
1 Introduction

The Research Center for Scientific Terms and Neologisms (RCSTN) of the Academy of Athens (AoA) has been issuing the *Bulletin of Scientific Terminology and Neologisms* every three years since 1986. The book under review incorporates volumes 9 and 10 of the Bulletin (henceforth BSTN). It was published in Athens in 2009.

This review is structured as follows. First, I give an objective summary of the parts of the book. I then present each part of the book in more detail, commenting on issues that I believe would benefit from being viewed from a different perspective.

2 Summary

BSTN is organized in four parts, including a Preface and an Introduction. The Preface consists of an address to the readership and acknowledgments. The Introduction includes brief information about the mission and research activity of RCSTN, whose main concern is to record and classify Modern Greek (MG) neologisms and translate foreign terminology into MG. Furthermore in the Introduction, there is a brief presentation of the research methodology adopted in the treatment of the terminology published in the Bulletin and of the organization principles applied in each part of BSTN.

Part I, entitled “Neologisms”, is organized in two sections. Section 1 contains 512 neologisms not registered in general dictionaries. Section 2 includes translation proposals for 80 non-transliterated and 26 transliterated terms of general vocabulary which are foreign loans, for 130 non-transliterated and 6 transliterated terms of Information Technology (IT) special vocabulary, and for 80 non-transliterated and 2 transliterated terms of special vocabulary in Economics and Finance.

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1 The English equivalents of AoA’s nomenclature were taken from the official site of AoA on www.academyofathens.gr.
Part II, entitled “Scientific Terminology”, includes a bilingual (English to MG) glossary of Energy Technology vocabulary, incorporating 361 English terms along with their MG equivalents and definitions. Furthermore, there is a MG index of 221 entry-terms (main entries) with their derivative terms (secondary terms) cross-referencing to the corresponding numbered term in the bilingual glossary.

Part III, entitled “Linguistic observations”, contains a list of 19 common language use mistakes in MG with suggestions about correct use. Mistakes are organized according to the language level concerned (i.e. “inflection”, “morphology-syntax”, “syntax” and “vocabulary”). At the end of Part III, there is a section, entitled “Sources”, which contains abbreviatory conventions, and references to lexicographic and terminological sources, used for collecting and documenting the terminology, and to grammar books consulted.

Part IV, the final part of the book, entitled “Studies”, includes three research papers on different issues of Greek vocabulary. The first paper, by A. Anastasiadi-Symeonidi, H. Alexiadou and G. Nikolaou (of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki), is a presentation of a data base which incorporates neologisms of MG collected during the decade from 1997 to 2007. The second paper, by G. Katsouda and P. Kritikou (of AoA), is about the study of the so-called graphic blends in MG. The third and final paper, by A. Christofidou (of AoA), is about the item δικτιο- (‘net’) as a better equivalent to English cyber-, e- and web for the translation of the relevant English terminology into MG.

3 Discussion

3.1 “Neologisms”

3.1.1 “Section 1”

The first section of this part of BSTN is a typical example of an evidential new-words glossary (Algeo 1990: 211). Its purpose is to document non-registered neologisms with the use of citations and is mostly addressed to scholars or professionals interested in vocabulary issues. In addition to quoting the source(s) of the new item from the press, each record also includes a frequency indicator based on the number of hits each neologism (in different grammatical forms) returns if searched on the net (“googled”). The main criteria for including and registering a
neologism in BSTN were: (a) to locate the item in daily or weekly press; (b) to ensure that the new item has been adopted by the community and sufficiently established in the general vocabulary; (c) to measure its frequency of use by searching it on the net, setting the limit for inclusion to >50 hits; and (d) to check that the item is not registered in general dictionaries of MG.

These criteria are generally correct, but I feel that they are not always sufficient for the proper selection and registering of neologisms. First, the “press criterion”, I think, restricts the range of text types and genres to a great extent as it excludes, for example, oral texts (i.e. radio, television) and hybrid texts like the internet (cf. Anastasiadi-Symeonidi et al. 2009: 424). Expectedly, this excludes real (and less formal) neologisms (in the sense of Anastasiadi-Symeonidi 1986: 105) that are coined thanks to the creativity of average speakers and, instead, includes several terms (mostly calques) that are not part of general vocabulary. Moreover, the appearance of an item in just one particular paper (in one or more issues) does not always mean that it has become part of the norm (see e.g. Schmid 2008: 1). For example, technical terms (cf. internationalisms) like makroθρεπτικός (‘macronutritional’) and mastoplastiki (‘mastoplasty’) and the pseudocompound evroexαγορές (‘euroexports’) were found in a single issue of one newspaper and barely (or do not) reach the limit of 50 hits on Google. In addition to this, we find the (compound) term ikovoiθóσ (‘housemaid’) in the place of the well established general (loose compound) term ikiaki voiθóσ. The term is documented on the basis of one case in a specialized classified ad paper with just a total of 8(!) hits on Google.

