

**CHANGES IN THE POLITICAL-ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES IN  
ALBANIAN ECONOMIC TERMINOLOGY**

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**Abstract**

This article is part of a broader study, the aim of which is to analyse the changes and novelties in the terminology and generally in the discourse of the economic field of today's Albanian language, because not only did the change of political system in years '90 have political characteristics, but it also had powerful impetus of socio-economic factors. The transition initiated in years '90 would have as a political slogan: “We want Albania like the entire Europe!”, but also other new collocations such as “market economy”, “free market”, and the famous “white cheque” etc, or other appellations of international organisations such as “International Monetary Fund” (IMF), “World Trade Organisation” (WTO) etc. Through the analysis of terminology and generally economic discourse, we can point out great changes that have occurred in economic terminology due to the change of systems. First of all, the decommissioning or the semantic change of many words, terms, collocations of the socialist period and their substitution with new terms. Secondly, the natural but also rushing outpouring of the terminology of market economy, of processes related to the deep economic transition that occurred in Albania during years '90. The massive socio-economic changes have had wide reflection in administrative texts and other publications of economic character, articles in newspapers and magazines or publications of businesses' advertisement etc.

**Keywords:** transition, globalisation, economic terminology, media, state administration

During previous studies on the Albanian language, the field of terminology holds a special place, particularly the terminology of linguistics in the Albanian language. In its early stages after the country's Liberation and beyond, Albanian linguistics had a more didactic character. Therefore, one cannot speak of a fully-fledged science at a scholarly level, let alone discuss the creation of a complete and recognized scientific terminology. Regarding the history of terminology in the Albanian language, mainly linguistic terminology, it can be said that its development *"has gone through several phases, conditioned by external factors, mainly historical, socio-economic, cultural, etc., as well as internal*

*linguistic factors*<sup>111</sup>." However, the work of our researchers is based on the foundations laid down since the time of the Renaissance by figures such as Sami Frashëri (1886), Kostandin Kristoforidhi (1904), A. Xanoni (1909), and the esteemed A. Xhuvani. Among others, the work of the "Albanian Literary Commission" in Shkodra (1916-1918) deserves special attention. It is one of the first endeavors that, in an organized and non-spontaneous manner, discussed and approved a series of terms in the legal and administrative fields, considering the foundations of the Albanian language. Linguist Tomor Osmani has highlighted in his linguistic analyses that, "*Several initiatives and individual authors have been taken for the creation of linguistic terminology, each having its place, but the first and foremost place in the history of this terminology should be occupied by the 'Albanian Literary Commission' in Shkodra*"<sup>112</sup>."

Subsequently, the foundations of linguistic terminology were laid through grammar publications. With the publication of the "*Dictionary of Linguistic Terms*" in 1975, Albanian linguistics demonstrated that it was in a phase of consolidation and clearly showed the unity and standardization of linguistic terminology.<sup>113</sup> Changes in the country, in social strata, economic spaces, and culture would also bring changes to the Albanian language, which would respond with its own fields of study.

Therefore, all the changes in the majority of new notions and concepts undoubtedly brought about the demand for a terminology that would parallel them with corresponding denominations. However, this does not mean that this dictionary would encompass everything because society is evolving, and language, on one hand, as well as terms and words, would be subject to continuous changes. Many dictionaries in other languages have highlighted the achievements of linguistics. This is precisely related to the fact that in the past four decades, a large number of new terms have been circulating in various fields of linguistics, such as lexicology, word formation, phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, stylistics, semantics, general linguistics, terminology, etc. Updating and consolidating Albanian linguistic terminology facilitates scientific communication within Albania and with the external scientific world, greatly assists the Albanian school and standard Albanian. Albanian is undergoing a rapid development, and terminological lexicon is increasingly becoming an active part of its dictionary. *This process is marked as secondary, as intellectualization of language, as the introduction of new contemporary terms, and as its democratization, as the process of adopting and mastering by an increasing number of Albanian speakers.*<sup>114</sup>

