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ABBREVIATIONS IN ENGLISH SHIPBUILDING TERMINOLOGY AND THEIR TRANSLATION INTO ROMANIAN

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Abstract: Abbreviations represent a substantial element in the English and Romanian word stock as well as in their shipbuilding terminologies. This paper is an analysis of the English abbreviations and their Romanian versions in an attempt to assess the availability of the latter language to shipbuilding Anglicisms. The research mainly consisted in the creation of a data bank to comprise the abbreviations that occur in English shipbuilding glossaries, dictionaries and lexicons and whose versions were included in similar Romanian lexicographic works. A first step in this project was the determination of the meanings assigned to the notion of abbreviation, which has been described to convey rather controversial meanings in English lexicology. The translational perspective of this approach was constructed on the concepts of foreignization and domestication, advanced by Venuti in the mid 1990's. Our analysis was designed to highlight the English touch on the vocabulary of the Romanian shipbuilding terminology, at the same time disregarding both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of this influence. These aspects were waived because terminologies, like any other compartment of languages, are vivid organisms in a continual strive to develop, enrich and expand.

Key words: ark, acronyms, alphabetisms, shortenings, borrowings

1. Introduction

“Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.” (Genesis 8:4)

The building of the earliest boats and ships, such as Noah's ark, was performed without designs, written architectural principles or blue prints, without complying with any rules of the classification societies or the application of any strict and complicated mathematical rules and theories. When people wanted more from these modest constructions, complexity became part of the manufacturing of a ship, and naval architecture was born as a new academic discipline. Although the lines that separate these two fields of human creativity are well established, with shipbuilding referring to the “work on and around the shipways” (MacBride 1921:v), and naval architecture to denote “the science of designing vessels” (Pease 1918:59), they share the boat as if it were their ‘brain’ and ‘hands’ child, respectively. This is why, illustrations from the language of naval architecture, which is so closely related to the shipbuilding lexicon will also be considered. If Noah's ark was built to save his family and “pairs of each land animal” from the deluge (Mills et al. 1990:63), nowadays, ships not only transport

goods and connect worlds, but they also connect people, who need to share know-how and experience.

The rationale behind this choice is an impressive legend transmitted by word of mouth, which has been told the proud locals who had learnt it from his forefathers. Since time immemorial, the legend has spun round the Consul Peak of the Macin Mountains, situated in the north of Dobrudja, those Romanian lands lying between the Danube and the Black Sea. The legend has it that there was a post on top of the Consul Peak, where long ago the locals found the link Noah had used to fasten his ark to that post. Unfortunately, although this legend is very popular among the villagers still living at the foot of the Consul Peak, it has not become popular countrywide. Contrary to the Romanian legend, Noah's ark and the name of the Ararat Mountains are mentioned in the Bible and in many other writings. Therefore, the myth of Noah and his ark link Armenians and Romanians in an absolutely unexpected way. Leaving legends and their kernel of truth aside, over the millennia many peoples from the cold North to the sunny coasts of Egypt experienced an unquenched spirit of adventure, a sense of practical work and a strong desire to conquer the world. And even if Romanians, for example, were not as adventurous spirits as other peoples, they have been involved in the building of ships since the mid-1450. Despite their loose connections with boats, the vocabulary of shipbuilding and navigation has evolved over the centuries. This paper looks into the power of adoption and adaptation of this old craft English abbreviations as it appears in Romanian lexicons and dictionaries. As the meaning and uses of the word abbreviation are rather controversial in lexicological approaches, this contribution also provides a series of specifications useful in the disambiguation of its disputable semantic features.

2. The Status of English in Romania

Romania is a European country cultivating the learning and use of foreign languages for both communicative and informative purposes. Traditional relationships with France mainly since the mid-nineteenth century revolutions made French the most popular language among Romanians for over one hundred and fifty years. Surveys claimed that by the end of the 1980's 80 percent of Romanians would be conversant with French. After the fall of the totalitarian regime, the whole cultural and historic paradigm of this country started to change substantially. One of the outcomes of the cultural changes was the switch of French with English, which is now the language spoken by nearly 90 percent of the younger generation. Unlike other fields of human activity, which had a history tying them to the use of French, naval architecture and shipbuilding have always relied on English and this tradition has remained unadulterated over the years.

