THE *AH!* COUNTS

A Corpus-based Contrastive Approach to the Study
of Pragmatic Markers in English and Romanian

Consequences for Their Translation

OLIVIA-CRISTINA RUSU

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Dragilor mei dragi,
Miriam, David și Cristi

Contents

List of abbreviations and symbols:

CamGr – Huddleston, P. and Pullum, G. (2002) *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language*;

CCAD – Collins COBUILD Advanced Dictionary (2009) Glasgow: Harper Collins Publishers, and online at http://www.mycobuild.com/free-search.aspx;

CGE – 2006 Carter and McCarthy, *Cambridge Grammar of English*;

CGEL – Quirk, R. et al. (1985*) A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*;

CTP – Săndulescu, C. G., Vianu L. (ed.) (2011) *Compendium of Translated Poetry*;

DLR – Iordan, I., Graur Al., Coteanu, I. (1965 – 1990) *Dicţionarul limbii române;*

GALR I 1966 – *Gramatica limbii române, I.* Bucureşti: Ed. Academiei RSR;

GALR I 2005 – *Gramatica limbii române, I, Cuvântul*. Academia Română, Institutul de Lingvistică „Iorgu Iordan – Al. Rosetti", Bucureşti: Editura Academiei Române;

LDOCE – Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, [online] http://www.ldoceonline.com/;

LGSWE – Biber, D. et al. (1999) *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*;

OALD – Hornby, A. S. ([1948] 2010), Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, online at www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/;

OED – Oxford English Dictionary – online version;

OMEG –, B. (2011) *Oxford Modern English Grammar*. Oxford: OUP;

TFD – The Free Dictionary, online at http://www.thefreedictionary.com/;

[*] This symbol is used for examples heard in conversation, not attested in literature;

[#] This symbol visually links one theoretical tag with its illustration;

e.g. – 'exempli gratia', for instance;

e. g. En. – Examples from English include;

e. g. Ro. – Examples from Romanian include;

i.e. – 'id est', that is;

TS – Translation strategy / strategies;

TT, TL, TC – Target text, target language, target culture;

TT1 – first target text;

TT2 – second target text;

ST, SL, SC – Source text, source language, source culture

[+] – existence of a pragmatic marker;

[-]; [∅] – omission of a pragmatic marker;

Introduction

Until recently the standard of grammatical correctness has been the written language. Consequently, spoken language has been considered somehow inferior, while verbal communication forms and structures have been less studied. Spoken language, together with its spontaneously produced forms and structures, has long been regarded as having lower importance as compared to the written expression considered the standard of language adequacy. Moreover, the meaning of spoken utterances is strongly chained into the enunciation context and experience and has the strong tendency to convey subjective information, highlighting the relationship between the speaker and the listener. Thus, pragmatic markers are verbal expressions that are inherent to formal or informal verbal communication and which have not been sufficiently highlighted in dictionaries and grammar books (Carter 2006, 9).

This book is an incursion into the definitions, classifications, functions, and translation strategies of pragmatic markers, with emphasis on the grammar class traditionally called interjections. It ultimately aims to highlight both similarities and differences regarding how this word-class is treated in British and Romanian grammar, as well as to establish the most frequent types of pragmatic markers used in the two languages and their possible correspondences from one language to another. The research is based on the Ph.D. thesis *A Corpus-based Contrastive Approach to the Study of Interjections in English and Romanian. Consequences for Their Translation* defended at the "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University, Iași, in 2015, having Professor Rodica Dimitriu PhD as academic advisor, and distinguished with a Summa cum Laude. A number of articles have already been published on the research topic, in order to complete the doctoral indicators.

The comprehensive examination of theoretical notions in grammar, pragmatics, and translation theory makes this work useful to students in the *Applied Modern Languages* Bachelor's Program of the Faculty of International Business and Economics, of the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, as to all professionals in translation and interpreting. All theoretical notions are amply exemplified with examples from the corpus, offering practical solutions to the use of a comprehensive list of translation strategies. The pragmatic implications and translation strategies are transferable to any type of text or discourse.

