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PHONETIC AND ORTOGRAPHIC INTERFERENCES IN THE ROMANIAN LANGUAGE SPOKEN IN SPAIN

1 INTRODUCTION

The present study, *Phonetic and Orthographic Interferences in the Romanian Language Spoken in Spain*, emphasises the importance of the language contact phenomena in Romanian communities living in Spain.

Taking into account that Romanian communities have been living in a Spanish - speaking area, we have analysed to what extent the usage of the Romanian language has been influenced by Spanish phonetically and orthographically speaking. Such changes occurred on a background of multiple contacts at the social, political, cultural and economic levels in the context of a massive Romanian migration to Spain. As a consequence, we started by determining how intensely the Romanian spoken by immigrants was influenced by the official language of the host country, at the phonetic and orthographic level.

The present study is based on a corpus of spoken texts that was collected from 11 Romanian students living in Castellón. The present recordings were made in Castellón de la Plana at Lope de Vega College and at Jaume I University. The corpus is comprehensive and authentic. Although the number of subjects was not impressive, we think that the linguistic material this investigation revealed was objective enough to be considered a basis for generalization.

Attempting to find as many examples of the investigated linguistic phenomena as possible, we extended our research to the written language and we selected another corpus of texts from conversations between Romanian immigrants on one of the forums dedicated to them in Spain (www.adevarul.es).

2 PHONETIC ADAPTATION OF LEXICAL BORROWINGS

In our paper, we will call *adapted borrowing* any word from the Spanish language which is used by a speaker of Romanian language and which is composed of

phonemes “which may be identified with Romanian language morphematic units, and these morphematic units enter paradigmatic relations specific to the Romanian language” (Kis 1975: 34). Thus, a Spanish word entered in the vocabulary of Romanian people from Spain is adapted at phonetic, graphical and morphological level. The present article will refer only to the phono-graphical adaptation.

“Two languages in contact do not have the same inventory of phonemes and variants. In these cases, phonemes or sounds which exist only in one of the two systems are adapted to the system of the target language” (Sala 1997: 59). Pronunciation of Spanish words in the Romanian language “always implies a degree of adaptation to Romanian speakers’ skills” (Avram 1997: 15).

Both Romanian and Spanish are Romance languages and have a similar phonological system, most of the Spanish phonemes being rendered through sounds specific to the Romanian language. The difference between the Spanish phonological system and the Romanian one is constituted by a series of specific Spanish sounds: *θ, ɲ, tʃ, ʝ, ɫ* which are not encountered in Romanian, as well as some sounds which are different in Romanian than in Spanish, such as *ă, î, ș, ț, ʋ, z*.

In the case of Romanian-Spanish phonetic interferences within communication in the language of Romanian immigrants from Spain, phonetic adaptation may be classified in two main types:

- adaptation of Spanish borrowings to the Romanian phonological system;
- adaptation of Romanian words to the Spanish phonological system.

2.1 The adaptation of Spanish borrowings to the Romanian phonological system

In general, the sounds *θ, ɲ, tʃ, ʝ, ɫ* have been adapted to the Romanian phonetic system, as follows:

- sp. *θ* > rom. *s* - the phoneme *θ*, rendered graphically by the letters *c* followed by *e* or *i*, and *z* followed by *a*, *o*, *u* has been replaced with the sound *s* specific to both languages in question:
 - sp. *acercar* > rom. *a aserca* [bring closer]: *A fost asercat*, adică i s-au apropiat inelele” (I10)¹. Besides the morphological adaptation, we observe that *θ* phoneme, written with *ce* digraph is substituted by *s* phoneme;
 - sp. *Educación Infantil* > rom. *Educașion Infãntil* [Early Childhood Education]: „Am zis sã fac ciclul superior de *Educașion Infãntil*”² (I1);
 - sp. *Mediación cultural* > rom. *Mediașion cultural* [Cultural Mediation]: „Am fãcut un curs de *mediașion cultural* în medio sanitarior”³ (I8);
- sp. *ɲ* > rom. *ni* (semivocalic *i*) – the phoneme *ɲ*, represented graphically by the Spanish letter *ñ*, is pronounced by the Romanians living in Spain with the sounds *n* and *i*, semivowel *i* being always a part of a diphthong (*ia*, *io*):
 - sp. *contraseña* > rom. *contrasenia* [password]: „Ai un numãr și un *contrasenia*”⁴ (I1);

