

## ON THE CHALLENGES OF CONFUSABLES AS TRANSLATION TRAPS

It is often difficult to find the right word to express a message in our own language. So much the more difficult is it to find the right word(s) in order to render a message in another language, especially when the two languages are so different like English and Romanian. The arguments which are most often set forth are related to polysemy, synonymy and homonymy.

Besides the large number of traps in the English language into which the natives themselves may often fall, there are lots of traps in translating from English into Romanian, or viceversa. In this respect, Bryson's[1] opinion is as funny as true:

"Any language where the unassuming ... word *fly* signifies an annoying insect, a means of travel, and a critical part of a gentleman's apparel is clearly asking to be mangled".

1.1. By way of illustration, one cannot ignore the other meanings of the word **fly**. Thus, it may seem very interesting to consider the polysemy of **fly**, especially its figurative meanings in idiomatic phrases such as **fly on the wheel**[2] 'a person who overestimates their influence', **fly on the wall**[3] 'an unnoticed observer of a particular situation', or in idiomatic collocations such as **a fly in the ointment**[4] 'a minor irritation spoiling one's enjoyment of something' and **fly in amber** 'a curious relic of the past' [5].

In addition to the denotative meanings of the verb **fly**, its figurative meanings are also obvious in such phrases as **fly a kite**[6] 'try something out in order to test opinions' → a sonda terenul, a încerca să vadă de unde bate vântul[7], **fly off the handle** (fam) 'lose one's temper unexpectedly' → a-și ieși din sărite/ pepeni/ țâțâni; a-i sări muștarul/ bâzdâcul/ țandăra; a se aprinde brusc; a i se sui piperul la nas[8], **fly the nest** (fam) 'leave one's parents in order to live on one's own' → a-și lua zborul, a se descurca singur, a trăi pe cont propriu, **fly the pit** (humourous) 'to move unexpectedly without paying the rent' → a o șterge, a zbura din colivie[9].

Such expressions are used in both common core English and in functional languages: e.g. **a fly-by-night peeson** → trecător, pasager; (ec.) insolubil[10], **fly the eagle** (pol. Am. E) → a ține un discurs bombastic propăvăduind idei expansioniste[11]. Special attention has to be devoted to words such as **flyweight** (box) → categoria muscă, and **flywheel** → volant, which are not collocations but one-word compounds[12].

However, in spite of its polysemy, the word **fly** is not included in dictionaries of troublesome words and phrases. It is worth mentioning, though, as an example of polysemy.

Moreover, I would consider it troublesome in the collocational idiomatic patterns referred to above which may be included among confusables as translation traps.

1.2. Confusables cause great problems in translation, being the source of many misinterpretations and translation errors.

Sometimes the difference(s) between confusables may be explained only in terms of collocability. Their meaning becomes clear only in collocations. In this respect, an example may be the pair of confusable adjectives **distressful**, **distressing**: e.g. **distressful circumstances** (involving stress) and **distressing news** (causing stress). The same may hold valid with the pair of adjectives **disordered**, **disorderly** used with the meaning *nearanjat/ în dezordine* and *dezordonat*, respectively: e.g. **a disordered shelf**, **a disorderly room/crowd**. Moreover, they can be included in the category of false friends.

Furthermore, a series of confusables such as **discord**, **discordance**, **discordancy** may be translation traps[13] because the differences in their meanings are difficult to perceive, and in monolingual dictionaries each of them is explained by using the other two. Thus, it is in a

collocation such as **martial discord** that the meaning of *discord* → dezacord is understood as lack of harmony → lipsă de armonie. The other two words are specific to Am.E. In addition, the noun **discordance** seems to be usually employed in the singular with the meaning of general discord, i.e. difference of opinions, whereas the noun **discordancy** seems to be frequently employed with its plural form meaning controversies and involving repeatedness.