Chapter I deals with the grammatical characteristics of pragmatic markers first from a historical perspective, and secondly from a contrastive one, in an attempt to capture all Romanian and English grammatical features. English grammar identifies interjections with the class of conversational words (i.e. 'non-sentences', 'inserts' or 'pragmatic markers'), along with various forms of discourse and politeness (greetings, apologies, toasts, etc.) markers, reaction, and attention (alarm) signals, response elicitors, hesitations, hedges, vocatives and expletives. Romanian grammar provides a detailed etymological, structural, formal, and functional classification, but does not offer examples of spoken language, which are abundant in the English corpus-descriptive grammar. These generous investigations led to the elaboration of a personal classification of pragmatic markers based on Jakobson's language functions.

Chapter II center-stages the pragmatic values of pragmatic markers from a general perspective as well as from a Relevance Theory stance. It has been noticed that, although they seem insignificant, pragmatic markers are found in speech acts, implicatures, and presuppositions. My most significant contribution to the second chapter consists in the investigation of the peculiarities of demotic creativity and in the exploration of the pragmatic relational functions of pragmatic markers in juvenile language as well as in a child-specific type of discourse belonging to the folk memory: nursery rhymes.

Chapter III considers the methods and strategies of transferring the meaning conveyed through pragmatic markers from English to Romanian. Trying to recreate the meaning of creative, spoken discourse is a translation challenge. I finally developed my classification of translation strategies which I consider optimal for conveying the meaning of pragmatic markers into a target language.

Chapter IV, the last part of the research, is an ample and detailed practical analysis that tackles the possible translation challenges in conveying the meaning of pragmatic markers. I have chosen one single literary work to compare elaborately two of its versions into Romanian, from a contrastive perspective. Applied analyses conclude that functional and idiomatic creativity is an important factor for the most appropriate transfer of pragmatic markers from English to Romanian.

Research methods

This study makes use of quantitative research methods, such as surveys of pragmatic markers, statistics, and inventories, as well as the analysis of a corpus of pragmatic markers, to establish the most frequent types of pragmatic markers used in the two languages and their possible equivalents from one language to another. The qualitative research primarily consists of the contrastive analyses of the source texts of the corpus. Secondly, I examine the corpus analysis from a translation perspective.

For an accurate analysis of pragmatic markers, I particularly relied on the relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995) and its application to translations (Gutt, 1991), on theories of human communication in general (Grice, 1975, Levinson, 1983, Yule, 1996), on the theory of speech acts (Searle, 1969, Austin, 1962) as well as on pragmatic orientations in translation studies: taxonomies of equivalence, the equivalence of effect (Catford, 1965, Nida, 1964) theories encompassing both the translation product and the translating process (Vinay and Darbelnet's and Chesterman's models, 1958), functional theories (Nord, 2005, 2006), theoretical approaches to discourse analysis, and, again, its application to translation (Munday, 2008), and guidelines of the polysystem theory (Toury, 1978).

The contrastive approach is obviously extremely important in this research and it is emphasized through the continuous bridges that were established between pragmatic markers in English and Romanian, under all aspects, from how they are treated in grammar, to their pragmatic functions and the consequences for their translation.

The whole approach is interdisciplinary, combining acquisitions from linguistics, pragmatics, stylistics, translation studies, and theories of communication. Elements of literary theory, history, sociology etc., are also studied in my endeavor to fully understand the meanings

conveyed through pragmatic markers. Considerations from linguistic, cognitive, pragmatic, sociolinguistic, and functional theories justify and generate applicative implications concerning the possibilities of translating pragmatic markers from English into Romanian making use of linguistic and pragmatic acquisitions in translation studies.

