Latin Etymologies in Communication Terminology

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ABSTRACT

Ancient Rome was a model of organization and communication. The term "communication", and its meaning in particular, comes from Latin. Many Roman traditions regarding communicational practices are still valid today, adjusted, obviously, according to the needs of our society. Bureaucratic organization, especially in European civilisation, originates in the Roman world. Ancient Rome developed a service of organized communication, subordinating several communication networks. During the Roman imperial period, communication relied on two pillars: the Roman postal service and the imperial offices. This explains how the terminology related to communication sciences usually has a Latin etymology. Our study has selected the main notions of communication sciences with a Latin etymology.

Keywords: Rome; etymologies; traditions; inheritance; communication sciences

1. INTRODUCTION

Ancient Rome was the city which established a vast, extremely efficient and modern communication networks, therefore it is not by chance that many linguistic terms in the field of communication sciences are of Latin origin. Although ancient Rome did not enjoy our communication means, it managed to communicate with all its provinces on three continents, thus explaining once more the success of its imperialism in history. Communication in ancient Rome (Badea, 2013, pp. 54-64) actually relied on two pillars: 1. the Roman postal service, a real ministry of transports, employing military functionaries, a service disposing of a vast network of roads, built by the state (with the help of the soldiers); 2. the imperial offices, mainly developed by Hadrian, were real public relations offices, meant on make the connection between the Empire and its provinces, as well as its citizens. Our article has selected the most often used and the best known terms of Latin origin in the field of communication sciences, which, for a better demonstration, we will present by twos, the current term or expressions, followed by the Latin term that we will also describe. Many communication-related Latin terms define much more appropriately, in our opinion, the communicational process. The best example is *rumor,-oris,* s.m. = 1. rumour, 2. public opinion, other people's opinions, reputation and *rumusculus,-i*, s.m. = insignificant rumour (Strechie, 2009), and the definition of rumour found in DEX = 1. news, ungrounded information which was not verified, 2. rumour caused by voices, by the activity and movement of a crowd, murmur etc. (Guțu, 1993, p. 366). In the analysis of Kapferer (Kapferer, 2006), the expert in the phenomenology of rumours, the closest definition to this phenomenon is the one provided by the term *rumour* of Latin origin (also Dziwańska, 2013; Borowski, 2013).

2. ETYMOLOGIES

Act 'act' from *acta, -orum* n.n. = acts, decisions, laws, bulletin, minutes

Agent 'agent' and *agenţie* 'agency' from *ago, -ere, egi, actum*, vb.t. = to move, to drive, to carry, to lead, to live, to behave, to lie, to fulfil, to do, to bring, to perform, to play, to treat

Auditoriu 'audience' from *audio, -ire, -ivi, -itum* vb. = to hear, to listen, to find out, *auditio-onis*, s.f = rumour, listening, *auditor, -oris,* n.m. = audience, listener, disciple, and *auditorium, -ii* s.n. = lecture room, auditorium.

a comunica 'to communicate' from *communico, -are, avi, -atum,* vb.i. = to make common, to share something with somebody, to associate, to take responsibility for

calomnie 'calumny' from *calumnia, -ae* s.f. = calumny, unfair accusation, deceit, chicanery, intrigue

circuit 'circuit' from *circuitus, -us* n.m. = detour, way round, circuit, avoidance, beating about the bush *civil* from *civilis, -e* adj. = civil, related to citizenship, civic

civic 'civic' from *civicus, -a, -um* adj. = civic

comentariu 'comment' from *commentatio, -onis* n.f. = reflection, meditation, study

comunicare 'communication' from *communicatio, -onis* n.f = communication, sharing, and from the verb *communico, -are, avi, atum* = to make common, to share something with somebody, to associate, to take responsibility for

comprehensiune 'comprehension' from *comprehensio, -onis* n.f. = catching, comprehension, and *comprehendo, -ere, -di sum*, vb. = to catch, to comprise, to express, to grasp, to understand, to describe, to tell, to embrace

comutări 'commutations' from *commutatio, -onis, n.f.* = change

compromite 'to compromise' from *compromitto,* vb. = to pledge oneself by bail, to recognize someone's arbitration

computer 'computer' from *computatio, -onis,* n.f. = calculation

conativă 'conative' *(funcţia conativă a comunicării* 'conative function of communication') from *conor, -ari, -atus sum* vb. = to try, to strive, to try to do something great, and from *conatus, -us*, n.m. = attempt, effort, start

