PECULIARITIES OF BRANDING TERMINOLOGY

Georgeta CIOBANU
Politehnica University of Timişoara

Abstract: The present paper approaches a few issues related to peculiarities of Romanian branding terminology. The first section includes an outline of the representative corpus of terms established to point out the peculiarities of branding terminology. From among the peculiarities, attention is focused on term formation, assignment term-concept with special emphasis on Romanian equivalents and adaptation of Anglicisms, and types of synonyms.

Key words: branding terminology, term formation, terminological Anglicisms, treatment of synonyms and variants.

1. Introduction

Branding, one of the most dynamic fields nowadays, boasts of having a terminology of its own. Yet, research of branding terminology has not developed as much as the branding practice, as there are still relatively few comprehensive terminographic products in the field (Ciobanu, 2009).

Due to the novelty of the field, Romanian branding terminology is still in the making; quite often the English terms, used internationally, are taken over as such into Romanian, and are highly favoured by many specialists in branding. As new branding concepts are born most of the time, there is a specific need of creating proper, precise, accurate Romanian equivalents as a necessary condition to develop the branding field. This terminology facilitates unambiguous communication, as well as communication mediation among interlocutors using English and Romanian in the branding professional settings.

Due to the absence of a proper Romanian terminographic product, work on our book "Branding Terms in English and Romanian", published as "Termeni de branding în limbile engleză şi română" (Ciobanu coord., 2009), gave the possibility to outline peculiarities of the branding terminology in English and Romanian.

Our analysis of peculiarities is based on a terminographic product that follows the basic principles of terminology / terminography (Pavel, Nolet, 2001:33-58) – a systematic approach based on a rich corpus, thorough analysis of terms, thorough knowledge of the field, a product tailored to include useful information for the main users envisaged (respectively, translators, interpreters, specialists in public relations), close collaboration with specialists in branding. The corpus of terms under analysis is based on our book, as well as other examples from the consulted documentation.

2. Term selection

As genuine term selection is based on documents (Cabré, 1998:195), hard copy and online sources were examined, namely, books, manuals, journals, newspapers, magazines, press releases, Internet sites, as well as dictionaries, glossaries, data bases.

The great number of brand-related resources published in English are by far more numerous than resources published in Romanian, some of these being translations by specialists in the field. All these written and online materials were used for term extraction, including choice of preferred terms, identification of variants and synonyms, misused forms, usage preferences depending on user type and communication situation.

Besides a few translations of books dedicated to branding exclusively, some Romanian books on marketing, business, advertising, publicity and public relations include sections dealing with branding.

The appropriate selection of terms was based on the systematic approach, respectively, the systematic elaboration of a conceptual system resulting in:

- a clear understanding of the assignment concept-term;
- a clear selection of synonyms;
- the possibility of checking equivalence;
- the possibility of understanding the exact meaning of terms;
- the possibility of explaining terms that usually create confusion.

Initially, the selection involved basic concepts referring to the outcomes, objectives, activities and instruments related to the practice of branding. The major categories grouping the frequently used terms were named: brand elements, brand management and brand promotion.

The provisional initial system was enlarged and more categories were added, resulting in the following:

a) Generalities
b) Types
c) Strategic brand management
d) Implementation.

Systematic elaboration brought about improved granularity with further subdivisions:

a) Generalities – component elements, attributes, human resources
e) Implementation - PR activities, marketing communication.

3. Main peculiarities of branding terms

The basic categories of the field with the corresponding key concepts provided a representative collection of terms necessary to outline peculiarities of branding terms; from among these we refer to:

- term formation and ways of rendering Romanian equivalents;
- ways of adopting and adapting the terminological Anglicisms in Romanian;
- treatment of synonyms;
- peculiarities occurring in variants.

Term formation (Sager,1997: 25-42) and ways of rendering Romanian equivalents.

If we examine the terminological units of our corpus from the formal point of view we find:

- a few simple terms consisting of one word e.g.('En'= English; 'Ron'= Romanian)

En *brand, branding, theme, jingle*
Ron *branding, rebranding, naming*

- most of the terms are complex terms, syntagms, mainly two-member units e.g.

En *brand language, brand coach, brand vision, brand architecture*
Ron *brand turistic, imaginea brandului, mesajul brandului, brand local, repoziționarea brandului*

In a brand new field like branding one would expect the presence of abbreviations and acronyms, a common feature for many recent subject fields (Ciobanu, 2001, 2003, 2006). This is not exactly the case with branding. The only cases identified were Ron *CVB*, standing for 'comunitate virtuală de brand', the equivalent of En *VBC,* 'virtual brand community', and Ron *3D brand*, an example of alphanumeric term, consisting of words and figures.

As expected, morphologically speaking, most of the terms are nouns, except for few verbs e.g.

