



**Transilvania
University
of Brasov**

FACULTY OF LETTERS

**22nd CONFERENCE ON BRITISH AND
AMERICAN STUDIES**

TRADITION AND INNOVATION IN LANGUAGE

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



**The Romanian Society for English
and American Studies (RSEAS)**

www.rseas.ro

**BRAȘOV
23-24 MAY 2026**

Plenary speakers

Professor Elisabetta Lonati (elisabetta.lonati@uniupo.it)

Università degli Studi del Piemonte Orientale, Italy

“Speaking to commercial men”:¹

practical issues and portable shape in T. Mortimer’s late modern lexicography

The aim of this presentation is to analyse a selection of entries taken from Thomas Mortimer’s lexicographic production through decades, from his *A New and Complete Dictionary of Trade and Commerce* (1766) to the first edition of his portable *A general dictionary of commerce, trade and manufactures* (1810), to conclude with the second and third editions of the preceding work, revised and issued posthumously by William Dickinson, Esq., as *A general commercial dictionary* (1819 and 1823).

These reference works provide an interesting perspective on late modern commercial lexicography and the huge ongoing changes in British commercial practice between the second half of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth. Thomas Mortimer (London 1730-1810) wrote extensively on economic issues of his times (e.g. *Every Man his Own Broker*, 1761; *The Elements of Commerce, Politics, and Finance*, 1772) and, since the publication of his first dictionary in 1766, he distinguished himself from his predecessors, Malachy Postlethwayt and Richard Rolt, for some lexicographic choices. The introduction of very practical information and headwords, along with nomenclatures in various modern languages, especially in his later works, established his approach focused on everyday trading issues, and on the needs of *mercantile men*, *political speculators*, *men of business* and *inquisitive persons* (1810, Preface, pp. 1-2, not numbered). The comparison of selected entries and sections will highlight his choices, his outlook, and, ultimately, the evolution of his ‘practical lexicography’ over time.

References

Primary sources

- Mortimer, Thomas. 1766. *A New and Complete Dictionary of Trade and Commerce* [...]. London: Printed for the Author. And sold by S. Crowder [...]. [2 vol., folio]
- Mortimer, Thomas. 1810. *A general dictionary of commerce, trade and manufactures: exhibiting their present state in every part of the world; and carefully compiled from the latest and best authorities*. London: Printed for Richard Phillips. [octavo]
- Mortimer, Thomas. 1819 (2nd). *A general commercial dictionary: comprehending trade, manufactures, and navigation; as also agriculture, so far as it is connected with commerce; with brief abstracts of the laws relating to the regulation and protection of trade and tradesmen* [...] with considerable alterations and

¹ Thomas Mortimer, *A General Dictionary of Commerce* (1810, Preface, p. 2, not numbered)

additions by William Dickinson [...]. London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown. [octavo]

Mortimer, Thomas. 1823 (3rd). *A general commercial dictionary: comprehending trade, manufactures, and navigation, as also agriculture, so far as it is connected with commerce: with brief abstracts of the laws relating to the regulation and protection of trade and tradesmen exhibiting their present state and their connection in these kingdoms with those of other parts of the world* [...] *with considerable alterations and additions by William Dickinson* [...]. London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green. [octavo]

Plenary speakers

Professor Lucía Luque Nadal (lluque@uma.es)

Universidad de Málaga, Spain

How culturemes configure our culture-bound reality

Taking as an starting point the term 'cultureme', term that can be traced back to the functional theory in translation studies (Vermeer, 1983; Oksaar, 1988; Nord, 1997), this presentation will develop the importance that such linguistic-cultural units have in our daily use of the language. Even more, the study of culturemes is an important issue to master the knowledge of one's own mother tongue, since the elevated literary or historical status of many culturemes may also constitute an obstacle to many native speakers, not to say students of foreign languages and translators.

Additionally, we will deal with the meaning of culturemes in a broad sense, i.e., as "culture-bound notions specific to a country or a cultural sphere where many of them have a complex semantic and pragmatic structure" (Luque Nadal, 2009). In this sense, culturemes may be considered as semiotic notions that refers to ideas that circulate through the mass media, therefore can be found in practically infinite numbers in present-day languages. These type of culturemes may appear in any language under the form of idioms that represent the popular wisdom and the gathered knowledge of a given society and culture.