Second, I cannot clearly see how the “adoption” criterion was applied in the selection of the items registered in BSTN. The large majority of these items are not neologisms of the general vocabulary but instead technical terms (calques) from different disciplines and, in my view, should not have been included in the macrostructure. Examples include stereodjáτακσi (‘conformation’, re biology), oksínisi (‘acidification’, re chemistry), noimatistís (‘signer’, re linguistics), metaλak-sijénesi (‘mutagenesis’, re biology), tromvooemvolí (‘thromboembolism’, re medicine), and etisiopió (‘annualize’, re economics), among others.

Third, the quantitative criterion based on Google-hits, I would say, is weaker than it should be. The net search strategies used and the results obtained appear rather simplistic, as they do not seem to have exhausted all available heuristic

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3 Six Greek newspapers, of high-circulation and prestige, were used for this purpose from April 2007 to April 2008.

4 See Ralli 2005: 169-170 among others.

5 In this case, the particular term, I think, has been coined purposely to save words in the classified ad. Interestingly, this term gives today more than 66.000 hits [20 June 2011] but, almost exclusively, in classified ad texts or sites of job-related businesses. I doubt that this term has been established in everyday speech.
options offered by such a powerful search engine. So, I cannot see any differentiation among texts where each keyword was found. For example, if we search the term *stereoðjátaksi* [access date 20 June 2011] we get 768 hits, mostly from technical texts. So, is this a valid criterion for neologisms? Therefore, it is doubtful whether this frequency indicator is a safe criterion in its own right and it follows that the limit of ‘>50’ hits is indeed low in order to quantitatively support the establishment of a neologism in the general vocabulary. Another problem lies with the keyword used in searches and the results reported thereof. I do not see why results should be given for each grammatical form and not for all possible forms of the term (cf. citation form). For instance, the term *ixθiaotpótema* (‘fish stock’) is reported with a total of 42 hits in the singular and 291 hits in the plural form; there is no clear importance in making this distinction as opposed to giving a cumulative sum.

Fourth, the “absence” of the term from general dictionaries is a safe criterion and is used in registering neologisms (see, e.g., Ayto 2000: 47, Anastasiadi et al. 2009: 421-422). I think all three medium-size monolingual synchronic dictionaries used in this research, as reported in BSTN, were appropriate for the application of this criterion as they are, generally, compatible with each other in both macrostructural and microstructural terms.

Concluding, I think that the collection of terms reported in this section of BSTN forms an interesting body of words that, arguably, still remain in specialized areas of the MG lexis. In order to support the claim that particular terms have passed on to the general area of the stock, I suggest that we need to apply more stringent quantitative criteria and to mine neological lexical units from more representative text corpora, ones that consist of diverse genres, types and levels of texts.

3.1.2 “Section 2”

The first part of this section is dedicated to foreign terms imported into MG in their original phonetic form, either transliterated or not. Regarding the non-transliterated items, several suggestions made in this section are already accepted by the community and speakers use the equivalent MG calques reported in BSTN (e.g. *ylösa (tu) sómatos* ‘body language’, *katejismós iðeón* ‘brainstorming’, *meléti periptosis* ‘case study’, *arθoyráfos* ‘columnist’, *prosekklíménos* ‘guest’, *ðjamesolavitís* ‘ombudsman’). All transliterated terms reported in this section, however, show some degree of incorporation in the MG general vocabulary given that their phonetic and orthographic forms have been adapted to MG grammar. So, all suggestions to drop the English-reminiscent item with the equivalent MG calque, recorded in this section, are rather made in vain (see, e.g., Anastasiadi-Symeonidi 1986: 86). The difficulty with this attempt, apart from its prescriptive nature, is that the suggested equivalent in many cases cannot reflect polysemic aspects of the meaning of the (direct) borrowed term into MG (see, e.g., Anastasiadi-Symeonidi
2002 and references therein). For instance, the borrowed term portfolio ‘portfolio’ cannot be translated as fákelos ‘file’ as it is too general and cannot reflect the specific meaning of the borrowed English word, which refers to the collection of items that are heterogeneous, independent and interrelated (e.g. portfolio of homework, portfolio of duties, etc.). Another example is the term turopereítor ‘tour operator’, which cannot be translated as turistikós práktoras that only refers to the meaning of tourist agent and not to a company that offers vacation services worldwide. Similarly, the term drimtím ‘dream team’ cannot be an equivalent of iðaniki omáða as the English item is a loose compound referring to historic athletic teams in different sports. Furthermore, the word alakárt ‘à la carte’ does not just refer to katepilojín ‘optionally’ but to a special type of menus in restaurants, both literally and metaphorically. Equally, the case of the word könsept ‘concept’ cannot stand in MG as slípsi or énia as it particularly refers to a prototypical idea (e.g. a prototype of a new car or an innovative product or service). In addition, the term deliveri (bói) ‘delivery (boy)’ shows a higher degree of lexicalization in MG, as it has given inflected forms like deliverás (Sing.) and deliveraídes (Plur.).

