

**Marin Bucă, Mariana Cernicova, *Dicționar de câmpuri frazeologice* [Dictionary Of Phraseological Fields], București, Ed. Pescăruș, 2015, 403 p. ISBN 978-606-8379-86-9.**

Phrases undoubtedly constitute the most expressive and colourful category in the lexicon of any language, but also a stumbling block in foreign language learning. Nonetheless, the systematic study of this fascinating lexical micro-system has acquired a scientific basis and analytic tools only over the past several decades, during which the principles of lexicographical recording of phrases have also been developed. In Romanian linguistics, a practical solution in this respectis offered by the recently compiled *Dictionary*

of *Phraseological Fields* [*Dicționar de câmpuri frazeologice*], a work of high standard by two linguists from Timișoara, Marin Bucă and Mariana Cernicova. A well-reputed lexicologist and lexicographer, Professor Marin Bucă is the author of an impressive lexicographical work, encompassing 50 volumes, among which *The Great Dictionary of Romanian Phrases* [*Marele dicționar de expresii românești*], București, Meteor Press, 551 pages, and the monumental *Encyclopaedia of Romanian Aphoristic Thought* [*Enciclopedie a gândirii aforistice românești*], București, Editura Tehnică, 1453 pages. His latest achievement stands out through its considerable scope, high quality and originality in the manner of selecting and presenting a most diverse linguistic material.

The *Dictionary of Phraseological Fields* proposes a new angle, the result of an up-to-date reworking of the ideas put forward in the two anthropocentric dictionaries (the extensive *Encyclopaedia of Romanian Aphoristic Thought* and the related dictionary, *The Great Dictionary of Romanian Phrases*).

The dictionary aims to systematize Romanian phrases, *i.e.* those multi-word units that generally prove hard to group into categories, by using semantic criteria, and to present a wide range of idiomatic means of expressing fundamental notions. Every dictionary entry can be correlated with a conceptual domain. The phraseological fields consist of clusters of phrases, conveying notions that are introduced by headwords (typed in bold, underlined block letters), usually alongside various spatial, temporal, causal, circumstantial, etc. qualifiers. Phrases and idioms are italicised, in the Romanian lexicographical tradition. Their meaning is explained through a synonym or a paraphrase, typed in regular letters.

At the heart of the dictionary are the phraseological fields built around the concept of *human being*, which are given prominence in the presentation: life, the stages of life, main events, moral, intellectual, behavioural and temperamental traits, sentiments and emotions, relationships among people, main activities, etc. Extremely interesting semantic fields are formed in this way, including, in fact, some of the most authentic Romanian phrases<sup>1</sup>, such as: “**a iubi**”/ “to love” (“*a iubi la nebunie*”/ “to be crazy in love with somebody”, “*a da inima cuiva*”/ “to give one’s heart to somebody”, “*a se prăpădi după cineva*”/ “to be dead gone on somebody”, “*a sorbi pe cineva din ochi*”/ “not to take one’s eyes off somebody”), “**a se certa**”/ “to quarrel” (“*a fi pus pe arțag*”/ “to be ill-tempered”, “*a semăna neghină*”/ “to make mischief between”, “*a umbla cu țâfna*”/ “to have a worm in one’s tongue”), or sets of very

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<sup>1</sup>The English translation of the phrases or idioms used for illustration renders the Romanian meanings only partially.

expressive phrases (“*bani*” (pl.)/ “*money*” (sg.) – “*bani gata*”/ “*ready cash/ money*”, “*man-about-town*” (approximately), “*bani grei*”/ “*top dollar*”, “*bani peșin*”/ “*ready cash/ money*”, “*a lua mălai*”/ “*to hit the jackpot*”, “*a nu avea nicio para sau lescaie*”/ “*not to have two pennies/ nickels to rub together*”, etc.).

The phrases are presented in a systematic, accessible manner, by taking into consideration the grammatical and lexical structures used by native speakers and recorded in existing dictionaries. The explanations, simple and concise, are taken from dictionaries or formulated starting from dictionary definitions. Different semantic overtones are marked off by semicolons. Definitions are often followed by a synonymous phrase. Variants are introduced by the words *sau* and *ori/ or* and also: “*a se învăța pe lângă cineva (sau în jurul, împrejurul cuiva)*”/ “*to butter up or play up to someone*”, “*a-și pune pirostriile pe cap (în sau pe cap)*”/ “*to tie the knot, also tie the wedding knot*”, “*a fi (sau a rămâne, ori a sta) stâlp (de cremene ori piatră)*”/ “*to stand like a statue, also to stand stone-still*”, “*umblă vorba ori merge vorba că...*”/ “*rumour has it that or the story goes that...*”. Most idioms are defined analytically, the definition coming after the ‘equal’ sign. When the situation does not allow for such definitions, the authors offer explanations of the contexts in which the idioms are used. They start with “*se spune*”, “*se zice*”/ “[is said] about”: “*toacă de vătrați, se spune despre un om care a sărăcit*”/ “*poverty-stricken, about someone who has grown poor*”, “*se îmbină ziua cu noaptea, se spune când începe să se facă lumină*”/ “*at the crack of dawn, about the time when the sun first appears*”, “*a dat prea mult de pomână, se zice când unui zgârcit îi tremură mâinile*”/ “*he/she has outdone him/herself in generosity, about a miser whose hands are shaking after giving alms*”.

Phraseological units are ordered according to semantic filiation, ‘phrase’ being sometimes mentioned in brackets. Information about the stylistic register is also given in brackets (*e.g.* regional, folklore, archaic, everyday, slang, ironic, vulgar, scholastic, etc.). For this purpose, abbreviations are used; a list thereof is provided at the beginning of the dictionary. The lexicographical explanation often ends with a series of synonyms, separated by commas, and their equivalents: “*a sta pe gânduri*”/ “*to be in two minds*” (“*a ezita*”/ “*to hesitate*”, “*a șovăi*”/ “*to falter*”), “*a nu-l mai încăpea cămașa pe cineva*”/ “*to get too big for one’s boots*” (“*a fi înfumurat*”/ “*to be haughty*”, “*fudul*”/ “*smug*”, “*plin de sine*”/ “*full of oneself*”), “*a fi un pachet de nervi*”/ “*to be ready to fly off the handle*” (“*a fi enervat*”/ “*to be annoyed*”, “*iritat*”/ “*irritated*”, “*înfuriat*”/ “*enraged*”). In order to find a phraseological unit, one has to do an alphabetical search of one of its main constituent words, which will then bring up the entire semantic field.

Through the *Dictionary of Phraseological Fields*, the authors provide those interested in the expressive resources of the Romanian language with an effective work and information tool, as well as a means of becoming acquainted with a significant part of the vast Romanian language thesaurus. The dictionary may turn out to be useful not only to students, teachers and translators, but also to anyone with an interest in the Romanian language and its richness of expression.

**Mața ȚARAN ANDREICI**

Translation from Romanian by **Irina Diana Mădroane**