

Articulator Metaphors: GURĂ – MOUTH

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My brethren, in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits into the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though *they be* so great, and *are* driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, withersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and bosteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; *it is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet *water* and bitter? ... so *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. (*Holy Bible*, "James," Ch 3, 1-12: 238)

It is for reassurance, for comfort, and for sap that we go back to the BOOK, when torn 'tween promise and expectation, 'tween words and deeds. IT has it all: IT has it right, IT has it brief, IT has the gist. IT has intensity and power to bridge experience and thought.

This time, it is the *MOUTH*, the one which hurts, betrays or heals the breach. It is the body part which has generously "radiated" out to other senses by metonymic, metaphorical, and synecdochic mapping (Goossens 1988: 62). It is the **articulator**, which, by virtue of its vital functions, has attracted hosts of "affective" synonyms (Ullmann 1967: 148) or metaphors.¹ The *GURĂ - MOUTH* paradigm is organized

¹ The term has of late been used to refer to a cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system of a speech community or to the way people talk about the world. In exploring the conceptual system, language is a "map" which ascertains how concepts are categorized in the speakers' minds. Such models or *root analogies* "derive their fundamental meaningfulness directly from their ability to match up with preconceptual structure" (Kittay 1987: 327), making not language but thought (i.e. the way we conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another) the "locus" of metaphor. The internal structure or conceptual model of clichéd metaphorical expressions is therefore seen as "conceptual structure shaped for symbolic purposes according to the dictates of linguistic convention." (Faber and Wallhead 1995: 127) These lexical items show how root analogies or different Vehicles may highlight, downplay, or hide aspects of the same Topic, according to the speaker's communicative purposes. (Goatly 1997; Slave 1986) Moreover, they are forms of lexical variation which have been approached not simply as lexical but rather as lexicogrammatical selection or "wording," not just as "variation in the use of words," but as "variation in the expression of meanings" (Halliday 1994: 341), illustrating not 'how a word is used' but rather 'how a meaning is expressed' or perspectivized. Ontological correspondences between the entities in the Source

“around a prototypical centre” (Goossens 1988: 62) which has both a physiological and a communicative function, that is, ‘the opening on the face through which food or drink is put into the body and by which sounds are produced’. The communicative function of the articulator involves its affiliation to the domains of Human Communication and of Linguistic Action (LA).²

Word-class selection of the Vehicle and derivation will have a say in the semantics of metaphor.³ Nominal Vehicles make the most powerful metaphors, yielding “richer interpretations” and being “less prone to oblivion” than any other Vehicle word classes, because their referents have spatial dimensions and are therefore imaginable. Copular metaphors “provide the richest potential for imagery” revealing “very strongly the clashes between conventional and unconventional reference and/or semantic contradiction,” (Goatly 1997: 83),⁴ as in R. (E) o *moară stricată* – E. (She’s) a *chatterbox*.

The connotative shades of meaning vary from, at one extreme, ‘lexicalized metaphors’, which only name an entity (e.g. *chatterbox* - *gaiță*), to the other extreme where the strong opposition between the two meanings brings about a wealth of metasememic information, as in *gargară*, *gargariseală*, *ghiveci*, *peltea*. (Cf. Slave 1986: 157-158).

Since most metaphors also have a concrete meaning, the connotational output depends on the evocative force of the concrete image.⁵ A transfer from a concrete entity to an abstract concept will often psychically characterize a person (e.g. *sforar* - *schemer*) whereas one from a concrete entity (an animal, a bird or a part of their body) to another concrete entity will refer to either man’s negative psychic traits (*fanfaron* - *windbag*) or man’s body (*plisc* - *bazoo*).

The most suggestive LA metaphors refer either to ‘a talkative/noisy speaking agent’ or to the articulators, especially the speaker’s mouth.⁶ The early patterns of

domain and their counterparts in the Target domain are metaphorically mapped and are mnemonically labelled TARGET/TOPIC DOMAIN IS / AS SOURCE/VEHICLE DOMAIN.

