

From "Burning Bridges" to Bridging Cultural Gaps: Water and Fire Idioms in English and Romanian

Alexandra Stan
Transylvania University of Braşov
Romania

Abstract

The relation between culture and language can offer important information to the language learner. In fact, one way to understand a culture is through its language. Teachers of English as a foreign language (ought to) provide knowledge of the culture along with the mandatory curriculum items as a means to support students in bridging any cultural gaps. This paper aims to analyze English *water* and *fire* idiomatic expressions by describing their meanings and origins and identifying their Romanian equivalents. The research starts with a theoretical overview of the definitions and classifications of idiomatic expressions in the specialized literature, followed by the contrastive analysis of twenty English idioms functioning as verbs. More specifically, the description of their meanings and origins is provided, as well as the Romanian counterparts, and where possible, the origins of the translated items. The last part of the paper draws some conclusions on the significance and practical teaching implications of this analysis.

Keywords: *culture, teaching English, idiomatic expressions, water, fire, contrastive analysis.*

1. Introduction

Teaching English as a foreign language, I find the relation between culture and language, and between different cultures, significant in terms of revealing cultural gaps and how to bridge them. As Taylor (2003: 141) stated,

certain experiences are presumably common to all normal, human beings, while others are strongly conditioned by culture and environment, [so] it comes as no surprise that we find both considerable cross-language similarity in metaphorical expressions, as well as cross-language diversity.

Metaphorical expressions, be they idiomatic expressions, phraseological units, fixed phrases, or multi-word units, hold great expressive potential and their origins can reveal a lot about the history of the culture where they originated.

The purpose of this paper is to identify the equivalences between English and Romanian idiomatic expressions containing or relating to the concepts of *water* and *fire*, and to describe their meanings and historical origins. Studies investigating *water* and *fire* idioms focus on the English language (e.g., Pintilii 2020, Bechko 2021), and not on an English-Romanian contrastive analysis or on aspects related to their meanings and origins.

Starting with a theoretical overview of how idiomatic expressions have been defined, characterized, and classified in the literature, the paper continues with the examination of twenty English idioms which function as verbs and contain the words *water* and *fire*, or relate to the respective lexical fields by including such words as *ice*, *rain*, *burn*, *flames*, and *smoke*. The analysis consists in two steps. Firstly, the meanings and historical origins of the English idioms are presented, and secondly, the Romanian equivalents are provided, as well as the origins of these translations, where necessary and possible. The idiomatic expressions, their meanings and origins, along with the Romanian translations, were extracted from various general dictionaries and dictionaries of idioms, both monolingual and bilingual (see Bibliography).

2. Theoretical background

Idioms have been studied by linguists for many years, having been defined as "frozen patterns of language which allow little or no variation in form", often carrying "meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components" (Baker 1992: 63); as "conventionalized multi-word expressions often, but not always non-literal" (Fernando 1996: 1) "which become conventionally fixed in a specific order and lexical form, or have only a restricted set of variants" (ibid.: 31); or as "phrases that can have a literal meaning in one context but a totally different sense in another" (*Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins* 2011: 6).

Anthropologists also studied how idioms as figurative expressions are formed and why they become appropriate descriptions of events in one speech community, but not in another (Cacciari and Tabossi 1993: xi). Knowing the historical origins of idioms informs how people "organize their conceptual and lexical knowledge" (ibid.: xii), and helps establish connections across domains and languages.

There are various classifications of idioms in the literature, and some notable ones belong to Baker (1992: 65): (i) idioms that are easily recognizable like expressions which violate truth conditions ("it's raining cats and dogs"), (ii) expressions which seem ill-formed because they do not follow the grammatical rules of the language ("the powers that be"), and (iii) expressions which start with "like" (simile-like structures); and to Cacciari (in Cacciari and Tabossi 1993: 39), i.e., (i) totally opaque idioms, (ii) retrospectively transparent idioms, (iii) directly transparent idioms, and (iv) figuratively transparent idioms, or to Fernando's (1996: 32) three categories: (i) pure, (ii) semiliteral, and (iii) literal idioms.

Specialists have put forth various ways to identify idioms. For instance, Baker (1992: 63) lists the following criteria for identifying an idiom: the order of the words in an idiom cannot be changed; a word cannot be deleted from it; a word cannot be added to it; a word cannot

be replaced with another; and its grammatical structure cannot be changed.

