

Foreign Words in Textbooks

Elona Limaj

Chief Translator at ATA Domestic News Desk

Albanian Telegraphic Agency

www.ata.gov.al

Tel: +355672066634, +355692766634

Received: 30 January 2013; **Revised:** 10 February 2013; **Accepted:** 18 February 2013

Abstract: Study on the presence of foreign terminology in the Albanian language includes a wide gamma of issues. In this work, I would like to focus on problem of use of foreign words in textbooks, as an issue directly affecting the general education of youth. Based on legal norms in force, textbooks in the entire Albanian territory should be written in literary language, but, it is noted that our textbooks are full of international and non-international foreign words or foreign words that have their own equivalent in Albanian language. The object of this study were the textbooks of Albanian elementary and high school education, in which is also felt the presence of foreign words. Meanwhile, language policies should focus on enrichment of the pupils and high school students' vocabulary and difficulties in this respect.

Keywords: foreign terminology, textbooks, enrichment of language, language policies.

Introduction

Study on presence of foreign words in Albanian language includes a wide gamma of problems. Theoretical concept on this problem includes two opposite points of views: a) views on a purist approach toward language and b) views to allow use of foreign languages. Between these two stances exists a middle approach, which consists of a differentiated approach toward language. Considering borrowing as a natural process for each contemporary literary language with a high level development, experts point to realization of a language borrowing process in line with certain rules. In this respect, prof. A.Xhuvani considers a natural the borrowing a foreign words as an additional source for enrichment of the language, adding "no language can avoid influence of other languages and remain pure".⁴² Meanwhile, in this work, I would like to dwell on problem of foreign words in textbooks, as an issue directly influencing the general education process of youths. Albanian language is fed up terminology, word-compounds, notions and different expressions of other languages, which according to majority of scholars are used improperly in field of economy, law, technology, machineries, techniques and other public fields such as psychology, literature, etc. Meanwhile, famous Albanian albanologists and language expert, used to say that "Language is the clearest mirror of a nation and its culture."⁴³ In the period including end of XVIII-th century and beginning of XX-th century, process of words entrance mostly from French and English languages, which in general have entered in the capacity of terms, has almost completely swept book vocabulary, in particular vocabulary related to terminology in different knowledge fields, starting from origin of creation of this terminology (in their basic fields, such as Mathematics, Geometry, Geography, etc) up to today, where they are presented in a crystal clear form and a sustainable homogeny systems. Representatives of Albanian Renaissance were strongly

⁴² A. Xhuvani, Purity of Language, "New Literary Man", 31 VIII, 1950

⁴³ E. Çabej, On purity of Albanian Language "Our Language", 1, 1981

affected by this problematic situation of terminology, who worked to draft first textbooks. Even though at a low scientific-technical level, they have faced foreign words, which served to mark concepts of basic science's fields, such as mathematics (arithmetic) geometry and anatomy (N. Frashëri), linguistics and geography (S. Frashëri). To overcome this situation, beside introduction of vocabularies with foreign terms in textbooks, they have always tried to create or find as many equivalents as possible in the Albanian language, which would also help them more easily understand scientific concepts, at the times of lack of knowledge of that period in our country. After opening of Albanian language toward other languages, problematic remains the same in its essence: Albanian language is day by day falling against great pressure of other languages. Albanian language registers many changes – for better and worse – after '90-ies, when regime toppled. Language changes along with people, who use it. Even the language they use, changes Demographic movements have enabled an inter-action between dialects. Likewise, opening of the borders has caused the improper use of foreign words and language structures. With a broad development of sciences and technology at national and international level, number of fields of knowledge increased and was really differentiated. In this respect, meeting their requests with terms was able only with foreign terms, which entered massively, in particular in textbooks of higher education and scientific and technical documents, instructions of all types, as well as in the speech. But, even freedom to use language means at one's wish has negative consequences.

