

PREFACE

Această lucrare este, conform cunoștințelor noastre, primul dicționar frazeologic englez-român care prezintă doar expresiile onomastice sau, altfel spus, acele expresii care includ un nume propriu. Atât limba engleză cât și limba română operează cu o mare varietate de nume proprii cum ar fi, de exemplu, numele de persoane (reale sau fictive) și numele geografice sau toponimele (hidronime, oiconime, oronime) folosite cu un alt sens decât acela de desemnare și individualizare a oamenilor sau locurilor.

Acest nou volum lexicografic continuă tradiția românească veche de aproape o jumătate de secol de elaborare a dicționarilor frazeologice bilingve, propunând un nou nivel de abordare a frazemelor. Astfel, dicționarul descrie expresiile fixe și pe cele flexibile care, până acum, fie au fost tratate cu superficialitate, fie au fost total ignorate. Pe lângă expresiile onomastice proprii limbii și culturii române, dicționarul nostru oferă o serie de asemenea expresii încă necunoscute sau poate mai puțin cunoscute vorbitorului român de limbă engleză. Versiunile românești ale acestor expresii "nou nouțe" ne aparțin în exclusivitate.

Considerăm că această carte poate deveni un util instrument de lucru deoarece multe traduceri au demonstrat, în repetate ocazii, nevoia unei mai profunde cunoașteri a expresiilor onomastice. Confruntarea frecventă cu expresia "Bob's your uncle" tradusă prin *Bob e unchiul tău* și exclamația "Great Scott!" prin *Marele Scott* este iritantă și frustrantă. Asemenea erori subliniază superficialitatea și nivelul scăzut de cunoaștere a culturilor anglofone precum și indiferența față de calitatea propriei munci. Pentru noi, ca profesori de (limbă, literatură, cultură și civilizație) engleză, identificarea erorilor repetate a însemnat o irezistibilă invitație la acțiune. Astfel am creat acest dicționar despre care credem că se va dovedi util tuturor tinerilor specialiști care se situează la granița dintre cele două culturi și profesează în domeniul traducerilor, al subtitrării și al interpretariatului.

De-a lungul celor doisprezece ani de proiectare, selectare și organizare a materialului, de elaborare și editare a dicționarului, fiecare dintre noi am lucrat independent și ne-am verificat de mai multe ori reciproc soluțiile propuse. Dacă, în ciuda eforturilor noastre, veți identifica erori, singurele persoane responsabile de acestea suntem noi.

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PREFACE

To our knowledge, this book is the first English-Romanian explanatory dictionary to account for the English phrasemes which include such various proper names as personal names (anthroponyms), geographical names (geonyms) as well as names of heroes and heroines in mythology (mythonyms) and national or universal literature (charactonyms).

This new lexicographic approach brings the Romanian tradition of compiling phraseological dictionaries to a new level as it presents a different outlook. This book contains only (set) phrases comprising proper names, a category of phrases which has been rather superficially dealt with or marginalized to this day. In addition to the proper-name-including phrases selected from the already existing similar works, new similarly-structured English phrases are introduced to the Romanian readership. The Romanian versions of the “brand new” entries were given by us, the authors of this dictionary.

We consider that such a book is really needed because many translations have been indicative of its necessity in several ways and on many occasions. To hear now and then the saying *Bob's your uncle* equated with “Bob e unchiul tău” and the exclamation “*Great Scott!*” with “*Marele Scott*” was annoying and frustrating. Such errors point to practitioners’ shallow knowledge, superficiality and disregard for the quality of their own job. To us, as teachers of English (language, literature, culture and civilization), it meant action. And so, we felt such errors as an irresistible impulse to create this tool, which will hopefully prove helpful for the younger practitioners who are trying to get a reputation as specialists in fields of translation, subtitling and interpreting.

We worked independently and double-checked each other’s solutions several times but if errors should still be found, we are the only persons to be held responsible.

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INTRODUCTION

The term *phraseme* is used in this book as both a synonym for *idiom* and a general term for any element that is part of a rich collection of expressions. These expressions have been named and defined in different ways, which by and large divide into the western and eastern ways. Western lexicologists and lexicographers mostly rely on the names “idiomatic structure”, “idiomatic expression” and simply “idiom”, while their eastern colleagues predominantly uses “phase”, “phraseological unit” or “phraseme”.