Moon (1998) enumerates three factors to be taken into account when considering a string an idiom: **institutionalization**, defined as the process through which a string becomes recognized and accepted as a lexical item of the language (Bauer 1983, in Moon 1998: 7); **lexicogrammatical fixedness** or formal rigidity with restrictions on aspect, mood or voice (Moon 1998: 7); and **non-compositionality**, i.e., the meaning of the whole is not the sum of the meaning of the parts, but is something apparently quite unconnected to them (*Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins* 2011: 6). Nevertheless, Moon (1998: 9) warns that these criteria “are not present to an equal extent in all items”, which “means that it is difficult to identify cleanly discrete categories of fixed expressions and idioms”.

Flavell and Flavell (in *Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins* 2011: 7) also point out that

it is not that a phrase is or is not an idiom; rather, a given expression is more or less ‘idiomaticky’, on an [*sic*] cline stretching from the normal, literal use of language via degrees of metaphor and grammatical flexibility to the pure idiom.

In the present paper, the concepts of *idiom* and *idiomatic expression* will be used interchangeably to refer to a multi-word group with a special meaning which cannot be identified from the meanings of its constituents. The items in the list, which function as verbs in both English and Romanian, are classified as idioms or metaphors based on the labels they receive in the dictionaries consulted (see Bibliography) for the purpose of this research.

3. An analysis of *water* and *fire* English idioms

This section presents the meanings and origins of a list of twenty English idioms that contain or are related to the concepts of *water* and *fire*, followed by their Romanian equivalents. They are grouped according to the semantic and lexical equivalence between the two languages, which resulted in three categories (cf. Baker 1992): (i) idioms with similar meaning and form, (ii) idioms with similar meaning but dissimilar form, and (iii) idioms translated by paraphrase.

3.1 Idioms with similar meaning and form

This category is comprised of the following items, listed alphabetically: *to add fuel to the fire (or flames)*, *to break the ice*, *to go up in flames*, *to make one's mouth water*, *to play with fire*.

3.1.1. to add fuel to the fire (or flames)

The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms explains this metaphor as "to worsen an already bad situation, as by increasing anger, hostility, or passion", perhaps dating from Roman times and Livy's *The History of Rome*, who lived around 1 AD: *Not withstanding my remonstrance, you have added fuel to this fire, by sending to your army a youth who burns with an ambition of sovereignty* (according to <https://grammarist.com/idiom/add-fuel-to-the-fire/>).

The Romanian translation is *a turna gaz / ulei pe foc; a pune paie pe foc* ("to pour fuel / oil on the fire; to add straw to the fire"). According to Cordoneanu et al. (2005: 27), the Romanian expression *a turna gaz pe foc*, which means "to make a bad situation worse", may originate in Horace's *Satire II*, with the verse *Oleum addere camino* ("to pour oil on the fire").

3.1.2. to break the ice

The Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins defines this idiom as "to break down social awkwardness and formality". It is at least five hundred years old and thought to be an allusion to the hard ice that formed on European rivers in severe winters centuries in the past.

People whose livelihood depended on plying a small boat up and down the river did not enjoy ice, because their first task was to break it up so that work could begin, hence the first meaning of the expression “make a start on a project”. Gradually it changed to mean embarking on a relationship and breaking down the natural reserve one feels in the presence of strangers.

In Romanian, the idiom translates to *a sparge gheața*, defined as “to start a (difficult) conversation” or “to eliminate awkwardness (in a group)”.

3.1.3. to go up in flames

The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms explains this idiom as “to be utterly destroyed”, transferring a fire to other kinds of destruction [early 1900s].

The Romanian translation is *a izbucni în flăcări*, explained as “(despre lucruri, planuri, speranțe, etc.) a sări în aer; a se alege praful; a se preface în fum; a se duce pe apa Sâmbetei, which means “(about things, plans, hopes, etc.) to blow up, to go to waste, to go up in smoke, to go down the drain”.

3.1.4. to make one’s mouth water

According to *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms*, this metaphorical expression is defined as “to cause one to eagerly anticipate or long for something”, alluding to salivating when one anticipates food. It has been used figuratively since the mid-1600s, whether it refers to food or not.

The Romanian translation is *a-i lăsa (cuiva) gura apă*, explained as “to want or desire something with a passion”.

