

Abordarea limbajului economic prin prisma terminologiei în predarea limbii române studenților străini

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Abstract

In the acquisition of economic language by foreign students, it is necessary to assimilate a terminology specific to the field, and this is possible primarily through a good knowledge of the Romanian language. Foreign students must not only possess a set of knowledge, theories, specialized terminologies, but must also be able to communicate in an appropriate economic language. In teaching-learning the economic language to foreign students, the accessibility of the message and the individualization of the training are very important.

Keywords: *economic language, terminology, foreign students, Romanian language, teaching-learning*

Rezumat

În dobândirea limbajului economic de către studenții străini este necesară asimilarea unei terminologii specifice domeniului, iar acest lucru este posibil în primul rând printr-o bună cunoaștere a limbii române. Studenții străini trebuie nu doar să posedă un ansamblu de cunoștințe, teorii, terminologii de specialitate, ci mai trebuie să și poată comunica într-un limbaj economic adecvat. În predarea-învățarea limbajului economic studenților străini este foarte importantă accesibilitatea mesajului și individualizarea instruirii.

Introduction

The specialized language represents the language used by some socio-professional categories, constituting an inventory of terms characteristic of a certain field, of some scientific activities, such as: economics, medicine, law, IT, engineering, mass media etc. Specialized languages influence the communication function of the language through

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a certain restriction of the terms, believes D. Irimia²⁰, here the linguist is referring to the reduced level of understanding of these specific terms, but we must also take into account the fact that the languages of specialty are some linguistic systems specific to certain fields of professional activity, constituting one of the diastatic variants (socioprofessional language levels illustrated by technical, professional terms) of the language.

The classification that M. Pamfil and V. Sporîș makes of the specialized language is revealing: „To fit into a well-defined field of activity, to perform an important function and to possess specific characteristics, by which to be distinguished from other variants of the language”²¹, claims M. Pamfil, confirming that a certain identified inventory of words forms a specialized language. However, we note that the characteristic lexical units of a specialized language do not always belong only to it, there will always be some points of tangency with other languages, universal terms, common to several related fields, something that can complicate the process of understanding the language specialized by foreign students. Cristina Athu observes that specialized languages show a certain duality: „Regardless of the field of professional activity, all terminologies are made up of words from the common language as well as strictly specialized words, which individualize each specialized language. (...) Considering the terms from the field of chemistry, botany, philosophy, for example, we can see that the terminologies have a conventional character, they either represent words from the general vocabulary, which are assigned special meanings depending on the field of use, or new words (neonyms) formed according to strict rules, specific to the respective language and in accordance with the opinion of specialists – authors of a theory, inventions or discoveries”²².

So, the variety of specialized languages resides in the diversity of fields of human activity, of their characteristic concerns, each of them having its own set of linguistic characteristics, its own vocabulary formed by the migration of various lexical units from the common language into special languages, which acquire new meanings and an area of narrower use, targeting only a certain social group, which practices the respective scientific, professional activity. Contrary to other varieties of language, specialized languages are characteristic of a well-structured social group, whose members, collectively, have the same system of understanding the

²⁰ D. Irimia, *Curs de lingvistică generală*, ediția a III-a, Iași, Ed. Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2011, p. 468.

²¹ M. Pamfil, V. Sporîș, *Stilistica limbii române. Note de curs și aplicații*, Sibiu, Techno Media, 2010, p. 131.

²² C. Athu, *Delimitarea terminologiilor de specialitate*, în Euromentor. Studii despre educație, vol. I, nr. 2, iunie 2010, București, Ed. Pro Universitaria, 2010, p. 57.



language used, which allows the group's activity to function well. The scientific language is devoid of affectivity, characterized, in particular, by the correctness of the writing, by using the literary version of the language, by precision, by presenting a set of accurate and to-the-topic information, by objectivity and impersonality, by clarity, through the communication of knowledge and fixed, logical notions, represented by lexical units devoid of affective charge, which may have a different meaning than that in common language. The specialized languages are diversified, each field having its complexity, and within the Preparatory Year of Romanian as a foreign language they must refer to the European normative document CECRL in order for foreign students to reach the respective linguistic level, the optimal threshold level for graduating a such study program.

The economic language and the assimilation of specific terminology in the context of the teaching-learning of the Romanian language by foreign students

The differentiated use of the lexical, morphosyntactic and stylistic resources of the language, depending on the content of the message, its purpose and the nature of the recipient, is one of the essential goals of the teaching-learning process, characteristic of all disciplines, including economic ones. In the teaching of economic language to foreign students, the accessibility and individualization of training can be achieved, along with other didactic procedures and methods, such as: the selection of learning contents according to their essentiality and usefulness for the formation of certain skills, the transition from easy to difficult, from simple to the complex, from the known to the unknown, and through „the teacher's use of a rigorous, clear, simple and attractive language”²³. The teaching-learning activity of the economic language requires, by its very scientific condition, training for foreign students alongside knowledge, of some intellectual participation skills specific to the field addressed, such as the identification of some economic concepts, such as: market, entrepreneur, economic rationality, antepreneurial action, economic behavior etc.

