

WORDS TO BUSINESS: LANGUAGE CONTACT AND LEXICAL INNOVATION

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The EET project provides linguistic testimonies that are essential for the study of terminology, from a perspective that is both interlingual and diachronic. These data help to clarify the date of introduction of neologisms in a given language, and help to identify possible sources and decode the meaning behind lexical innovation.

In this presentation, we want to show some data that result from the work of linguists - not economists, and this should be emphasized.

Our starting point is the lexical corpus of the first portuguese translation of Forbonnais *Eléments du commerce*. We are not able to make a systematic study of all the economic vocabulary in the text, so we bring some cases that we consider significant to the history of Portuguese language and can be understood in the context of Romance languages.

The portuguese translation (*Elementos do Comercio*) was published in 1766 and appears to contain evidence of new meanings to existing portuguese words, indicating

- 1) The beginning of a terminological use exclusive of economy,
- 2) Secondly, the permeability of Portuguese language to the specialized vocabulary from French. The comparison between languages also identifies terminology solutions developed in Portuguese language, which are not modified by contact with terminology of the language that is translated.

We will analyse the cases of *circulação*, *género* and *matéria prima*, looking for a specialized use.

1. Key concepts

Economy, understood here as an area of activity or as a scientific discipline, is supported by a specialized language that expresses distinctions of concepts. (This structured set of specialized vocabulary of a domain of knowledge or technique is a terminology that can be learned or systematically presented.)

The possibility of having a stable terminology is enhanced by a number of factors. In the case of economics, they all occur:

- The specialized language is used and shared by a large number of professionals and has a social utility recognized by non-professionals;
- There is ample documentation on the activity;
- Is based on a natural language for mutual understanding (nowadays, English), which provides a common reference to form the equivalent terminology for the different languages.

Contacts between languages and cultures have been extensively explored in the history of science and its evolution. In fields such as literature, art, philosophy and economics, historians pay special attention on the reception and transformation of foreign stimulation, identifying predominant cultural influences, the time lag of response and the emergence of independent concepts. The vocabulary, linguistic interference, the creation and dissemination of neologisms can be a basis for the study of these different perspectives.

Linguists want to track the contact between languages and the distribution of neologisms, in order to identify the source of lexical or semantic neologisms, to assess the duration of the transfer process and explain which changes occurred in the passage between languages. And, if there are variations, which processes in the target language contributed to the transformation.

The neologism corresponds not only to the introduction of a new word or phrase, but also the creation of a new meaning to pre-existing words and phrases. If this innovation is explained by a contact between languages, it is a loan.

The loan is the entry in the language of a new word or phrase, keeping the meaning of the source language. Sometimes the word is not completely assimilated into the language. In such cases, the incompatibility manifests itself in writing, and the word is shown similar to the original (big bang, bestseller, bluff, brainstorming).

This particular kind of loan is a foreignism. Purists, who are unaware of the purpose of terminology, tend to see foreignisms as unhealthy contamination.

Over time, the word is assimilated. A proof of the integration is the possibility to acquire new meanings (tennis (ing.) > tenis (port.); tenis (port.) = tennis shoe (ing.) or follow derivation processes that do not exist in the original language (scanner (ing.) > scaner (port.) > escanear (port.) > escaneamento (port.).

The semantic loan occurs when translating the words of the source language. Thus, a word or phrase pre-existing in the target language changes the meaning due to contact with another language, and comes to have a new meaning, wider or narrower.

2. Circulação

The French word circulation is attested in dictionaries as a term related to the economy since the late seventeenth century. The Dictionnaire de l'Académie (1694) indicates a meaning that can have a literal interpretation ("Mouvement de ce qui circle ", eg.' la circulation du sang"), and figuratively, concerning the circulation of money: "On dit fig. La circulation de l'argent, pour exprimer le mouvement de l'argent qui passe d'une main à l'autre» (Académie 1694: s.v.).

Portuguese dictionaries from the first half of the eighteenth century picked up, from the French dictionaries, relevant information to describe Portuguese and, in the case of circulação, this particular sense is never stated. In one of the first French-Portuguese dictionaries, this acception is not considered essential to know the meanings of the French word:

Circulação. A acção de andar à róda. Circulatio, onis. Fem. Vitruv. § Circulação do sangue.

Circular. Verbo. (Termo da Medicina, & da chimica) Na Medicina, Circular se diz do sangue, que muytas vezes no dia por meyo das veas, & arterias passa do coração para as extremidades do corpo, & dellas se restitue ao coração — (Bluteau 1712-1728: s.v.).

Circulation, s.f. Circulação. La circulation du sang. A circulação do sangue. — (Marques 1768: s.v.)

However, in French, circulation is associated with words that mean 'money' and 'goods' and, as a single word, means the movement of goods and capital. It is often used, and is part of lexical combinations, which are explained through paraphrases.

