ONOMASIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE VERBAL IDIOMS WITH KEY ELEMENT OF TURKISH ORIGIN

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Abstract:

This study addresses a certain category of Romanian verbal idioms based on key terms of Turkish origin. More specifically, we have in mind the thematic groups from which Romanian borrowed the terms, by integrating the respective Turkish loans into phrases copied from old Turkish or created on Romanian land. The onomasiological criterion applied here reflects the areas of contact between the two cultures, in the period of time between the 17th and the 20th centuries.

Keywords:

Verbal idiom, Romanian, Turkish, loan, semantic evolution, onomastics.

1. The onomasiological criterion in the classification of idioms

The so-called "thematic grouping" of verbal idioms is clearly a purely methodological manoeuvre, designed to provide a first level of logical-semantic ordering of dynamic structures, eternally suited to changes, by their nature. The criterion used is the onomasiological, e.g. a notional system of ordering the terms, based on what E. Coşeriu called "nomenclature domains". The working tools would be those taken from lexicography, and the models - the older dictionaries of ideas, of the kind writen from a logical-linguistic perspective, theorized and elaborated in the middle of the 20th century by R. Hallig and W. von Wartburg. In fact, it is about domains of reality - names of elements and principles of the organization of the Universe, names of human qualities, terms for categories and social relations, words that refer to aesthetic and philosophical concepts, etc. In the practice of linguistic research, anyone who attempts such an ordering of lexical material notes how

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unstable the boundaries between a category and another are. The general and the individual often overlap, the terms that designate quantities and qualities can change their place among themselves, the "dimensions" prove to be inconsistent; also in time and space, the material and spiritual values either appear too broadly or too narrowly integrated into an onomasiological group or another. So, even if we narrow down the thematic groups to a very simple scheme, they do wrong either by "generalization and non-defining" or by "excessive particularisation."

However, researchers continue to use this criterion because it reveals a certain link between language and thought. That is why we find it applied also to the field of Turkish language.

As far as we are concerned, we did not borrow from the thematic groups used by the quoted Turkologist, although the lexical series inventoried by him under the generic name "Semantic Spheres of Loans" are as logically selected as possible. Our reticence comes primarily from the ascertainment that we are on moving ground, eternally prone to change, to integration of a word into a group or another.

In our case, the situation is somewhat more complicated because of the bivalent status of idioms: the meaning of component terms is quite different from the general meaning of idioms. Consequently, we opted for the grouping of idioms according to the primary, concrete-denotative meaning of the key term. We have done this, first of all, because this is the word coming from Turkish, in the material studied by us, and this is the one taken into account by the objective of our study. Secondly, it is the one that imprints the general sense of the idiom, even if not directly, but through a rather complicated semantic evolution sometimes. In principle, we have terms such as "food and drink", "clothing", "finance-trade", etc. which became abstract and loaded with generalized symbols referring to human communities (social relationships, human qualities and defects, etc.) so that, all onomasiological groups should be reduced to an all-encompassing one: "Abstractions."

So if we say *"a îmbrăcat caftanul"*, we can understand exactly what the statement says denotatively. In such a context, it is not clear whether we are dealing with a idiom or not. In the figurative language, however, the statement means “he/she was raised to a high social-administrative rank." In other words, it is difficult to decide whether the term caftan should be recorded in the clothing group or in social relations and hierarchies group. I

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chose the first group, because the abstraction and metaphorization transfer them all automatically to the other group, which cancels any attempt at onomasiological grouping.