Key-words: culture, language, idioms, phraseology, Cultural Linguistics.

References

- Luque Nadal, Lucía (2009): "Los culturemas: ¿unidades lingüísticas, ideológicas o culturales?". *Language Design: Journal of Theoretical and Experimental Linguistics* 11, p. 93-120.
- Nord, Christiane (1997): *Translation as a Purposeful Activity*. Manchester: St. Jerome.
- Oksaar, Els (1988): *Kulturremtheorie. Ein Beitrag zur Sprachverwendungsforschung*. Hamburg: Göttingen.
- Vermeer, Hans J. (1983): "Translation theory and linguistics". In P. Roinila, R. Orfanos & S. Tirkkonen-Condit (eds.), *Häkökohtia kääntämisen tutkimuksesta*. Joensuu: University, p. 1-10.

Presentations

Cognitive Linguistics

Francesca Ioana Gehl, University of Bucharest, Romania (gehlfrancesca6@gmail.com)

Conceptual Metaphors of LIBERTY in the American Revolutionary Mind

The present paper analyzes the main conceptual metaphors related to "liberty", used in speech and writing by Founding Fathers before and during the American Revolution (1776-1783). The theoretical framework used is that of conceptual metaphors, first discussed by Lakoff and Johnson in the book *Metaphors We Live By* (1980). The speeches and/or writings of the revolutionary thinkers Joseph Warren, John Dickinson, Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry reveal such ontological and structural metaphors as LIBERTY is a WOMAN, LIBERTY is a PLACE, LIBERTY is a PRIZE, etc. Wielding such metaphors in their discourses, these shapers of the American revolutionary mind presented to their public the idea that "liberty" is something they must protect, win, and serve. The present study is structured following the geographical division of the American Colonies, relevant to the American Revolution, i.e. the New England Colonies, the Middle Colonies and the Southern Colonies, to which the mentioned thinkers belonged.

Comparative Linguistics

Andrada Țircă, University of Bucharest, Romania (andrada1509@gmail.com)

On Commitment and its Syntactic Representation in English and Romanian

The present paper aims to investigate the concept of linguistic commitment and its representation in the overall syntactic structure, contributing to the domain of the speech act layer, at the interface of syntax and pragmatics. The proposal is that commitment, while being a pragmatic feature, is syntactically encoded in the structure. Moreover, this analysis aligns with the view that relevant pragmatic features, such as commitment, should be represented in the higher-CP domain, namely the speech act layer. This domain contains the relevant pragmatic features visible into syntax, such as the representation of the speaker, the addressee and the illocutionary force (which are integrated in the Speech Act Phrase- SAP) and, additionally, other pragmatic nuances. The hypothesis is that commitment is encoded in its own maximal projection, CommitPhrase in the sense of Krifka (2020), Miyagawa (2022,2023). The paper also analyses how commitment interacts differently in the case of declaratives and interrogatives through several linguistic devices, for instance 'really' or 'chiar'. The data is drawn primarily from English and Romanian, contributing to a comparative perspective on how linguistic commitment is structurally represented.

Contact Linguistics

Alina Laura Chițu, University of Bucharest, Romania (chitualinalaura@gmail.com)

Question words in Melanesian Pidgin English

This paper provides an overview of question words across documented varieties of Melanesian Pidgin English, synthesizing structural patterns, lexical and orthographic variations. Baker (1993) describes the construction what for 'why' in Vanuatu in 1867, and what name 'who', 'what', 'why' in 1871 within the same region. Churchill (1911) notes the use of what name, what for, when, and where in his study of Beach-la-Mar. An orthographic variation, wanem 'what name', is documented in the Solomon Islands, New Hebrides, and New Guinea pidgin varieties (Clark 1979). The pidgincreole Tok Pisin also uses the forms haumas 'how much/many', husat 'who', wonem 'what', and we 'where', as well as wanem/wonem + N phrases to form interrogative constructions like wonem taim 'what time' and wonem hap 'where' (Laycock 1970, Mühlhäusler 1982, Goulden 1990, Verhaar 1995). Although less frequent than what name, Papuan Pidgin English also has the form what's the matter 'why' (Landtman 1917, 1918, 1927). Samoan Plantation Pidgin uses wat + N phrase to substitute standard interrogative items in wat man 'who' and wat peles 'where' (Mühlhäusler 1978). Finally, the use of what name is also attested in Torres Strait Pidgin (Ray 1907).

