

Technical and Scientific Terminology in Albanian Language in the Era of Globalization



Linguistics

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Abstract

Globalization as a phenomenon in linguistics should neither be overestimated nor underestimated. One should take from it those positive traits which are also linked to the national specificities, especially regarding small countries' languages, as is the case with the Albanian language. One of the major fields being affected by globalization in linguistics is terminology. In order to cope with the negative effect, it would be necessary to establish a data bank which would help identify the terms introduced so far, which in turn would lead to the compilation of a big scientific and technical terminology dictionary (Albanian into foreign languages) with encyclopedic elements that would accelerate the standardization of technical and scientific terminology at a national and international level. It would resolve the problem of improper use and translation of technical terms in Albania and would avoid to a considerable degree the unnecessary borrowings into Albanian, especially those terms originating from the English language.

Introduction

As it has been rightfully admitted, terminology is the main entrance door for foreign lexicon²⁷. Referring to the saying of Socrates “Wisdom begins with the definition of terms”, in this paper we will try to emphasize the undisputable value that terminology has in the development of a language, namely the Albanian terminology in the consolidation of the standard language by completing the terminological systems, this being witnessed in the Albanian school, in the scientific and generic literature, in economy, in industry, in public communication and everywhere else.

Christian Galinski points out that “Countries with developing terminologies ... need rather a priority terminology standardization in the form of terminology planning”²⁸ (Galinski 1986).

The development and cultivation of today's Albanian in the past 20 years, as a small country with a developing terminology, has been confronted with powerful languages and cultures resulting in a big challenge for it and especially for its lexicon. Terms as denominating units being part of the specialised lexicon of the standard language are tied with multiple links to the lexicon of the general language. Terminology in general, including the terminological systems of various fields of knowledge, may be considered as an overlaying of lexical units of the generic language and that is why the basis for it are the words which it is build on. Extralinguistic and intralinguistic

²⁷A. Duro *Fjalët e huaja dhe gjuha shqipe (Foreign languages and the Albanian language)*, Studime gjuhësore (terminologji, gjuhësi kompjuterike, kritikë-bibliografi)(Linguistic Studies (terminology, computer linguistics, criticism-bibliography)), QSA, IGJL, Tiranë, 2012, f. 295.

²⁸G. Galinski, “Special languages, Terminology Planning and Standardization”, Infoterm 2 – 86 en, 1996, pg.10.

factors have gradually led to bringing the Albanian lexicon to the level of a genuine linguistic-conceptual system. Therefore, the standard Albanian, being or aiming at becoming a language of a high level and open culture should exploit all possibilities offered by terminology which is capable of transmitting a high level of culture, embodied in the language of science and technics.

The beginnings of the Albanian terminology

Since the ancient times and the Middle Ages, the terminology, especially the one related to the fundamental sciences such as mathematics, geometry, geography, astronomy, etc., has been international, represented by Latin. From the 10th century until the 18th century, Latin remained the language of study in all major European universities. Latin was the language used for scientific, philosophical and theological treatises as well as other pieces of writing. Following the creation of literary languages for each nation-state, each terminology acquired a national character which is true for Albanian as well²⁹. At the end of this period, it was replaced mainly by the domestic lexicon which comprised the basis for each Albanian terminology. We encounter the first efforts of defining the international words into Albanian, in the writings of A. Xhuvani³⁰ (the majority of the terms in: *chemistry, physics, mathematics, geography, botanics, electricity, philosophy* etc., of Greek and Latin origin. Further on, according to P. Geci the words *laborator(laboratory), musculature (musculature), import (import), eksport (export)* are found in other nations as well³¹.