In some cases, the polysemantism of the key term, obtained through extensions of sense, poses a thematic framing problem even before being integrated into an idiom. For example, *astereală* means both "lining from a coat" (from a dress or skirt especially) as well as "the lining of thin boards from the roof of the houses". Therefore, in which group should the word be included - "clothing" or "house-building"? Not even a reference to the explanatory and etymological dictionaries of Turkish language, which in their turn send to the Arabs, Persians, etc., does not clarify us, because the process of meaningful movements, extensions, specializations, etc. had begun in those languages. And, anyway, for our analysis corpus, the sense that counts was the abstract, figurative one:

a face ceva cu astereală
means "to do a good thing", "to act rationally"

It often happens that the key word loses its original meaning by changing the support verb and by some details of phraseology (the appearance of some connectors, additional nominal or adverbial components, etc.). There is a big difference between ***a plăti*** *bir* (literal sense) and ***a da*** *bir* ***cu fugiții*** (metaphorical sense). Other times, the idiom itself does not look structurally different from the primary denotative grammar construction (verb + noun case), but the sense of the former is granted by the wider communicative context in which it is placed. The external referent changes the overall meaning of the construction, altering its grammatical status. *A luat caimacul (cafelei)* is an usual declarative sequence ("he/she took / removed the foam of the coffee"), consisting of the predicate, the noun acting as direct object , and possibly the noun attribute as an additional referent. Whereas, *a luat caimacul (afacerii)* is a metaphorical sequence ("He took the best out of a business deal"), where the verb + first noun group forms a single lexico-semantic and morphological unit, and "business" is the additional reference in the wider context of the respective communication sequence.

Consequently, the safest way is to place the key term in its denotative onomasiological group. Even then we are confused by the polysemantism, as we have seen, which brings with it ambiguities, unclear relationships between gender and species, between the hyponym and the hypernym, etc.

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In the following pages, we reduced the thematic groups to the minimum necessary, illustrating each group with fewer terms than those found in our corpus (see end index). Even so, classifications are questionable: "*a da buluc* "was classified as "Abstractions", but" *buluc"* has a concrete meaning, in diachrony, cf. böllük "small army of rapid intervention". We have, however, considered such an approach necessary, because it creates a real world image that generated the treasure of verbal idioms discussed here.

2. Thematic diversity of key words

As we know, most of the idioms are built around the words of the main lexical fund of a language (VF), which are basically old terms with great stability in language development and with great power of derivation, composition, conversion and generally generators of new lexical structures, among which metaphorical terms and idioms occupy an important place. In the case of the Romanian language, it is the words of Latin origin (popular), as well as some terms from the Thracian and Dacian substrate, with productivity above the average of the descendants formed by internal means.

However, many lexemes from the subsequent etymological layers, such as those of Greek, Turkish or Slavic origin, have also entered the fundamental vocabulary and have become productive in every day Romanian, including under this form, the idioms that we are dealing with in this article. Referring only to the Turkish background, we can present the following situation, based on the Romanian Verbal Idioms Index from the reference book written by Florica Dimitrescu: of the approx. 800 lexical units of the verbal idioms, about 121 are built around a term of Turkish origin. Statistically, this means 15.1 units of the total count.

We recall that by the "key term" we understand the word that gives the denotative or metaphorical meaning of the idiom. It is, of course, especially about the second meaning, the connotative, which expresses the state of fact described in the idiom. For example, in case an expression like "a ieși la maidan", the key word is, in our opinion, the word maidan, because it shows the state designated by the entire phrase: "he came out of a difficult situation." We bring as evidence for our interpretation three series of facts of language:

a) The same logical concept is expressed by different key words, but which reproduce the same metaphorical image, namely the clarification of a dilemmatic situation, the successful completion of a difficult action:

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a ieşi la ***liman***
a ieşi la ***mal***
a ieşi la ***lumină***
a ieşi ***basma curată*** etc.

We note that in this synonymous residual series, which could be long continued, two of the four key words are of Turkish origin (liman and basma) – the latter, with an epithet that completes the metaphorical meaning, it is true –, one is Thracian and Dacian (mal) and one of Latin origin (lumină).

b) The same term appears in other idioms, which express somewhat the same concept, but through another verb-vehicle: a (o) scoate la maidan

c) Finally, we could add the argument that the term "maidan" appears in many other types of idioms, a sign of lexical productivity, which, in turn, is a sign of the frequency that that word had in the usual speech, in a certain age in the history of the Romanian language: ca pe maidan, a maidanez, etc.