As Mădălina Spătaru-Pralea also said in teaching and assimilation by foreign students „in the case of economic language, the corpus used in activities and exercises is made up of (...): simple and compound terms – money, currency, currency, cash, check, bill of exchange, issue, bank, account, credit, investor, entrepreneur etc.; complex lexical units

²³ M. Druță, C. Grünberg, *Didactica disciplinelor economice. Portofoliul seminarilor*, București, Ed. ASE, 2003, p. 46.



(consisting of two or more terms) – virtual money, promotional price, current account, financial service, consumer panel, payment order, interbank foreign exchange market, tangible economic goods, consumer goods etc.; derived words with suffixes and prefixes – to undo, deposit, compensate, remit, resell, reuse etc.; words of English or American origin (being adapted and not adapted), economic terms borrowed from other specialized languages, terms from the economic language taken from the common language to which it gives a specialized meaning”²⁴.

However, recently, especially in the economic field, a pronounced influence of the English language can be seen. Thus, English lexical units – scientific terms, enter the economic language to denote a new phenomenon or concept, being „borrowed” from English or American specialists both the notion and the phenomenon: marketing, leasing, software, holding, jogging, shaping, kangoo jumps, fitness, nursing, peeling etc. Cristina Athu follows the process of penetration of international affixes in the economic language, such as the prefixes com-, contra-, ex-, hyper, inter- etc. or the suffixes -ism, -ist etc. The linguist also mentions the formation of several terms by compounding: phantom profit, redistributed profit or co-interest, euro-currency, macro-economy, or by using long infinitives: insurance, accreditation. Currently, the specialized languages of the Romanian language show a sharp development and diversification, due to the progress recorded in human activity in various scientific fields, due to changes and scientific revolutions: some concepts (processes, activities, tools, gadgets, means of transport, medicines etc.) they are replaced by better performing, more useful ones, these changes imperatively demanding new names. Moreover, the newly formed terms gain popularity and can reach, through the mass media, in the common language, being accessible not only to the specialized social group from which they started, but also to the general mass of people.

There is an interaction of economic and common language, whose main differential features reside in the presence of a rather vast, imposing terminology, as well as a series of specific formulations and expressions: to draw a bill of exchange, to pay off a debt, to open balances, resolve correspondence, account movement, sell/buy in bulk, file bankruptcy etc. Thus, on the one hand, during its evolution, the economic terminology was supplemented with many terms derived, through semantic transfer, from some words and combinations of words from the common language: freezing (of prices/accounts); release (of the debtor); subscribed (on

²⁴ M. Spătaru-Pralea, *Achiziția limbajului economic românesc. Repere teoretice și practice*, București, Ed. Universității din București, 2019, pp. 15-16.



issue); imposition; adjustment (economic); balance of payments); stake; paradox (statistical); operation (stock exchange, banking, foreign exchange, triangular etc.); horizon (economic); effect (commercial); title (of credit); depression; exercise (financial) etc. It is a complex process which, in specialized literature, is called terminologicalization.

The phenomenon of transferring lexical units from the common language to the scientific language (in our case, the economic one) in the teaching-learning of the Romanian language by foreign students can cause confusion. Therefore, we must consider the explanation of some terms entered into the use of the common language, such as: capital (of intellectual, spiritual, moral assets); purchase (make a purchase); reserve (of hospital); arrears (“exam that was not passed within the established term”); transition (of train); to charge (to qualify, to consider as right...); liquidator (assassin, paid killer); to store (fix, store in memory data, information), to pay off (fulfill an obligation, a moral duty) etc. The use, in the common language, of some combinations, phraseological expressions that contain economic terms in their structure, difficult for foreign students to understand, denotes a close connection between the two languages: don't give two bucks (to someone); to have ready money; to live on (someone's) account; to be good/bad to pay, to pay with the same currency; to have someone's money etc. One of the fundamental qualities of the modern teaching staff is „the ability to process, structure and make accessible the transmitted knowledge, to transform skills specific to the field, taking into account the particularities of individual and group age of pupils/students”²⁵. In the acquisition of terminology specific to the economic field by foreign students, the use of logical inductive approaches to teaching – learning from simple to complex, from easy to difficult, from concrete to abstract must be taken into account.