² Language is primarily conceptualized as OBJECT, i.e. MONEY, CLOTH / CLOTHES, LIQUID / FOOD/DRINK, or as ACTION, i.e. WALKING / RUNNING / JOURNEY /GAME, WAR / FIGHTING. (Cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Goatly 1997)

³ Most often, figurative derivatives group around the archlexeme, even if not all of them become members of the same metaphorical paradigm. The derived meaning is most often exclusively metaphorical and disphoric. For example, the Romanian adjectival suffixes *-os* and *-or* activate the verbal metaphor (e.g. *a i-o tăia* -> *răspuns tăios* = *sharp* -> *sharp(en)* -> *sharp reply/rejoinder*) or the noun metaphor (e.g. *clonț* -> *om clonțos* = *tongue* -> *sharp/quick-tongued*; *ustura*, *usturător* -> *remarcă usturătoare* = *sting*, -> *stinging* -> *stinging remark*).

⁴ “Noun phrases are more likely to produce a sense of unconventional reference or contradiction than other kinds of phrase.” Moreover, “reference to first-order entities is a condition for the richest kinds of image-based interpretation of Active metaphors.” (Goatly 1997: 96-97)

⁵ Elena Slave (1986) classifies metaphors in Romanian according to the Source/Vehicle Domain, as a criterion in the cognitive structuring of reality. The main Sources are considered to be: NATURE, THE VEGETAL KINGDOM, THE ANIMAL KINGDOM, MAN, ARTEFACTS / MAN-MADE OBJECTS, TECHNOLOGY, EDUCATION (SCIENCE and ART), RELIGION, MYTH, RELATIONS / TRADE. Grammatically, they have been analysed as Noun, Verb and Adjective metaphors (Cf. idem: 29).

⁶ LA articulator metaphors entail either *say* – a *spune* or *speak* / *talk* – a *vorbi* and MANNER, as parts of the semantic relation called “troponymy.” (Miller and Fellbaum 1995: 220-221) The members of this

metonymic and metaphorical LA uses of *mouth* go back to the Bible, being mapped metonymically onto three patterns: ‘what is said’ (i.e. ‘words’, ‘spoken words’, ‘speech’), ‘the Speaker’ (as either *mouth*, S’s *mouth* or the *mouth* of the S) and ‘the speech faculty’.⁷ As part of the Biblical heritage, Romanian and English phraseological units frequently map Mouth, Tongue, and Lip(s) onto the Speaker and Language onto Words.

The concrete as well as the abstract character of a linguistic item may bring about different metasememic effects. Although all the metaphorical pattern types may occur (i.e. concrete > concrete, concrete > abstract, abstract > abstract, abstract > concrete), usually the more concrete the Source term, the more informative it is when used figuratively. That is why LA metaphors usually take the first pattern, from concrete to concrete: *caragață, cață, gaiță, țarcă, cioc clanț, clanță, (cio)clonț, plisc, fofelniță, meliță, moară, muzicuță*.

The connotative paradigm *GURĂ – MOUTH* is organized by the ‘connoteme’ or along the dimension meliorative/euphoric and pejorative/disphoric. It confirms the fact that, with metaphors, expressiveness is the result of changing the ‘traditional’ usage of a lexical item, of violating selection restriction rules.⁸ The archlexeme can be replaced by a series of onomasiological or ‘contextual’ figurative synonyms, which have been transferred to this paradigm from the fields of animals, birds and musical or technical objects: *bot, cioclonț*,⁹; *fleoancă, fleoarcă, fleoartă*,¹⁰ *leoarbă; surlă, radio*,¹¹ *cățea*,¹² *papagal, pupăză*. Differences of meaning between sets are easier to establish sometimes than between individual units. Compare, for example, the Romanian metaphors *cioc, clonț, cloanță cioclonț, plisc* to *clanță, fofelniță, meliță, moară, morișcă, rășniță*;

paradigm share with the verbs *talk – vorbi* the minimal distinctive features [+Communication], [+Human], [+Vocal/Sound], and, with descriptive or manner of speaking verbs, a core of verbal action ANu (*talk-vorbi*) as well as a Modifier. (Cf. Snell-Hornby 1983) The latter consists of a bundle of common distinctive features [-Formal], [+Extensive], for ‘extended’ verbal production, [+Intensive], for ‘fast’ verbal performance, plus semantic features specific to each Vehicle.