En (to) *brand,* (to) *build a brand*, (to) *maintain a brand*, (to) *launch a brand*
Ron (a) *branda*, (a) *brăndui.*

Conceptually, these terms are assigned to objects (in the terminological sense) and entities for most cases e.g.

En *logo, brand language, brand tribe, brand community, glocal branding*
Ron *comunitate de brand, brand global.*

Numerically, processes and properties follow e.g.

En *rebranding, repositioning, brand dilution, "no-brand" branding, brand expansion, brand ranking*
Ron *maparea brandului, evaluarea brandului, poziționare de brand.*
En *aggressive branding, green branding, intensive branding;*
Ron *branding emoțional, branding național, marcă subsidiară.*

The presence of the above classes is linked to the way terms are formed. From among the most specific methods of term formation, we mention the presence of compounding (syntagmatic compounding), borrowing, terminologization.

In the case of Romanian syntagmatic compounds in special languages, we have to point to the fact that structures following the pattern 'noun + preposition + noun / verb' occur frequently in many special subject fields.

For branding, the structure 'noun + de (preposition) + noun' proves to be highly favoured e.g.

> Ron *nume de brand, brand de produs, brand de servicii, arhitectură de brand, management de brand.*

The issue of ways of rendering Romanian equivalents is linked to the general trend of present-day terminography to create prescriptive products. Therefore, special effort was focused on examining records of existing equivalents and recommending the preferred term. The subject field specialist had a strong say in taking decisions for equivalents. For instance, to avoid the general confusion created by the English terms *publicity* and *advertising,* both rendered in Romanian very often mistakenly as *publicitate,* one specialist suggested the Romanian term *publicizare* as a possible equivalent for the English *publicity.* Also, following the specialist's advice, Ron *fidelitate față de brand* replaced Ron *loialitate față de brand* as an equivalent for the English term *brand loyalty.*

Equivalents formed by paraphrase e.g. Ron *creare de nume* originating in En *naming*, or En *brand mark* – Ron *semn de brand*, are isolated cases.

As far as borrowing is concerned, English was the donor language for many Romanian branding terms.

Considering the borrowing of Anglicisms in our language (Ciobanu,1997), we can say a few branding terms have been adopted as such, but are not yet adapted, at least formally e.g. Ron *branding, jingle, sampling, branding on-line, wordmark*. Their spelling and pronunciation "copy" the English spelling and pronunciation. Even so, attempts to adapt these terms occur. For instance, Romanian contexts for the term *branding* reveal the addition of the Romanian definite article, the attempt to integrate it in the class of Romanian neuter nouns. A similar case is Ron *wordmark-ului, un wordmark.*

Like with general language, Anglicisms entering various subject fields follow the general tendency of adapting to the Romanian language system. Still, for the moment, we do not consider the number of our corpus Anglicisms sufficient enough to prove the above mentioned tendency.

Further on, the presence of synonyms provided interesting information as well. Considering that perfect synonymy is a very rare situation in terminology, quasi-synonyms and pseudo-synonyms require special attention.
From among the quasi-synonyms we can mention:

> En *branding* – En *brand marketing*
> En *brand* – En *trademark*
> En *arbitrary brand name* –En *fictitious name*
> Ro *logotip* – Ro *siglă*

Ro *logotip* –Ro *logo*

Misusage of these quasi-synonyms creates confusion and requires very precise knowledge of each form.

Still, genuine synonyms do occur in our inventory as well e.g. Ron *nume de brand* – Ron *nume de marcă.*

Whenever possible, we were keen on identifying synonyms used in various registers, as such information is precious for language mediators e.g.

Ron *marcare* – Ro *brănduire* / Note de utilizare : registrul informal/
Ron (a) *branda* – Ron (a) *brăndui* / Note de utilizare : registrul informal/
Ron (a) *face brand* / Note de utilizare: registrul informal /

Also, any preference for one synonym or another in oral or written communication was highlighted e.g.

Ron *brănduire* – mainly oral communication
En *descriptive name* – preferred in oral communication

All in all, there was a scarcity of variants. The only variants occurring in our corpus were spelling variants e.g.

En *brand – name* / *brand name*
Ron *numele brandului* / *numele brand-ului*

4. Conclusions

Exploring the various peculiarities of Romanian branding terminology, one can notice terminological changes are as dynamic as the field of branding itself. This phenomenon is reflected clearly in the usage of terms, in the number of variants recorded for an increasing number of terminological units.

Even if Romanian documentation in the field lacks tradition, there is an effort to find Romanian unambiguous equivalents for many of the branding terms borrowed from English.

Peculiarities present in Romanian branding terminology are quite similar to tendencies occurring in other brand new fields, such as e-commerce, Internet, economy.

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