The latter example is a recent derivative creation that shows that the term, although old, has not entered the passive vocabulary, but has been readjusted in the vocabulary of the younger generations, which are usually the promoters of the new lexical creations.

Returning to the corpus we are talking about here, we can see that the thematic areas to which the key terms of Turkish origin around which the Romanian verbal idioms are built can be configured in a fairly coherent manner around centers of interest in the mentality and the existence of the community of speakers who generated them. In the treatises, the respective thematic groups are broken down after periods of linguistic contacts between the native population and the successive waves of population of Turkish origin established on the Romanian territories or who came only in economic, political and cultural contact with the Romanian speakers.

First, there are journaled old influences of the Turks-Tatar populations that have passed over the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic territory, namely those of the Pecenese, who temporarily settled in Moldova, Eastern Muntenia (9th century), Transylvania and Dobrogea (10th-11th centuries), which left linguistic traces exclusively in toponymy (Peceneaga, Pecinisca, etc.) and the Cumanians, who presumably had come from the northern Black Sea steppes in the 11th century (see above, chapter on the Turkish-tatarian ethnolinguistic element in Romania) and would have remained in the Wallachian territories for several centuries. Coming from them there are Romanian toponyms (Comana, Bărăgan, Teleorman, Covurlui);

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anthroponymics (Coman, Itu, Talaba); words in the field of medieval military organization (beci, baltag, buzdugan, dușman, ceată, toi), in the field of clothing, household objects, as well as names of plants and animals, occupations, etc. (*aslam* „cămătă", *bardacă, catâr, cazan, cioban, hambar, maramă, suman* etc.)

Separately, there are recorded thematic groups of Romanian words coming from the Ottoman Turks from the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries and they entered the Romanian language in two stages: the 15th-17th centuries; 18th and 19th centuries. The former are more frequent and used in popular environments, the latter being mostly used in writing or in the neat talk of the Phanariot era (1711-1821). All these words refer to the house and the objects in the house (*acaret, balama, divan*); food and beverages (*baclava, musaca, cafea, rachiu*); clothing (*basma, ciorapi*); flora and fauna (*dovleac, zambilă, bursuc*); trade (*chilipir, cântar, saftea*); trades, tools, parts (*băcan, cazangiu, cazma, pingea*); attributes (*ageamiu, lichea*); words for abstractions (*berechet, belea, cusur, hal, tabiet*); various meanings (*bacșiș, ciubuc, haram, halal, zaiafet*).

As for the ad hoc corpus of words taken from different sources (Şăineanu, DLR, Dimitrescu, Suciu), we notice that the lexical elements usually have more than one way to contribute to the forming of verbal idioms in the Romanian language. Obviously, the quoted sources do not record all the Romanian verbal idioms that we find either in every day speech, in the lexicographic works of various types, or in some literary works.

3. Onomasiological groups determined by the key term

3.1. The house and the objects in the house

a avea acareturi (multe) meaning "to be rich"
a nu mai ști numărul acareturilor meaning "to be rich"
a tăia alatul meaning "to untie" "to release"
a face ceva cu astereală meaning"to work wisely"
a rămâne cu ochii la bagdadie meaning *(bagdadie* „tavan sau perete din șipci tencuite")
a-și ieși din balamale meaning "to become very angry"
a unge balamalele
a pune bina pe cineva meaning "to trust" (cf. *Bina* meaning "building")
a pune la butuc