3. Shipbuilding in Romania. Shipbuilding in Galați

Their history makes Romanians appear to have been much less attracted to life at sea than such other peoples as the Spaniards or the Portuguese, not to mention the English.

Nevertheless, both the transport by water and the dependence on rafting, boats and vessels, like many other water-related crafts, have provided the daily bread of the people living close to rivulets and rivers, sea and ocean coasts. For example, Filaret Barbu, a Romanian musician, wrote *Plutașul de pe Bistrița* [The Rafter on the Bistrița], an operetta which describes the traditional method of transporting logs that were carefully tied into rafts. Skilful rafters would steer the floating logs from the mountains of Moldova down to the Danube, to be loaded on vessels and shipped all over the world.

Historical evidence shows that after the Turks had set fire on the Romanian town of Brăila in 1470, and then conquered our forefathers' fortresses of Chilia and Cetatea Albă, in 1484, it was the town of Galați which harboured the commerce and trading activities. This status was an impetus to the development of shipbuilding operations. The presence of shipbuilders and a shipyard are easily inferable from a 'firman,' i.e., a Sultan-emitted document addressed to voivode Alexandru Lăpușeanu (who ruled both between 1552-1561 and 1564-1568). The document is not dated, but its features show that it was issued during the second half of the sixteenth century. Among other things, this document also refers to the arming of the kayiks at the Galați berth. Arming was an operation performed only by specially trained craftsmen (Păltănea 1994:45). After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, the Romanian Principalities were no longer forced to exchange goods with the empire only. The Galați shipyard became a private enterprise and in spite of all odds, which mean world wars and their aftermath destruction, abolition of political regimes, it has contributed to the development of the Romanian shipbuilding industry to this day (Lăcătuș, Popescu and Dobrea-Brugge 2018:12). In 1951 the first Faculty of Naval Architecture was established at "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galati and it has contributed ever since to the development of this industry in this town that is situated on the left bank of the Danube.

4. Literature Review

Although roots of the traditional study of Romanian terminologies go back to the end of the nineteenth century, little has been written about the shipbuilding terminology. Contrary to the vocabularies of sciences or others fields of activity, which were described in lexicons, glossaries and dictionaries, the vocabulary of shipbuilding has not been dedicated any comprehensive lexicological approach.

Partial descriptions were recorded only in one English-Romanian dictionary (Bejan 1984) and two doctoral dissertations (Bejan 1982; Ionescu 2019). The lack of terminological literature in this field is a fact, but the study mainly relies on the author's previous research in the terminology of shipbuilding (Maftei and Popescu 2005; Popescu 2005; 2016), comparative lexicology and translation studies (Popescu 2007; 2009; 2019) as well as the five-year experience as a translator in the Galați shipyard.

5. Research Aims and Methodology

The research aimed to identify the English abbreviations in the shipbuilding terminology and their Romanian equivalents. To this end several steps were taken, the most time-consuming of them being the manual selection of the abbreviations through the scanning of hundreds of pages. A lexical corpus with parenthetical specifications for the abbreviation-type of each entry was created. The sources from which our data were collected are marked with an asterisk in the bibliography. The analysis of the English shipbuilding terminology turned into Romanian is based on the intertwining of theoretical knowledge with language practice and non-mediated work with terminology as well as a keen sense of observation, thorough analysis, inclination for detail and good knowledge of the sets to be compared.

5.1. Selection of Approach

The translational perspective of this approach, which is based on terminological comparisons, will evaluate the impact of the English language on the Romanian shipbuilding terminology. Thus, a ‘case study’ appears as the appropriate complementation to the title of this whole contribution.

5.2. The Theoretical Model Preferred

The research started from the general theory of word formation as the concept of abbreviation appears to have had several interpretations. The term abbreviation has been used as the synonym of acronym or initialism (Bankole 2006), a cover term to describe the results of such word building processes as shortening, blending and clipping (Ginzburg et al. 1979:187-191) or a formation which is completely different from alphabetisms or initialisms (Miller 2015:197). Plag (2003:163) used it as a hyperonym of acronyms and initialisms, although he illustrated backronyms as well, without specifically designating them with one name or another. In what follows, abbreviation functions as a blanket term to cover ninety-seven elements (i.e. initialisms, fore-clippings, middle-clippings and acronyms).

