

**Ion Mării, *Harta lexicală semantică*, Editura Clusium, Cluj-Napoca, 2002, 189 p.**

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The work of I. Mării approaches the three fields announced in the title, the target being the field of dialectology, indicated by the determinate *harta* [the map], the order of determinants indicating the order of application in dialectology of the theories and outcomes resulting from the two fields. In short, the work actually deals with the judicious application of the structural semantics developed on the direction Saussure–Trubetzkoy/Hjelmslev–Coseriu in approaching the lexis. Moreover, the author studies the way in which this perspective is used in processing the data obtained from dialectal investigations in the Romanian Linguistic Atlas series (ALR) as well as the repercussions upon the dictionaries that use data from the ALR series, first of all *Dicționarul limbii române* [The Romanian Language Dictionary] (DLR).

This study aims at providing a critical analysis of the work methods and outcomes of the above mentioned works. The critical perspective must be comprehended in its purely scientific nature, the objective being to understand and amend the outcomes of the previous representative dialectology and lexicography works. In the introduction the author describes very clearly the aims of his analysis, in terms of “constructive evaluative criticism” (p. 10–11). The observations which the author rightfully points out in the study are the result of four decades of study in the field of dialectology and lexicography.

As far as the style and the phrase are concerned, the latter is often very complex, with interposed sentences, with quite extensive explanatory notes in between brackets and a relatively high number of footnotes within one phrase, the combination of all these characteristics straining the reader. As far as the language level is concerned, the author makes, in many instances, the transition to the familiar or the popular language, in order to emphasize the truth-

fulness and indisputability of certain evaluation or scientific observations.

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The reader will immediately notice that the basic elements needed for the interpretation of data resulted from the dialectal investigation are a good knowledge of the distinctions emphasized by Coseriu in his semantics studies, as well as of the methods of obtaining and recording dialectal data, most of the notes in the introductory chapter explaining these two aspects. Mării is pleading for interpreting and rendering the dialectal material starting from the semantic (lexical) content of the terms. This is the reason for which a map designed according to this principle is called “semantic lexical map”. This is different from the onomasiological lexical map (proposed in ALR) which starts from the ontological level (denominations of a reality). The advantage of such an approach is the fact that the content of each word obtained in the dialectal investigations can be understood without any risk of confusion. The example studied in detail in the second chapter is the semantic opposition *șimbure*<sup>1</sup> : *șimbure*<sup>2</sup>, present in Oltenia and partially in Banat, which corresponds to the content opposition ‘noyau de la prune’ : ‘amande du noyau de la prune’. Thus, in the south of Oltenia there is the opposition *șimbure*<sup>1</sup> ‘noyau de la prune’ : *miez* ‘amande du noyau de la prune’, while in the Northern part of Oltenia there is the opposition *os* ‘noyau de la prune’ : *șimbure*<sup>2</sup> ‘amande du noyau de la prune’. The two onomasiological maps for *șimbure*<sup>1</sup> and *șimbure*<sup>2</sup> found in ALR do not reveal the value (in the Saussurean sense) of the word, yet including the opposition *șimbure*<sup>1</sup> : *șimbure*<sup>2</sup> in a single map, where there is a note for each instance of occurrence of the oppositions *șimbure*<sup>1</sup> : *miez* and *os* : *șimbure*<sup>2</sup> confers clarity and accuracy. Moreover, such a perspective forces, on the one hand, the person who draws the map to consider such distinctions

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whenever s/he interprets the dialectal material, and on the other hand it forces the investigator to have a more thorough reception of the dialectal material. The author notes an improvement in this respect in NALR.

According to the author, one of the key elements in the accurate interpretation of the dialectal terms is the use of the indirect question from the lexical onomasiological perspective (through which the name of a concept is triggered), against the referential onomasiological perspective (through which the name of an object is triggered). A recurrent example is the one given to the question “Where is cheese kept?”, namely the term *găleată* [bucket]. Vasile Țăra interprets it as being a “semantic extension”, while Mării considers that “the term *găleată* has not suffered, in this case, any kind of semantic extension; the object called *găleată* has such use, as well” (p. 59, cf. also p. 60, 67, 160). The author provides several such examples, considering that we are dealing with a sort of confusion between words and objects that could generate “serious onomasiological and/or semasiological lexical misrepresentations”. In theory, the interpretation provided by Mării can be argued, yet it is quite unlikely that the dialectologists who conducted the investigation and received such answers (not few, if we are to judge by the number of examples excerpted by Mării) could be guilty of such confusions which were supposed to be negligently perpetuated by the editors of ALR or NALR. Such situations could at most be assimilated to the lexical neutralization process (mentioned at p. 38). In reality we are dealing with another functional language, within which a certain distinction can exist without being lexicalized. For instance, in another analysis (p. 41–46, 137–143), the author takes into account the kinship relationships designated at the Romanian literary language level by *cumnat* [brother-in-law], which do not make any distinction between the following concepts: ‘wife’s brother’, ‘sister’s husband’ and ‘wife’s sister’s husband’. However, things are different at the level of certain dialects, within which the above mentioned conceptual distinctions are lexicalized in various ways. The lack of distinction at the literary language level cannot be explained by relating it to contemporary dialects. Only their assimilation with an older stage of the Romanian language could provide an explanation from a diachronic perspective. Things are the same in an inverse situation, as

