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**ANGLICISMS IN ROMANIAN
ONLINE COMMUNICATION
BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE**



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1. Globalisation

1.1. General Aspects

The aim of this chapter is to give a brief account of general aspects regarding the process of globalisation. Since it is a very broad concept, relevant aspects related to the topic of this book are mentioned, in order to support ideas presented in the following chapters.

Globalisation has drawn the attention of a number of scholars, and numerous studies have been conducted in order to understand and explain this social phenomenon. Briefly, historical, economic and political factors as well as developments of information technology have influenced globalisation throughout time. It encompasses social, cultural and economic interdependence of nations worldwide. Also, it refers to the process of social interaction across national borders, among world populations, and of cultural exchange of ideas, values and beliefs among cultures of the world. Moreover, globalisation is the process of interdependence of the world's economies as it integrates local and national economies into a global market economy. It involves the expansion of economic activities in the exchange of goods and funds, and the growth of international trade.

Held et al. (1999: 2) mention three broad schools of thought - *the hyperglobalisers*, *the sceptics* and *the transformationalists* - that give a distinctive account of globalisation. The hyperglobalisers refer to contemporary globalisation as "a new era in which peoples

everywhere are increasingly subject to the disciplines of the global marketplace" (Held et al. 1999: 2). Economic, political and cultural processes will be homogenised and regulated by global forces, which will lead to a borderless world. Economic and political power are becoming denationalised and the autonomy of a nation-state is becoming eroded. In their view, economic globalisation involves "constructing new forms of social organisation that are supplanting, or that will eventually supplant, traditional nation-states as the primary economic and political units of world society" (Held et al. 1999: 3). Global infrastructures of communication and increasing awareness of many common interests will facilitate transnational cooperation between peoples, thus leading to an emerging 'global civil society' (Held et al. 1999: 5).

Sceptics, on the other hand, consider the hyperglobalist thesis as "fundamentally flawed and politically naive, since it underestimates the enduring power of national governments to regulate international economic activity" (Held et al. 1999: 5). In their view, given the statistical evidence of world flows of trade, investment and labour from the nineteenth century, current economic developments are an extension and an intensification of historical internationalisation processes. Internationalisation depends on the regulatory power of national governments that ensure economic liberalisation (Held et al. 1999: 5).

In contrast, transformationalists' conviction is that globalisation does not imply a fixed trajectory that leads to a borderless world, but an on-going and differentiated process, which transforms the structures and practices of contemporary societies. Globalisation is seen as a "long-term historical process which is inscribed with contradictions and which is significantly shaped by conjunctural factors" (Held et al. 1999: 7). It is a powerful force that influences transformations of societies, economies, institutions of governance and world order (Held et al. 1999: 7).

Moreover, globalisation refers to "patterns of growing interconnectedness within all the key domains of social activity"

(Held et al. 1999: 27). It is well known that cultural relationships always depended on a variety of factors: economic, political, social, etc., which evolved and diversified with the globalisation process, leading to a more extensive interaction between cultures. Research shows that globalisation is "a central driving force behind the rapid social, political and economic changes that are reshaping modern societies and world order" (apud Held et al. 1999: 7). Broadly, this is due to the decreased or the ceased influence at a global scale of more developed countries, in terms of their economic, military and social power.

The process of globalisation is also associated with conflicts, diplomacy and capitalist expansion. According to Radhakrishnan (2010: 23), "empirical studies of the cultural dimensions of globalisation tend to broadly cluster around a few key strategies", such as to follow international migration, capital investment and products, and ideas, by examining consumer or activist practices as they cross the globe (Radhakrishnan 2010). Regarding the large international migration in the last decades, this occurs due to economic and political issues between states or within the same state, to religious or interethnic conflicts, to civil disturbances or to different forms of persecution. The capital investment, on the other hand, is the result of the expansion beyond boundaries of local and national economies which lead to a global unregulated market economy (Guttal 2007). For example, the international petroleum and energy industries, transportation, communication technology, international trade and transactions, capital and investment movements, etc. expand their partnerships at a global scale. This involves dissemination of knowledge and information, of production methods and management techniques (IMF 2000). In all these contexts language plays an important role in the process of interaction and communication among people worldwide.