⁷ Although in present-day English the metaphor from metonymy type seems to be still best represented (e.g. *keep one’s mouth shut*, AE *Well, shut my mouth*), *mouth* metaphors outnumber metonymies. The latter still have *mouth* rarely mapped onto ‘speaking (aloud)’, as in *by word of mouth, open one’s mouth* (i.e. ‘to start to speak’), and, more often onto the ‘Speaker’, with unfavourable connotations, like in *blabbermouth* and *loudmouth – gură bogată*. With Shakespeare’s taste for metaphoric language, a large number of metaphors have shifted from metonymies. For example, *put the mouth on someone*, and *stop sb’s mouth*, which may no longer be so transparent nowadays as mappings within the same domain.

⁸ The metaphor implies an opposition relationship between the Source and the Target members of a paradigm. When the cognitive structure is activated, the opposition gets neutralized and the two terms establish a new relation, by semantic deviation or transfer, that is by violating ‘semantic solidarities’. The intersection of the two meanings implies both loss and addition of semes. The Source term takes over the Target term semes on which it superimposes some of its own denotative semes. For example, ‘communication’ is the semantic base of the Target term *say/speak/talk – spune/vorbi* and of the Source term *crow = a cânta cucurigu, a se cucuriga*, which adds a sound component proper to a rooster as well as a feeling of joy.

⁹ *Cioclonț* is a case of contamination or intensification of the meaning of a word by adding either a new image or an intensifying element.

¹⁰ Metaphorically, the noun *fleoarcă*, ‘a cloth’, stands both for *gură – mouth* and *limbă – tongue*, as well as for ‘a prostitute’.

¹¹ Because of the noise they make while crying or speaking, respectively, children and mothers-in-law have been associated to *patefon* and *radio*. (Cf. Jordan 1975: 333)

¹² Cf. *Leagă/Lasă cățeaua!* = *Taci!*

caterincă, cobză, flașnetă, flaut, muzicuță, pian, patefon, radio, trâmbiță, trombon; and mitralieră. The former set denote ‘a bird’s beak’ and, both in the Source Domain and in the Target Domain, they denote the opening in the face into which food is put. The latter sets refer to different artefacts, which, because of their association with staccato sound emission, noise and often jerky, abrupt movement, have come to denote the organ of speech.

Expressiveness is function of the Source Domain which activates the cognitive structure that makes speakers map the Target / concrete term onto the Source / abstract term. What counts is the “distance” between the two terms and the nature of their basis of comparison evaluated in terms of value scaling from neuter to favourable / unfavourable. (Cf. also Slave, 1986: 121 and Dumistrăcel, 1980: 113) Sets of slangy words have been obtained through “semantic derivation.” (I. Jordan 1975: 333)¹³ The evocative power of the paradigm members is directly proportional to the distance between the Source term and the Target term as well as to the size of the Source domain. The more restricted the domain is, the more expressive the metaphor will be. Compare, *R. plisc* and *cioc* (E *beak*) to *clanță* (E ‘door handle’; *chops, jaw; gab*), *meliță* (E ‘scutcher’) and *muzicuță* (E ‘mouth organ’; *jaw, potato trap; gab*). For example, in *R. meliță* (E ‘scutcher, a tool used for dressing flax by beating; part of a machine that scutches: the striking part of a threshing-mill’), several denotational semes of the Source term, marked (-Animate, +Artefact, +Movement, +Noise, +Iterative, +Staccato), have been superimposed on the Target term, i.e. Speaker or Speaker’s mouth.

As an archlexeme, *gură* establishes meaning relations with all the members of the paradigm. The lexical items transferred from the field of manufactured objects acquire a negative connotation and, mostly ironically, they refer to the ‘Speaker’ and his/her ‘mouth’.¹⁴ For example, *muzicuță, clanță*, and its derivative *clânțau*, refer to the Speaker’s mouth and to an extensive, intensive and aggressive manner of speaking. In *fofelniță, meliță, melița, melițare, moară* and *morișcă*, the metasesmemic transfer does not operate on the human agent as a whole but only on the articulator, as a part of the body, and on the speech ability.¹⁵