On the other hand, there are three English nouns used for the Romanian noun **întrerupere**: **discontinuance**, **discontinuation**, **discontinuity**. The first is used with the meaning cessation (întrerupere, încetare): e.g. **business discontinuance**. The second and the third are used in American English. The noun **discontinuation** is related to a breach in one's activity: e.g. **discontinuation of work**, whereas **discontinuity** refers to some gap or break in something (surface): e.g. **major discontinuities** on the surface of the moon[14].

2. There are a lot of pairs and groups of words which are easily confused both by natives and by translators because their forms are misleading.

These **confusion-generating forms** may be considered at the phonological level, on the one hand, and at the morphological level, on the other.

**2.1. Phonologically** speaking, there are a lot of words which can be confused because they are 'soundalikes', i.e. homophones:

e.g. *brake, break* |breɪk|, *breach, breech* |brɪ:tʃ|, *broach, brooch* |brəʊtʃ|, *canvas, canvass* |'kænvəs|, *cask, casque* |kɑ:sk|, *cast, caste* |kɑ:st|, *sensor, censor* |'sensə|, *check, cheque* |tʃek|, *chord, cord* |kɔ:d|, *council, counsel* |'kaʊnsəl|, *cruise, cruse* |kru:z|, *cubical, cubicle* |'kju:bɪkəl|, *curb, kerb* |kɜ:b|, *currant, current* |'kʌrənt|, *curtsy, curtesy* |'kɜ:tsi|, *dependant, dependent* |dɪ'pendənt|, *dollar, dolour* |'dɒlə|, *doolie, dooly* |'du:li:|, *enquiry, inquiry* |ɪn'kwɪəri|, *faint, feint* |feɪnt|, *fair, fare* |feə|, *faze, phase* |'feɪz|, *flair, flare* |fleə|, *flea, flee* |fli:|, *indict, indite* |ɪn'daɪt|, *main, mane* |meɪn|, *maize, maze* |meɪz|, *pail, pale* |peɪl|, *pendant, pendent* |'pendənt|, *pray, prey* |preɪ|, *rack, wrack* |ræk|, *reign, rein* |reɪn|, *review, revue* |ri'vju:|, *stake, steak* |steɪk|, *tail, tale* |teɪl|, *vale, veil* |veɪl|, *voracious, voracious* |və'reɪʃəs|.

At the phonological level, other pairs of words show **vowel alternation**, **vowel-diphthong alternation**, or **consonant alternation**.

### 2.1.2. Vowel alternation

e.g. *amend* |ə'mend|, *emend* |ɪ'mend|, *balk* |bɔ:lk|, *bulk* |bʌlk|, *billow* |'bɪləʊ|, *bellow* |'beləʊ|, *breath* |breθ|, *breathe* |brɪ:ð|, *collision* |kə'lɪʒən|, *collusion* |kə'lu:ʒən|, *confidant* |'kɒnfɪdənt|, *confident* |'kɒnfɪdənt|, *crud* |krʌd|, *crude* |kru:d|, *deference* |'defərəns|, *difference* |'dɪfrəns|, *desert* |'dezət|, *dessert* |dɪ'zɜ:t|, *don* |dɒn|, *done* |dʌn|, *dram* |dræm|, *drum* |drʌm|, *expanse* |ɪk'spæns|, *expense* |ɪk'spens|, *fallow* |'fæləʊ|, *fellow* |'feləʊ|, *feast* |fi:st|, *fist* |fɪst|, *flutter* |'flʌtə|, *flatter* |'flætə|, *mash* |mæʃ|, *mesh* |mes|, *master* |'mɑ:stə|, *muster* |'mʌstə|, *meal* |mi:l|, *mill* |mɪl|, *moral* |'mɔ:rəl|, *morale* |mə'reɪl|, *mute* |mjʊ:t|, *mutt* |mʌt|, *paddle* |'pædl|, *peddle* |'pedl|, *parish* |'pəri|, *perish* |'perɪʃ|, *reward* |ri'wɔ:d|, *reword* |ri'wɔ: d|, *slather* |'slætə|, *slaughter* |'slɔ:tə|, *snooty* |'snu:ti|, *snotty* |'snɒti|, *splatter* |'splætə|, *splutter* |'splʌtə|, *staff* |stɑ:f|, *stuff* |stʌf|, *warring* |'wɔ:riŋ|, *worrying* |'wʌrɪŋ|, *warrior* |'wɔ:riə|, *worrier* |'wʌriə|.