Corpus data and methodological procedures for data collection

All theoretical aspects related to grammar, pragmatics, and translation of pragmatic markers are illustrated with examples extracted from a literary corpus digitalized by myself. More specifically, all the explanatory data presented in this research were collected from a corpus of ten English books of children's literature written by British and American novelists: Sir James Matthew Barrie, Rudyard Kipling, Lewis Carroll, Alan Alexander Milne, Pamela Lyndon Travers, Lyman Frank Baum, Michael Bond, Shel Silverstein, Oscar Wilde, and a selection of Nursery Rhymes edited by L.K. Alchin. In order to exemplify the translation strategies, the books were studied in parallel with their Romanian versions. The chosen titles are: *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (Barrie, 1910), *Peter Pan în grădina Kensington* (Barrie, 2005, translation by Nina Stănculescu); *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (Baum, 2000), *Vrăjitorul din Oz* (Baum, 2000, translation by Joszefina and Camil Baltazar*); A Bear Called Paddington* (Bond, 1992), *Un urs pe nume Paddington* (Bond, 2012, translation by Iulia Arsintescu); *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Carroll, 2000), *Alice în Ţara Minunilor* (Carroll, [1976] 2014, translation by Frida Papadache, and Carroll, 2007, translation by Mirella Acsente); *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (Carroll, 1991), *Alice în limea oglinzii* (Carroll, 2014, translation by Frida Papadache), *The Jungle Book* (Kipling, 2012), *Cartea Junglei* (Kipling, 2004, translation by Mihnea Gheorghiu); *Winnie-the-Pooh* (Milne, 2004), *Ursuleţul Winnie Puh* (Milne, 2013, translation by Luiza Vasiliu and lyrics translated by Florin Bican); *The House at Pooh Corner* (Milne, 1928), *Ursuleţul Winnie Puh. Căsuţa de pe Strada Puh* (Milne, 2014, translation by Luiza Vasiliu and lyrics translated by Florin Bican), *LAFCADIO, THE LION WHO SHOT BACK* (Silverstein, 1991), *Povestea unchiului Shelby despre Lafcadio, leul care nu s-a lăsat păgubaş* (Silverstein, 2012, translation by Alexandra Columban), *Mary Poppins. The complete collection* (Travers, 1994), *Mary Poppins* (Travers, 1994, translation by Silvia Kerim), *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* (Wilde, 2006), *Prinţul fericit* (Wilde, 1991, in Văduva-Poenaru şi Goci (eds.), translation by Const. I. Bondescu). For a comprehensive grammatical illustration of Romanian pragmatic markers, original idiomatic examples have been extracted from Ion Creangă's *Memories of My Boyhood*. In order to highlight phonological, lexical, syntactical, and discursive similarities between pragmatic markers and children's language, I extracted examples from CHILDES, a virtual corpus that contains genuine spoken interactions with children. In the last section I have chosen one single literary work and its corresponding Romanian translation – namely, Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* - for both a comprehensive linguistic and pragmatic investigation and an ample contrastive and statistic examination of pragmatic markers applied to their translation.

The main methodological procedure concerned working on text corpora by using either computer-generated software or traditional 'manual' ways of handling text corpora. However unapproachable they might seem, computerized corpus tools can be adapted to any type of linguistic investigation. The first step of this process was to get hold of both

source and target texts. If finding English texts was relatively easy - due both to copyright expiration and to digital precise replicas (e.g. BookVirtual™ or the free e-books of the Project Gutenberg), obtaining accurate electronic versions of Romanian translations required a more elaborate process. The Romanian versions were either purchased or borrowed from Iaşi University Library and scanned into non-readable.pdf formats. Texts were then converted into readable .docx or.txt formats, using Abbyy®, a software that provides optical character recognition. The text 'domestication' stage proved rather painful, as no matter how advanced Abbyy® is, the converted texts abounded in unrecognized characters and signs which had to be 'manually' removed in Microsoft Word. Two possibilities have been found for terminology extraction.

1) A patience-demanding and time-consuming alignment of the source and target text segments can be performed with the open-source software LF Aligner 3.0 followed by texts upload in the ParaConc software. The latter is a computer program especially made for working with parallel corpora of source and target texts, which allows terminology search. It immediately finds all corresponding translations of one term only if text segments have been formerly aligned. The fact that two (or more) target texts can be uploaded in both LF Aligner and ParaConc (and, in this way, different diachronic translations can be studied simultaneously) has been helpful to my research. Moreover, once aligned and saved, texts can then be used as translation memories (TM) by professional translators.

2) For the quantitative research, I opted for extracting pragmatic markers, using AntConc©, a concordance software that requires.txt format of the texts and displays all hits of a search, within their co-texts. This method was supported by a rigorous recheck of the results through complete text reading resuming. A helpful feature of AntConc is the possibility of searching all terms from a pre-saved list. According to the definition of the pragmatic markers suggested in the first chapter, all pragmatic markers have been extracted by means of traditional reading and classified according to my taxonomy of the pragmatic markers, based on language functions.