Corpus Linguistics

Tania Moraru-Zamfir, "Henri Coanda" Air Force Academy, Braşov, Romania (tania.moraru@afahc.ro)

On the architecture of idiomatic expressions

Following Larson (2017) we regard idioms as fully compositional structures, that is, their meanings can be predicted from the meanings of their parts and the structure in which they occur. The present paper addresses military idiomatic expressions in an attempt to investigate the tendencies in terms of syntactic patterns in which these idioms may occur based on an English corpus study. Starting from the idea that idioms have a historical dimension and they are fully compositional, it is our concern to examine their internal syntactic structure. The premise is that the interpretation of idiomatic expressions depends on selection. The analysis takes into account the following: (a) sensitivity to the vP configuration and (b) the properties exhibited by idiomatic patterns concerning the presence/absence of functional elements. The analysis reveals that functional heads that appear in between parts of idioms do not disrupt the selection, for they are not fixed parts and can either be left out or replaced. It also points towards sensitivity of idiomatic expressions to the event structure.

Language Acquisition

Bianca-Elena Babei-Popa, University of Bucharest, Romania (bianca.babei-popa@lils.unibuc.ro)

DOM in child heritage Romanian in contact with Dutch: the view from a preference task

Previous studies on differential object marking (DOM) in child heritage Romanian report contradictory findings. Those relying on “frog story” narratives show that speakers of heritage Romanian underuse DOM but, when they mark direct objects, they do it correctly. Experimental studies, however, report incorrect overextension of DOM to inanimate objects and DOM omission in obligatory contexts. This study contributes to this debate by examining DOM in child heritage Romanian in contact with Dutch, an understudied language dyad. The data come from a preference task which tested knowledge of DOM in four contexts: DOM with animate and inanimate proper names and DOM with animate and inanimate common nouns. 10 balanced Romanian - Dutch bilinguals (mean age 08;09) and 18 Dutch-dominant bilinguals (mean age 09;06) participated in this study. Their responses to the preference task were compared to those of age-matched monolingually-raised children living in Romania. The results showed that child heritage speakers performed similarly to monolinguals with respect to animate objects, but they also incorrectly extended DOM to inanimate objects more frequently than the monolingual group. The results are explained in terms of the lack of robust cues in the input with respect to the role of animacy in the DOM system.

Andreea Dogaru, University of Bucharest, Romania (andreea.dogaru@lils.unibuc.ro)

On the source of linguistic transfer in the acquisition of subjects in English as an L3

One of the central questions in third language (L3) learning is to identify which previously acquired language serves as the source of linguistic transfer in L3 development. This study examines how Romanian-German bilinguals, for whom both previously acquired languages have L1 status, acquire referential, quasi-argumental and expletive subjects in L3 English. The aim is to identify which previously acquired language plays any role in the L3 learning of subjects. A grammaticality judgment task was administered to 120 Romanian-German bilinguals, learners of English as L3 (age range 12-13), divided into two proficiency groups (B1 and B2). Their performance was compared to that of 120 Romanian monolinguals, learners of English as L2. The two groups were matched for age and English proficiency. While the B2 groups performed similarly, the B1 Romanian-German bilinguals significantly outperformed the B1 Romanian monolinguals. I argue that this finding indicates facilitative transfer, at early stages, from German, which, like L3 English, requires overt subjects in finite clauses. These results are discussed in relation to the Typological Proximity Model (Rothman, 2011) and the Linguistic Proximity Model (Westergaard, 2017), according to which learners transfer grammatical properties from the language(s) that is/are typologically or structurally closer to the target language.