Metaphors re-order semes. LA metaphors emerge through the semantic process of ‘metacommunication’ (Slave 1986: 13) as ‘implicite metaphors’ that surface only the Source / Vehicle term. This takes over the Target term semes on which it superimposes some of its denotative semes. For example, out of the classemes (-Animate) and (+Animate), assigned by selection restriction rules to the Source term (*meliță* =

¹³ The use of different terms for the Romanian *gură*, such as “*bot, cioc, clonț, plisc, rât, surlă, cobză, flașnetă, flaut, muzică, morișcă, rășniță* etc.,” “... manifestă tendința de a spori în jurul nucleului comunicării în care el apare regiunea notelor expresive pentru reacțiunea individuală, subliniată afectiv, a vorbitorului față de obiectul comunicării sale.” (I. Jordan, 1975: 333) This tallies with the opinion that “...formele populare ale limbii sînt mai pătrunse de valori stilistice decît formele ei literare.” (T. Vianu 1968: 202)

¹⁴ Therefore we have extended the paradigms to “Speaker” metaphors.

¹⁵ Terms denoting tools used in textile manufacturing have come to connote extensive and intensive LA. *Fofelnita* (*cackling woman, gossip*) is an interesting case. On the one hand, it denotes either a ‘hasp’, a ‘reel’ or ‘the knife/the tongue’ (an antropomorphic metaphor itself) of the scutcher (R *meliță*), and, on the other, it metaphorically connotes the organ of speech, the ‘mouth’. As a member of the paradigm which ironically evokes the human mouth, both as a LA articulator and as a part of the body, the noun *meliță* and the verb *a melița* as well as other derivatives (*melițare, melițat*) have enlarged the metasesmemic paradigm: *melița* (mereu), i.e. ‘a vorbi mult, fără rost’, ‘a flecări’, ‘a trăncăni’, *melița* (cu gura), a-i toca/umbra gura ca o *meliță* (*clack, twaddle, chatter nineteen to the dozen*), a da cu *melița*; Tacă-ți *melița*/*fofelnița/*muzicuța, etc.

chatterbox) and to the Target term (*vorbitor* = *speaker*), respectively, the Source entity will take over the latter, whereas the Target entity will add (+Noise), which brings about a new metasememic structure that connotes ‘a noisy, talkative human agent’ (*vorbitor* = *meliță* – *speaker* = *chatterbox*). In *gaiță* – *magpie*, a new hierarchy of connotations has been established by intersecting the sememe of the Source noun and that of the Target noun and by adding the adjective *certareată* to the latter, which is left in the underlying structure of the former. (Cf also Slave 1986: 13) The Source term semes overshadow the semes of *femeie* (*woman*), which add the semes of the adjective *certăreață* (*ill-tempered/quarrelsome*) or the verb *a se certa* (*to quarrell*) as well as semes describing some colourful, possibly vulgar physical appearance. Thus, by ‘metaphorical convergence’, an abstract, temperamental or moral characteristic, *vorbăreț* - *talkative*, gathers shape as the ‘figurative synonym’ of a concrete term, and, instead of *femeie certareată ca o gaiță* (‘a woman who is as noisy / ill-tempered / quarrelsome as a jay’) the speaker will use *gaiță* – *jabberer* / *clacker* / *rattler* / *tell-tale* / *F sieve*. (Cf. also Slave: 29) In Romanian, *caragață*, *cață*, *coțofană*, *gaiță*, and *țarcă* mean *femeie (certăreață / vorbăreață)* – *an ill-tempered / quarrelsome woman*. Except for *cață*, which is (+/-Male), all the Romanian terms are (-Male), hence unmarked for gender opposition.¹⁶ Unfavourable, negative or disphoric connotations may also result from the incompatibility of the feature (+Human) in the Target Domain, or the connotational metaphorical meaning, with the feature (-Human) in the Source Domain or the denotational meaning.¹⁷