The literature of translation and translation studies has gathered numerous opinions regarding the ways a word may be turned from one language into another, making more or less clarifications in the meanings and uses of such concepts as translation procedures, strategies, techniques or methods. For example, *calque* is viewed as both a process (Zakhir 2009:115) and as a strategy (Bosseaux 2012:189). To avoid such ambiguous terminologies a simplified perspective was adopted.

The history of translations and translation studies relies heavily on analyses which explore larger chunks of language which span from a phraseological unit to a paragraph. Our research was designed to survey the possibilities of equivalence at lexical level whose outcomes are adopted as elements of the Romanian language. Our translational analysis adopted the theory of atomistic interpretation (Gerzymisch-

Arbogast 2008), which dwells on the word-level only. This model, which supports the examination of word forms and usage in a target language, was considered as our most adequate option; it enabled the assessment of the translational choices in our corpus.

Of the wealth of views on translation means, Venuti's (1995) concepts of *domestication* and *foreignization* were preferred to any other as appropriate to this analysis framework, which is ultimately terminological. Our major end was to verify the availability of the Romanian language to acquiring abbreviate foreignisms. Domestication was used to refer to "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values" (Venuti 1995:20). In our approach it will consider those versions which have similarly meaningful equivalents and have already been included in Bejan's dictionary of shipbuilding terms. Foreignization, the means through which foreign elements were brought to an already culture, creating the sense of "sending the reader abroad" (Venuti 1995: 20), will expand upon the description of the so-called foreignisms, i.e., words which appear and sound foreign to a native Romanian. In addition, these quotes deserve the following two specifications: (a) 'the foreign text' is in this particular case a word or a string of words, which have a clearly and well-defined field-specific meaning and (b) 'the reader' is a professional who certainly cannot feel as travelling but probably as working abroad.

6. Findings

In terms of usage, the lexicon of shipbuilding consists of the same layers of elements which are operational in the professional vocabularies. Thus, it reveals elements pertaining to either common words, technical words or specialisms. The common words which have the highest frequency of occurrence include those elements which are shared by the general language and the language for specific purposes. The layer of technical words, also called sub-technical or semi-technical words, consists of those elements which have "a specialized meaning within a scientific or technical context" (Kennedy and Bolitho 1984:57-8). The technical or highly technical words, which "are unique to particular subject specializations and which rarely occur outside it" (MacKay and Mountford 1978:145), are not so numerous if compared to the preceding categories.

On the other hand, abbreviations may be rather cryptic and hence, authors used to refer to these formations in particular. For one example, the following list of symbols and marks of identification was included in MacBride (1921:349), to disambiguate the abbreviations below:

Abbreviated formula	Descriptive presentation
<i>V.K.FL.C.</i>	vertical keel floor clip
<i>FL.FR.</i>	floor frame
<i>FL.S.</i>	floor stiffener
<i>BB.FL.C.</i>	bilge bracket floor clip
<i>S.D.B.B.</i>	second deck beam bracket
<i>E.C.UDK.B.C.</i>	engine casing upper deck beam clip

<i>CK.</i>	Countersink
<i>CK.T.S.</i>	countersink this side
<i>CK.O.S.</i>	countersink other side

Table 1. Intralinguistic deciphering of abbreviations

Our investigation of the shipbuilding vocabulary identified the following two categories of word reductions:

- (a) abbreviations (i.e. shortenings, alphabetisms/initialisms, acronyms and backronyms)
- (b) clippings

The abbreviations in our corpus show a few orthographic specificities which:

- (a) allow for distinctions between initialisms which use or do not use full stops
e.g. *L.S.* (< summer timber load line) and *HW* (< height of water)
- (b) use the apostrophe in the following types of clipping:
e.g. apheresis: *'tween-/'twixt-deck* (< between/betwixt)
e.g. syncope: *for'd* (< forward, *for'c'stle* < forecastle)
e.g. apocope: *cat* (< catamaran)
- (c) use the slash:
e.g. *B/5* (< Breadth divided by 5), *B/5-line* (which is an imaginary line used in ship design)
- (d) use capital letters as subscripts:
e.g. *C_B* (< Block Coefficient), *C_M* (< Midship Section Coefficient), *L_{OA}* (< length overall, which is the vessel's absolute maximum length)
- (e) may be confusing because of:
 - i) their phonetic identity (a backronym vs a common noun), whose outcome is a pair of capitonyms:
e.g. *KNOT* (< *Knutsen* NYK Offshore Tanker) and *knot* (which is a fastening made by looping a piece of string, etc.)
D.O.C./DOC (< Damen Offshore Carrier) and *doc* (< doc word) or *dock*
 - ii) their double orthography:
e.g. *BHD* and *Bhd* (< bulkhead)
EHP and *ehp* (< effective horse power)
MH and *mh* (< main hatch)
 - iii) their polysemy:
e.g. *M.L.* may stand for (1) mean level, (2) motor launch and (3) longitudinal metacentre
M.S. is the abbreviation for (1) motor ship and (2) machinery survey
wks is the abbreviation of both 'wrecks' and 'weeks'
 - iv) their double orthography and polysemy:
e.g. *N* and *n.* are the abbreviate forms of both 'navy' and 'noon'
W.T. and *wt.* are the abbreviate forms of both 'weight' and 'watertight'
 - v) inconsistency between the abbreviated and original forms:
e.g. both *G.M.* and *K.M.* stand for 'metacentric height'
KG (< centre of gravity)

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The abbreviations in the English shipbuilding vocabulary were translated into Romanian with the application of domestication and foreignization. In the former case, the following rendering solutions were identified:

- (a) abbreviated domestications:
 - ER* (< engine room) → *CM* (< compartimentul/camera mașini)
 - HW* (< height of water) → *C.A.* (< coloană de apă)
 - W* (< winter load line) → *I* (<linie de încărcare maximă de iarnă)
 - CL* (< Center line) → *PD* (< planul diametral)
 - MSB* (< main switch board) → *PCC* (< pupitrul central de comandă)
 - '*tween deck* → interpunte
 - '*tween deck tonnage* → tonajul interpunțiilor
- (b) partial domestications ('partial' because the order of letters in the acronym is different from that of the noun phrase):
 - L.W.* (< winter timber load line) → *I.L.* (< linie de încărcare de iarnă pentru lemn de punte)
 - L.W.N.A.* (< winter North Atlantic timber) → *I.A.N.L.* (< linie de încărcare de iarnă în Atlanticul de Nord pentru lemn de punte)
 - L.S.* (< summer timber load line) → *V.L.* (< linie de încărcare de vară pentru lemn de punte)
 - F_n* (< Froude number) → *F_r* (< numărul Froude)
- (c) non-abbreviated domestications:
 - L.T.* (< summer timber load line) → linie de încărcare de tropicală pentru lemn de punte
 - L.T.F.* (< tropical fresh water timber load line) → linie de încărcare de tropicală în apă dulce pentru lemn de punte
 - WH* (< wheel house) → timonerie
 - WTH* (< watertight hatch) → bocaport etanș

In the latter case, the application of the technique of foreignization contributed to the enrichment of the Romanian vocabulary of shipbuilding with two types of borrowings, i.e.:

- (a) abbreviations:
 - dwt* (< deadweight tons) → tone deadweight
- (b) initialisms
 - DNV* (< *Det Norske Veritas*) → DNV (classification society)
 - GL* (Germanischer Lloyd) → GL (classification society)
 - BV* (< Bureau Veritas) → BV (classification society)
 - D.T.* (< Deep Tank) → diptanc (special type of ballast tank)
 - JSS* (< Joint Support Ship) → JSS (special type of vessel)

8. Conclusion

Impossible as it could sound, the comparison of the English and Romanian vocabularies is feasible and successful for they both are Indo-European languages which share an impressive Latin heritage.

The English abbreviations pertaining to the vocabulary of shipbuilding and naval architecture comprise representations which refer to classification societies and “qualifications, formulae, symbols, technical and sub-technical words” (Rongre and Saleh 2018:67). A small percentage of the abbreviations considered in this study had been assimilated by the Romanian vocabulary of shipbuilding as early as the 1950’s. The majority of abbreviations have penetrated this lexicon only after 1990 and even later, i.e. after the year 2010 and most of them have played a referential role as names of vessel types, classification societies, institutions, bodies, and/or authorities which have acquired an international reputation over centuries of work, dedication and commitment. Irrespective of the time of their accessing the Romanian language, all these abbreviations were naturalized at both the phonetic and orthographic level, except deadweight, which was adopted in its original form.

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