1 It has been *asercat*, that means that his rings were brought closer.

2 I’ve been thinking to register for higher education in *Educașion Infãntil*.

3 I took up the *mediașion cultural* in *medio sanitarior* (health care environment) course.

4 You have a number and a *contrasenia*.

- o sp. *España* > rom. *Espania* [Spain]: „E prințesă la *Espania*”⁵ (I8);
- o sp. *piña* > rom. *pinia* [pineapple]: „Cazul chelnăriței care îmi oferea suc de *pinia*. A recunoscut că nu auzise în România de ananas”⁶ (I7);
- o sp. *señorita* > rom. *seniorita* [miss]: „Dă-i și *senioritei* un besu!”⁷ (I8).
- sp. *tf* > rom. *č* – The sound *tf*, represented graphically as the group of letters *ch*, is substituted in by Romanians living in Spain by the *č* sound:
 - o sp. *chico* / *chica* > rom. *cico* / *cica* [boy / girl]: „Așa *cica!*”⁸ (I8), „Mamă, ce *cico* bun!”⁹ (I7);
 - o sp. *gazpacho* > rom. *gaspacio* [a sort of tomato soup]: „Bei *gaspacio* ca să te răcorești vara, un fel de bulion.”¹⁰ (I9).
- sp. *j* > rom. *i* – *j* phoneme, graphically written *y*, is pronounced *i* by the Romanian immigrants living in Spain:
 - o sp. *ayuntamiento* > rom. *aiuntamiento* [town hall]: „I-a dat ordin de l-*aiuntamiento* să nu se apropie”¹¹ (I10);
 - o sp. *yo* > rom. *io* [I]: „*Io* cred că visele ne motiva să luptăm”¹² (forum¹³);
 - o sp. *reyes* > rom. *reies* [kings]: „Au și Cortes de los *reies*”¹⁴ (I8);
- sp. *ll* > rom. *i* – *ll* sound, graphically reproduced by *ll* digraph, is adapted to the Romanian phonetic system, being replaced by *i* sound:
 - o sp. *bocadillo* > rom. *Bocadiio* [sandwich]: „După aceea am mers să mănânc *bocadiio*”¹⁵ (I11);
 - o sp. *botellon* > rom. *boteion* [drinking]: „Îți spun eu sigur că de Madalena am băut *calimocio*. Știi, pe stradă, când fac *boteion*” (I9)¹⁶.
 - o sp. *dezarollo* > rom. *dezaroiu* [development]: „O întrebare de *dezaroiu*”¹⁷ (I1);
 - o sp. *paella* > rom. *paeia* [traditional Spanish food]: Am făcut și *paeia*”¹⁸ (I8).

2.2 Adaptation of Romanian words to the Spanish phonological system

Apart from the phonetic adaptation of borrowings from Spanish, another attention-grabbing phenomenon appears frequently in communication. Words in Romanian end up being adapted to the Spanish phonetic system (it is an adaptation of the words from the source language to the target language).

Some of the Romanian words containing the sounds *ă* and *v* are adapted to the phonetic system of the Spanish language, being replaced by *a* and *v* by *b*:

5 She is a princess in *Espania*.

6 The case of the waitress who would offer me *pinia* juice. She admitted that she did not hear about pineapple in Romania.

7 Give a kiss to the *seniorita*.

8 So, *cica!*

9 Oh dear, what a good *cico!*

10 You drink *gaspacio* to refresh in summer time, a kind of broth.

11 They give him an *aiuntamiento* order not to come closer.

12 *Yo* (I) think that the dreams *ne motiva* (sic!) to fight. (The speaker not only uses the Spanish word, but he does not make concord between subject and predicate).