Definitions also show the author’s personality as even if the essence remains the same, each definition sounds individualizing and unique. To define an idiom is a hard nut to crack because there is not only one type of structure nor one degree of opacity to be subsumed to this concept but a few more. One of the simplest definitions views an idiom to be “a group of words which has a different meaning from the sum of its parts” (Cullen et al. 2000, iii). A comprehensive definition which takes into consideration several features of phrases, states that

“an idiom is an institutionalised construction that is composed of two or more lexical items and has the composite structure of a phrase or semi-clause, which may feature constructional idiosyncrasy. An idiom primarily has an ideational discourse-function and features figuration, i.e. its semantic structure is derivationally non-compositional. Moreover, it is considerably fixed and collocationally restricted.” (Langlotz 2006, 5)

Phrasemes are the salt and pepper of any language as well as an obstacle in its correct understanding because of their nature. What makes phrasemes difficult to understand is their opaque meaning which is indiscernible from the meanings of the words associated into a fixed lexical formation. Thus, *all thumbs* may sound as awkward to a non-native English as *the apple of someone’s eyes* or *as cold as charity*. Background knowledge may well play its part in the case of culture-bound phrasemes, as things stand with such phrases as *to pull the wool over one’s eyes*, *cloak-and-dagger behaviour* or *to open Pandora’s Box*.

Phrasemes may further divide into inflexible and flexible. The former group includes those expressions which never change either the (singular or plural) form or the order of their words, i.e. *airs and graces*, *cakes and ale* or *a house of cards*. (e.g. *a backseat driver*, *a ball and chain*, *without furthermore ado*, *a la mode*, etc.). The latter changes its form to express such aspects as subject-predicate concord, the use of the correct forms of tense, aspect and person to make a logical sentence (e.g. *to be in apple-pie order*, *to have an axe to grind*, *to have one’s beady eye on somebody/something*, *to throw somebody off the balance*, etc.).

Onomastic phrases or phrasemes are those constructions which include a proper name in their structure. As a rule in the case of traditional Romanian lexicography,

onomastic phrasemes have been subsumed to phrases and never before separated from the whole inventory of idioms. The disadvantage is that too many of them were disregarded and this may influence the acquisition of language knowledge. At the same time, onomastic phrasemes deserve special attention and additional information to account for their meaning(s). This is due to the further meanings of proper names which gradually acquired new values. Proper names may reveal either cultural or historic shades of meaning that are unknown to non-natives and hence, even if they may add a particular stylistic touch it will be missed because of the speaker's or reader's lack of knowledge. As already proven,

“the status of proper names as constituents of phraseological units differs greatly, depending on the degree of lexicalization and users' knowledge, since language users can decode constituents at issue as proper names or they may not even know of the proprial origins of the elements.” (Szerszunowicz 2006: 295)

The phraseological units with onymic components comprise a large array of “word-like units” (Gläser 1998: 126–127), which consist of both idioms and non-idioms that generally designate phenomena, objects, actions, processes or states in the real world, while they originate in the Bible, classical heritage, literary texts, popular culture or celebrity culture.

Although the concept of phraseme is based on the presence of at least two lexical items, practice has often shown that one word may also have an idiomatic meaning as it resembles or it has the nature of an idiom. For just one example, *Amelia* is first acknowledged as a female given name and, like any other personal name, it has a referential value, i.e. it suggests a person whose name this is. And yet, in some contexts, it is used to portray a lady, who is referred to as *a model of conjugal affection*, here displaying an individualizing function. This new meaning was attached to the name after Henry Fielding's character in the eponymous novel. Many other personal names, both patronyms and matronyms such as *Benjamin*, *Eve*, *Adonis*, *Cassandra*, *Fagin* and *Svengali* (derived from names of people that live for ever in the Bible, tales of mythology, history or literature) are also included in our collection of onomastic phrasemes.

The majority of onomastic phrasemes is constituted by the two-word patterns. Thus, for another single example, *New York minute*, refers to a time interval which is less than a minute.

The examples in the foregoing, with their rather cryptic significance, inspired the compilation of the current dictionary that dwells on a wide range of phrasemes. The structure of onomastic phrasemes spans from one-word units up to seven-word examples. They were manually selected from the most popular English and American dictionaries of eponyms, clichés, catch phrases, proverbs and idioms.