Respectively, this article is part of a broader study that aims to analyze the transformations and innovations in the terminology and overall discourse of the economic field in contemporary Albanian. This is in response to the system changes that occurred in the 1990s, which had not only a political character but also strong influences from socio-economic factors. The transition that began in the 1990s had the political slogan "*We want Albania like all of Europe,*" as well as other new catchphrases such as "*Market Economy,*" "*Free Market,*" and the famous "*White Check,*" etc., or names of international organizations like the *International Monetary Fund (IMF)*, the *World Trade Organization (WTO)*, etc. Economy is a very important part of human society and well-being, and therefore, in the Albanian language, just like in all languages around the world, the economic lexicon has naturally developed as part of the everyday lexicon and expressions. *How much does this or that product cost, measure or weigh, sell and buy, exchange or trade, borrow or lend, etc.* Even in the earliest times of history, people had the need for exchanging different products, for selling and buying, for exchanging or trading goods even in the absence of monetary value. For example, residents of villages near lakes or the sea, where there were fishermen or fishing centers, would exchange baskets of various fruits (especially quince, apple, fig, or grape) for fish, in approximately equal amounts. Likewise, there are early terms or expressions in Albanian for measuring weight or land, such as "*balancë*" (and its related forms: *bollanxhë, bilanxhë*), "*kandar*" (and its regional forms: *konar, kotar*), "*okë,*" "*kile*" (or *qile/qillo*),

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<sup>111</sup> Sh. Rrokaj – V. Bello, *Për hartimin e një fjalori të termave të gjuhën shqipe*, "Terminologjia në shkencat e ligjëritimit, Elbasan, 2014, f. 11.

<sup>112</sup> T. Osmani, Komësia Letrare, Shqipe, në Shkodër, Shkodër 2009, f. 168-169.

<sup>113</sup> Akademia e shkencave të Shqipërisë, Grup autorësh, Tiranë, 1975.

<sup>114</sup> V. Memisha, *Terminologjia e gjuhësisë dhe fjalori*, "Terminologjia në shkencat e ligjëritimit, Elbasan, 2014, f. 35-37.

"kuintal" (and its regional forms: *kintal*), as well as verbs like "shes" (*sell*), "blej" (*buy*), "ndërroj" (*exchange*) and expressions like "marr hua" (*borrow*), "jap hua" (*lend*), "marr borxh" (*take a loan*), "kthej borxhin" (*repay the loan*), "laj borxhin" (*clear the debt*), and the borrower "borxhli." The list can continue with the initial terminological names of the market economy, such as "dugajë" (*shop*), "dugajxhi" (*shopkeeper*), "teqe e bagëtive" (*designated area for livestock trading*), "pazar," "panair" (also in the form "pangjyr"), etc.

Through the analysis of terminology and overall economic discourse, we can highlight the significant transformations that have occurred in economic terminology because of system changes. *Firstly*, there has been a departure from the use or semantic shift of many words, terms, and phrases from the socialist period, replaced by new terms and ways of expression. *Secondly*, there has been a natural but also excessive influx of market economy terminology, related to the deep economic transition that occurred in Albania since the 1990s. The major political and socio-economic transformations in Albania have undoubtedly found their reflection in administrative texts, contemporary political and social discourse, economic books and publications, academic or university texts, as well as articles in newspapers and magazines, and especially in public speeches and business advertisements. However, until recently, there was a complete lack (or a scarcity) of analyses on the state of economic terminology in the Albanian language, where a large quantity of words, phrases, and expressions present significant structural problems that require solutions if subjected to comprehensive and systematic scrutiny.

One of the most important conclusions raised by researchers on this subject is that the Albanian language does not lack economic terms to the extent claimed, but the problem of economic terminology should be viewed from a dual perspective: "On one hand, as emphasized by the researcher Isa Mulaj, there is a limited use of known terms in Albanian, and on the other hand, the intentional or unintentional introduction of barbarisms by researchers and economists." This is also related to other issues arising from the state of economic terminology and contemporary discourse in the field of economics. As previously recognized by others, we believe that preserving or increasing the use of terms with clear meanings in Albanian, as opposed to borrowing equivalent terms from foreign languages that are often incomprehensible to the majority of people, is important. Not only "purists," but also a wide range of people initially reacted when words like "numëroj" (*count*) or "llogaris" (*calculate*) were replaced by "kalkuloj" (*calculate*) or when the word "makinë llogaritëse" (*calculating machine*) was replaced by "kalkulatrice" (*calculator*), and numerous other words and terms. Some words such as "vlerë" (*value*), "send me vlerë" (*valuable item*), "mjete themelore" (*basic tools*), "mjete bazë" (*fundamental means*), or "pasuri e çmueshme" The problem is that the term *asset*<sup>115</sup> lack equivalents in both general dictionaries of the Albanian language and terminological dictionaries. Moreover, the era has brought the necessary measure of Albanianization of new terms, especially those influenced by globalization and the advancement of economic science. With the exception of a few glossaries, whether they are in pure Albanian or from other languages translated into Albanian, it is difficult to find a study or publication that thoroughly addresses these problems and their current state.