13 Examples were taken from the forum of the www.adevarul.es.

14 They also have the courts of *reies*.

15 After that I went to eat a *bocadiio*.

16 I'm telling you for sure that during the Madalena feast I used to drink *calimocio*. You know when they are making *boteion* in the street.

17 A question of development.

18 I have cooked *paeia*, too.

- **ă** > **a**: *Ce fata frumoasa!*¹⁹ (I3), *Ma, te bat!*²⁰ (I4), „Cum se spune la mămăligă în spaniolă? / *Mamaliga*”²¹(I5);
- **v** > **b**: *Bin, ha, ha ! Vin !* (I6)²².

A case of hypercorrection is encountered in the following sentences: „Tatăl său era *encargado*, adică șef de *ovră*”²³(I5) „Nu poate să-mi facă *livreta* de bancă”²⁴ (I10). Some of our subjects replace the sound **b** with **v** in the words which are written with **b**: *ovră* < sp. *obra* [work], *livretă* < sp. *libreta* [certificate].

Under the pressure of the two phonetic systems: the Romanian and the Spanish one, the spoken language arrives to a certain point in which a speaker hesitates between the Romanian and the Spanish forms of the word:

- *paisaj*: „Ați ieșit din *paisaj* [peisaj]”²⁵ (I3) – the emitent replaces the **e** sound from the first syllable of the Romanian word *peisaj* with the **a** sound, under the influence of the Spanish word *paisaje*;
- *hustiția*: „Ca să vezi *hustiția* spaniolă”²⁶ (I10) – the informer is influenced by the fact that the words which contain **j** letter are pronounced with **b** in Spanish.

The phonetic accidents produced during the adaptation of the borrowed word *rotonda* [roundabout] are also worth mentioning:

- Sp. *redonda* > Rom. *rodonda* [roundabout]: „Mergi până la *rodonda* din calle Fadrell”²⁷ (I3) – the vowel **e** from the Spanish word was substituted by the vowel **o**, during the phonetic process of assimilation;
- Sp. *redonda* > Rom. *rotonda*: „Faci *rotonda* și o iei înainte”²⁸ (I 10) – the consonant **d** was replaced in the spoken Romanian with the **t** sound, during the dissimilation process.

3 PHONETIC ADAPTATION OF PROPER NAMES

Phonetic adaptation is also encountered at the level of onomastics. Romanian names can be often modified in order to be more easily pronounced in Spanish.

These transformations occurring at the phonetic level are determined by the absence of the sounds corresponding to the letters and groups of letters: **ă, â, î, ș, ț, ge, gi, ce, ci** from the Spanish phonetic system. Thus, a person's name such as *Laurențiu*

19 *Ce fata frumoasa* (What a pretty girl!) changes into (What the pretty girl). Changing “ă” into “a” in Romanian would mean that we change the zero article into a definite article.

20 Hey, yo, I will beat you!

21 How do you say in Spanish *mămăligă* (polenta)? *Mamaliga!*

22 **B** instead of **v** (the unvoiced consonant becomes voiced) *Bin - Vin* (I come). This phonetic accident, called betacism, was also found in the written media (*Origini*, 34, 2008, p.18), within a rhetoric interrogative statement: „Ce mai *tura-bura?*” (What is this topsy-turvy?).

23 His father was an *encargado* (attendant), which means a chief of *ovră* (work).

24 They cannot process my bank *livreta* (certificate).

25 You are out of the *paisaj* (landscape).

26 See the Spanish *husticia* (justice).

27 Go to the *rodonda* from *calle Fadrell* (Fadrell street).

28 Take the *rotonda* and then go straight ahead.

is transformed into *Laurentiu*, and a woman's name such as *Cătălina* into *Catalina* (Jianu 2011, 24).