Marius Vasilca, University of Bucharest, Romania (marius-vladut.vasilca@lils.unibuc.ro)

Motion in L2 English: the View from Romanian L1 English L2 Learners

This study investigates how Romanian learners of English describe motion events in L2 English within the framework proposed by Talmy (1985, 2000). In this typology, English is classified as a Satellite-framed language, where Manner is encoded in the verb and Path is expressed through satellites, whereas Romanian

shows a stronger tendency toward Verb-framed patterns, encoding Path in the verb and expressing Manner peripherally. These cross-linguistic differences are expected to influence how Romanian speakers construct motion descriptions in English

Building on previous research that relied on static image stimuli (Frog, Where Are You?), the present study employs short animated video clips depicting clear motion events such as running, jumping, or entering a location. Participants, Romanian learners of English (B1-C1/C2) from different age groups, are asked to produce written descriptions of each event. This step-by-step procedure is designed to encourage spontaneous descriptions of individual motion events.

The analysis focuses on the distribution of motion verbs and syntactic patterns, including bare directed motion, manner-of-motion constructions, Path-Manner verbs, Goal of Motion constructions, and located motion. Particular attention is given to manner encoding and potential L1 transfer effects, as well as to whether Goal-of-Motion constructions (considered typical in English) emerge as the preferred pattern.

Language Studies

Maria Aurelia Cotfas, University of Bucharest, Romania (maria-aurelia.cotfas@lils.unibuc.ro)

Negated epistemic possibility and necessity in English: From (scalar) negative bias to negative evaluation

The paper focuses on epistemic 'must' in negative contexts, challenging the claim that its negated equivalent is, by default, 'can't'. It strengthens the idea that both 'can't' and 'must not' are negative counterparts of epistemic 'must' and argues that they are governed by different semantic and pragmatic factors and interact with negation differently. Building on Giannakidou & Mari's (2021) scale of epistemic commitment and their claim that necessity epistemics involve bias, we contend that bias itself comes in scales. Thus, just as epistemic 'would' is stronger than 'must', 'can't' is claimed to be stronger than 'must not'. While 'must (not)' signals commitment to the likelihood of (non-)p, without totally excluding the opposite, 'can't' signals commitment to the impossibility of p, which amounts to exclusion of p from the anchor's epistemic space, leaving non-p words as the most viable option. Supporting evidence comes from a) 'can't' being the definite choice when direct evidence for non-p is at stake, b) impossibility of weakening with 'maybe' and c) strengthening with speaker-oriented adverbs like 'totally' and 'drama so'. Moreover, the wide scope negation of 'can't' allows for expletive-like uses similar to emphatic negative exclamatives, an option unavailable for the narrow scope negation of 'must not'.

Maria-Liana Ciucea, University of Bucharest, Romania (marialiana.ciucea@yahoo.com)

The Dichotomy of the Russian Classifier System – A Mix of Lexicality and Functionality

The present paper aims to provide a comprehensive account of the Russian classifier system by drawing a clear distinction between nominal counting classifiers (e.g. butylka 'bottle', predmet 'item', kusok 'piece') and measure words, also referred to as optional classifiers (e.g. shtuka 'item', chelovek 'person', golova 'head').

Drawing on Khrizman (2016) and Yadroff (1999), this bipartite distinction will be reinforced through a range of arguments concerning their syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features. Owing to length constraints, we only mention here presuppositionality, syntactic distribution and adjectival modification.

Furthermore, the paper expands the inventory of 'measure words' analyzed in Khrizman (2016) by adding *dusha* 'soul' and *yedinita* 'unit' (cf. Goto 2012, Tănase-Dogaru 2024). In spite of their rather limited distribution, their usage in the language as a means of measurement cannot be overlooked. Hence, we will transform the features mentioned above into testbeds with a view to assessing the membership of the two terms in the class of optional classifiers.

Ultimately, our goal is to challenge the traditional view that languages fall neatly within two strictly-delimited categories, i.e. classifier and non-classifier languages (Greenberg 1970).