3.1.5. to play with fire

This metaphor is explained in *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms* as “to take part in a dangerous undertaking”. Although the idea behind the metaphor is ancient, it was first recorded only in 1655.

From “Burning Bridges” ...

The Romanian translation is *a se juca cu focul*, meaning “to participate in dangerous situations, to expose oneself to unnecessary risk”.

3.2 Idioms with similar meaning but dissimilar form

The idioms in this category are, in alphabetical order: *to cut no ice with someone*, *to jump out of the frying pan into the fire*, *to pour / throw cold water on something*, *to rain cats and dogs*, *to skate / tread on thin ice*, *to throw out the baby with the bathwater*.

3.2.1. to cut no ice with someone

In the *Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins*, this idiom is explained as “to make no impression upon someone, to be powerless to influence someone”. It originated in America towards the end of the nineteenth century, reportedly coming into British usage in the 1920. It refers to ice skating, i.e., one can only move about with ease on ice skates if the blades are keen and cut into the ice. On the other hand, blunt blades make no impression on the ice, just as a plan or a project, for instance, makes no metaphorical impression on someone. The skater who wears blunt blades makes no progress and neither does the plan.

The Romanian translation is *a nu avea niciun efect (asupra cuiva)*; *a nu produce nicio impresie (asupra cuiva)*; *a-l lăsa (pe cineva) rece / indiferent*, which means “to have no effect (on someone); to make no impression (on someone); to leave someone cold/disinterested”.

3.2.2. to jump out of the frying pan into the fire

In *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms*, this expression is explained as [to go] “from a bad situation to one that is much worse”. It is a proverb in many languages and it was first recorded in English in 1528.

The Romanian translation is *a cădea / sări din lac în puț*; *a scăpa de dracul și a da de tată-său*; *a merge din ce în ce mai rău*, meaning “to fall / jump from the lake into the well; to get away from the devil and run into his father; to go from bad to worse”. According to Dumistrăcel

(2001: 210-211), the Romanian expression *a sări / cădea din lac în puț* owes its origin to the fact that in Muntenia (southern Romania) and Oltenia (south-western Romania), the word *lac* ("lake") can also refer to a simple small puddle, similar to the ones that form on the ground after rain. Such puddles can form near wells (=puțuri), when water from such a well is poured in containers for cattle to drink. In its original form, the expression *to jump from the lake (puddle now) into the well* can be found in the texts of writers from Muntenia (e.g., Iordache Golescu, Anton Pann, Petre Ispirescu, Zaharia Stancu), with their words documenting the "accident" that occurs when someone falls into a well in an attempt to avoid the puddle near it. Someone might jump from the puddle and fall into the well.

3.2.3. to pour / throw cold water on something

The *Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins* explains this idiom as "to discourage, to quench enthusiasm for something". Plautus used this expression in 200 BC in the sense of "to slander". It has been current and with the changed sense of "to discourage" since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The origin of the term is unknown, but it brings to mind the dousing of brawling cats, mating dogs or even ardent suitors in cold water, thus bringing their intentions to an abrupt end.

The Romanian translation is *a descuraja un om / o acțiune / un plan; a strica / tăia cheful cuiva*, meaning "to discourage a person / an action / a plan; to ruin / dampen someone's enthusiasm".

3.2.4. to rain cats and dogs

In the *Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins*, this idiom is explained as "to rain heavily". There are three theories regarding the origin of the expression. The most vivid suggests that drainage in the streets in bygone centuries was so inadequate that, during storms, stray dogs and cats drowned in the flood. When the water level went down, their carcasses littered the streets. Swift's *Description of a City Shower* (1710) gives a flavor of what it was like: *Now from all parts the swelling*

From "Burning Bridges" ...

kennels flow, And bear their trophies with them as they go. The "trophies" are numerous, but amongst them are: *Drown'd puppies, stinking sprats, all drench'd in mud, Dead cats and turnip tops, come tumbling down the flood.* The first written record of the phrase as we know it comes in Swift's *Polite Conversation* (1738) and it might be supposed that he was merely making an allusion to his earlier verse, which would confirm this theory and make Swift the author of the metaphor. Unfortunately, the expression was used in a slightly different form in the previous century when Richard Brome wrote: "*It shall raine...dogs and polecats*" (*The City Wit*, 1653). Alternatively, some authorities believe that the phrase may be a corruption of the Greek word *catadupe*, meaning "cataract" or "waterfall". In other words the original expression had the meaning "rain is coming down like a waterfall". Still others suggest a connection with Norse mythology in which witches in the guise of cats rode upon storms and the storm-god Odin was accompanied by a dog.