in the case of the word *găleată* [bucket], exemplified above. Such “misrepresentations” occur regularly in an atlas and actually reveal the nature of the language. Without such “misrepresentation” a language would be deprived of its history. Another example belonging to the same category is described below. For question 344, „How do you call the round-ended vessel (gesture) where you cook the polenta?”, the map in ALR Trans. III indicates in the entire area, besides *ceaun* [cast-iron kettle], the terms *căldare*, *căldărușă*, *căldăruță*. According to the reasoning proposed for the answer *găleată* at the question “Where is cheese kept?”, one could infer that in Transylvania polenta is also cooked in a *bucket* [căldare], in the sense given to the word from another perspective, possibly that of literary Romanian. A misrepresentation of the dialectal level with the literary language level (or any other level) cannot be related to that one since the speaker of a dialect is not a speaker of the literary language (or of another dialect) who would occasionally deviate (in his own dialect) from the norm of another dialect or of the literary language.

The distinction between signifier and significant is undoubtedly a necessary condition in any lexicological approach. A lecture of the maps without the correct reception of the information in the legend, that can indicate certain values of the terms, could lead to a false nomenclature of certain areas of the dialectal lexis (p. 39). An onomasiological reading based on the title of the map, without paying attention to the information provided in the legend, followed by a semasiological interpretation of the answers is unacceptable for a linguist (p. 38). A semasiological lexical documentation by means of indirect questions such as “What do you call...? or “What does .... mean?” (p. 67) can clarify the initial answer. Such an approach, based on Coseriu’s lexical fields principles, where the word can be regarded as part of a whole, of a field (p. 28), leads to what the author terms “semantic lexical map”, where words belonging to a semantic field are no longer presented in separate maps, but on the same map, indicating distinct semantic characteristics for each term in the field.

These issues are treated in detail within the opposition *șimbure*<sup>1</sup> : *șimbure*<sup>2</sup> (*șimbure*<sup>1</sup> : *miez* and *os* : *șimbure*<sup>2</sup>) as well as the ones for the concepts of ‘wife’s brother’, ‘sister’s husband’ and ‘wife’s sister’s husband’, included in *cumnat* at the literary language

level, but combined in several ways in the Banat dialect, with two terms for each of the three concepts. Such an approach is certainly the most indicated for a clear image of the dialectal material, yet a new investigation would be necessary for each detail of this type. This detail (the semantic trait that makes the specific difference) is actually missing from the objection raised by the author to the answer *găleată* [bucket], mentioned above, because we should be told what one means by *găleată*. We can only suppose that one refers to the answer to question 917 (“How do you call the vessel made of staves, where you milk the ship?”). Similarly, in the example provided by us above, the question with the answers *ceaun*, *căldare*, *căldărușă*, and *căldăruță*, it is necessary to define the relationship between *ceaun* and *căldare*, in the instance where the answer is *ceaun*, as well as the relationship between *căldărușă* / *căldăruță* and *căldare*, in the instance where the answer is one of the two diminutives and where there possibly exists an opposition based on morphological information (as in the case of *călduț* / *căldicel* in expressing the temperature). Moreover, in the instance where the answer is *căldare*, one should expect the opposition with *găleată* to be different when compared to the other areas. Drawing this type of map requires a special attention to this type of relationships (which implies, besides the traditional onomasiological approach, a semasiological approach and a semantic reading), yet the results would be undoubtedly better than the ones provided by the traditional method. The outcome would consist of, according to some of Coseriu’s concepts, emphasizing on the ‘structure’ of each dialect and its relevance at the ‘historical language ‘architecture’ level.

One circumstance that could indeed lead to confusion, as the author warns, is the way in which the indirect question is formulated. For instance, the question related to the kinship terms, formulated as “How do you call ...?” instead of “What is ... to you?” can lead to terms of address instead of kinship terms (p. 57–58, cf. also p. 54).

Besides these theoretical methodological issues (which provide, however, practical results) some

issues of strictly practical methodology are also discussed: the superficial reading of information provided in the atlases (or the lack of information, as in those for Transylvania, where the legend is either very poor in information or missing altogether) or the superficial reading of the investigation data by the person who compiles the atlas and the recording of the results of such readings in DLR. The author provides examples from his own works, by indicating the whole itinerary of the occurrence and perpetuation of an error. As the study progresses, various other issues are signalled, such as synchronic explanations in DLR instead of what should be diachronic explanations (p. 79), focussing the investigation on the speaker’s semantic system (p. 71, 82), the usefulness of recording “the diachronic correspondent” in the map footnotes (p. 23); all these issues are really useful in the research of a historical language. A short chapter (p. 109–121), full of precious information, is dedicated to the interrogative documentation of gestures.

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The work of I. Mării can bring a significant contribution to the field of dialectology and implicitly lexicography. Even if some of the interpretations might be a little too radical (as indicated above), they should be understood in the spirit of the aims proposed, while the “constructive evaluative criticism” should not be limited to the author of the study alone, but it should be assumed by the reader, as well. *Harta lexicală semantică* [The Semantic Lexical Map] should be a compulsory part of the minimal bibliography of any dialectologist, lexicologist or lexicographer and it would surely help improve any study in the field of dialectology and lexicography. The author is well aware of the fact that a general application of these methods for a new linguistic atlas of Romania or for a new dictionary of the Romanian language is hardly achievable (we should also restate here that it cannot even be applied to the entire lexis, since such oppositions are only established in certain lexical areas), yet their application “at least for the fundamental semantic-terminological systems” is a perfectly justified desideratum.