When Spaniards pronounce Romanian, two phonetic accidents may occur: betacism and prothesis. Betacism is a "phonetic modification which consists in the confusion of *b* with *v*, especially in initial position" (DȘL 2005: 86). The phenomenon is frequently encountered in the Spanish language. In speech, almost in all situations, the name *Viorica*, *Viorel*, *Victor*, *Vasile*, *Vlad* are pronounced *Biorica*, *Biorel*, *Bictor*, *Basile*, *Blad*.

Prothesis, "a phonetic accident which consists in adding a non-etymological sound to the initial of the word to ease utterance [...] adding a vowel at the beginning of the word" (DȘL 2005: 417) is encountered in Spanish in words that begin with the sound *s*, followed by a consonant. In this case, the sound *e* is added in front of such words. Prothesis is thus encountered in the pronunciation of Romanian names *Ștefan*, *Ștefania*, *Stela* which become *Estefan*, *Estafania* and *Estela*.

4 GRAPHIC ADAPTATION OF LEXICAL BORROWINGS

Analyzing the communication between Romanian immigrants from the forum of *Adevărul de Spania* newspaper, we remarked that the majority of borrowings is written with Spanish letters. When one of the locators adapts a Spanish word to the Romanian graphic system, he is warned and corrected by the other participants to the communication, as we can see in the given example:

"Hello. Alt subiect mai interesant nu aveți și voi. Ce contează dacă mă duc să cumpăr *cervesa* sau bere că tot aia e, și toată lumea mă înțelege. Găsiți și voi altceva."
"Cerveza?"

"C., știu că există subiecte mult mai incitante. Așteptam să propui unul. Ai intrat în colimatorul lui B., te corectează. Vezi ai scris doar o replică și deja te tratăm como de la familia?"

"Sorry...nu m-am putut abține, dacă scria ceva mai drăguț...poate treceam cu vederea"²⁹ (forum).

Generally, the borrowed words from Spanish which contain the graphemes: *ñ*, *y*, *b*, *j* and *g* followed by *i* or *e*, *ll*, *rr*, *qu*, *ch*, or the letters *c* followed by *i* or *e*, respectively *z* followed by *a*, *o* or *u*, as well as the words that start with the letter *h*, normally are written according to the Spanish orthographic system:

- *ñ*, phonetically rendered by *ni*:

29 "Hello. Don't you have a more interesting subject? It doesn't mater if I go to buy *cervesa* or beer, because it is the same thing, and everybody can understand me. Find something else.
Cerveza?"

C., I know there are many other more exciting subjects. We are waiting for you to propose one. You have been ironised by B. who is correcting you. You see, you have written only one remark and we have been already treating you *como de la familia* (like a family member)?

Sorry ... I couldn't refrain, if he had written something nicer ... I could have overlooked this aspect." The speaker not only uses Spanish words which are adapted to Romanian, but also English words (hello, sorry), which are transliterated as in English, phenomenon which shows that Spanish borrowings are added to a stratum that already contained English borrowings which had time to pass into Romanians' vocabulary and were perfectly adapted.