### 2.1.3. Vowel- diphthong alternation

e.g. *bath* |bɑ:θ|, *bathe* |beɪð|, *blithering* |'blɪðərɪŋ|, *blithsome* |'blaɪðsəm|, *boast* |bəʊst|, *boost* |bu:st|, *but* |bʌt|, *butt* |bʌt|, *butte* |bjʊ:t|, *chordal* |'kɔ:dəl|, *cordial* |'kɔ:diəl|, *compromis* |'kɒmprə,mi:|, *compromise* |'kɒmprə,maɪz|, *diva* |di:və|, *dive* |daɪv|, *dobby* |'dɒbi|, *dobie*

|'dəʊbrɪ|, *dom* |dɒm|, *dome* |dɒm|, *dun* |dʌn|, *dune* |'dju:n|, *draught* |dra:ft|, *drought* |draut|, *flake* |fleɪk|, *flak*, *flack* |flæk|, *inhuman* |ɪn'hju:mən|, *inhumane* |ɪn'hju:meɪn|, *mod* |mɒd|, *mode* |'mɔ:əd|, *nap* |'næp|, *nape* |neɪp|, *navvy* |'nævi|, *navy* |'neɪvi|, *slop* |slɒp|, *slope* |sləʊp|.

#### 2.1.4. Diphthong -vowel alternation

e.g. *abate* |ə'beɪt|, *abet* |ə'bet|, *canary* |'kænəri|, *cannery* |'kænəri|, *caper* |'keɪpə|, *capper* |'kæpə|, *chafe* |tʃeɪf|, *chaff* |tʃɑ:f| |tʃæf|, *dose* |dɒs|, *doss* |dɒs|, *dray* |dreɪ|, *dry* |draɪ|, *dree* |dri:|, *stable* |'steɪbəl|, *stubble* |'stʌbəl|

#### 2.1.5. Diphthong alternation

e.g. *compeer* |'kɒm'piə|, *compere* |'kɒmpɛə|

#### 2.1.6. Consonant alternation

e.g. *bath* |bɑ:θ|, *bathe* |beɪð|, *blighter* |'blaɪtə|, *blither* |'blaɪðə|, *breath* |breθ|, *breathe* |bri:ð|, *canal* |kə'næl|, *channel* |'tʃænəl|, *cancel* |'sɛnsəl|, *censor* |'sɛnsə|, *censure* |'sɛnsə|, *concede* |kən'si:d|, *conceit* |kən'si:t|, *deadly* |'dedli|, *deathly* |'deθli|, *delude* |dr'lʊ:d|, *deluge* |'delju:ʒ|, *descend* |dr'send|, *descent* |dr'sent|, *device* |dr'vaɪs|, *devise* |dr'vaɪz|, *divers* |'daɪvəz|, *diverse* |dar'və:s|, *dither* |'dɪθə|, *ditcher* |'dɪtʃə|, *douse*, *dowse* |dɒs|, *doze* |dɒz|, *errand* |'erənd|, *errant* |'erənt|, *relief* |rɪ'li:f|, *relieve* |ri'li:v|

#### 2.1.7. Consonant addition

e.g. *bellow* |'beləʊ|, *bellows* |'beləʊz|, *clam* |klæm|, *clamp* |klæmp|, *chum* |tʃʌm|, *chump* |tʃʌmp|, *sand* |sænd|, *sands* |sændz|

