

The International Words in the Balkan Linguistic Area

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Abstract: In our research, on the basis of Albanian words (of the Dictionary 1980) with the letters A and B in confrontation with above-mentioned languages a statistic analyses is carried out for the words of more or less affinity and in their differences on phonetic, phonologic, morphologic and word-formation levels.

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The international words identified in the languages of the Balkan Language Union (Albanian, Greek, Bulgarian, Rumanian, Serbo-Croatian) belong almost to the majority of Languages of all the world (according to the adopted criterion: they are common in six "great" languages: English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish)¹. Although these words are felt as such (similar by the external form and their meanings) in other languages as well as in the languages of the Balkan area, they undergo the particularities of the corresponding languages on phonetic, phonologic, morphologic and word-formation levels. It should be noted that, though they are languages of the same family, they make up four different groups: Greek and Albanian – separate languages, Slav languages and Rumanian as Slav-Romanic.

In some cases, similarities and unimportant differences in pronunciation could be noticed as Alb. (*automat*), Grk. (*aftómato*) (alternation *w/f* and the presence of the terminal *o*); in other languages it is the same as in Albanian: *automat* (Rum.), *avtomat* (Bul.), *automat* (Serbc.). As to the word-formation level, there may be affinity or alternations on morphemic structure as well: *automatik-e* (Alb.), *aftomatikós* (Gr.), *avtomatichan* (автоматичан) (Bul.), *automatičeski* (Serbc.). These words can be considered as half – international. Rarely, there are native equivalents for any international words, such as in Serbc. *nagomet* for *football*, *košarka* for *basketball*.

In our research, on the basis of Albanian words (of the Dictionary 1980)² with the letters A and B in confrontation with above-mentioned languages a statistic analyses is carried out for the words of more or less affinity and in their differences on phonetic, phonologic, morphologic and word-formation levels.

As to reviewing the international words in confrontation with Balkan languages it is important to consider the basic one can start from. One of the ways should be the material quoted out of the bilingual Dictionaries³, and as well as their confrontation with any of the languages recognized as international. In our case we have referred to the Russian language, because it can serve as a representative of a group of languages typologically to a certain degree remote to the Balkan Languages. So the presence of the international words in this language gives more possibility to minimize the degree of subjectivism in the choice of international words among the other lexical units which cannot be considered as such.

The confrontation of international words in Balkan Languages is carried out on the basis of those quoted out of The Dictionary of Albanian Language (1980). The latter, being compared with Russian equivalents⁴, are confronted and verified with other languages, firstly with the corresponding equivalents with Greek and then with Rumanian ones, being closer to Albanian and then continuing with other Slav languages.⁵ The confrontation aims at determining their typological characteristics based on a statistical analysis. The chosen criterion of their similarity is the similarity in their forms, both phonic and written one, and their content too, i.e. in the similar meanings.

Similarities existing within the groups are to be seen also in the frame of internal alternations, which do not affect at all the identity of international words in different languages (as the elements of the same isoglosses).

Their identification can be possible in such a case apart from the differentiations (alternations), being observed in certain phonemes, because as Akulenko states⁶ "perception of the word is realized as a whole and within this "wholeness" fade the minute differentiations, existing between two or more units being confronted such as *algebra* (Alb.), and *algebra* (αλγεβρα) (Gr.), *kimia* (Alb.), *kimia* (χημεία) (Gr.). Such a phenomenon includes also the cases when units have excessive final elements or lack final elements, or in case these final elements (excessive or lacking) are of word-

formation nature. So they can be identified as similar ones not only when the final elements prove to be excessive up to two phonemes such as in Alb. *asket* and in Greek *askitis* (ἀσκητής), in Alb. *autobiografik* and in Greek *aftobiografikós* (αυτοβιογραφικός), but also when final different elements are of word-formation nature such as in Alb. *automatik-e*, in Greek *avtomatikós* and in Bulg. *avtomatičan*.

Among these alternations of phonemes the most frequent are:

k/h: *kimia* / *himia*

gj/g: *gjeografia* / *geografia*

In order to be as analytical as possible, there are observed (by confrontation as was stated above) only the international words being quoted out of the letters A and B of the Dictionary of Albanian (1980) as well as on a group of international words identified in a study on them in Albanian⁷, for each of which the equivalents are found in all the Balkan Languages.

On the basis of such a confrontation the following groups of international words are identified and classified:

A. 1 Out of a group of international words made up of 560 units, 75 are identified in all the languages, being almost entirely similar in their written forms, depending on alphabet and chiefly in sound forms, including in general their final identical elements: *abazhur, aktiv, algejbra, akrobat, binom, aspekt, bar, boks, buldozer* (in Alb.).

A. 2 Closer to the first groups of international words there is another one which are simple or compound words mostly, adjectives derived from nouns. They have similarities in their basic constituent part and, the other ones are made up of different phonologic-morphologic elements: *automat / automato*, or different word-formation elements.

From the confrontations the following variations can be observed:

1. In one language there are final excessive phonemic-morphologic elements, while there can be other variations in other languages.

autograph / autografos

ballkon / balkóni (μπαλκόνι)

antilopa/ antilópi (αντιλοπη)

balon / balono

fizika / fiziki

academia / akademie

2. In different parts of the words a series of alternations occur, but they do not affect the identifications of the unit. The alternations are:

s/z

ll/1

u/v

d/ð etc.

So, out of 560 units more the half of them can be found to have more or less similarities with internal alternations or final excessive elements not affecting their identifications.

A. 3. Another group close to the two first ones constitutes a limited number of verbs and verbal nouns, in which the major part is made up of international elements and the word-formation part is mixed with native and foreign elements. These partial differentiation do not affect their identification, although anyhow their hybrid character can be noticed. As it was mentioned above, they can be named half-international words:

automat/izoj/ automat/izim: -izoj/ -izim (Alb.)

automat/izirati/ automat/iziranje: -izirati / -iziranje (Srbcr.)

B. Another major group (almost half of them) is made up of 250 international words which occur in various proportions in various languages of this linguistic area.

As far as this group of international words is concerned, the following cases may be noticed:

1. Generally, some of these unit are absent in one of the languages representing a separate group.

2. They can be absent in separate languages. Here, one can notice several special cases.

a) the unit may be absent in one of the languages (these are rare cases).

b) one foreign unit may occur parallel to the native one as a synonym:

b₁ foreign unit may be primary;

b₂ native unit may be secondary.

As to the case 1. based on the confrontation of this group in all languages in question, a small number of international words are met in Greek. For most of them the native equivalents exist. Whereas here many international words may be absent in the most of languages of their areas these unit are conceived as an international fund, as it is in Alb.: *autor, automobil, agjent, agronom, adresë, akt, aktor, aktiv-i, altar, aksion, albumine, alveolë, alternativë, antenë, apel, aparat, argument, artist*: in Grk.: δημιουργος, αβτοκινιτο, πρακτορας, γεογονος, διευθυνση, πραξη.

As to the case 2.a very small number of international words may be absent in any other language, but they can be seen as separate cases. So, for example, the word *ampulë* in Rum, cannot be found, and instead there is *fiola*. As it was mentioned above in Srbcr there are not two English words which are recognize as international: *football* and *basketball*: instead of them there are *nagomet* and *košarka*.

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