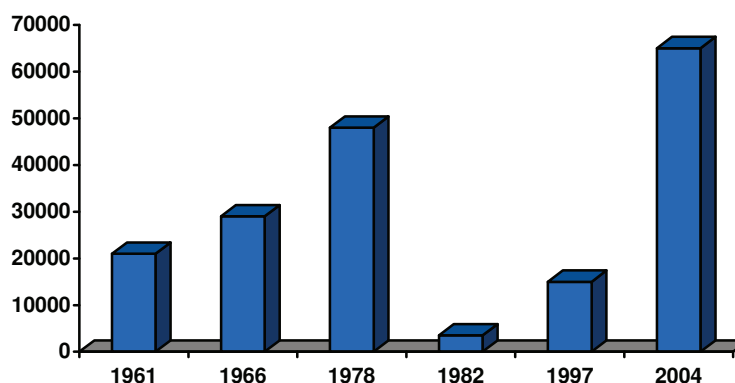
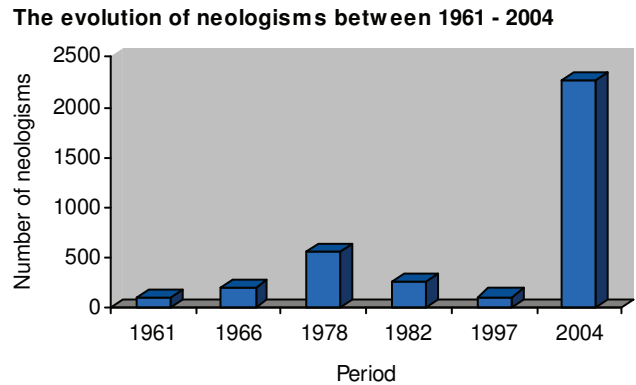


Fig. 1. The evolution of neologisms between 1961-2004

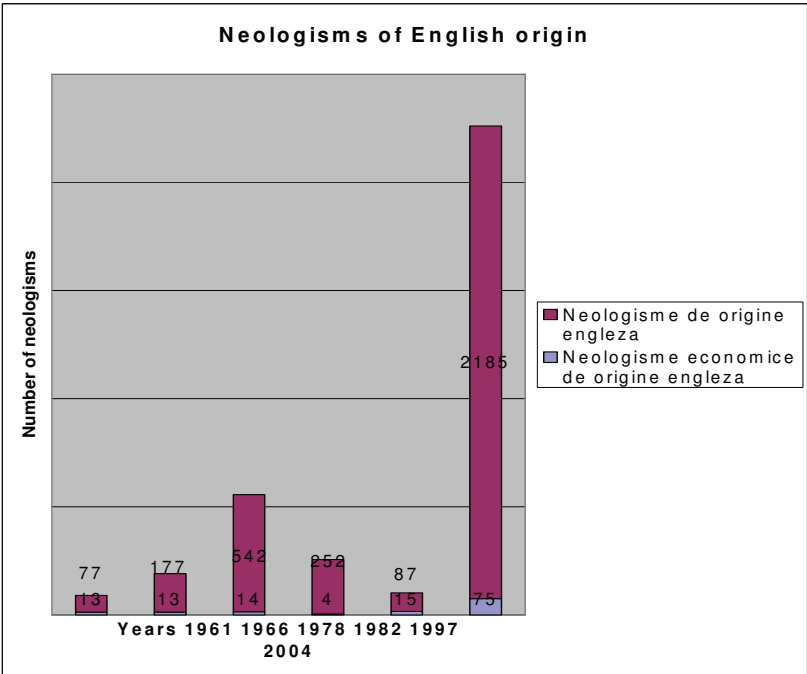
As the graphic shows, neologisms did not have a linear evolution in time as it came out of the study of the stated dictionaries. All in all we easily notice an upright evolution in the number of new items in our vocabulary from a total of about 21.000 terms to almost 65.000 neological terms.

²⁰⁶ 1961 – Dicționar de neologisme, ed. I;
 1966 – Dicționar de neologisme, ed. a II-a;
 1978 – Dicționar de neologisme, ed. a III-a;
 1982 – Dicționar de cuvinte recente;
 1997 – Dicționar de neologisme;
 2004 – Marele dicționar de neologisme, ed. a VII-a.

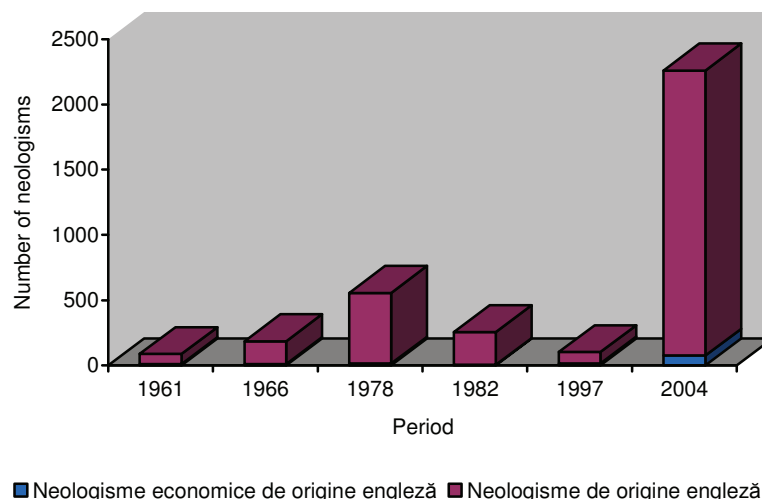
Then the research focuses on a narrower slide of the neological items, those of English origin (Fig. 3). The climax is represented, as it should normally do, by the last of the dictionaries researched, as the trend to borrow words of English origin is more striking nowadays.



The graphic above, Fig. 3 is a representation of the numerical growth of the English element of the Romanian vocabulary, having its highest peak in the year 2004. Therefore, in 1961, out of the 21.000 words of the dictionary only **90** (meaning **0.42%**) are of English origin whereas in 2004, *Marele dicționar de neologisme* contains **2260** (representing **3.5%**) terms of English origin out of the total number of the words in the dictionary, approx. 65.000.



The next step of our research focuses on establishing the number of neologisms of English origin in the economic domain, in order to visualise the impact of the tendency to adopt more and more English items, affects this domain, an area facing itself a vivid uprising movement. The following graphic presents the conclusion drawn after studying and working with numerous specialised texts and dictionaries.



The evolution of Romanian has been regarded as a bleak, alarming one during the last decades, considering that it may become uglier, decayed as a result of the infusion of foreign words, especially of English origin. The present study has tried to assure those who are very concerned about the negative impact of Anglicisms on Romanian language, that it is a perfectly normal process faced by most of the other European countries and there no need for fearing any damages. The number of words of English origin is increasing but not in a such intensive pace to make us worry about the future of our language.

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