Furthermore, globalisation enables freedom of movement and migration of labour force between developed and less developed countries and a rise in international education and student exchange

programmes. Also, improvements in transportation technology and transport infrastructure have decreased travel time and cost, and increased international travel. These permitted interaction between people of different nationalities and cultures, which involves understanding and tolerating other cultures, as well as exchanging and sharing knowledge, ideas, values and beliefs.

Turner (2010: 10) presents main aspects of globalisation as follows:

1. The growing frequency, volume and interrelatedness of cultures, commodities, information and peoples across both time and space;
2. The increasing capacity of information technologies to reduce and compress time and space (giving rise to notions such as the global village);
3. The diffusion of routine practices and protocols for processing global flows of information, money, commodities and people;
4. The emergence of institutions and social movements to promote, regulate, oversee or reject globalisation;
5. The emergence of new types of global consciousness or ideologies of globalism that give some expression to this social interconnectedness such as cosmopolitanism.

Specialists agreed on the fact that “globalisation involves the compression of time and space, the increased interconnectivity of human groups, the increased volume of the exchange of commodities, people and ideas, and finally the emergence of various forms of global consciousness which, for the sake of brevity, we may simply call *cosmopolitanism*” (Turner 2010: 5). The interaction between *the national* and *the global* has involved movements of identities, goods, ideas and capital. The opening of borders and the rise of free market facilitated exchanges of consumer goods, tightened economic relationships between states and enabled expansion in capital and media capacity.

Nevertheless, there are debates on whether globalisation “produces cultural standardization in terms of a single and uniform global village, or whether globalisation, through the processes of adaptation and simulation, results in cultural hybridity” (Turner 2010: 8). In Turner’s (2010: 10) view, globalisation produces “a complex interaction between the local and the global”, which may lead to “complex hybrid cultures”. According to Radhakrishnan (2010: 4), “*local* came to stand in for the particular and *global* for the universal”. That is to say, even though nations worldwide are facing unification at different scales, their national identity is still preserved and serves as their emblematic feature. The global is not intelligible outside its local articulation and expression. The ethnographic site does not represent the source of culture, as this is “located not in a geographic place, per se, but takes shape in the experiences, attitudes and beliefs of individuals reflecting complex social realities” (Radhakrishnan 2010: 14).

On the other hand, globalisation is associated with the growth of the Internet which enabled global communication, global journalism and increased speed in the spread of information, in the so-called “global village” (Turner 2010: 13). Globalisation and technological advances have created a world of interconnectedness, particularly due to their acceleration in the last few decades. The former has crossed cultural boundaries and has drawn people into closer cultural, political and economic relationships, while the latter has definitely changed the way people currently communicate. Cultures were brought together and a multicultural society was created, which allows cross-cultural communication. Individuals develop multicultural identities, either because they were born and/or raised in a multiracial home, or because they grew up in many different cultural contexts (for instance, the case of the families of missionaries, international business employees, diplomats, military personnel etc.).

The Internet is perhaps a major driving force in creating a unified global community and its wide accessibility has had a huge

impact on how social media or social networking is used. New media allow instant virtual human interaction via a wide variety of forms: emails, instant messaging & chat, forums or blogs. As Turner (2010: 5) puts it, "sociological theories of globalisation attempted to establish the independent development of social and cultural forces contributing to the emergence of the world as a single place". Literature explains present-day globalisation as "capitalism or technological change" (Held et al. 1999: 12) and on the other hand as "the product of a combination of factors, including technological change, market forces, ideology and political decisions" (Held et al. 1999: 12). On the whole, globalisation does not reflect a simple linear developmental logic and does not prefigure a world society or a world community. It is a process or set of processes, rather than a singular condition, which reflects the emergence of interregional networks and systems of interaction and exchange (Held et al. 1999: 27). According to Sifianou (2013: 87), "globalisation is a motivating force for profound political, social, economic and cultural change", which increases "intercultural encounters" (Sifianou 2013: 87) and facilitates "intercultural contacts" (Sifianou 2013: 87). It involves interaction between local cultures and global processes, which results in a new dynamic between *the local* and *the global* (Sifianou 2013).