Some abstract economic notions are also difficult to understand, which, not being adequately defined, give the language some obscurity. We mean things like: „financial oligarchy” (oligarhie financiară); „oligopoly” (oligopol); „oligopson” (oligopson) etc. and which, in communication with foreign students, should be accompanied by the appropriate explanations: „financial oligarchy” – „restricted group of owners of financial capital, which dominates the entire economic and political life”²⁶; „oligopoly” – „goods market monopolized by a small number of large producers”²⁷; „oligopson” – „situation that signifies the existence on the market of several producers of a product, for example,

²⁵ M.E. Druță, *Didactica disciplinelor economice. Considerații teoretice și aplicații*, București, Ed. A.S.E., 2002, p. 11.

²⁶ <https://dexonline.ro/definitie/oligarhie>.

²⁷ <https://dexonline.ro/definitie/oligopol>.



railway tracks, in which a relatively small number of companies/consumers buy the majority of the respective products”²⁸.

Stylistic strictures are also violated by the inappropriate use, in the economic language, of some phraseological expressions from the spoken language: „Excise taxes are paid to the state by the sellers of goods and are passed on the shoulders of the population (...)”²⁹; „In cases where outsider enterprises stand in the way of monopolies, they succeed, in the end, in ruining non-monopolized enterprises (...)”³⁰.

More difficult to acquire and, respectively, to teach are economic notions rendered through terminological combinations, whose content could be interpreted by people uninitiated in matters of economics, as a „sum” of the direct meanings of their constituent elements. Thus, the terminological combination *consumption function* – „the relationship that describes the functional link between income and consumption expenses (expressed as aggregate variables), on the one hand, and consumption and other factors other than income, on the other hand. *The consumption function* is of the type: $C = C_0 + C(Y)$, where: C – consumption; Y – income (expressed as national income or as disposable income); C_0 – autonomous consumption; $C(Y)$ – the induced part of the consumption function”³¹, is a theoretical notion, not only complex, but also controversial, and the teacher, whenever he will face it in the teaching process, will have to operationalize it in an accessible way for foreign students.

A similar situation can be seen in the case of the notion of payment transfer, which does not represent the transfer, the transfer of payments from one financial institution to another or from one country to another, which would result from the sum of the meanings of the constituent elements, but signifies „payments made by the government for social security (compensation for unemployment, for the liquidation of damages caused by calamities etc.), for which no goods or services are expected to be received in return”³². Quite difficult for foreign students to understand in assimilating the economic language is the use of long, defective phrases, the message of which is difficult to perceive, such as: „The equilibrium price is, in fact, a price whose growth diminishes greatly the quantity sold (and possibly the number of buyers), even if such a change becomes interesting and tempting for sellers (producers): a decrease in it will also attract a decrease in the quantity sold because very few sellers can accept

²⁸ <https://dexonline.ro/definitie/oligopson>.

²⁹ ****Dicționar de economie*, București, Ed. Economică, 2001, p. 5.

³⁰ ****Ibidem*, p. 155.

³¹ ****Ibidem*, p. 112.

³² ****Ibidem*, p. 254.



this change due to their situation of economic agents whose immediate motive is profit”³³.

The confused expression does not allow the addressee (the foreign student) to receive the information addressed to him. Therefore, he is forced to focus his attention on the defective expression, lacking clarity and precision and less on the acquisition of terminology specific to the economic field. This continuous process of information and economic training necessarily involves increasing the accessibility of the terminological fund for foreign students, future specialists in the economic field.

Conclusions

In the current conditions, when, on the one hand, there is diversification of the branches of the national economy, and, on the other hand, the trend of globalization of the economy is rapidly manifested, the economic language has an increasing weight within the specialized languages. The interaction between the economic language and the common language in the teaching-learning process of economic subjects involves the use by teachers and, implicitly, by the authors of textbooks, dictionaries, methodical instructions etc. of a rigorous language, appropriate to the respective field, but simple and accessible. In the teaching-learning process of the Romanian language as a foreign language, especially the specialized languages, the assimilation and correct use by foreign students, not only of the Romanian language, in general, but also of the specialized language, must be taken into account, in particular.

Currently, the infusion of technical-scientific terms knows a process of continuous expansion – the main source of supply of new terms is today the English language – reaching an incredible variety of form and content within the many fields of science and technology, especially the economic one. The current situation shows us that the language is becoming more and more open to lexical exchanges between the different functional styles, so that the boundaries between them are becoming more and more flexible, and the combinatory possibilities are much more numerous.

³³ Coșea M., Gavrilă I., ș. a., *Economie. Manual pentru licee, cl. a XI-a*, București, Ed. Didactică și Pedagogică, 1995, p. 60.



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