Mention should be made that vowel or consonant alternation may be combined with **shift of stress**:

e.g. *canal* |kə'næl|, *channel* |'tʃænəl|, *divers* |'daɪvəz|, *diverse* |dar'və:s|, *desert* |'dezət|, *dessert* |dr'zət|

**2.2. At the morphological level, a large number of pairs or groups of troublesome words are real traps in translation.**

##### 2.2.1. N-N pairs

admission, admittance  
advance, advancement  
apposition, opposition  
assent, assent  
assent, consent,  
assurance, insurance  
barbarism, barbarity  
base, basis  
bondman, bondsman  
boor, bore  
brake, break  
breach, breech  
camouflage, camouflet  
canal, channel  
canary, cannery  
canteen, cantina

cantle, cantling  
capa, cape  
carton, cartoon  
catch-up, catchup  
cessation, cession  
chord, cord  
chum, chump  
colleger, collegian  
collision, collusion  
commandment,  
commendation  
commissar, commissary  
commissionaire,  
commissioner  
  
commutator, commuter  
compeer, compere

complexion, complexity  
composer, compositor  
composite, compound  
conscience, consciousness  
consummation,  
consumption  
contention, contentment  
council, counsel  
curb, kerb  
curricle, curriculum  
data, dates  
defendant, defender  
deference, difference  
deliverance, delivery  
deportation, deportment  
disparagement, disparity  
dispensation, dispense

diplomat, diplomate  
 disposal, disposition  
 ditcher, dither  
 dooby, dobie  
 doolie, dooly  
 draft, draught  
 drop-off, drop-out  
 emergence, emergency  
 emigrant, immigrant  
 enormity, enormousness  
 enquiry, inquiry  
 expanse, expense  
 expectancy, expectation  
 failing, failure  
 fish, fishes  
 garb, garbage  
 genius, genus  
 groove, grove  
 informant, informer  
 installation, installment  
 intent, intention

### 2.2.2. N- N- N groups

cask, casque, casket  
 censor, censure, censer  
 chatelaine, cahteline, chat  
 (up) line  
 chink, Chink, Chinkie  
 courtesy, curtesy, curtsy  
 desert, deserts, dessert  
 discord, discordance,  
 discordancy

### 2.2.3. Adj. - Adj. pairs

alternate, alternative  
 amateurish, amatory  
 apposition, opposition  
 arbitral, arbitrary  
 ashen, ashy  
 auspicial, auspicious  
 balky, bulky  
 blithering, blithesome  
 bored, boring  
 candent, candescent  
 candid, candied  
 capacious, capacitive  
 carefree, careless  
 childish, childlike  
 chordal, chordial  
 classic, classical  
 comic, comical  
 commanding,  
 commendable  
 commutable, commutative  
 comprehensible,  
 comprehensive  
 compulsive, compulsory

confused, confusing  
 congruent, congruous  
 conscious, conscientious  
 consequent, consequential  
 contemptible,  
 contemptuous  
 credible, creditable  
 critic, critical  
 damn, damned  
 deadly, deathly  
 decorative, decorous  
 deductible, deductive  
 defective, deficient  
 defensible, defensive  
 deferrable, deferred  
 definite, definitive  
 degraded, degrading  
 dejected, disjected  
 delighted, delightful  
 denominational,  
 denominative  
 derisive, derisory  
 desirable, desirous  
 digestible, digestive  
 disappointed,  
 disappointing  
 disordered, disorderly  
 disposable, disposed  
 disrespectful, disrespectful  
 dissentient, dissentious  
 dissociable, dissocial  
 distinct, distinctive  
 divers, diverse  
 elemental, elementary  
 emotional, emotive  
 enviable, envious  
 envious, invidious  
 exhausting, exhaustive  
 expedient, expeditious  
 extant, extent  
 fearful, fearsome  
 fiddling, fiddly  
 fierce, fiery  
 fitful, fitted  
 fixated, fixed  
 flagged, flagging  
 forced, forceful  
 forgivable, forgiving  
 gold, golden  
 graceful, gracious  
 grieved, grievous  
 human, humane  
 immanent, imminent  
 impious, impish  
 impractical, impracticable  
 incredible, incredulous  
 indigenous, indigent  
 indistinct, indistinguishable