- o *caña* [pint, glass]: „Câștig destul de bine cât să ieși și tu la o *caña* și un voiaj până la Paris”³⁰(forum);
- o *España* [Spania]: „Aici³¹, *España* ... (forum);
- **ch**, phonetically rendered by **tf**:
 - o *pincha* [select, klik]: „Am *pinchat*, dar m-am plictisit de atâta înregistrare și autentificare”³² (forum).
- **y**, phonetically rendered by **j**:
 - o *ayuntamiento* [town hall]: „Ceea că mă uimește e că sunt *ayuntamientos* care organizează așa ceva”³³ (forum);
 - o *ya* [already]: „La vârsta mea, *ya*, nu mai este cazul”³⁴ (forum);
 - o *yo* [I]: „*Yo* cred că nu”; „Adevărul e că je, je, *yo* nu am văzut români uniți”; „*Yo*, da. Și să vezi cum e!” (forum)³⁵.
- **J**, phonetically rendered by **x** :
 - o *jabón* [soap]: „Să apeși cu mâna să iasă *jabon* și apoi să te întorci în cadă”³⁶ (forum);
 - o *relájate* [relax]: „Și *relájate* ... oricum vorbești dintr-o perspectivă subiectivă”³⁷ (forum);
 - o *trabajo* [muncă] „Că la ce criză de *trabajo* e pe aici...”³⁸ (forum).
- **Ll**, phonetically rendered by **l**:
 - o *botellón* [drinking]: „Ha, ha, ha, *botellon* organizat”; „Tineretul nostru stă la *botellon*”; „Ce părere aveți de cultura *botellonului*” (forum)³⁹;
 - o *castellano* [castilian]: „Copiii învață *castellano*”; „Scrieți în *castellano*” (forum)⁴⁰;
 - o *paella*, *tortilla* [traditional Spanish dishes]: „Îmi place *tortilla* și *paella* valenciană”⁴¹ (forum).
- **rr**, phonetically rendered by **rr**:
 - o *turrón* [Christmas Spanish speciality]: „Spaniolii au *turrón*”⁴²(I8).
- **qu** phonetically rendered by **k**:
 - o *queja* [complaint]: „Viața ar fi o continuă *queja* și destul de desagradabile”⁴³ (forum);

30 I earn well enough to go out for a *caña* (pint of bear) or to travel to Paris.

31 Here.

32 *Am pinchat*, but I got bored by so much login and registration. The Spanish verb “pinchar” is transliterated in Spanish as a participle and Romanian Past Tense (Perfect Compus) is formed with the Romanian auxiliary verb “to have” and the Spanish participle “pinchat”.

33 The thing that bothers me is that there are *ayuntamientos* which are organizing something like that.

34 At my age, *ya*, it is not the case anymore.

35 *Yo* (I) don’t think so; The truth is that, *je, je, yo* (I) haven’t seen united Romanians; *Yo* (I) do. You must see how it is.

36 Push with your hand waiting for the *jabon* to flow, and then go back to the bathtub.

37 And *relájate* ... anyway you speak from a subjective perspective.

38 What a crisis of *trabajo* is here.

39 Ha! Ha! Organised *botellón* (drinking). Our youngsters are staying at *botellon*. What do you think about the culture of *botellon*?

40 Children are learning *castellano*; Write in *castellano*.

41 I like *tortilla* and Valencian *paella*.

42 Spanish people have *turrón*.

43 The life would be a continuous *queja* and *desagradable* enough.

- o *bosque* [forest]: „Toți am vrea să avem propria casă cu vedere la un *bosque*”⁴⁴;
- o *finiquito* [settlement]: „Aștept indemnizația + *finiquito*”⁴⁵ (forum).
- *c* followed by *e* or *i*, phonetically rendered by *θ*:
 - o *gracias* [thank you]: „*Gracias*, mă faci să mă simt importantă”⁴⁶ (forum).
- *v*, phonetically rendered by *b*:
 - o *sobreviviran* [they will survive]: „Nu-ți face grijă de copii. *Sobreviviran*”⁴⁷ (forum);
- aspirate *h*:
 - o *hola* [hello]: „*Hola*, Diximan!” (forum).

5 CONCLUSIONS

Analysing the written communication of the Romanian Diaspora from Spain over the internet, we remarked that borrowings are never accented or spelt with dieresis, since Romanian words are not spelt with accented characters. Spelling without an accent in Spanish, as well as spelling without accented characters (diacritics) in Romanian is a feature of communication on the internet⁴⁸.

In conclusion, we may state that lexical borrowings from the Spanish language are generally adapted to the phonetic system of the Romanian language, but are not adapted to Romanian spelling.