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a trage cu bidineaua meaning "to cover a stupidity/a thing badly done"
a-şi lua calabalâcul meaning " to leave"
a-şi face calabalâcul meaning" to pack his/her things"
a avea parte de calabalâc here meaning: " to make a lot of noise"
a se scula cu faţa la cearceaf meaning "not to be in a good mood"
a albi cearceafurile
a lega la ciochină meaning "abandon someone to his/her fate"
a pune la ciochină meaning " to forget "
a-şi rupe ciochinele degeaba meaning "to walk around in vain"
a spânzura/a atârna la ciochină meaning " not to care", " careless "
a face conac
a trece prin dârmon
a sta de divan
a ajunge la divan
a se da în dulap
a întoarce pe cineva ca în dulapuri
a juca pe cineva în dulap
a-i trage un dulap
a învârti dulapuri
a învârti/a întoarce chichiţe şi dulapuri
a bate duşumeaua
a băga un fitil
a lua (un) fitil
a pune un fitil
a da câte un ibrişin (pe la nas)
a trage un ibrişin
a lua luleaua (neamţului)
a schimba macazul
a face muşama
a trage oblonul meaning "to close temporary or for good a business", "to cease doing or talking about something"
a duce cu preşul meaning "to lie to someone"
a da tina
a da tava
a sta cu ochii în tavan
a ridica până la tavan
a atinge tavanul

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a-ți pica tavanul în cap a sta pe tandur

Statistically, there are 35 idioms included in these series of the 121 units selected by us, which means 25% of the total Turkish words and 4% of the thematic groups considered here.

From vehicle verb, we notice the series appearing in the idioms constructed with any other type of key words: *a băga (to introduce)* (1); *a da (to give)* (4); *a duce (to carry)* (1); *a face* (to do)(4); *a ieși (to exit)* (3); *a învârti* (to spin) (1); *a (se) lăsa* (1); *a(-i) lipsi* (to miss) (1); *a lua (to take)* (6); *a pune (to put)* (5); *a schimba* (to change) (1); *a spânzura (to hang)* (1); *a sta (to stay)* (1); *a trage (to shoot)* (3); *a trece (to pass)* (1); *a unge (to lubricate)* (1).

Of those idioms we added to the DLV list, (12 idiom units), a few use the above verbs: *a unge (to lubricate)*(1); a sta (to stay)(2), but most rely on other vehicle verb: *a ajunge* (*to reach)* (1); *a albi* (*to bleach)* (1); *a atinge (to touch)* (1); *a bate (to blow, to beat)* (1); *a pica (to drop, to fall)* (1); *a ridica* (*to lift*) (1); *a scula (to raise)* (1); *a ști (to know)* (1); *a trece (to pass)* (1).

Of the key words that are repeated with several support verbs, *fitil* (3 occurences) and *ibrișin* (2 occurences) can be noted. We will return to the analysis of the form and meaning of these idioms in due time.

3.2. Names of food and beverages:

a bea aldămașul meaning " to seal a deal by eating and drinking together"
a mânca boc
a-i sări bâzdâcul meaning "to become/get angry "
a sufla în borșul cuiva
a lua caimacul meaning "to take the best out of a deal/ situation "
a face chef meaning " to organize a party "
a face o ciorbă (lungă) meaning "to cook badly/ something with no taste"
a face (un) ghiveci meaning "to mix things up "
a ieși (un) ghiveci meaning " an unwanted combination of many different things "
a sufla în iaurt
a prinde maia
a-i sări mușțarul meaning " to get angry "
a pune sub obroc
a face papară
a face pastramă

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a ajunge pastramă
a face pilaf
a face ramazan
a-l tăia la ramazan
a o da pe rachiu
a găsi trufandale meaning "to find rare things " " to buy fresh/hard to find food "
a o da pe rachiu meaning " to have a drinking problem "
a bea tutun meaning "to smoke"
(a avea) răbdare și tutun ș.a. meaning "to be patient "

In most cases the process of preparing food expressed by key words explains the distribution of support verbs: a face (to make) (8 occurrences in DLV plus 3 other in the complementary series, thus 11 in total); *a pune(to put) (3); a(-i) sări(to jump, to burst) (2); a sufla (to blow)(2); a da (to give) (2); a pune (to put) (2); a ajunge (to get), a bea (to drink), a găsi (to find), a lua (to take), a ieși(to come out), a face(to do), a mânca (to eat), a prinde(to catch), a tăia(to cut) (1 each).*

If we refer to the key words, they express cooked foods, ingredients, elements of various dishes, beverages, etc.