In the mean time, legal determinations require that textbooks should enable ability of students for use of standard language. Likewise, textbooks should influence in enrichment of students speech, acknowledge and use of elementary professional terms, acknowledge of words functions in different contexts of communication, careful use of foreign words, international words, etc. Based on legal norm in force, textbooks in Albanian space are written in literary language, meaning: they respect standard norm of language at all language levels – phonetics, morphology, syntaxes, and semantics. As widely accepted, a textbook should develop multiple connections of notions within a certain subject and lead knowledge on related issues between notions of other close subjects. Proper usage of professional language is of great importance for learning of knowledge, development of thoughts and language education of students. But, not all textbooks are of good use for this mission. Even though, language of authors is rich, full of neologisms, in Albanian textbooks students notice many foreign words, which have entered together with new technology. Such words sometimes are written as in their original language and some of them are written in their Albanian pronunciation, sometimes translated into Albanian, and rarely written properly – Albanian pronunciation, accompanied with original in brackets. Meanwhile, nowadays, textbooks continue to be compiled not in line with the required criteria and without necessary professionalism. Textbooks are far from proper level of language aspect. In this framework, object of this work were textbooks of middle and elementary Albanian education level, where is also noted the most the presence of borrowed terminology.

Based on investigatory work carried out in this respect, we notice that textbooks are full of international foreign words, non-international foreign words and foreign words with equivalents in Albanian language.

Usage of foreign words in text books consists of the following problematic:

- In general, it is noted that foreign words of Latin origin, which earlier have been used rarely or only in special occasion, today they have become widely known and acceptable. This has happened with the words: *principle - parim, approval – miratim.*
- But, we also have usage of foreign words when there exists an equivalent in Albanian language, such as: *adoption, consolidation, conclusion.*

- In some cases, we use foreign words to explain meaning of an Albanian language word: *veteveçim* (isolation), *shkallë sipërore* (superlative), *anasjellas* (inversion), *e përbashket* (unified), *punë e fortë* (intensive).
- Some borrowings have been used in line with some rules of Albanian word creation rules: *tendencioz* (tendentious), *maksimalizim* (maximalize).
- Often, we come across to word used with their wrong meaning in the Albanian language: *ekspresion* (expression), *kompleks* (complex), *intimizohem* (intimidation), *artikular* (articulated).
- We even find words whose meaning is very difficult to be found: *abdikoj* (abdicate), *blatoj* (blatify), *mistifikim* (mystification), *deviance* (deviance), *conformist* (conformist), *autoria* (authorial).

There are difficulties not only in the case of use of foreign words, which we consider unknown for students, such as: *personification*, *elegy*, *metaphor*, *essay*, *equation*, *subject*, but even when we do not even expect it. Elementary level textbooks are overloaded with words that at first sight seem familiar and common, but most of them are not understood by students, because they never find their explanation or their content. We are talking about lexical units such as : *phenomenon*, *rapport*, *condition*, *circumstances*, *cause*, *consequence*, *moral*, *intellectual*, *direct*, *aspect*, *point of view*, *opinion*, etc. In this case, the result is clear: serious obstacles in understanding of the subject. Lack of understanding causes lack of interest and refusal. Likewise, learning of foreign words is carried out at a proper age and in an intensive organized way, because vocabulary enrichment must be one of the top priorities in our schools. In order to provide a successful teaching process, we should have maintained another completely opposite stance toward Albanian-origin lexical assets and foreign-origin lexicon. Even in this respect, there are a lot of problems in our textbooks. Exaggerated use of foreign words, without keeping in mind the criteria of age and capabilities of children creates a problem in learning process of a certain subject. Unfortunately, pupils of students often address other languages literature to read native literature. Students are willing to look up or trace words because they cannot find them in current vocabularies. Enrichment of students' vocabulary and speech experiences, in particular in field of abstract notions, it is an important tasks for textbooks writers. In the field of naming objects and concepts coming from world around use, we have a flow of irreplaceable terms or lack of efforts to replace some of these meanings in Albanian language, such has software, computer, desktop, folder, file, diskette, printer etc., whereas in the field of naming actions, features, qualities, local lexicon offers high scale replacements. Therefore, giving priority to the Albanian word would secure also a better learning of the subject. If foreign words have their equivalent in the Albanian language, we must use the respective words. If there is a lack of the notion in Albanian language, then they should be assimilated in compliance with Albanian language rules. An organized and systematic work is necessary for elaboration of terminology through different to eliminate a certain fund of foreign words and replace them with equivalents of the Albanian language, by immediately including them in textbooks and everywhere. Nevertheless, issues of use of foreign words and professional and terminological lexicon should be discussed with textbooks' compilation institutions. Linguistics policies of each state are based above all on organized and obligatory teaching of native language in all education cycles – pre-university and wider. We can say that most remarkable achievements of Albanian linguistics must be the scientific basis of complexity of knowledge that an Albanian pupil must learn from ABC up to State Matura, in compliance with age, well-studied pedagogical criteria and state standards. Meanwhile, today's public, social, family language environment, in most cases, does not have the proper impact on boosting of the attention to native language. As we know, they even exercise pressure in damage of Albanian