The Romanian translation is *a ploua / turna cu găleata*, which means "to rain heavily, as if pouring from a bucket". According to Dumistrăcel (2001: 157), the origin of this Romanian expression may come from a fertility dancing ritual called *paperudele* ("rainmakers"). While they are dancing, the actors (usually women) are drenched in water in a manifestation of homeopathic magic whose effects are invoked by the ritualistic chants: *Paparudă, rudă, Ogoarele udă, Ploile să curgă, Fără de măsură; Cu găleata, leata, Peste toată gloata!* which roughly translate to *Rainmaker, rainmaker, Water the fields, Let bucketfuls of rain fall over the whole crowd!* Wetting the rainmakers was an imitation and invocation of rain, and thus the expression "it's pouring by the bucketful" (found in such Romanian authors' texts as Petre Ispirescu and Mihail Sadoveanu) suggests the satisfaction of achieving the goal of the rainmakers' game.

3.2.5 to skate / tread on thin ice

The *Dictionary of English Down the Ages* explains this idiom as “to behave rashly”. Foolish behavior on thin ice was not uncommon as this snippet from the YORK COURANT for 5 January 1748 shows:

It is estimated that no less than a dozen persons have lost their lives this last week, by unadvisedly skating upon thin ice, which broke and drowned them: whereof five expired at one time, within the sight of some fifty spectators in St James’s Park. (*Dictionary of English Down the Ages* 2011: 197)

The Romanian translation is *a se afla pe muchie de cuțit, a păși pe teren minat* (referitor la o persoană care se află într-o situație ce comportă multe riscuri), meaning “to be on the razor’s edge, to walk through a minefield (referring to a person in a risky situation)”.

3.2.6. to throw out the baby with the bathwater

This idiom is explained in *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms* as “to discard something valuable along with something not wanted.” The *Dictionary of Proverbs and Their Origins* states that some authorities claim this was of German origin, a translation of *Das Kind mit dem Bade Ausschütten*. It has been traced back to a first use by Thomas Carlyle in 1853. Since Carlyle was a considerable author on the subject of German culture, language, and literature, it is probable that this theory is correct. The phrase has gradually taken on the status of a modern day proverb, in that it offers popular advice and guidance.

The Romanian translation is *a arunca grâul odată cu neghina*, meaning (“to throw away the wheat along with the chaff”), which means “to throw away everything (including what is useful)”.

3.3. Idioms translated by paraphrase

This category includes the following idioms, in alphabetical order: *to burn one’s boats / bridges, to burn the candle at both ends, to burn the midnight oil, to hang fire, to have too many / other irons in the fire, to hold*

From "Burning Bridges" ...

water, to keep one's head above water, to muddy the waters, to pour oil on troubled waters.

3.3.1. to burn one's boats / bridges

This phrase is explained in the *Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins* as "to be so committed to a course of action that it is impossible to withdraw". It refers to the practice Roman generals sometimes employed of setting fire to their own boats after mounting an invasion. This was done in order to remove any idea of retreat from the minds of their soldiers. Similarly, as the Roman army advanced, they would burn bridges behind them, forcing the soldiers to move forward. The usage of "to burn one's boats" is probably more frequent than "to burn one's bridges". The phrase emphasizes the high risk element: a daring venture in the first place, made still more hazardous by an "all or nothing" action.

The Romanian translation is *a-și tăia orice posibilitate de retragere, a lua o hotărâre supremă / irevocabilă și riscantă, fără posibilitatea de revenire; a risca totul într-o acțiune fără a privi înapoi*, which means "to eliminate any possibility of return, to make a definitive and risky decision without the possibility to change one's mind; to risk everything without looking back".

3.3.2. to burn the candle at both ends

The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms explains this metaphor as "to exhaust one's energies or resources by leading a hectic life". It originated in France and can be found in Randle Cotgrave's *Dictionary* (1611), where it referred to dissipating one's wealth, perhaps because candles were expensive and burning them cost money. It soon acquired its present broader meaning.