The second part of this section consists of technical terms from Information Technology (IT) that appear in MG, mostly, in a non-transliterated form. Here, MG equivalents are proposed for each term on the basis of six criteria that refer to semantic accuracy, avoidance of periphrastic forms, derivability, analogical formation, translation equivalence and levels of usage. These criteria are compatible with those proposed in the relevant literature (see, e.g., Babiniotis 1993, Cabré 1999, Xydopoulos 2002, Tsakona 2007). Many of the terms included in this part, though, appear to have passed on to the general area of MG vocabulary in their original form, as direct loanwords. This is due to the fact that IT (hardware and software) is extremely familiar to the majority of MG speakers, who are users of IT devices and functions. This is the case with terms like ódiobuk ‘audiobook’, bráuzer ‘browser’, tsat ‘chat’, dilit ‘delete’, dráiver ‘driver’, gátzet ‘gadget’, xáker ‘hacker’, xáitek ‘high tech’, laptop ‘laptop’, tzóstik ‘joystick’, pin ‘PIN’, pórtal ‘portal’, rínkton ‘ringtone’, spam ‘spam’, γuebkám ‘web cam’, etc.

The third part of this section consists of terms from economics and finance. The suggested equivalents were based on the same criteria applied earlier in the case of IT terminology. Arguably, there are terms, especially referring to banking, which form part of the general vocabulary and are used in their original form, e.g. internet bánkink ‘internet banking’, dil ‘deal’, kárta debit ‘debit card’, etc. that, in my opinion, should not have been included here.

3.2 “Scientific terminology”

The bilingual glossary of Energy Technology that appears in Part II of BSTN includes the English original term along with its MG equivalent and a definition
along with an index. Unfortunately, it only includes terms from A to L, because of space limitations. The equivalents appear to fulfill all criteria set and discussed in the Introduction and adopted in the relevant literature (see 2.1 above), while definitions are sufficiently descriptive and explanatory.

3.3 “Linguistic observations”

Part III of BSTN is completely redundant, in my opinion, as it is not compatible with the whole concept and content of the Bulletin. If deemed necessary, such prescriptive remarks could have been part of a special issue/volume of AoA where each “mistake” would have been discussed and explained on the basis of descriptive and not prescriptive principles, according to widely accepted ideas about language and linguistics found in literature (see e.g. Bauer & Trudgill 1999, Haris 2002, Napoli & Lee-Schoenfeld 2010 among many others).

3.4 “Studies”

3.4.1 Anastasiadi-Symeonidi et al.

In this paper, Anastasiadi-Symeonidi, Alexiadou & Nikolaou present a database for MG neologisms. First, the authors briefly discuss the principles of neology. They then present, in detail, the criteria that they used in the collection and typological classification of neologisms. Furthermore, they give details about the structure of the data base and the particular fields it includes. They conclude their presentation by offering a quantitative and qualitative overview of the current trends of neology in MG. In my opinion, the paper is an important contribution to the lexicographic treatment of neology in all respects. In addition, I believe that an internet version of this data base would be an extremely useful and reliable tool for all people interested in MG vocabulary. Such a database could also lead to the publication of a “popular” dictionary of MG neologisms, comparable to the various dictionaries of new words for English (e.g. Tulloch 1991, Knowles & Elliott 1998 etc.).

3.4.2 Katsouda & Kritikou

In this paper Katsouda & Kritikou examine a special kind of blends the so-called “graphic6 blends” (Soudek 1978: 465). The authors discuss the formal characteristics of blends on the basis of the relevant bibliography about Greek blends. The paper presents and discusses a very interesting corpus of MG data, collected from

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6 The authors call these blends with the Greek term optikí simfírmí (‘visual blends’). I think Soudek’s term is more accurate as it highlights the written dimension of these constructs.
daily and weekly newspapers. The description is, I think, exhaustive and offers a good classification of the formal features and functions of graphic blends in MG. The analysis, though, would have benefited somewhat if it had taken into consideration the relevant bibliography about blending in other languages.

3.4.3 Christofidou

In this paper, Christofidou discusses the problem of translating English internet-related terms into MG. In English, such terms can appear with various prefixal items such as cyber, tele, web and e-. These terms are borrowed into Greek as calques and appear as kiverno-, tile-, isto- and ile- or (mostly) e- (hybrids). In this interesting paper, the author gives convincing evidence that all these terms could be translated in a uniform way, using the ‘cover’ item dikto-, thus avoiding various morphophonological and semantic problems. In addition, the item dikto- appears to be sufficiently productive for the creation of equivalents for current and future needs.

4 Conclusions

In this review I have presented the joint volumes 9 & 10 of the Bulletin of Scientific Terminology and Neologisms, published in 2009 by AoA. The whole work is a useful contribution to the collection, classification and registering of neologisms in special vocabularies and the general area of the MG lexis. As I have explained here, there are a few methodological and presentational issues that, in my opinion, could be addressed in order to improve the usability and contribution of BSTN to the lexicographic treatment of neologisms in MG. In my view, future issues of BSTN will benefit greatly if they appear as registers of MG neological material, excluding all other material that distorts the chief function and role of the Bulletin. In other words, research papers can appear in some special “research activity/working papers” publication of AoA and “linguistic observations” could be included in a special (non-presetptive) manual, with the authority of AoA.

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References