ingenious, ingenuous  
 inhuman, inhumane  
 insensible, insensitive  
 intent, intentional  
 laden, loaded  
 leisured, leisurely  
 manly, manish  
 masterful, masterly  
 righteous, rightful  
 seasonable, seasonal  
 sensible, sensitive  
 special, specious  
 unreasonable, unreasoning  
 vacant, vacuous  
 varied, various  
 vindicative, vindictive

### 2.2.4. Adj. - Adj. - Adj. groups

allusive, elusive, illusive  
 amenable, amiable,  
 amicable  
 barbarian, barbaric,  
 barbarous  
 benefic, beneficent,  
 beneficial  
 civic, civil, civilian  
 congeneric, congenial,  
 congenital  
 continual, continuative,  
 continuous  
 decretal, decretive,  
 decretory  
 depressed, depressing,  
 depressive  
 diffuse, diffusible, diffusive  
 distressed, distressful,  
 distressing  
 effective, effectual, efficient  
 entranced, entrancing,  
 entrenched  
 enviable, envious, invidious  
 explanatory, explicable,  
 expletive  
 fatal, fated, fateful  
 ineffective, ineffectual,  
 inefficient

### 2.2.5. N - Adj. pairs

blight, blithe  
 chilli, chilly  
 cleric, clerical  
 clinic, clinical  
 commode, commodious  
 confidant, confident  
 crud, crude

currant, current  
dependant, dependent  
dinghy, dingy  
dope, dopey  
errand, errant

### 2.2.6. V - V pairs

adjudge, adjudicate  
afflict, inflict  
alleviate, elevate  
allude, elude  
oppose, oppose  
attach, attack  
avoid, evade  
avouch, vouch  
boost, boast  
charted, chartered  
command, commend  
decompose, discompose  
decry, descry

deduce, deduct  
detract, distract  
disable, disenable  
distrust, mistrust  
elapse, lapse  
enjoin, join  
endanger, engender  
implicate, imply  
induce, induct  
merge, emerge  
\*\*\*  
fasten on, fasten onto  
follow up, follow up with  
fix up, fix up with  
get down, get down to  
give over, give over to  
give up, give up on, give up  
to  
go through, go through  
with

mess around, mess around  
with, mess with  
muck about, muck up  
\*\*\*  
approve, approve of  
become, become of  
believe, believe in

### 2.2.7. N -V pairs

advice, advise  
bath, bathe  
blighter, blither  
breath, breathe  
clam, clamp  
cloth, clothe  
cold pack, cold-pack  
device, devise  
dispensation, dispense  
disproof, disprove