Lorsque le Commerce est considéré par rapport à un corps politique, son opération consiste dans la circulation intérieure des denrées du pays ou des colonies, l'exportation de leur superflu, & l'importation des denrées étrangères, soit pour les consommer, soit pour les réexporter. (Forbonnais 1754: 6-7)

Quando o Commercio he considerado a respeito de hum corpo politico , a sua operação consiste na circulação interior dos géneros do paiz, ou das Colónias, a exportação do seu superfluo , e a importação dos géneros estrangeiros , assim para os gastar, como para os reexportar. ([trad. Pereira] 1766: 5-6)

Le Commerce interieur est celui que les membres d'une société font entr'eux. Il tient le premier rang dans le Commerce general, comme l'on prise le nécessaire avant le superflu qui n'en est pas moins recherché. Cette circulation intérieure est la consommation que les citoyens font des productions de leurs terres & de leur industrie dont elle est le premier soutien. (Forbonnais 1754: 53)

O Commercio interior , he o que os membros de huma sociedade fazem entre si. Elle he o primeiro , que faz distincta figura no Commercio geral. Esta circulação interior he o consumo que os cidadãos fazem das produçoens das suas terras, e da sua industria; de que elle he a baze. ([trad. Pereira] 1766: 43)

«Ainsi l'opération de la circulation n'est autre chose que l'échange réitéré des denrées contre l'argent, & de l'argent contre les denrées. » (Forbonnais 1754: 91)

Assim a circulação não he outra coisa mais , que a repetição da troca dos géneros pelo dinheiro, e do dinheiro pelos géneros. ([trad. Pereira] 1766: 105)

The translation of Jose Manuel Ribeiro Pereira is literal and uses abundantly loans from a terminological corpus, set out in French. This perception of the translator is confirmed if we consult the first edition of the Forbonnais texts.

The Elements du Commerce compiles and extends a series of articles published a few years earlier in the Encyclopédie of Diderot et d'Alembert. In this first edition, these terms occur in the middle of the articles with a typographical presentation in italics, which reinforces their status as lexical units.

The author seems to be able to distinguish between regular use and specialized use. In the translation of "l'argent qui circuloit ", Pereira chooses, accordingly, a common equivalent in Portuguese:

La circulation naturelle est interrompue à mesure que l'argent qui circuloit dans le commerce en est retiré. (Forbonnais 1754: 96-97)

A circulação natural se interrompe à proporção que sahe do Commercio o dinheiro, que nelle girava» ([trad. Pereira] 1766: 109)

This translation option presents a combinatorial expression of some significance in Portuguese, because we find it occurring with money in dictionaries that are published in the following years:

Circulation. s.f. Circulação, movimento do que circula § Circulation de l'argent, Circulação, gyro do dinheiro. Circuler, v.n. Circular, mover-se circularmente. Diz-se do sangue. § Fig. Circular, gyrrar: Diz-se do dinheiro. § Faire circuler des billets. Fazer circular, gyrrar bilhetes no Commercio. — (Sá 1784: s.v.)

CIRCULAÇÃO, s.f. Giro em Roda: v.g. a circulação do sangue §. fig. O giro, do dinheiro, v.g. § A circulação do astro; o tempo em que ele corre a sua orbita: a circulação da Lua. — (Silva 1789: s.v.)

3. Géneros

French language has a term Denree to designate "merchandise" (product for consumption), and a second, genre, for 'genus, species' (common properties that characterize a group or species). Portuguese, however, uses the same term, género, for both meanings.

The two French terms occur, for exemple., in the following excerpt of Elemens du Commerce: The translation shows the use of the same word for both meanings:

Ces mots de bom marché ou de cherté d'une marchandise, ont une application relative à son genre, à sa qualité, à sa plus belle fabrication (...). Nous entendons ici en général, par ces mots, le plus haut ou le moindre prix d'une denrée comparée à une autre de même genre, de même qualité, de même perfection de travail (pg. 279-280)

Estas palavras de barato, ou caro de huma mercadoria tem huma applicação relativa ao seu genero, sua qualidade e o seu bom fabrico (...). Nós aqui só entendemos por estas palavras, o mais alto ou o mais baixo preço de um genero comparado a outro do mesmo genero, da mesma qualidade, e da mesma perfeição do trabalho (pg. 159).

In the sixteenth century the term género is always synonymous with 'type, class, group', but in the seventeenth century género begins to occur with the meaning of 'goods'. It is precisely this secondary meaning, less frequent, which allows translation of Denree.

It is likely that the secondary meaning, rare, has become more frequent precisely to translate French texts, such as Forbonnais. And in the following years, the use of género as 'product, merchandise' will become increasingly common.

Although, in 1789, the largest Portuguese dictionary does not yet accept that gender may mean goods.