Paradigmatic series of metaphorical transfers from other animates to man illustrate fairly homogeneous, semantically coherent sets: *cioc*, *clanț*, *clonț*, *plisc*; *pițpalacă*, *pițigoi*, *pupăză*, *papagal*; *caragață*, *cață*, *gaiță*, *țarcă*. The last four terms make up ‘a compact’ group, which originally had a concrete meaning and which, through synonymic derivation, have established metaphorical correlations with other series of concrete and metaphorical terms. They share the distinctive features: (+Sharp Sound), (-Intelligent), (+Physical Appearance) (Cf. Slave 1986: 62). Transfers that occur within the same domain, for example (+Animate), are less expressive, like R *țaiță* (‘gossip’, ‘foul-mouthed woman’) and R *sol* (‘messenger’, ‘herald’). The Source terms in the set *cioc*, *clanț*, *clonț*, *plisc* are marked (+Animate) and (-Human) and they are both referentially and metaphorically equivalent. The set *clanță*, *fofelniță*, *flașnetă*, *meliță*, *moară*, *muzicuță*, marked (-Animate), foreground the classeme (+Noise), which suggests the Reporter’s negative evaluation. The last term, *muzicuță*, stands out, marked (+Irony).

The conceptual structure of this type of metaphor seems to be rooted in the widely accepted opinion that whatever exceeds the standard limits (i.e. MORE) can either excel at (i.e. UP) or come short of accomplishing one’s purpose (i.e. DOWN). However, associated as these metaphors might be to the MORE IS UP orientational metaphor, axiologically, this mapping clashes with the structure of linguistic action

¹⁶ Most of the English noun phrases which refer to the Speaker, like *chatterbox*, *jabberer*, *jaw* etc., are (+/- Male) and their metaphorical images are totally different. The Source term is either of imitative origin (e.g. *jabberer*, *clacker*, *rattler*), or it may refer to ‘a vessel for sifting’ (e.g. *sieve*), as a metaphor for ‘someone who tells the private concerns or misdeeds of others’.

¹⁷ The disphoric connotation is amplified by phonetic variation, as in the group of deprecatory terms for women, which describe rather moral than physical traits, and their behaviour, including manner of speaking (*caragață*, *cață*, *gaiță*, *țarcă*), or in the members of the MOUTH paradigm (*cioc*, *clanț*, *clonț*, *cioclonț*).

events lexicalized as manner of speaking, whose semantic content usually implies a (+/- Favourable) evaluation of quantity.

The semantic content of these lexemes implies a favourable/ unfavourable evaluation of quantity (Cuniță 1983). A small quantity usually elicits a favourable appraisal, unless the quantity is felt as insufficient, which may generate a devaluating judgment, as is the case with *vorbuliță / vorbuță*. (Cf. Iordan 1975: 168) A large quantity (in terms of number, intensity, size etc), felt as an exaggeration, usually elicits devaluating judgments. For example, *R pisălog*, an object used in crushing or breaking things to pieces, has come to denote ‘a person who bores either by repeating things or by insistence’ (*a (regular) bore, a pest*). Moreover, the axiological value of quantity (sufficient - insufficient) may also combine with the idea of unsatisfactory/lack of quality as in the case of *băgăreș, vârcios - prying, hămăi / lătra - bark*, etc. The metasememic mechanism allows for all connotational combinations, i.e. favourable – favourable, favourable – neuter, favourable – unfavourable (e.g. *R. muzicuță > gură*), neuter – neuter, neuter – favourable, neuter – unfavourable (e.g. *ciorbă, peltea > vorbărie*), unfavourable – unfavourable, unfavourable – neuter. (Cf. Slave 1986: 41)

The Speaker’s verbosity, or frivolous and unprincipled extensive and intensive linguistic action, most often acquires negative connotations. The relationship quantitative appraisal - axiological appraisal may also surface by adding a lexical unit, a prefix or a suffix, which carries an evaluative trait. Not rarely, quantitative evaluation is marked by modifiers, e.g. *gură mare/bogată - big/loud mouth (vs. a man/woman of few words – scump la vorbă); vorbă lungă - a great talker/babbler; gură spurcată – bad mouth*.

Intensification may occur when slang terms are used in the standard variety or in colloquial speech. The speech community’s qualitative and quantitative appraisal, inculcated in certain lexical units, will be amplified or reduced by the Reporter’s idiosyncratic interpretation of reality.¹⁸ Lexical units will reflect the speaker’s/ writer’s axiological appraisal of a certain referential element as, for example, ‘an extensive use of language’ in *farfara*, which denotes ‘a person who speaks too much, often distorting facts or speaking ill of people’. (Cf. DEX: 323) Irony, as a metaphor-generating technique, has surfaced in most of the members of the Romanian articulator paradigm which go back to the domain of sound and music.