The meanings often result from the failure to explain the recipe, the exaggeration of processes, actions that contradict logic or moral norms. One idiom has even a scatological a meaning: a mânca boc. We will return to them.

3.3. Terms for clothing

a păți o alagea
a-și respecta (ține) anteriul
a-i pica basmaua
a (nu) purta basma
a lega basmaua
a îmbrăca binișul
a îmbrăca caftanul
a pune la ciorap
a scoate de la ciorap
a turti fesul
a purta fesul (in expressions: *interesul poartă fesul*)

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a fețeli iacaua (from Romanian *iaca* " the collar of a woman's coat", see the Turkish *yaká* "neck")
a trage pe panglică
a-și ieși din șalvari
a trage cuiva un tighel
a ascunde sub tulpan

Obviously, there are many more, and the semantic field of clothing and footwear is more productive than many others. Significantly marked social symbolism shows that, in fact, "Clothes make the man"...

As expected, key words are part of the semantic field of the way of dressing (popular or aristocratic), with the social meanings associated (*a-și ține anteriul*), but also with those related to gender relations (*a nu purta basma* "to be a man"); to various states (agitation, worry, annoyance). Idioms and expressions of the type: *a pune*/*a scoate (de) la ciorap* can be integrated all so well in the thematic group of merchandise, finance, economic activities, because they are part of the range of the concept ("to save", "to use one's saved money"), richly represented by expressive idioms: *a produce/ a ține/a scoate (de) la saltea* (with other key-words of different origins), ~ *la strujac*, etc.

Support verbs are also the ones we expect: *a pune* (to put), *a scoate* (to remove), *a lega* (to tie), *a purta* (to wear), *a trage* (to shoot), by 1-2, up to 3 occurrences, as most overlap the verb a purta (to wear).

3.4. The terms expressing flora and fauna

The actual idioms are very few, although the semantic fields of the two concepts contain quite many terms of Turkish origin:

a fi (un) catâr meaning "to be very stubborn"
a trage ca un catâr meaning "to work very hard"
a fi tare de dovleac
a avea dovleacul mare/tare
a avea dovleacul bun
a fi delicat ca o zambilă
a fi parfumat ca o zambilă etc.

These idioms have a strong expressive load, and the floral and animal symbolism which is rich in any natural language explains this, as well as, the metaphorical expressions generated by these key words.

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3.5. Musical instruments

a avea cobză
a bate ciamburul
a bate darabana

Idioms are few and can rather form a subgroup in the vast group of "objects" of various types. It is again about the symbolic values of the musical instruments, of the type of music performed, with social, moral, more than aesthetic meanings. These attributes favor the formation of new words by derivation, composition, etc. For example, *a avea cobză* means "being skilled in the art of persuasion," "enchanting someone with his/her mastery of expression." This is how the verb *a cobzări* can be justified. It is used frequently even today, although "*cobza*" is a relatively old instrument in the practice of instrumental music. However, the equivalent *a chitări* has not been created. The denomination verb is commonly used, along with other metaphorical idioms and expressions: *a avea papagal*, *a duce cu vorba*, *a încânta* (from the same aesthetic and communicative sphere), *a duce cu zăhărelul* ș.a.

a bate ciamburul means both "to keep pace" and "to announce", "to spread the news", "to reveal a secret", then to "dance" etc., see DLR, s.v.

3.6. Children or adults games

a juca pe cineva sau ceva la arșice "to give away for nothing"

a da un pui de giol "to win everything", "to steal" (see Turkish *çöl* "the quantity of sheep bones that every gambler needs")

a juca la iazâc și tura "to flip the coin"

a face marț "to win without the benefit of the doubt"

a face otuzbirul "to play 31"

There are many more expressions, because when cultural clashes happen such "novelties" are in great demand as regards the influenced population. There are interesting deviations of sense, like the much-debated derived from *otuzbir* "31", got to *a lua cu otzbirul* "to take by force", "to be violent."