Mihaela Tănase-Dogaru, University of Bucharest, Romania (mihaela.dogaru@lils.unibuc.ro)

Gender in the Classifier Domain: Evidence from Complex Proper Names

This paper examines complex proper name constructions like *doctor Smith* (English) and *doctorul / doctorița Ionescu* (Romanian), focusing on the featural specification of the nominal element preceding the proper name. Building on the analyses in Cornilescu (2007) and Tănase-Dogaru (2013, 2022, 2024), the paper argues that these constructions instantiate a classifier structure in which the first nominal does not function as a referential noun but as a classificatory head within the extended nominal projection.

I propose that the structure involves a Classifier Phrase dominating the Proper Name, embedded under DP: [DP [ClassP N_i [NP Proper Name]]]. Cross-linguistic variation between English and Romanian is derived from the featural composition of the classifier head. Romanian classifiers are specified for interpretable ϕ -features, including gender and definiteness, which are morphologically realized on the classifier head, whereas English classifiers lack overt realization of such features.

The same structural configuration is argued to underlie address forms (e.g., *doamna/domnul doctor Ionescu*), suggesting that gender and definiteness are licensed within the classifier domain rather than in D. The paper thus argues for parametric variation in the nominal spine and provides further evidence that proper names may be embedded under classifier structures in languages without canonical classifier systems.

Language Teaching and Language Learning

Adina Maria Paicu, Constantin Brâncuși Tg-Jiu, Romania (paicu.adina@gmail.com)

English and the New, Digital Technologies

This paper presents the relation between English and the new, digital technologies. More exactly, its main subject is the manner in which teachers and students face the challenges of this technological era. It also presents the digital transformation of our society and the field of education.

The field of technology and its fast development have divided the human society and raised many controversies. As dr. Aly Abdul Sames Quoura specified in his paper "Predarea si aprofundarea limbii engleze in

era transformarii digitale" "the digital technology in modern world is not just a tool, but also a living environment that open up new opportunities: learning at any convenient time, continuing education etc."

In terms of structure my paper is divided into two parts: the first part presents the traditional means of teaching English to students. After a presentation of these means this part will concentrate on their advantages and disadvantages. The second part is a more specific one starting with the description of the digital education. The following sections of the paper present the technologies that are part of the digital education: Internet, Augmented reality, Cyber security, Personalized learning and Artificial Intelligence.

Yousra Rouchdi, University of Bucharest, Romania (yousra.rouchdi@lils.unibuc.ro)

Gender, Definiteness and Rationality in Romanian Learners' Arabic: Preliminary Error Patterns

This paper reports preliminary findings from an error analysis of first-year Romanian university students learning Arabic as a foreign language, with a focus on agreement errors in noun-adjective phrases. The study examines difficulties related to grammatical gender, definiteness, and the rational/non-rational distinction (partially comparable to the animate/inanimate distinction in Romanian), drawing on data from written translation tasks targeting nominal structures. It forms part of a broader PhD research project on contrastive Arabic-Romanian grammar and learner error patterns. The analysis reveals strong transfer effects from Romanian. Students struggle with Arabic gender assignment, particularly when forms do not match expected morphological cues. Recurrent issues include the treatment of non-rational plural nouns, which require feminine singular agreement, and feminine nouns lacking typical endings. Students also tend to overgeneralize masculine forms and face challenges transferring Romanian neuter patterns into Arabic. Differences in definiteness marking – specifically the use of a prefixed definite article in Arabic versus a suffixed one in Romanian – further contribute to errors. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of explicit, contrastive teaching approaches that address structural mismatches between the two languages. Targeted pedagogical strategies are proposed to help learners overcome early-stage difficulties and develop a more accurate understanding of Arabic nominal morphology.

Alain Wolf, University of East Anglia, the UK (a.wolf@uea.ac.uk)

A brief history of the literature paper in the Cambridge Proficiency in English examination (CPE) 1913-2002: have they thrown the baby out with the bath water?