### 2.2.8. The pairs of groups which are less frequent are the following:

- ❖ **Adj.- N:** *Cambrian, Cambric; directional, directory; duff, duffer; fair, fare; fallow, fellow;*
- ❖ **V- Adj.:** *decouple, decuple; collide, collied; disparage, disparate; leer, leery; drowse, drowsy;*
- ❖ **V - N:** *applaud, applause; avenge, revenge; broach, brooch; caper, capper; chafe, chaff; commandeer, commander; concede, conceit; cruise, cruse; descend, descent; keep away, keepaway;*
- ❖ **Adj. - Adj. - Adj. - Adj. groups:** *lone, lonely, lonesome, alone;*
- ❖ **N - N - Adj.:** *adherend, adherent, adhesive;*
- ❖ **N - N -N- Adj - Adj.:** *dud, dude, duds, duddy, duddish;*
- ❖ **N - Adj. - N:** *diagnosis, diagnostic, diagnostics;*
- ❖ **N - Adj. - Adj.:** *descendant, descendent, descendible; maniac, maniacal, manic; dough, doughy, doughy;*
- ❖ **N - Adj.- N- N:** *desert, deserted, deserts, dessert;*
- ❖ **Adj.-N- Adj:** *cameral, cameralist, cameralistic;disputable, disputant, disputations;*
- ❖ **Adj. - Adj. - N:** *civic, civil, civilian;*
- ❖ **Adj. - V-en:** *complected, completed; drab, drub;*
- ❖ **Adj. - V - Adj. - Adj.:** *dilatate, dilate, dilative, dilatory;*
- ❖ **Adj. - N- V:** *agape, gap, gape;*
- ❖ **Adj. - V- N - Adj:** *loath, loathe, loathing, loathsome;*
- ❖ **N - V- Adj. - Adj.:** *dot, dote, doting, dotty;*
- ❖ **Adj.- N- Adj- Adj.:** *dull, dullard, dullish, duly;*
- ❖ **Vt Vi/ Vi Vt:** *avouch, vouch; decompose, discompose;*
- ❖ **N - V- N:** *commandant, commandeer, commander;*
- ❖ **V-V-V:** *assure, ensure, insure;*
- ❖ **V-V-V-V-V:** *raise, rise, rouse, arise, arouse;*
- ❖ **V-N-N:** *ascend, ascent, assent;*
- ❖ **V-N-Adj. -N:** *dodge, dodger, dodgy, doge;*
- ❖ **V-Adj.- N-Adj. :** *dump, dumpish, dumpling, dumpy;*
- ❖ **Conj-N-N:** *but, butt, bute;*
- ❖ **V-V-N:** *billow, bellow, bellows;*
- ❖ **Adj.- Adv.:** *light, lightly; mere, merely;*
- ❖ **Adv. -Adj.:** *readily; ready;*
- ❖ **Adj.- Adv. - Adv.:** *outward, outwardly, outwards;*
- ❖ **Adv.- Adv.:** *alternately, alternatively; altogether, all together; exceedingly, excessively; especially, specially; first, firstly;*
- ❖ **Adv.- Adv. - Adv.:** *at last, lastly, last of all.*

2.2.9. There are pairs of troublesome adjectives which may be real traps for translators, i.e. the adjectives getting the suffix **-al** or **-ic**:

e.g. *clasic, classical, clinic, clinical, comic, comical, critic, critical, economic, economical, electric, electrical, ethnic, ethnical, magic, magical, tactic, tactical, topic, topical; capitalist, capitalistic, modern, modernistic, pessimist, pessimistic, sadist, sadistic.*

2.2.10. There are differences between past participle forms such as **certified - certificated, packaged - packed**, not to mention the basic differences between such forms as **drunk - drunken, or sunk-sunken**. They are usually pointed out when discussing the differences between pairs or groups such as **gold-golden, rot-rotten, wood - wooded - wooden**, and **wool-woolen- wolly**.

3. **Culture specific confusables** are some of the greatest translation traps. Some examples of such confusables are:

*assure - ensure - insure, cafe - cafeteria, canteen - cantina, carline - car line, centenary - centennial, cheveret - chevrete - chevrette, chilli- chilly, commisar - commissary, commissionaire - commissioner, commutator - commuter, comprehansible - comprehensive, council - counsel, dooby- dobie, dom-dome, doolie - dooly, dragon- dragoon.*

The explanations concerning the cultural differences are given either in brackets, like the indications of grammatical status, modality, register, variety of English, or as a cultural note. For example:

**council** |'kaʊnsəl| **n.** (+ *sing./pl. v.*) 1. a group of people appointed or elected to make laws, or to take decisions: *The matter was debated in the Security Council (fig.) There was a family council to decide what to do with the land:* **consiliu**. 2. (*esp. BrE*) the group representing local government in a town: *The council have told them to clean the streets:* **consiliu local/ municipal**. 3. **be on the council:** to be an elected member of it: *Her husband is on the council:* **a fi membru (ales) în consiliu**.