Throughout time, as a form of social check up, metaphorical expressions have spread cognitive and ethical models. A number of them activate the CONDUIT /

¹⁸ Linguists seem to agree that: “[T]he affective side of language is just as fundamental as its cognitive function. ... The two elements are in principle always compresent in speech; it is only their dosage that varies. ... Naturally, there are many situations where one of the ingredients completely overshadows the other.” These ‘overtones’ convey the “emotive power of word-meaning” (Ullmann 1967: 97- 98) and are resources for the emotive function of language. Therefore, “[A]ny contrast between the provenance of a word and the general standard of the context in which it occurs is of relevance here: even between spoken and written, familiar and academic discourse. The emotive effect of these elements is due to their *evocatory* power: they will call up the environment or level of style in which they naturally belong” (idem: 100), as ‘effets d’évocation d’un milieu,’ in Bally’s interpretation. To a certain extent, “some emotional elements are neither individual nor purely contextual in character: they are a permanent accompaniment of the word and sometimes its very *raison d’être*. Their value is best brought out in series of synonyms, or rather pseudo-synonyms... This is another form of ‘contextualization’, and a large measure of constancy in affective tone derives from” the interaction of contexts. “Sometimes, however, even these contexts are unnecessary: that inner core of signification which the word calls up even in isolation includes affective factors: ‘their real significance is as much emotional as it is conceptual’.” (idem: 99)

CONTAINER or the WORD as OBJECT metaphors. The frequent mapping of LA in the cognitive system onto Eating and Drinking has led to its interpretation as Conduit Metaphor, according to which the *mouth* is “a container for (reified) words”. Therefore words: can be fed into others (e.g. *put words into sb’s mouth – a pune vorba în gura cuiva, a atribui vorba cuiva*); can be poured out (e.g. *shoot one’s mouth off*); may be taken/stolen from others (e.g. *take the words out of sb’s mouth – a lua vorba din gura cuiva*); may be too large to contain (e.g. *to say a mouthful – a spune ceva cu emfază/gravitate, a face pe grozavul*) or may turn to filth (e.g. *foul-mouthed – murdar/spurcat la gură, bad mouth - gură spurcată*).

Both in English and Romanian, the phrases that refer to the “inactivation” of the articulators (Verschueren 1985) *gură-mouth, limbă-tongue* and *buze- lips* suggest a voluntary, highly intense act of silence, which implies total absence of sound or word production, because the speaker avoids to make an untimely remark or to give a straight answer: *not let out a peep - a nu-i scăpa un cuvîntel / o vorbă; not say ‘boo’ - a nu zice (nici) ‘păs’; not breathe a word - a nu spune / scoate un cuvânt / un cuvîntel, a nu sufla o vorbă / o vorbuliță; not have a word to say - a nu avea (nici) un cuvânt / nimic de spus; not to open one’s mouth - a nu deschide gura; to keep one’s trap/yap shut - a-si ține gura/fleanca; to shut one’s bazoo / face / head - a-și ține gura/fleanca/? mitraliera (Cf. *are o mitralieră!*); to muzzle oneself - a-și pune lacăt la gură; to keep one’s tongue in check - a-și ține limba în frâu; to put a bridle on one’s tongue - a-și pune frâu la limbă, a-și ține/a-și băga limba-n gură; to bite one’s tongue – a-și ține gura, a ascunde o taină, a se abține (în ultimul moment) să spună ceva (nepotrivit); to seal one’s lips - a-i fi buzele peceluite; to button / zip one’s lip - a-și pune lacăt la gură, a avea/? a-i fi gura cusută*