concesie 'concession' from *concessio, -onis*, n.f. = assignment, concession, permission

conferinţă 'conference' (*conferinţă de presă* 'press conference'*)* from *confero, conferre, contuli, collatum* vb. = to gather, to bring, to contribute, to face, to oppose, to clash, to compare, to carry, to transport, to apply, to use, to utilize

confesiune 'confession' from *confessio, -onis* n.f. = confession, recognition

consens 'consensus' from *consensus, -us* n.m. = agreement, understanding, conspiracy

consili 'to counsel' from *consilior, -ari, -atus sum* vb. = to take counsel with, to deliberate, to advise

contract 'contract' from *contractio, -onis*, n.f. = the act of contracting

contradicţie 'contradiction' from *contradictio, -onis*. n.f. = contradiction, combating

controversă 'controversy' from *controversia, -ae* n.f. = dispute, controversy, misunderstanding, trial

convenţie 'convention' from *conventio, -onis,* n.f. = meeting, convention, pact

convenienţă 'convenience' from *convenientia, -ae* n.f. = perfect agreement, harmony

convocare 'convocation' from *convoco, -are, -avi, -atum* vb. = to convene

corporaţie 'corporation' from *corpor, -oris* n.n. = body, person, totality, substance

cultura 'culture' – the etymology of the word cultură 'culture' is a Latin one and it means *1. care, cultivation;* at the same time culture is a means of communication, without culture human

society could not have developed and survived. Conflicts could not be settled, a life in common and a peaceful dialogue would be excluded.[5]

curriculum vitae (CV in its abbreviated form) = the course of life

denotativă 'denotative' from *denoto, -are, -avi, -atum* vb. = to mean, to distinguish, to indicate

devianţă 'deviation' from *devius, -a, -um* adj. = devious, roundabout, lost

discriminare 'discrimination' from *discrimen, -inis, n.n.* = demarcation line, interval, distance, distinction, difference etc.

disertaţie 'dissertation' from *disertus, -a, -um* adj = eloquent, clear, clarified, talented

discurs 'discourse' from *discursus, -us* n.m. = moving all around, spreading, and from *discurro*, vi = to run in all directions, to spread while hasting

efect 'effect' from *effectus, -us* n.m. = fulfilment, consequence, effect, result

elabora 'to elaborate' from *elabora, -are, -avi, -atum* vb. = to strive, to work with grim decision, to accomplish

electoral 'electoral' (*comunicare electorală* 'electoral communication') from *eligo* vb. = to elect

elocvent 'eloquent' from *eloquens, -tis*, adj. = who speaks in an attractive, eloquent manner. We might say that eloquence was a way of life for the Romans, since it was a mandatory discipline in school for those intending to embrace a public career. The Romans wrote treatises on eloquence, and these treatises are still valid toady in many respects.

emite 'to emit' from *emitto, -ere, -misi, -missum* vb. = to send, to release, to throw, to set free, to publish, to let go.

emisie 'emission' from *emissio, -onis*, n.f. = throw, flinging, release

enunţ 'statement, utterance' (*enunţ comunicaţional* 'utterance in communication') from *enuntio, -onis* s.f. = account, utterance, sentence

fatică 'phatic' (*funcţia fatică a comunicării* 'phatic function of communication') from *fateor, -eri, fassus sum* vb. = to confess, to show and from *fio, fieri, factus sum* vb. = to be done, to do, to happen, to become, to be appreciated.

globalizare 'globalization' from *globus, -i* n.m. = sphere, globe, mass of people, crowd. Rome as a superpower of European Antiquity applied globalization, a process which became visible especially through Romanization.

imagine 'image' from *imago, -inis*, n.f. = face, image, reproduction, copy, appearance, wax faces of ancestors

informaţie 'information' from *informatio, -onis* n.f. = idea, notion, plan, draft, and from *informo, -are, -avi, -atum,* vb. = to form, to imagine, to conceive, to represent, to describe. The Latin preposition was inherited in most Romance languages and more than that, it is still widely used today in communication language.[1]

imitaţie 'imitation' from *immitto, -ere, misi, missum* vb. = to transmit over, to throw, to introduce, to let loose, to set free, to send to

instituţională 'institutional' (*comunicare instituţională* 'institutional communication') from *instituo, -ere, -stitui, -stitutum*, vb. = to settle, to put into, to dispose, to arrange, to prepare, to do, to start, to undertake, to decide, to establish, to form, to instruct