The English onomastic phrasemes represent a subcategory of idioms, most of which being relatable to the following types of anthroponyms:

- (a) female and male given names used in their full form (e.g. *Amelia*, *Anne*, *Alexander*) or as hypocorisms (e.g. *Bess*, *Billy*, *Charlie*)

- (b) full names (e.g. *Daniel Boone, Roger Cary, Robin Hood*)
- (c) surnames (e.g. *Burke, Burton, Gunter*)
- (d) biblical names or biblionyms (e.g. *Benjamin, Judah, Cain*)
- (e) names of saints or hagionyms (e.g. *St Antony, St Giles, St Elmo*)
- (f) names of gods and goddesses or mythonyms (e.g. *Cupid, Cerberus, Nemesis*)
- (g) names of literary characters or charactonyms (e.g. *Fagin, Frankenstein, Hamlet*)
- (h) names of peoples/nations or demonyms (e.g. *Chinese, English, French*)
- (i) names used in geography, i.e. toponyms or geonyms that further distinguish
 - i) names of countries, villages, towns, counties, (e.g. *China, Kentucky, Mesopotamia*)
 - ii) names of waters or hydronyms, i.e. rivers, lakes, seas (e.g. *the Thames, Baltic*)
 - iii) names of edifices, such as castles, mansions and houses (e.g. *Lathom, Holmby, Knowsley*)

Few onomastic phrasemes are based on apparent anthroponyms which originate in:

- (a) common nouns (e.g. *Cherry, (Lady) Dragon*)
- (b) alterations of binomial expressions (e.g. *Penny Liggan* < penny lacking, *Lammas* < loaf mass)
- (c) adjectives (e.g. *(Lady) Bountiful, Green*)
- (d) brand names and trademarks (e.g. *Arnell, Aga*)
- (e) day names (e.g. a cobbler's *Monday, Friday* face)
- (f) month names (e.g. *to have January chickens*)

Another well-represented class of *onomastic phrases* or *phrasemes* is that of “sentence-like units” (Gläser 1998: 126–127), which consist of proverbs, maxims and formulae which rely on the practical knowledge that common people impart with wit and humour. It is especially formulae that are perceived as “situation-based expressions serving a specific discursive function, typically occurring in spoken discourse” (Gläser 1998: 127; Moon 1998: 21).

From the point of view of their meanings, onomastic phrasemes refer to linguistic units with onomastic components (OCs) which function as carriers of culture and can be divided into three groups (Szerszunowicz, 2011, 82):

- a. International culture component (ICC): biblical, mythological and historical characters with universally known connotations;
- b. National culture component (NCC) familiar to the native users of a language;
- c. Local culture constituent (LCC).

In the process of cross-linguistic equivalence, one of our concerns was the one of preserving the descriptive and evaluative character of such phraseological units. Depending on the type of onomastic components, English ICCs have more full equivalents in Romanian than the other categories for which there are mostly partial and zero equivalents. There is definitely a significant semantic and cultural loss

when onomastic components as carriers of negative or positive stereotyped images find zero equivalents (Fiedler 2007: 118) and this happens especially in the case of LCCs.

The *English-Romanian Dictionary of Onomastic Phrasemes* describes the meaning and use of 1495 idioms built on the basis of 748 proper names which occur in one or more of the following structures:

- (a) one-word units:
 - i) personal names recategorized into common nouns, adjectives, epithets or exclamations (e.g. *romeo, cassandra*)
 - ii) common nouns recategorized into proper names (e.g. *Locusta, Shanks*)
- (b) two/three-word lexical units:
 - i) genitival constructions (e.g. *Hobson's choice, St Hugh's bones, a Frankenstein's monster*)
 - ii) name + common noun (e.g. *Abraham man/Abraham cove*) or adjective + name (e.g. *smart Aleck, merry Andrew*)
 - iii) exclamations (e.g. *Christopher Columbus! Great Scott!*)
 - iv) by-based binomials (e.g. *By Jove! By Jupiter! By Gad!*)
 - v) according-to constructions (e.g. *according to Gunter*)
 - vi) anthroponym + and + anthroponym (e.g. *David and Goliath, Damon and Pythias, Darby and Joan*)
- (c) multi-word lexical units:
 - i) idiomatic compounds (e.g. *Jack the Lad, a date with John Barleycorn*)
 - ii) idioms (e.g. *to keep Bayard in the stable, get into Cherry's boose, worse than the state of China*)
 - iii) similes and comparisons (e.g. *live like Pelham, poor as Lazarus, wise as Solomon*)
 - iv) sayings (e.g. *Is Saul also among the prophets? Bob's your uncle! All my eyes and Betty Martin*)
 - v) clichés (e.g. *to cut the Gordian knot, I'm all right, Jack, Dickens to pay!*)

All these taxonomic aspects complement the general view of onomastic phrasemes and their definitions are clear and complete as they rely on quotations of outstanding works in literature. Each phraseme is described both etymologically and semantically so that each shade of meaning could be grasped with ease.