1.2. Technological Advances

Advancements in technology have gradually changed people's lifestyle by improving and updating existing technical equipment or machineries, by creating new apparatus and gadgetry and by implementing new methods for performing activities for both personal and professional purposes (IT, economy, medicine, agriculture, transportation, tourism, education, communication, media, etc.). All these are meant to facilitate and simplify tedious processes while increasing efficacy and saving time. In business, for instance, technological developments and the Internet enable companies to carry out marketing strategy plans more effectively.

Large organisations are able to gain competitive advantage more easily and to reduce the cost of production, while small businesses are now able to reach target markets faster and at a lower cost of operation (Ramey 2012).

Moreover, improvements in medicine and health care should also be mentioned, such as medical technological tools, development of new drugs and treatments, easier access to patients in remote areas, etc. (Ramey 2012). Also, advancements in agricultural technology resulted into increased production and abundant food supply (Ramey 2012). Consumers, on the other hand, have easier access to services and goods (e.g. browsing online) and benefit from various means of purchasing products (e.g. in store vs. online purchase, cash vs. credit card payment, on-site vs. off-site order, physical purchase in store vs. direct-to-consumer shipment, etc). Furthermore, innovations in transportation led to greater travel opportunities.

There are numerous advantages in education as well. Technological advances have simplified the way teachers reach their students (e.g. the use of Internet for long distance learning and the use of social media to connect students and teachers) and have improved traditional/existing teaching methods by implementing the use of smart whiteboards, of computers, tablets and smartphones in the classroom. This way the learning process becomes more engaging, practical and relevant as students have access to updated information, supported by real time video and audio illustrations, if necessary, and also, by using the Internet, they have easy and unlimited access to academic information (Ramey 2012).

Communication between individuals and organizations has also changed due to the Internet and technological gadgets (computers, tablets, smart phones) which enable users from different parts of the world to instantly communicate with each other through phone calls or video calls, emails or text messages (Ramey 2012). Technological developments, computers and the Internet have significantly changed the way people communicate in

terms of time and space, as well as humans' perception of the media, its reachability and control (Chen 2012).

New technological devices that develop a wide range of social media networks "functionally allow people to interact with multiple persons simultaneously with the ability to individualize messages in the process of interaction" (Chen 2012: 2). Social networking sites provide a common space for intercultural dialogue - instant message exchange among people around the world. This need for instant interaction was met by the creation of social media and networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, etc. Statistics show that one out of fourteen people has a Facebook account (Sawyer 2011). Facebook was created in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg; its mission was to bring people together in cyberspace and to encourage interaction among users with different backgrounds and interests (Sawyer 2011). As research shows, "intercultural dialogue is critical today in our globalized and blended world, where different cultures encounter each other daily, especially through social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and the iPhone" (Sawyer 2011: 6).

All in all, technological advances have had a great impact on the way certain activities are performed and on the way people interact with each other in various contexts. Consequently, they facilitated cultural ex-change and interaction between individuals at professional and personal level.

1.3. Electronic Discourse

Cultural relationships always depended on a variety of factors: economic, political, social, etc., which evolved and diversified with the globalisation process, leading to a more extensive interaction between cultures. The development of intercultural relations is also based on the evolution of the means of communication specific to various periods of time. Thinking back to the first settlements - villages - people communicated orally given the low number of inhabitants, the limited space of their community and their common

interests. Once towns and cities appeared, there was a need for interaction between citizens in different domains: economic, social, political, military, cultural, etc. This led to the evolution of the language and of the means of communication. Throughout the time, there was an evolution in message dissemination, "from simply the oral tradition, to script, print, wired electronics, wireless electronics and finally digital communication" (Chen 2012: 1).

Online means of communication facilitated human interaction regardless of the physical space and created a specific language of communication. This *new language*, which involves new forms of both spoken and written interaction, may not always be conventional since it does not follow a standard pattern, but has its own characteristics and its own linguistic features, given the need for instant interaction by its users who become increasingly mobile (Frobenius 2014).