The Romanian translation is *a se extenua (în special din pricina somnului și a efortului istovitor)*, meaning "to exhaust oneself (especially because of lack of sleep and tiring effort)".

3.3.3. to burn the midnight oil

The *Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins* explains this expression as “to stay up late, usually to study or write.” The idea of burning away oil in the pursuit of learning and creativity is not uncommon in classical literature. In his *Life of Demosthenes*, Plutarch speaks of the orator’s meticulous care in composition, writing:

For this many of the orators ridiculed him, and Pytheas in particular told him, “That all his arguments smelled of the lamp.” Demosthenes retorted sharply upon him: “Yes, indeed, but your lamp and mine, my friend, are not conscious to the same labours.” (*Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins* 2011: 113)

The phrase as we know it today has been in use since at least the mid seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, Gay used it more than once, as in this passage from *Trivia* which describes bookstalls in London streets: *Walkers at leisure learning’s flowers may spoil, / Nor watch the wasting of the midnight oil*. Even in these days of electricity and lightbulbs the phrase has remained current to describe those, especially students, who write or study far into the night.

The Romanian translation is *a studia / lucra până noaptea târziu*, meaning “to study/work late into the night”, overlapping with the original only in the use of the noun *night*.

3.3.4. to hang fire

The *Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins* explains this expression as “to be pending, delayed”. This is an expression from the use of fire arms. When the main charge in a gun was slow to ignite, the gun was said to be *hanging fire*. Now the term is used to refer to someone slow to take decisive action on a matter to the frustration of all concerned. It is usually used in the context of a decision or event that is delayed, but may be found referring to a person who is indecisive.

From “Burning Bridges” ...

The Romanian translation is *a rămâne în suspensie / nerezolvat*, meaning “to hang in suspense / to remain unsolved”.

3.3.5. to have too many / other irons in the fire

This idiom is explained in the *Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins* as “to have too many/other projects in hand, undertakings to be attended to”. Someone with *other irons in the fire* has a choice of projects they can turn their attention to. If they have *too many irons in the fire*, they have too many plans and cannot pay sufficient attention to any of them. Some authorities say the phrase is from the smithy where the efficient blacksmith has several irons in the fire ready for when he needs them. Others say it alludes to the industrious laundress who would keep two or three flat irons heating in the fire for when the one she was using cooled. If she had *too many irons in the fire* she might find that some had become too hot and scorched the clothes instead of smoothing them. The latter of the two allusions is generally preferred and seems to fit the different shades of meaning well.

The Romanian translation is *a avea multe lucruri de făcut în același timp; a fi antrenat în multe activități*, meaning “to have many things to do at the same time; to be involved in various activities”.

3.3.6. to hold water

The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms explains this metaphorical expression as “to stand up to critical examination, be sound and valid”. It alludes to a container that can hold water without leaking [c. 1600]. The first possible known account of a similar term can be found in the Old Testament, Jeremiah 2:13, when God states “two evils my people have done: they have forsaken me, the source of living waters; They have dug themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.”, meant to compare the people’s faith trickling away like water through a broken cistern (<https://grammarist.com/idiom/doesnt-hold-water/>). The first known use in modern publication was in *The Yorkshire Spaw* in 1626

when John French wrote “Let them produce a more rational account...that will hold water”, as a form of criticism when shared information did not provide valid information (ibid.).

The Romanian translation is (*despre o teorie*) *a ține; a rezista*, which means “(about a theory) to hold up, to stand up”.

3.3.7. to keep one’s head above water

The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms explains this expression as “to stay out of trouble, especially financial difficulties; also, keep up with work or other demands”, and it alludes to keeping oneself from drowning [early 1700s]. Its origin is unknown.

The Romanian equivalent is *a se menține la suprafață / pe linia de plutire*, meaning “to (barely) meet one’s financial commitments”.

3.3.8. to muddy the waters

In *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms*, this metaphorical expression is defined as “to confuse the issue” and it alludes to making a pond or stream turbid by stirring up mud from the bottom. According to *Oxford Dictionary of Idioms*, the figurative use of *muddy* to mean “make something hard to perceive or understand” occurs in Shakespeare: *muddy the waters*, dating from the mid nineteenth century. On the other hand, according to <https://mediamanipulation.org/definitions/muddy-waters>, among the earliest recorded figurative uses is in William Ames’ 1633 *A Fresh Suit against Human Ceremonies in God’s Worship*: “he mudds the water, and so would mislead the simple. The first occurrence of this phrase in the *Oxford English Dictionary* was in 1653.