**Cultural note** In British English **council** is used for local government authority. It is not very common in the US, where the system of local government varies from state to state. That is why the Americans use the collocations: **city council, town council, county council**.

**counsel** |'kaʊnsəl| **n.** 1. (*law*) a lawyer (in Britain a **barrister**) defending someone in law court: *Neither of the parties were represented by counsel (= neither of them had lawyers). The judge called the defence counsel to set forth evidence:* **avocat**. 2. (*formal, or literary*) advice: *The president took counsel from some clever specialists:* **sfat**. 3. **to keep one's own counsel:** to keep one's opinions, or intentions secret: *He had been known to be a man who used to keep his own counsel:* **a nu-și spune secretul, a nu-și face cunoscute planurile, intențiile**.

**comprehensible** |kəmprɪ'hensəbəl| **adj. (to)** (*formal*) that can be made out: *It was a short, comprehensible speech appreciated by everybody. This document is comprehensible only to specialists:* **care se poate înțelege, inteligibil, clar**.

**comprehensive** |kəmprɪ'hensɪv| **adj.** 1. thorough, minute: *There had been comprehensive inspection of the whole factory. This article gives a comprehensive knowledge of the subject:* **minuțios; cuprinzător, vast**. 2. (*no comp. BrE.*) (of education) teaching pupils of different abilities over the age of 11: *She goes to the local comprehensive (school).*

**Cultural note.** The comprehensive system, introduced in 1965, replaced the old system of grammar schools and secondary moderns, which took pupils depending on whether they had passed or failed an exam called the eleven-plus. Over 80% of British pupils attend comprehensive schools.

Children are often put in groups according to their level of ability at a comprehensive: *We didn't want to send our son to a public school, we thought of the local comprehensive.*

**4. To conclude**, besides the explanations referring to the differences in meaning between confusable words, a dictionary of troublesome words or confusables is very useful for giving indications about usage, pronunciation, spelling, the contextualizations being as essential as their translation because they reinforce the meaning and show how words are used in context.

Last, but not least, an index of Romanian words and phrases corresponding to the English confusables is of a great help to the 'end-users'.

An ideal to touch is for such a 'beneficent' act of writing a book of *confusables as translation traps* to be 'beneficial' to the 'next-users' too.

#### NOTE

- [1] Bryson 1990: 2.
- [2] Reference is implicit to Aesop's fable of a fly sitting on the axle of a moving chariot and saying 'See what a dust I raise' (Knowles 2006: 261).
- [3] It may also occur as a modifier, e.g. *a fly-on-the-wall documentary* used with reference to 'a film making technique whereby events are merely observed and presented realistically with minimum interference rather than acted out under direction (ibidem).
- [4] It was originally used with biblical allusion to Ecclesiastes 10:1, 'Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour' (ibidem).
- [5] Allusion is made to the amber -trapped fossilized bodies of insects. "The image was given a different slant by Michael Crichton's thriller *Jurassic Park* (1990) and the Spielberg film based on it, in which the DNA essential to the recreation of dinosaurs was retrieved from the animal's blood supposedly fossilized with the insect that had fed from it" (ibidem).
- [6] This meaning is derived from the historical sense 'raise money on credit'. Thus, the sense of testing public opinion about "one's creditworthiness gave rise to the current figurative usage". (ibidem)
- [7] Nicolescu et al. 1982: 116.
- [8] Nicolescu et al. 1982: 116.
- [9] Nicolescu et al. 1982: 116.
- [10] Levițchi and Bantaș 1999: 342.
- [11] Nicolescu et al. 1982: 117.
- [12] Levițchi and Bantaș 1999: 343.
- [13] Croitoru 2004: 112.
- [14] Croitoru 2004: 111.

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#### ABSTRACT

*What are the challenges to be faced by learners of English when translating troublesome words, collocational patterns and idiomatic phrases into Romanian? The entries included in Confusables as Translation Traps with their contextualizations and Romanian equivalents may give you a clue about this.*