Modest as they might be, the *GURĂ – MOUTH* paradigms in English and Romanian richly illustrate the metasememic mechanism and the way speech communities experience and lexicalize LA events, generating some practical metalanguage, which usually censures the use to settle the norm. (Cf. Herseni 1975). As the transfer of meaning operates between concrete, physical entities, the paradigms more readily lend themselves to a semantic approach.¹⁹ Their sememic configuration includes among the primary or obligatory semes some mergers of the Target and the Vehicle terms: (+Communication), (+Animate), (+Human), (+Vocal), (+Speed), (+Iterative). Secondary features are idiosyncratic and they decisively account for the extensions of meaning which have been lexically integrated as “dead metaphors.” It is the Reporter’s positive or negative evaluation of the context that will yield a metaphorical or emotional reading, in terms of different dimensions: (+Sound), (+Shape), (+Attitude), (+Male), and style, i.e. (+Pejorative), (+Jocular /+ Ironic), (+Archaic), etc. The feature (+Sound) pertains to the vocal dimension, where the transfer implies similarity of the Speaker’s voice, in terms of pitch and tone, to animal, mechanical, and musical sounds. Hence the evaluation of the Speaker’s vocal performance as “noisy,” “musical,” etc. or of the Speaker’s manner of speaking, as “cheerful,” or “aggressive” attitude.

¹⁹ Names of animals, flowers, and trees are said to embody taxonomic concepts and are usually referred to as ‘natural kind’ words. Therefore, unlike ‘cultural kinds’ such as ‘toys’ they seem to form a well defined, discrete semantic field.

The transfers to MOUTH and SPEAKER follow three paths:

1. (+Animate) < (+Animate) --> BIRD/MAMMAL = MOUTH; SPEAKER
(+Human) < (-Human)
2. (+Animate) < (-Animate) --> OBJECT = MOUTH; SPEAKER
(+Human) < (-Human)
3. (+Animate) < (+Animate) --> SPEAKER = SPEAKER
(+Human) < (+Animate)

Romanian: (1) *cioc, clanț, clonț, (cio)clonț, plisc; caragață, cață (S,M),²⁰ cățea, coțofană, gaiță, papagal, pitpalacă, pițigoi, pupăză (S,M), țarcă (S,M)*; (2) *clanță, fleancă, fleoancă, fleoarcă, fleoarță, fofelniță, leoarbă, perie, meliță, moară, morișcă, râșniță; mitralieră; caterincă, cobză, flașnetă, flaut, muzicuță, patefon, pian, radio, surlă, trâmbiță, trombon*; (3) *bârfă, mahalagiu, mahalagioaică, țată, Cheptea, Manda*.

Several derivatives name the Speaker: *limbut(ă), bârfitor, clănțău, flecar, gargaragiu, guraliv, limbut(ă), palavragiu, pălăvrăgioaică, pisălog, taclagiu, vorbagiu*.

English: (1) *bazoo, gab, gob, jaw; yap*; (2) *mill,²¹ sieve*; (3) *tell-tale*.

Most English units are compounds or derivatives of onomatopoeic metaphorical verbs or manner of speaking verbs. They refer mainly to the Speaker: *clapper* ('mouth'); *babbler(mouth), blabber(er), bag of wind, blowhard, chatterbox, chatter(er), clacker, clapper, gabber, gabbler, gasbag, gossip, gossip (monger), jabberer, magpie, nag(ger), prater, prattler, prattle-box, (potato) trap; rattler, rattle-trap, squealer, (tittle-)tattler, tattletale, windbag, yapper*.

Articulator metaphors hardly extend their borders across word classes. Compare: *gură, guraliv, gureș – mouth (S, M, Activity) – mouthy, big-mouth; limbă, limbut, limbăreț, limbuți, limbuție – tongue, tongue-lashing, tongue-work; clonț, clonțos; clanță, clănțău, clănțâni, clănțăneală, clănțânit; meliță, melița; gab, gabber, gabby; gab, gabble, gabbler, gabbling, gabblement*. Occasionally, articulator noun phrases may also denote the Speaker: Compounds are typical of the English paradigm, e.g. *blabermouth, chatterbox, gasbag, loudmouth, magpie, windbag; gură-bogată/spartă*. Denominal verbs are also rare, e.g. *gab, jaw*.

Based on the opposition [+/-Human], that is Bird and Object (technical or musical), the Romanian paradigm consists of homogeneous groups, which, either by a concrete image or by phonetic symbolism, evoke a certain Source domain. The English paradigm is mapped mainly onto the Human or Animal mouth and face (*bazoo, gab, gob, jaw, trap, yap*).