INFORMERS' LIST

Informers	Age	Sex	Place of living	Occupation	The year of their arrival in Spain	The data and the place of the interview
I 1	21	f.	Borriol	student	2003	Castellón, 2009
I 2	17	m.	Castellón	pupil	2001	Castellón, 2009
I 3	17	m.	Castellón	pupil	1998	Castellón, 2009
I 4	16	f.	Castellón	pupil	2002	Castellón, 2009
I 5	16	m.	Castellón	pupil	2003	Castellón, 2009
I 6	17	m.	Castellón	pupil	2002	Castellón, 2009
I 7	10	f.	Castellón	pupil	2005	Castellón, 2009

44 We all want to have our own house with a *bosque* (forest) view.

45 I wait for the salary + *finiquito* (settlement).

46 *Gracias*, you make me feel important.

47 Do not worry about the children. *Sobreviviran* (they will survive).

48 We have also encountered borrowings of Spanish punctuation in the written conversations on the forums. Most questions addressed by the transmitters are ended with two question marks, one straight and the other inverted, a Spanish graphic way of marking up an interrogative sentence: „Cât ceri pe ora de terapie?¿”; „Care participanți¿.....?”; „... nu e imobiliar site-ul?¿” (“How much do you charge for therapy hour?¿”; “Which participants ?¿”; “... Is it not a real estate site ?¿”) (forum). Even if the exclamation mark is used, in Spanish, in the same way, in the communication in the Romanian, such situations have not been encountered. The most available explanation can be that Romanians use Spanish keyboards.

Informers	Age	Sex	Place of living	Occupation	The year of their arrival in Spain	The data and the place of the interview
I 8	15	m.	Castellón	pupil	2005	Castellón, 2009
I 9	19	f.	Castellón	student	2002	Castellón, 2009
I 10	12	m.	Onda	pupil	2007	Castellón, 2009
I 11	22	f.	Onda	student	2002	Castellón, 2009

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POVZETEK

Fonetične in ortografske interference pri govorjeni romunščini v Španiji

Članek *Fonetične in ortografske interference pri govorjeni romunščini v Španiji* prikaže z dvojne (fonetične in ortografske) perspektive nekaj pojavov, ki so nastali pri romunsko španskih stikih. Namen raziskave fonetičnega in ortografskega vpliva španščine na romunščino je identifikacija lingvističnih posledic, ki bi jih množično priseljevanje Romunov v Španijo lahko imelo.

Pri analizi romunskega jezika priseljencev v romunskih skupnostih iz Španije smo zaznali dva načina fonetičnega prilagajanja: prilagajanje španskih izposojenk romunskemu fonetičnemu sistemu in prilagajanje romunskih besed španskemu fonetičnemu sistemu. Z vzporednim preučevanjem zvočnih in pisanih zapisov enajstih romunskih študentov v Španiji, v Castellón de la Plana, smo ugotovili, da se španske izposojenke fonetično prilagodijo romunskemu jeziku, pri pisavi pa te prilagoditve ne zaznamo.

Ključne besede: fonetika, ortografija, interference, izposojanke, jezikovno prilagajanje, priseljenci, jeziki v stiku.

ABSTRACT

Phonetic and Orthographic Interferences in the Romanian Language Spoken in Spain

The article *Phonetic and Orthographic Interferences in the Romanian Language Spoken in Spain* presents some results of Romanian-Spanish contacts, from a double perspective: phonetically and orthographically. The purpose of the phonetic and orthographic influence of Spanish over the Romanian research entails the identification of linguistic consequences which the massive migration of Romanian people to Spain had.

Analyzing the Romanian Language of migration within Romanian communities from Spain, we have remarked two ways of phonetic adaptation: the adaptation of Spanish borrowings to the Romanian phonetic system and the adaptation of the Romanian words to the Spanish phonetic system. Studying in parallel some audio texts recorded by 11 Romanian students in Spain, Castellón de la Plana, and some written texts from a forum, we concluded that borrowed words from Spanish are only phonetically adapted to the Romanian language, graphically speaking remaining unadapted.

Key words: phonetics, orthographies, interference, adaptation, borrowings, languages in contact, immigrants.