Meanwhile, it seems crucial to examine as comprehensively as possible the terminology and discourse of the field of economics in the Albanian language during the already forty-year period (during and after the transformations of the 1990s), when the transition occurred from a monist political system and socialist economy to a pluralistic political system and market economy. Simultaneously, it is necessary to acknowledge the significant influence of globalization, the global economy, and globalizing processes. As in many other languages, the greatest influence has come from the English language, coinciding with the development of capitalism, economics as a distinct social science, and the widespread influence of English as the primary second language worldwide and as the gold standard for communication in the European Union.

The transformation of systems in the 1990s had not only a political character but also strong impetuses from socio-economic factors. Through the analysis of terminology and overall economic discourse, we can highlight the significant changes that have occurred in economic terminology as a result of the system transition.

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<sup>115</sup> Fjalën *asset*, nuk e ka as Fjalori ekonomiko-financiar deri më tani më i njohur në gjuhën shqipe i autorit Pano (2002), dhe i termave të përgjithshëm si ai i Gorani-t (2006) dhe autorëve tjerë.

Firstly, there was a departure from the use or semantic shift of many words, terms, and phrases from the socialist period, replaced by new terms and ways of expression. The period of socialism or centralized and unidirectional state in Albania had influenced the preservation of a certain "purity" of economic terminology in the Albanian language. Naturally, the terms and expressions in the field of economics were associated with the controlled and planned economic typology, hence they were more protected against barbarisms. This was also influenced by the political and economic isolation from the rest of the world. The principle of self-reliance was promoted with the slogan "support in one's own forces," therefore the discourse and terminology of economics had that kind of "purity" (while also being closed off to terms related to "capitalist" economics). Dominant were terms like "political economy of capitalism," "political economy of socialism," "capital," "capitalist exploitation," "capitalist economic crises," and so on. In the same way, the promotion in the system of the moral stimuli or work on the basis of collective norm etc., which, in fact, were pointer to a contrary perception with that of economy and economization as a pillar of development of a society.

Secondly, there was a natural but also vigorous influx of market economy terminology, related to the deep economic transition that took place in Albania starting from the 1990s. Let us bring an illustrative example. While in 1945, the most commonly used term was "agrarian reform," which was carried out within the framework of nationalizing private enterprises and creating state-owned enterprises such as *Social Food Trade Enterprise (NTUS)*, *State Enterprise for Industrial Artifacts (NTSHAI)*, *State Enterprise for Vehicle and Truck Repair (NSHRAK)*, and so on, after the 1990s, all those terms completely fell out of use, and instead, private ownership of land was restored, as well as the extensive process of privatizing enterprises, returning the ownership to the former owners, and also adding a new economic category, private work, individual or group ownership, which would be included in the new term "legal entity." The significant socio-economic transformations naturally found wide reflection in administrative texts and other publications with an economic character (university textbooks, monographs, scientific papers, and journals), economic terminology dictionaries, government publications (laws, documents, official brochures and online pages, reports and statistics from central and local ministries), as well as articles in newspapers, magazines, or business advertising publications, etc. The comprehensive examination of economic terminology and discourse highlights several important issues of scientific and linguistic pragmatics. First and foremost, the influence of English terminology penetration should be studied, as English is also the language of communication in the European Union. Words like "afarizëm," "afarist," "afariste," "biznes" (English: *business*) - economic or commercial work or activity - have entered and are being widely used.