The Romanian translation is *a crea o situație confuză*, which means “to create a confusing situation”.

3.3.9. to pour oil on troubled waters

The Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins explains this idiom as “to soothe a quarrel, to calm a heated argument”. The fact that stormy waters could be quelled by pouring oil on them was known at least as

From "Burning Bridges" ...

far back as the first century AD. Pliny knew this and Plutarch wrestled with science:

Why does pouring oil on the sea make it still and calm? Is it because the winds, slipping over the smooth oil, have no force, nor cause any waves? (*Moralia: Quaestiones Naturales*, cAD 95, in *Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins* 2011: 140).

However, the phrase might owe its origin to the Venerable Bede who, in his *Ecclesiastical history* (completed in 731), recounts a miracle performed by Bishop Aidan. A priest named Utta was charged with escorting King Oswy's bride across the sea. Before he left he was approached by the bishop, who gave him a phial of holy oil and prophesied that there would be a fierce storm at sea. He promised Utta that, if he were to cast the oil upon the water, the storm would immediately cease and the journey home would be safe and calm. The storm arose as Bishop Aidan foretold, the waves began to fill the vessel, but Utta remembered the oil, and the sea was calmed. Strangely, however, the phrase was not widely used until the nineteenth century, the suggested explanation for this being that, until then, oil was not available in the great quantities needed to still rough seas. Today we use the oil of soothing words or deeds to calm stormy disputes.

The Romanian translation is *a calma / aplană lucrurile*, meaning "to calm things down / to smoothe things over".

Conclusions

Culture and language are intertwined and this connection can expose ways to bridge cultural gaps. Language offers a variety of mechanisms to uncover similarities across cultures. One such mechanism is attempted in this paper. Setting out to identify the equivalences between English and Romanian idioms which contain or relate to the concepts of *water* and *fire*, I also described their meanings and historical origins, and the analysis provided significant

observations, despite the short list of idioms. From among the twenty English idioms investigated, which were divided into three categories depending on the Romanian translations (i.e., idioms with similar meaning and form, see 3.1, idioms with similar meaning but dissimilar form, see 3.2, and idioms translated by paraphrase, see 3.3), only the five idioms in the first category contain the concepts of *water* and *fire* in both languages.

As far as the fifteen idioms in the second and third categories, their Romanian equivalents do not contain the concepts of *water* and *fire*. However, there are two interesting exceptions. The former is the *fire* idiom *to jump out of the frying pan into the fire*, which translates as *a cădea / sări din lac în puț* and contains the concept of *water*. The latter is *to rain cats and dogs*, whose Romanian counterpart, *a ploua cu găleata*, contains the concept of *rain*, a form of *water*, but despite this similarity, the historical origins of the two idioms are different.

The more similar idioms are across languages, the higher the potential for learning them by students of English as a foreign language. In what regards the idioms with similar meaning but dissimilar form, perhaps studying their history and the way they originated in a specific culture can enable learners to acquire them successfully.

Further interesting steps in this direction could be to expand the list to include idioms with other items such as names of plants, forms of relief, etc., and which function as nouns or adjectives.

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Alexandra Stan

Alexandra Stan

affiliation: Faculty of Letters, *Transilvania University of Braşov*

position: Senior Lecturer, PhD

e-mail: alexandra.stan@unitbv.ro

research interests: semantics, lexicography, ESP.

Selected publications :

- (2022): "Integrating Language and Content in ESP Teaching" (Alexandra Stan), in *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Braşov*, Braşov: Transilvania University Press, pp. 65-72.
- (2021): "Mobile Technology for ESP Students: Usage and Attitudes" (Alexandra Stan), in Burada, M., O. Tatu and R. Sinu (eds.), *Conference on British and American Studies*, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 213-230.
- (2020): "Microstructure in Online Romanian-English Dictionaries" (Alexandra Stan), in *A Local Perspective on Lexicography. Dictionary Research, Practice, and Use in Romania* (edited by Burada, M. and Sinu, R.), UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 150-176.
- (2019): "Terms Denoting Parts of a Tree - A Contrastive Approach" (Alexandra Stan), in *Linguaculture*, Iaşi: Editura Universităţii "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", pp. 132-150.