The present research aims to explore the historical development of the literature paper in the Cambridge Proficiency examination (CPE) from its beginning in 1913 to its discontinuation in 2002. It draws inspiration from notes published in 2013 and 2002 (Weir, 2002, 20013) as well as from personal communication with the Archives team at Cambridge Assessment. Based on an understanding of writing educational history from a moral perspective (Williams, 2005), the study provides a critical account of how and why the literary paper of the CPE was discontinued in 2002. The subsequent analysis of examination types is informed by past literature papers from the Cambridge Lower Certificate in English (CLCE, 1972) and the 1975 paper from the CPE. It shows that both the CLCE and CPE examination questions enabled candidates to situate themselves

critically in relation to academic secondary sources, a main characteristic of academic writing (Wolf, 2024). Finally, I explore the pedagogical implications of using traditional as well as innovative language-based tests of comprehension (see Bauer et al., 2022) in the context of literature testing. It is found that language-based tests encourage and reliably test readers' interpretive skills through focusing on their understanding of the wider meaning of literary texts.

Lexicography

Raluca Sinu, Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania (raluca.sinu@unitbv.ro)

Romanian Electronic Lexicography

The aim of this paper is to highlight some of the features of electronic lexicography in the Romanian context by reference to the dictionary-making activity as reflected in the metalexigraphic literature. The focus will be on briefly presenting the main projects in Romanian electronic lexicography and on identifying the trends behind these lexicographic projects as described by (meta)lexicographers.

Ruxandra Vişan, University of Bucharest, Romania (ruxandra.visan@lils.unibuc.ro)

Notes on culinary entries: A focus on eighteenth-century English lexicography

The present paper focuses on the representation of culinary entries in eighteenth-century English dictionaries, providing a discussion regarding the taxinomization of culinary information in 'specialized' dictionaries, such as culinary, agricultural, and 'family' dictionaries (Dictionarium Rusticum 1704, Nott 1723, Bradley 1725), on the one hand, and that in encyclopaedic and universal dictionaries on the other (see also Vişan 2021). Focussing on culinary keywords, the paper argues that, while John Nott's 1723 work makes use of the title 'culinary dictionary', it is not this reference work but 'family' dictionaries such as Bradley 1725 (a translation of Chomel 1709/1718), Dictionarium Rusticum (1704/1717/1726 with various editions attributed to Bailey and Worlidge) and the seventeenth-century Salmon (1796), also present in eighteenth-century editions, which provide points of reference for the more concentrated representations of culinary information in encyclopaedias and universal dictionaries (such as Chambers 1728, Bailey 1730).

Sociolinguistics

Silvia Dragomir, University of Bucharest, Romania (silvia.dragomir@s.unibuc.ro)

A corpus-based study of diachronic changes concerning role nouns: Feminine versus masculine forms in the Romanian newspapers "Scântea" (1944-1989), "Femeia" (1950-1999), "Libertatea" (1990-2023)

The aim of the present study is to investigate the use of feminine/masculine forms of role nouns in Romanian, working with a corpus which includes three Romanian newspapers ("Scântea" 1944-1989, "Femeia" 1950-

1999 and "Libertatea" 1990-2023). The choice of newspapers allows us to examine how these forms were used in Romanian before and after 1989 (a time of political and sociolinguistic change) and to establish if diachronic changes occurred. Our aim is to test two main hypotheses: 1. gender stereotypes influence the choice between feminine/masculine role nouns; 2. the percentage of masculine forms will be higher after 1989, due to renewed linguistic contact with English (where nouns are generally neutral with respect to gender). Twenty-one role nouns were chosen: 7 stereotypically feminine role nouns ('kindergarten teacher', 'primary school teacher', 'secretary', 'nurse', 'cashier', 'beautician', 'ballet dancer'), 7 stereotypically masculine role nouns ('president', 'minister', 'politician', 'manager', 'engineer', 'film director', 'composer'), and 7 stereotypically neutral role nouns ('author', 'writer', 'artist', 'journalist', 'translator', 'psychologist', 'reporter'). The results show variation with respect to the choice of feminine/masculine forms and minor diachronic changes. More importantly, the findings indicate that the variation can be predominantly attributed to the influence of gender stereotypes and the prestige of the profession.