Subject to selection restrictions, the lexical items *gură* and *mouth* themselves have built up expressive phrases. Yet, even more specific are their frequently slangy congeners, which evoke different milieux. Compare: a face *gură / gât; a da cu gura ; a-i*

²⁰ That is S(peaker), M(outh).

²¹ In internet language, the word refers to one's 'mother-in-law'.

da cu prafornița²² /plaftorița; a face gură / muzică, a lua pe cineva în fabrică; a se lua în gură cu cineva; a bate din chieptene / a bate ciamburul; i-a ieșit un sfânt din gură;²³ a trece din gură în gură; a-i merge / umbla gura ca rășnița / ca melița,²⁴ a-și bate / strica gura (degeaba); Tine-ți fleura/gura/*morișca/*rășnița/*flașneta/*trâmbița! Nu-i tace muzicuța/fleanca /*moara toată ziua! Tine-ți/ închide-ți/tacă-ți fleanca/gura/clanța/clonțul /clanțul!/*radioul! Tacă-ți cața/ clanța/clonțul/clanțul/*caterinca! să nu-ți mai aud clanțul! Păzește-ți clanța!; a se lua (cu cineva) la clanță; a ține clanț cu cineva; o clanță de femeie = ‘a scold’; a avea cobză/papagal; Shut your mouth/trap/ yap! You have yap, you know? You would have to open your big bazoo/*yap and tell everything; You shut your gob!; the gift of the gab.

The present state of research in field analysis calls for approaches to narrower paradigms or subfields, with a view to integrating them to the larger LA field. This is exactly what we have done: specified the paradigms, indicated where further feature specification is necessary, so that we should be able to account for the shapes and shades of our experience.

While “translating” the language of physical entities and events into idiomatic linguistic structures,²⁵ metaphor has “packed” experience and enhanced awareness of sameness and difference. The metaphorization of linguistic action through the articulators is just a sample of the huge open conceptual system which structures the speakers’ perception of the world. The mapping of the articulators onto the conceptual system has captured both physical and attitudinal dimensions of the Speaker’s linguistic performance in “image schemas” (Cf. Lakoff 1987: 271ff),²⁶ such as the CONTAINER, the CONDUIT, and the UP-DOWN analogies.

Differences in style (familiar, pejorative, slangy, archaic, etc.) and in rhetorical effect will allow for cross linguistic references in a shared conceptual space, even if the languages may not have perfectly matching lexicalized counterparts. We therefore think that, after scanning semantic configurations and selection restrictions, stylistic equivalence, which is a matter of degree rather than of meaning, would do the job as a translation technique.

²² S. Dumistrăcel (1980) mentions that while phrases based on “moară, rășniță ..., meliță” express intensity, duration and speed, *a da cu prafornița* also connotes ‘to offend’.

²³ Synonymic expressions: *Sfântă* vorbă a spus; A vorbit *sfânt*; Adevăr grăit-a.

²⁴ Part of a **reversible semantic equation**, this has been referred to as a **reciprocal** metaphor (Cf. idem: 203) by which the striking part of a scutcher, the scutch blade (as well as its beating sound), was named after *limbă* (*tongue*), afterwards to be lexicalized as *melițat*, cf *a melița* = ‘a vorbi mult, a flecări, a trâncăni’.

²⁵ „Legătura *metaforelor* cu *expresiile idiomatice* se impune de la sine prin faptul că ele au aceeași funcție stilistică, expresivitatea, iar din punct de vedere logic, prin faptul că atât unele și celelalte reprezintă un anumit sens (figurat)...” (Dumistrăcel, 1980: 124)

²⁶ The linguist argues that part of these schemas derive from the Speaker’s experience of the human body, that is, from the experiential base of “containment.”

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Les paradigmes métaphoriques GURĂ et MOUTH (BOUCHE)

L'ouvrage aborde comparativement, du point de vue de la sémantique cognitive, les paradigmes connotatifs *gură* et *mouth* et constate une plus grande diversité et homogénéité des paradigmes en roumain. Les métaphores renvoient à la communication dans le règne animal (avant tout chez les oiseaux) et aux sons produits par des outils et des instruments de musique. Le modèle conceptuel prédominant des expressions métaphoriques avec *gură* et *mouth* est la métaphore *container*.

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