standard language and fruitful learning by pupil. Textbooks have many problems. They are full of terms and sometime they consist of non-qualitative translations. Textbooks should not be uncontrolled translations, but should be subject of a real language correction by language experts, because translated textbooks are a major source of borrowed terminology. Teachers mostly relate failure in learning of concepts with textbooks. Problematic of textbooks seem to focus on teachers' concerns about incompatibility of objectives with programs, big number of concepts, scientific mistakes, aggravated language, big quantity of information, etc. In most cases, publishing houses, in most cases copy foreign textbooks, but such thing does not only obstacle content of program, but also the language of the material. In particular, I think that textbooks authors should keep in mind enrichment of pupils vocabulary during their work. In conclusion, considering borrowing as a natural process for each contemporary literary language with a high development level, I think that foreign words should be assimilated based on certain rules, because this is the only way to turn foreign words into an enrichment source of each national language. Requirements based on credibility and objectivity of teaching program content lie their foundation on general human rights, meaning among other things cultivation of national identity, i.e. cultivation of language identity, affirmation, recognition and respect of national values – respect for native language. Our children have the right to get proper education in professional and language aspect. A new orientation of language policy about foreign terminology in the Albanian language must be connected also to close realization of European Union membership aspiration, where Albanian language would play its role, as a language belonging to level of EU language. One of most important incentives of development of standard Albanian language would be its terminology which together with common units (international) content (technical-scientific concepts) and personal (national) of expression and terms would bring Albanian language closer to other European languages.

Literature

1. Academy of Sciences of Albania (2002). Vocabulary of the today Albanian Language, Tirana.
2. Academy of Sciences of Albania. (1973). Orthography of Albanian language, Tirana,
3. Bullo J, (1999) Philological studies, *I-II*, Academy of Sciences of Albania and Institute of Language and Literature.
4. Çabej E. (1981) On Purity of Albania Language, “Our Language”, 1.
5. Jashari I. (2007) Vocabulary of borrowed words in Albanian language.
6. Rrokaj. Sh. (2007) Issues on Albanian language.
7. Thomai J., Lafe E., Pasho H., Duro A., Proko V. (2009) Situation and development of Albanian terminology –problems and duties : (Scientific Conference)
8. Xhuvani A. (1950) Purity of Albanian Language, “New Literary Man”, 31 VIII

Source of examples:

- Textbook of Albanian Language 7, Albas, 2007
- Textbook of Albanian Language 9, Albas, 2009
- Textbook of Literature IV, Albas, 2004
- Textbook of History 2, Albas, 2005
- Textbook of Geography 2, Ideart, 2004
- Textbook of Civic Education 9, Albas, 2009