The restricted entrance of foreign lexicon into the general lexicon since the end of 19th century and its intensified penetration in the terminological lexicon from that period to the present has caused the specific weight of borrowing to shift from the center to the periphery of the language. This problematic situation with respect to terminology was strongly noticed by the renaissance writers who while working on drafting school text books, although of a low scientific-technical level, were faced with foreign terms marking concepts in the basic fields of knowledge such as mathematics, geometry, anatomy, etc. In order to overcome this situation, other than introducing foreign words (terms) in the school text books, they tried to coin or find as many equivalent words (terms) in Albanian as possible in order to facilitate the understanding of scientific knowledge considering the conditions of the country at that time and the lack of knowledge. Later on, other scholars were faced with foreign terms at the level of middle school in psychology, pedagogy (A. Xhuvani), literature (L. Gurakuqi), technics (M. Logoreci) etc. The merit of the renaissance writers and their followers is that in working on elaborating the fundamental terminologies, they were so much focused on albanizing the foreign terms that they even created unique Albanian systems of terms on specific fields. It is worth mentioning in

²⁹E. Lafe, *Për leksikon dituror të "Meshari" i Gjon Buzukut*. në: BUZUKU DHE GJUHA E TIJ, (*On the eruditional lexicon in "Meshar" of Gjon Buzuku* in: BUZUKU AND HIS LANGUAGE) ASHSH, IGJL, Tiranë, 2005, p. 406-411.

³⁰Cited according to J. Kole, see A. Xhuvani, *Vepra I*, Tiranë, 1980, p. 7.

³¹Cited according to J. Kole, P. Geci, *Pasuria e leksikut të shqipes dhe fjalori i gjuhës shqipe* në "Buletin i USHT, Seria Shkencat shoqërore" (*The richness of the Albanian lexicon and the dictionary of the Albanian language*) at *USHT Bulletin*, 1959 or in *STUDIME MBI LEKSIKUN DHE MBI FORMIMIN E FJALËVE NË GJUHËN SHQIPE, II*, (STUDIES ON THE LEXICON AND THE WORD FORMATION IN THE ALBANIAN LANGUAGE, II) Tiranë, 1972, p. 159.

particular the arbëresh scholar Dh. Kamarda in geography. A part of the Albanian terms that they coined, did not resist the test of time and were again replaced with foreign terms (such as *dheshkronjë* with *gjeografi* (*geography*), *shkronjëto* with *gramatikë* (*grammar*)).

Around the '50s in the 20th century the terminology was enriched with international terms as well as terms created on the basis of the generic lexicon, completing the terminology with Albanian substance built with wordforming samples, borrowings and replacement of some Albanian terms with borrowings. The subsequent work on replacing foreign terms, where it was possible, it was possible for the terminology in the fundamental fields of knowledge (mathematics, geometry, physics, chemistry, geography) to be placed on autochthonous foundations.

Linguistic globalization and terminological lexicon

Linguistic globalization affects the lexicon, first and foremost the terminological lexicon of the narrowest fields of knowledge, the most vulnerable part when it comes to foreign influence, being the most open and exposed to foreign words as compared to the lexicon in the fundamental fields. The globalization phenomena are noticed at a considerable extent in the lexical and semantic systems due to them being open systems, impacted by the entrance of foreign elements. This influence is especially related to the contacts that the Albanian language has with other languages, mainly with a universal language or an internationally spread language. The basis of globalization are the countries with an advanced technology in all fields. The terminological system of each field of knowledge is the most dynamic and the openest system to foreign influences and as such it is more possible for the globalistic phenomena to penetrate. Certainly, the internationality of content influences the internationality of form, which stimulates the appearance of the *international terms*. This means that the property of internationality in terminology³² is linked with a series of its aspects as a special lexicon, which in turn serves as the main gate for foreign terms, especially the terms of internationally spread languages, as is the case with English nowadays. In the terminological lexicon of the narrowest fields of knowledge in the Albanian terminology, internationalisms occupy the first place, which comprise a more or less consolidated layer noticed since before the '90s and have been dealt with in detail by J. Kole.³³

Globalization as a phenomenon in linguistics finds the way to penetrate right in the terminology, because this is where the borrowings are found in larger quantities such as *kompjuter* (*computer*), *monitor* (*monitor*) etc., which happens not only in small countries' languages as Albanian, but also in the languages of larger countries and thereafter they penetrate into the general language to the point of common speech. Consequently, the observation of globalization in the standard language should be based on terminology. Nowadays we are noticing a reduction of foreign words from

³²A. Duro, Prrirja për specializim e mjetëve të shprehjes në terminologji, "GJUHA JONË", (The tendency of specializing means of expression in terminology, "OUR LANGUAGE"), Tiranë, 1986, nr. 2.