4. Matéria primeira, matéria prima

An interesting case is the Portuguese translation of the French term *matière première*.

In Portuguese, and other Romance languages, the term “*materia prima*” until the eighteenth century is a philosophical term, inherited from the Latin expression *materia rerum prima*.

FROIS 1560-1580

e, segundo o que se tem alcansado desta seita, esse Dainichi hé o mesmo que, entre os nossos filozofos, a *materia prima*

BLUTEAU 1712

Na Filosofia toma-se por qualquer sugeito, ou sujeito, capaz de receber fórmas substanciaes, ou accidentaes, em quanto se considera com abstracção de todas ellas, & esta se chama *materia prima*

LUCENA 1788

Historia da vida do Padre S.Francisco de Xavier

E quem nam ve que esta só seria entam a *materia primeira* de todas as cousas, e forçadamente isenta em seu proprio ser de toda a jurdiçam das causas particulares ì Pois se ella realmente o he , e se nada he sem ella , nem he possiuel ...

With regard to economy, the common translation since the early nineteenth century also takes the form “*matéria prima*”, but during the eighteenth century there were several occurrences of “*matéria primeira*”, and because they are intriguing, they need to be explained.

The sudden appearance of the form “*matéria primeira*” in Pereira’s portuguese translation of Forbonnais contradicts what was expectable:

p. 51 Si les *matieres premieres* sont du crû des colonies, l’état perdra en outre le bénéfice de la navigation

p. 40 Se as *matérias primeiras* são do cruo das Colónias, perderá o Estado além disso a navegação

p. 78 Enfin, la confection d’un pareil traité exige une profonde connoissance du commerce des deux nations contractantes, de leurs ressources réciproques, de leur population, du prix et de la qualité des *matieres premieres*

p. 61 Finalmente a factura de hum semelhante tratado requer hum profundo conhecimento do Commercio das duas naçoens contractantes, dos seus mútuos recursos, da sua povoação, do preço, e das qualidades das *matérias primeiras*

Until the late eighteenth century, other authors use this new term:

SÁ 1783

Qual he o Commercio intema da Provincia : quaes as Feiras, sitio , e tempo , em que se fazem; que produtos, generos, fazendas se vendem, e trocaõ; se materias primeiras, se manufacturadas ; proprias, ou Estrangeiras.

GAZETA DE LISBOA 1787

ou os de entrada , que se cobrão sobre as matérias primeiras; isto he, sobre as fazendas de linho de toda a casta, tintas, ou pintadas, sobre, a cerveja y sobre os vidros, sobre os espelhos, e sobre os ferros.

ACADEMIA DAS CIÊNCIAS DE LISBOA 1789

Ninguem duvida já que sem a cultura da terra todo o commercio lie precario, porque lhe faltaõ os primeiros cabedaes, que são as producções da natureza: que sem as materias primeiras as manufacturas não podem subsistir

CORREIO MERCANTIL 1798

Por tanto hum methodo prompto e pouco despendioío de trabalhar estas duas matérias primeiras nas suas numerosas fabricas, produzirá a preferencia dos seus tecidos em outras partes

VELOSO 1798

Hé certo que, devendo fer o estabelecimento da Agricultura o objecto da maior contemplaçaã <3as Colonias; porque só ella tem em o seu poder o dar as materias primeiras ás artes , e fabricas , e por consequencia generos ao commercio ...

Records found in the nineteenth century rehabilitate the traditional term, and “materia prima” remains unchanged to the present.

ACADEMIA DAS CIÊNCIAS DE LISBOA 1823

... e conhecendo os lucros que Portugal podia tirar das manufacturas e sedas, huma vez que a matéria prima não viesse de paizes estrangeiros , empenhou-se notavelmente neste objecto , trazendo de outras partes da Europa sementes de ...

MINISTÉRIO DA FAZENDA, BRASIL 1833

Propõe também a Comissão que se isentem de direitos não só o carvão de pedra e o sal, mas ainda certos artigos, que podem servir de materia prima á industria nacional,

COLEÇÃO OFICIAL DE LEGISLAÇÃO PORTUGUESA 1836

... visto que desde então se reputaram reduzidos estes dous generos a simples producções daquelle Paiz, e que á sua exportação ficaram tendo acesso livre todas as Nações Estrangeiras, que o empregavam , como materia prima , na laboração ...

As a linguistic phenomenon, the occurrence of the expression for about 30 years is explained by borrowing from French. But this version of the term was barely accepted, which explains its subsequent 'correction'.

The texts that start a tradition of terminology are, as can be seen, very informative for linguists. Terminology is the exercise of communication not only between languages, but also between words of the same language. And, when a specialized field begins to attract the attention of a larger number of speakers, the words have to adapt to the most common uses, less specialized.

The study of the translations can clarify these adjustments, considering they are intended for dissemination of knowledge and therefore explain the meanings clearly.