A problem in itself, not only terminological but also in terms of the proper application of spelling rules and Albanian language culture, is the use of abbreviations from various foreign and international organizations. For some organizations, both the full name and the abbreviation are in Albanian, such as the *International Monetary Fund (FMN)*, *the World Bank (BB)*, and *the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (BERZh)*. However, many of them, although they have an abbreviation in Albanian, are predominantly used in foreign languages. For example, *the United Nations Development Programme (PNUD)* is more commonly used in foreign languages as *UNDP*. At the same time, the abbreviation *AER* for *the European Agency for Reconstruction* is used in Albanian, but the official abbreviation in English is *EAR - European Agency for Reconstruction*.

As presented above, the Albanian language currently has dictionaries of terms of different types and categories, which are distinguished not only by the content they convey but also by the technique of presenting the terminological material. *What should be considered and emphasized is that every terminological dictionary aims to establish the terminology of linguistic science, serving its standardization.*<sup>116</sup> If it is compiled scientifically and professionally, including the process of Albanization of non-international foreign terms, it contributes to the purification of the Albanian lexicon from unnecessary borrowings and at the same time solidifies the linguistic norm in terminology.

Taking into consideration all the excellent work of our researchers so far, it must be said that especially after the 90s, Albanian society faced new fields of knowledge that entered our lives, for which the Albanian language had to confront, especially in terms of terminology and its selection. The relationship

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<sup>116</sup> Sh.Rrokaj, *Çështje të gjuhës shqipe*, Tiranë, 2007.

of Albanian with foreign languages, the introduction of words in everyday speech and in spoken and written media, has created a mixed terminology of foreign words. Terminology in the media has become a corpus that is more easily found in the resources of foreign languages, such as English or Italian, rather than in the Albanian language. Furthermore, the frequent use of foreign words, non-Albanian syntactic constructions, and even irregular morphological forms are observed in almost all newspapers. Therefore, we are dealing with the use of a global language, with an all-encompassing lexicon and mixed grammatical structures, bypassing the principles of the Albanian language and adapting in some way to the global era in which we live. *The "media bombardment" has created the effect that the linguistic scale is tilted towards foreign words and towards "incorrect modeling" mainly due to improper imitation of structural impositions from foreign languages, which do not conform to the nature and roots of the Albanian language.*<sup>117</sup>

From a linguistic perspective, globalization today is seen as a phenomenon that is leading language towards an overwhelming influence of English, but not only of English, but also of other languages such as Italian or any other language. The impact of globalization on Albanian cannot be narrowly seen as the influence of English on Albanian expressed through direct borrowings, loanwords, etc.

Globalization and integration processes have also influenced discourse, reflecting all these economic, political, and cultural processes that Albanian society is going through. Therefore, the development of technology has changed the way we communicate with the world. Being in constant contact with written and spoken media, we are faced with a situation where we see our linguistic behavior, relationships, and the dynamics of the development of this behavior and the problems that accompany it reflected. A qualified economist is always recognized from the culture of professional speaking. Not only a competent possession of the literary language, but also a wide and deep knowledge in the terminology. René Descartes, a prominent French scientist and philosopher rightly said: "Clarify the meaning of words and you will remove the half of light of its illusions". As a result, the assimilation and the understanding of the terminology shall be followed by the embezzlement of special professional abilities for the future economist. In conclusion, it is said that in the world of media, the publication of terminological and synonymous dictionaries is necessary, joining the opinion of Prof. Sh. Rrokaj "... where the Albanian word is given instead of the foreign word. School plays an important role, shaping linguistic awareness, but also a language policy for the use and care of language."<sup>118</sup> The fight and the effort of a coordinated work by all forces for correctness towards international terms through policy orientation, linguistic planning towards the Albanian language, towards Albanian terminology, and the most rigorous respect for grammatical norms and the roots of the Albanian language would be one of the key points, along with the role of the school, to increase the appreciation of the relationship between Albanian and foreign words, as a relationship that should also be supported by the media. But it is also our duty, as researchers, linguists primarily, and all official, state, and academic institutions.

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<sup>117</sup> Gj. Shkurtaj, *Kundrime gjuhësore*, Tiranë, 2006, f. 38.

<sup>118</sup> Sh. Rrokaj, *Çështje të gjuhës shqipe*, Tiranë, 2007, f. 128.

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