³³J. Kole, *Mbi fjalët ndërkombëtare në gjuhën shqipe*, ASHRPSSH, IGJL, "Studime filologjike", (*On international words in the Albanian language* 'Philological studies'), Tiranë, 1984

large countries' languages such as *French, Italian, Russian*, etc. Even those words which we think we are borrowing from them, have actually been borrowed by English, being the language which performed the linguistic globalization. For instance the word *ordinatore* (It.), *ordinateur* (Fr.), used as such from the Italian, it has now been replaced by *computer* (En.). The same has happened with a series of other terms such as: *format(format)*, *monitoro (monitor)* etc., which have penetrated into the common language and are even used with figurative meanings.

Anglicisms and linguistic globalization

(Anglicisms before 1990)

Following the overall wide and deep development of sciences and technology at an international and national level, the fields of knowledge became so multiple and varied that the task of finding terms for them could only be done through foreign terms, which flooded in in large quantities, especially in university text books as well as in scientific and technical documents, in all types of manuals and even in common speech. Foreign terms have been and still are dominant in university text books. International terms nowadays are in general represented by anglicisms, although they comprised a certain level of restricted lexicon before the '90s, especially in the fields of science and technics, where they were predominant in sports, mechanics, electronics and in some other fields.

in sports: *gol (goal), faull (foul), aut (out), korner (corner), start (start), trajner (trainer), kros (cross), pas (pass), set (set), tenis (tennis)* etc.

in mechanics: *antifrizë (antifreeze), bajpas (bypass), buldozer (bulldozer), bunker (bunker), konvejër (conveyor), parking (parking), silenciator, standard (stadard), tramvaj (tram), vagon (vagon), ventilator (ventilator), vinç (elevator)* etc.

in electronics: *teletajp (teletype), transistor (transistor), laser (laser), shunt (shunt)* etc.

The conclusion for this period would be that anglicisms have served almost exclusively as terms in some specific fields of knowledge and as such they were not able to become fully independent as a separate layer within the Albanian lexicon, with a status of its own. One of the main factors has been the isolation of our country from the world, which was an obstacle to the penetration of globalization in linguistics and in particular in the lexicon.

(Anglicisms after 1990)

After the '90s, in the scientific publications in the country, a strong and from at times even a predominant trend was noticed, the pressure of linguistic globalization represented by anglicisms, primarily their introduction in the terminology of various fields of knowledge. Following the opening of our country to the world, the influence of globalization in the field of linguistics begins to feel, especially in the lexicon. This happened not only in the publications, but in the university lectures as well: due to the lack of Albanian text books in some subjects, everything recommended