Researchers used a wide variety of terms to refer to the language used in the electronic communication: 'electronic discourse' (Davis and Brewer 1997; Panckhurst 2006), 'electronic language' (Collot and Belmore 1996), 'Computer Mediated Communication' (Herring 1996), 'interactive written discourse' (Werry 1996), 'Netlish', 'Weblish', 'Internet language', 'cyberspeak', 'netling' (Thurlow 2001), 'cyberlanguage' (MacFadyen, Roche and Doff 2004), 'netspeak' (Thurlow 2001; Crystal 2006), and 'virtual language' (Pop 2008), (apud AbuSa'aleek 2015: 136). Relevant studies in the field distinguish between different forms of communication performed via electronic gadgets and/or the Internet such as "*asynchronous*" versus "*synchronous*", "*written*" versus "*spoken*", "*monologic*" versus "*dialogic*", "*text*" versus "*utterance*", "*public*" versus "*private*", "*mobile*" versus "*stationary*" and "*monomodal*" versus "*multimodal*" (Jucker and Dürscheid 2012: 4). Consequently, the term "**keyboard-to-screen communication**" (KSC) is suggested when referring to these communication practices in which the interaction is based on various "**communicative acts**" and "**communicative act sequences**" (Jucker and Dürscheid 2012: 4)

performed on a device that has a physical keyboard (or a virtual one on a touch-screen) and a screen. Regardless of the medium chosen for the conversational act (Blackberries, iPhones, iPads, PCs, etc.), the message is typically typed on a keyboard and read on a screen (Jucker and Dürscheid 2012).

This can be considered a new form of interaction at an international level and a new type of discourse - **electronic discourse** or **e-discourse**. It is "a form of semi-speech which combines spoken and written features and has its own characteristics and graphology" (AbuSa'aleek 2015: 136). Online communication is constantly changing due to the need for instant interaction between its users, for saving time and effort when typing, for differentiation from other groups, and for entertainment and socialising purposes. It involves the use of a simple and sometimes coded language, which consists of shortenings, contractions, abbreviations, acronyms, clippings, emoticons, onomatopoeic words. Also, punctuation marks and graphic symbols are used in order to express certain feelings or intentions. These symbols can be images that represent facial expressions, for example smiling, frowning, or punctuation marks used to indicate feelings. Features of spoken interaction are used in written communication thus the latter develops new characteristics. Moreover, there are unconventional spellings and word-letter replacements (homophone letters and numbers) as well as specialised terms that are either borrowed from English or internally created, without respecting and following language rules and norms. It can be considered as a nonconventional language, used to show modernisation and independence of the users. Regardless of the nation, young generations have always been the social segment that played an active role in language development. E-discourse is taking "new dimensions and attracts the interest of a growing number of scholars in investigating the language used by young people in the electronic communication" (AbuSa'aleek 2015: 136). Nowadays, the young segment of population prefers online interaction (written communication) on social media channels like Facebook, Whatsapp,

Messenger, etc. to direct communication (*face-to-face*). It can broadly be asserted that, given its distinct features, electronic discourse is a *new hybrid language* which combines written and spoken conversational styles. Research on electronic discourse is valuable for understanding social and linguistic variation and communicative practices in computer mediated communication.

There is a wide variety of studies on conversation analysis which aim at identifying the means and the factors involved in codifying and receiving information, as well as the characteristics of this type of information exchange. This is due to the need for identifying the kinds of relationships between people, the type of society they live in and the nature of the means of communication they use. Moreover, communication is an interactive practice and a multilateral process which implies a comprehensive sociolinguistic and pragmalinguistic competence of using linguistic tools (vocabulary, syntax, morphology, phonetics, specialised terminology) accordingly, in a given social and situational context, in relation to the interlocutor, the setting and the communicative purpose (Dossou and Klein 2012). Young people build their own identity, both at personal and at group level, through the type of language they use. Their linguistic choices may be the result of the need for distinctiveness (personal identity) as well as for differentiation from other age groups (group identity). As for online communication, certain linguistic choices could be also regarded as *norms* in the online space, for instance specialized terms from IT or terms introduced together with the creation of various online communication channels.