We chose to offer much information being aware that English proper nouns may mean next to nothing to Romanian speakers of English, and further data could make the difference between idiomatic and non-idiomatic use. Documentary data could help learners to easily distinguish between:

- (a) It will take me a *New York minute* to do the job (which is the idiomatic use) and
- (b) My most cherished *New York minute* is that minute I was in the city and I first laid my eyes on you (which is the non-idiomatic use).

As regards the so-called “brand new” examples, they comprise phrasemes which could not be identified in any English-Romanian dictionary of idioms we used for the creation of our corpus.

As we decided to introduce such constructions in our book, their Romanian equivalents were carefully searched, thought over and over and then they were advanced with our greatest concern in the correctness of the solution. This explains why our entry-template of onomastic phrasemes distinguishes between the issues “Romanian version(s)”, on the one hand and “literal” or word-for-word and “equivalent” versions, on the other. Both the simple and literal/equivalent versions are in full concordance with the specificities of the Romanian lexicon. Furthermore, the “literal” version is sometimes jocular and funny because it can hardly be found in the Romanian vocabulary, but it translates the idiom as if each of the words in the phraseme preserved its main meaning when used as an independent lexeme.

As practice has shown, in some instances, Romanian versions of onomastic phrasemes do sound and appear intelligible and they were eventually used as such. Although most frequently the literal versions of onomastic phrasemes do sound awkward and appear unfit to the context, they are unintelligible but have still been used as such. Now that English-speaking people of Romania who watch an English or American movie can both listen to the original voice and read the subtitling, they can much more easily notice translational errors. They are able to observe the discrepancy between an original phraseme and its far-fetched Romanian version, which most often does not relate to the context. These literal and awkward versions are marked with an asterisk which is indicative of the misunderstood reception of the phraseme and hence of its erroneous usage. It is only the equivalent version which should be considered in all the cases of divided versions, no matter whether the literal version is asterisked.

This dictionary, which has been elaborated over a few (long twelve) years, is intended as both a valuable learning aid and practical tool for younger translators and interpreters. It may serve as well to anyone who is eager to enrich their knowledge of English.

HOW TO USE THIS DICTIONARY

The most time-saving way to find an onomastic phraseme is to look at the index at the back of the dictionary. This index includes all the proper names which are preceded by an ordinal number. It represents the proper name entry number, which was viewed as the keyword in our inventory of onomastic phrasemes. Each keyword comes with an explanatory note that contains one or more onomastic phrasemes mainly divided into set or frozen phrases and flexible constructions. The following specifications give clues about the identification of each phraseme.

One-name onomastic phrasemes

Names are listed in the index in the same form as they appear in the phraseme; they are not accompanied by other language elements (e.g. “as”, “a”, “the”, “these”, “all”, “no”). When personal names are preceded by titles or honorifics as “Don”, “Lady”, “Sir”, “Mr”, “Mrs” or “St”, it is the name that imposes the letter in the dictionary list and not the title which is always mentioned in brackets. Thus, the surname *Grundy*, accompanied by the parenthetical specification (Mrs) is mentioned under letter G.

When several idiomatic structures are listed under one keyword, the entries are ordered alphabetically, on account of the letter of the first element in the phraseme (the *as*-comparative particle and the *to*-infinitival particle are always omitted). For example, the entries under the proper noun *Bayard* are ordered as follows:

Bayard
bold as blind Bayard
keep Bayard in the stable

Two-name onomastic phrasemes

When onomastic phrasemes comprise two elements in capitals, the initial of the former element was the criterion applied for its alphabetical order (e.g. *Fanny Adams* has its entry under letter **F** and *Robin Hood* appears under **R**).

We hope both the simplicity of the dictionary format and its content will make it a useful and pleasant tool for upper intermediate and advanced learners of English. Although its phrasemes are translated in Romanian, which might restrict it to speakers of this language only, the information presented in the origin and meaning section of each entry will be helpful to any speaker of English as a second language.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

This dictionary makes use of numerous abbreviations, which further divide into those that follow quotations and they represent the initials of the lexicographic works the words are extracted from (and they are followed by the page number) and those which give linguistic/stylistic information.

The list below accounts for the abbreviations providing linguistic or stylistic information.

<	= which originates in/from
aprox.	= approximately, nearly
Am. Slang	= slang in American English
Amer.	= American English
Austr.	= australian
coll	= colloquial
d.	= despre
euphem.	= euphemism
FP	= Floriana Popescu
fig.	= figurative(ly)
inf.	= informal
ir.	= ironic
mar.	= maritime language
n.	= noun
NNM	= Nadia Nicoleta Morărașu
obsol.	= obsolete
poet.	= poetical
Sc.	= Scottish
sl.	= slang
UK	= United Kingdom
v.	= verb