for literature to the students by the teachers is mainly in the English language. Although the terminological dictionaries published by the Institute of Linguistics and Literature include a considerable number of terms, they are not capable of keeping up with the overflow of new terms, especially for those disciplines which have developed recently worldwide. One could only have a look at the new editions of some reference books, which even a year apart from their latest edition contain new chapters related to new and more aspects of dealing with various issues, with new technologies etc. These require further, careful studies and organized efforts to make their results known in the Albanian literature as well. This is not a phenomenon peculiar to Albanian language only. Because of geopolitical factors, the influence of English happened later. It seems like things started to change fundamentally in the majority of European languages in the the 20th century when English became the base language for all scientific researches. Linguistic globalization happens though English and it focuses on the terminologies of the new fields. For over a century the terminology of modern English has started to penetrate deeply into the terminological dictionaries³⁴, being borrowed by many other languages as well. Therefore the saying of Xh. Lloshi sounds very real: “*The language of globalization is the English we must redo all terminological dictionaries English- Albanian and Albanian - English*”³⁵ Some scholars, although e few in number, have worked either directly on studying the anglicisms: H. Shehu, N. Caka, or in the context of studying the problems of standard Albanian language: Xh. Lloshi, Gj. Shkurtaj etc., and they have affirmed that anglicisms have predominantly continued to be introduced in Albanian as terms in various fields of knowledge, of course at much larger quantities than before 1990. A fundamental trait of their functioning in the language is that they are encountered not only in the lexicon of limited use, but they have gone deeper into the language, especially some of them, although this is seldom the case, are used in the common speech with term-like conceptual content, but with simplified meanings, such as in the speech of normal internet users, pupils, children: *klikoj (click), maus (mouse), printoj (print), printer (printer)* etc. The introduction of anglicisms³⁴ as the most prominent manifestation of globalization, has focused mainly in the field of informatics. The new foreign terms are overlaid on the previous foreign terms and today other than those we encounter new terms as well: *monitor (monitor), klikoj (click), çatoj (chat)* etc. Today we see the use of both *tastierë* (keyboard) and *kibord* (keybord from English)).

Below we are mentioning only a few out of 240 anglicisms (terms) identified in the “Fjalor i informatikës” (2005) (“*Dictionary of informatics*”)³⁶: *akses (access), bajt (byte), çip (chip), databazë (database), bufer (buffer), desktop (desktop), displej (display), drajver (driver), editor (editor), hab (hub), inç (inch), internet(internet), karakter (character), kilobajt (kilobyte), kompjuter (computer), kompakt disk (compact disc), laser (laser), log {logaritëm} (logarithm), mikroprogram (microprogram), minidisk (minidisk), modem (modem), printoj (print), record*

³⁴See Xh. Lloshi, *Shqipja standarde në rrethanat e dygjuhësisë*, “Studime filologjike”, (Standard Albanian in circumstances of bilinguality "Philological studies") ASHSH, IGJL, nr. 3-4, Tiranë 2001, p. 51-52.

³⁵Xh. Lloshi, *Shqipja – Gjuhë e hapur dhe dinamike*, “Studime filologjike”, (Albanian - An open and dynamic language) ASHSH, IGJL, nr. 3-4, Tiranë, 2002, p. 22-32.

³⁶“FJALOR I INFORMATIKËS” (anglisht-shqip, shqip-anglisht) (“DICTIONARY OF INFORMATICS” - English-Albanian, Albanian - English) (N. Caka, A. Dika, S. Rodiqi), Prishtinë, 2005.

(*record*), *robot* (*robot*), *skaner* (*scanner*), *target* (*target*), *telefaks* (*telefax*), *telemetri* (*telemetering*), *uebsajt* (*website*) etc.

Considering the huge amount of English words flowing into Albanian, it may be stated that the anglicisms (the terms) are ever extending the inflow gates of foreign terms into the standard language at all levels of speech. Since the majority of foreign elements coming in through this gate are more or less similar in terms of form and constitute common models in terms of content for other languages as well *kompjuter* (*computer*), *monitor* (*monitor*), *displej* (*display*) then these elements serve also as entrance gates for terms from other languages. Thus the English terms, being international for the most part, pass by as a common current in these gates, transforming them into communicating vessels with the common circulating mass (foreign terms). The Albanian terminology, entering into this common current, should orient its sense of movement according to this current, which is common for the other languages as well. This new orientation of the linguistic policy on the foreign terminology in Albanian, is also related to achieving the oncoming objective of integrating Albania into the EU, in which process the Albanian language will play its role in taking itself to the level of the languages of this international body. Among the important promoters in taking the Albanian standard language at the level of the other EU languages, will be its terminology which with the common (international) units of content (scientific-technical concepts) and its own units of expression, of terms, will bring Albanian closer to the other languages of Europe. It will be precisely the foreign terms, especially the international ones as a common linguistic and cultural fund, which will embody the idea of cultural globalization in the field of language. In view of the above, it may be admitted that terminology unites the nations into its special fund, both foreign and common for each one of the countries.

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