3.7. Trade, finance, economic activities

Idioms based on key terms in this semantic group are explained by two extra-linguistic circumstances:

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a) The importance of money, resources and financial transactions in the life of any human community - thus an ongoing motivation for anthropology

b) The historical background of the submission of the Romanian countries, including Transylvania, to the Ottoman Gate and, earlier, the ethno-linguistic contacts due to the movements of the pre-Roman populations on the present Romanian territory.

In the synthesis paper *Romania and Europe* ..., 2010, Bogdan Murgescu devotes a consistent subchapter to the impact of Ottoman domination on the economy of the Romanian countries, studying the economic pressure exerted in the suzerainty relationship, the payment of the reverential "haraci" and "peșcheș", by supplying the raw materials, products and labor, with the analysis of taxation, trade and productive structures in the fourteenth century (1396) - the nineteenth century (1877). It was normal for such a long period of economic contacts to leave deep traces in the specialized vocabulary of the Romanian language, even though in the Romanian countries the idea of "pașalâc", meaning "total domination" was only partial and temporary.

a lăsa amanet
a face alișveriș
a pune calupul
a da bir cu fugiții
a prinde cu ocaua mică
a nu avea o para (chioară)
a câștiga paraua
a nu face o para
a împușca paraua
a ști câte parale face
a fi de trei parale
a lega paraua cu trei noduri
a lua la trei parale
a face pe cineva de trei parale
a face safteaua

The list can be long, even if we leave aside terms like: *bacșiș*, *ciubuc*, *peșcheș* etc.

The fact that the same key word generates numerous metaphorical expressions and metaphors with different verbs (cf. pará) shows how frequent

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some words from this semantic sphere were in the speech of these centuries of cultural and political-economic contacts (14th century - 19th century). Their vitality even in the present day and age, confirms their old frequency. We will come back with detailed analyzes of denotational and connotative meanings of some of these words and phrases in the case study that concludes this chapter.

3.8. Human qualities and defects

a fi abraș (la inimă) "to be evil", "to be obstinate"
a ieși abraș "to be defeated"
a avea un adet "have a habit"

And these are more numerous, in fact, because of the already human predisposition to make judgments about human qualities and defects. We chose only three relatively abstract terms in principle, but value judgments take the form of metaphors based on the vocabulary of concurrent objects in everyday life, as we have seen from the lists of other thematic groups.

3.9. Abstraction names

a face cuiva alai meaning "to make a scandal"
a lua cu anasâna meaning „to take by force”
a ajunge la aman meaning "to get into trouble"
a lăsa pe cineva la aman meaning "to oblige someone", "to abandon someone in difficult times"
a zice aman meaning "to beg for forgiveness"
a nu da aman meaning "to refuse to forgive somenone"
a intra în bucluc meaning "to get into trouble"
a da buluc meaning "to swoop"
a face cabul meaning "to get to an agreement"
a avea cabul meaning "to be superstitious"
a face tuflă
a face zulă meaning "to steal"
da cu zula meaning "to steal"

I have shown above how almost each thematic group relies on the process of abstraction of key terms within the metaphor of the whole construction. For example, tc. *bölűk* meant a small, rapid military formation

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specializing in robbery incursions. The Romanian idiom is based on an extension of sense, which accompanies other lexico-semantic transfer mechanisms. So, such a group of idioms is, in fact, redundant.

4. Conclusions on TC distribution by onomasiologic groups

1. The key terms of Turkish origin in the structure of verbal idioms, metaphorical expressions and idioms of verbal value from ancient Romanian occupy an important place, primarily from a statistical point of view. Nearly 25% of structures of this type are based on a defining element derived from one of the layers of Turanian or Turk-Tartar influence.

2. Their frequency increases with variants which have in their structure different support-verbs (from Latin or non-Turkish bases), as well as non-verbal expressions (adjectival and noun phrases, etc.) with the same key term. There are also many derivative, composite, or conversion uses which come from the same basic terms.

3. The denotational meanings are intertwined with the connotative ones, and the latter are based on a popular symbolism, with material and spiritual referents at a general level.

4. There are several other semantic fields worth considering from this semantic-structural perspective.

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