interpretaţie 'interpretation' from *interpretatio, -onis*, n.f. = explanation, clarification

liminal 'liminal' (*mesaj liminal* 'liminal message') from *limen, -inis*, s.n. = threshold, entrance, building, barrier

locutor 'locutor' from *locutio, -onis*, n.f. = speech, expression

manifestare 'manifestation' from *manifesto, -are, -avi, -atum,* vb. = to make something obvious, to show openly

a manipula 'to manipulate' from *manipulus,-i*, s.m. = maniple, heap, pile (military sub-unit, very easily to guide, therefore extremely mobile)

masă 'mass' from *massa, -ae* n.f. = mass, heap, ball

media (*mass media*) from *medium, -ii*, n.n. = middle, centre, which belongs to everybody, public, means

mentalitate 'mentality' *(istoria mentalităţilor* 'history of mentalities') from *mens, -tis*, n.f. = brains, spirit, thought, opinion

mondializare 'mondialization' from *mundus, -i*, n.m. = world, universe, earth, sky

monitor, (Monitorul official 'Official Gazette'*) monitoriza* 'to monitor' from *monitor, -oris*= which reminds of something, counsellor, adviser.

mutual 'mutual' from *mutuus, -a, -um* adj. = mutual, reciprocal

noţiune 'notion' from *notio, -onis,* n.f. = knowledge, notion, idea, research, acknowledgement

opinie 'opinion' (*opinie public* 'public opinion') from *opinio, -onis*, n.f. = opinion, belief, thought, presupposition

orator 'orator' from *orator, -oris*, n.m. = orator, messenger.

persuasiune 'persuasion' from *persuasio, -onis,* n.f. = the action of persuading, of convincing, conviction, belief, opinion and from *persuadeo, -ere, -suasi, -suasum* vb. = to urge, to determine, to decide, to convince

proces 'process' (*proces comunicaţional* 'communicational process') from *processus, -us* n.m. = advance, fig. progress, success

publică 'public' (*comunicare publică, relaţii publice* 'public communication, public relations') from *publicus, -a, -um*, adj. = official, state-related, public, belonging to everybody, common, usual

publicitate 'publicity' from *publicitatio, -onis,* n.f. = auction, forfeiture for the benefit of the state.

receptor 'receiver' from *recipio, -ere, -cepi, -ceptum*, vb. = to draw back, to withdraw, to bring back, to take again, to acquire again, to come back, to receive, to admit, to permit, to guarantee, to promise

referent 'referent' from *refero, -erre, retuli, relatum*, vb. = to take back, to withdraw, to bring back, to bring an answer, to strengthen, to reply, to answer, to reproduce, to remind, to report, to refer, to register

relaţie 'relation' *(relaţii publice, relaţional* 'public relations, relational') from *relatio, -onis*, n.f. = the act of bringing, reporting, exposal, report, also *relator, -oris*, n.m. = referent,

sens 'meaning' from *sensus, -us,* n.m. = opinion, thought, meaning, sense, thinking, idea

social 'social' (*comunicare social* 'social communication') from *socialis, -e,* adj. = sociable, pertaining to the allies

societate 'society' from *societas, -atis,* n.f. = association, unification, alliance, union, society, company

status from *status, -us,* n.m. = position, status, situation, kind

stimul 'stimulus' from *stimulus, -i,* n.m. = stake, torture, thorn, irritation, urge

transmite 'to transmit' from *transmitto, -ere, -misi, -missum*, vb. = to send beyond, to transport, to move, to make pass, to leave, to cover (a distance)

verbal 'verbal' (*mesaj verbal, comunicare verbal* 'verbal message, verbal communication') from *verbum, -ii*, n.n. = word, term, formula.

vizual 'visual' (*comunicare vizuală* 'visual communication') from *visio, -nis* n.f = sight, landscape, representation, idea, vision.

3. CONCLUSION

These are a few Latin etymologies of the terms which are most often used in communication sciences. Our research does nothing but remind the Latin contribution to the vocabulary of communication sciences. The Latin terms can be found in Gheorghe Guţu (1993). Many terms in the field of communication sciences are also used in the administrative, military, political and legal language, demonstrating once again the importance of the Roman inheritance in the institutional sphere.

The main notions of communication (Vlăduţescu, 2009; Vlăduţescu, 2013) as a science were not only conceived by the Romans, but also successfully implemented by them.

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