The meanings of the pragmatic markers were also examined making use of well-known English and Romanian dictionaries mentioned in the bibliography. Pragmatic markers were classified according to their functions typology established in Chapter I. Parallel investigations and comparisons between the original pragmatic markers and their counterparts in two TTs were performed in Chapter IV, in order to establish the most common types of translation strategies.

I. Pragmatic markers: Contrastive Grammatical Characteristics

Pragmatic markers are complex linguistic phenomena which prove both powerful illocutionary force with expressive (emotive, affective), conative and phatic functions, and a high degree of creativity in the transmission of information. They require careful attention to understanding the deep structure of the speakers' linguistic choices. For instance, from the perspective of transformative grammar, the following utterances have the same deep structure, in a context in which a person shouts after hitting by mistake his finger with a hammer:

> "(1) Ouch!
>
> (2) a. It hurts!
>
>   b. It hurts a lot/so much!
>
>   c. My finger aches!
>
>   d. My finger aches a lot/so much!
>
>   e. I feel pain in my finger!
>
>   f. I feel a rather intense pain in my finger!" (Cruz, 2009:243)

Obviously, the probability that s/he would use version f. from the above is very low, if not inexistent. Hence, the semantic examination of these pragmatic markers requires a theoretical grammar review, in the light of pragmatic and translation theories.

Spoken interaction includes a variety of linguistic items and processes (Quirck, 1972:411, denotes them as language formulae, while Carter, 2006:208, as pragmatic markers) that encode speakers' intentions and interpersonal meanings, operating "outside the structural limits of the clause" (Carter, 2006:208). These items contain discourse markers, stance markers, hedges and interjections. They are fully operational only in a given context; otherwise, they could neither be wholly understood, nor transferrable into another language. In addition, the context they belong to often transmits specific or universal cultural components which are frequently highlighted by their very presence in the text. The case of pragmatic markers is only one illustration of this perspective and, in this thesis, the focus falls solely on "exclamative utterances" that "express positive or negative emotional reactions to what is being or has just been said or to something in the situation" (Carter, 2006:224).

Tackling interjections

Semantically located at the border between nonverbal and verbal communication forms, interjections face a grammatical challenge in being defined. They are a rather problematic class, although the general opinion suggests that they form the purely emotive stratum of language (Jakobson, 1960:354). The existing studies on the semantic and pragmatic meanings of interjections raise three main questions: "Are interjections part of language?", "What do interjections communicate?", and "How do interjections communicate?"

(Wharton, 2003:39). Subsequently, a question that might arise would be whether they are just "non - words" (Goffman, in Wharton, 2003:40), meaning no more than marginal elements that convey the expression of feelings or moods, denying thus the language itself (as they prove to be neither productive nor syntactically independent), or whether they are signs, or, to a certain extent, "motivated linguistic signals" (Croitor Balaciu, 2005:657)? Considered as a part of speech with universal linguistic features (Ameka, 1992:101) the interjection, a real "continuum between 'showing' and 'saying'" (Wharton, 2003:40) requires, thus, a grammatical reassessment of its terminology, definition and classification.

Two methodological challenges came across this endeavour. These mainly come down to the following questions:

What grammatical approach is more convenient?

What to include under the umbrella-term 'interjection'?

A linguistic comparison between English and Romanian grammar books is problematic at all language levels, because of their different origins and history. In the same line of thought, and referring to Vinay and Darbelnet who stylistically compared English and French languages, Romance languages have a greater tendency of abstraction than Germanic languages[1]. The Canadian authors highlight, on the one hand, the French preference for logic, precision and detail, and on the other hand, the English preference for the concrete, practical and real (1960: 59-61). As a Romance language, Romanian shares many features in common with French, including an inclination towards logical classifications. English and Romanian grammar books share the same differences. English grammar books are descriptive, whereas Romanian grammar books are rather prescriptive. Combining these two different approaches, extracting similarities while focusing on divergences, underlining idiomatic approaches in the attempt to find a generalised and common layout is an endless methodological challenge.

Therefore, the solution proposed further on comprises three stages: firstly, a synthesis of the English interjection, as it appears in both prescriptive and descriptive English grammar books, secondly, a synthesis of the Romanian understanding of the word class *interjection* and finally, a comparison of the two, i.e. a combinatorial sum of the above, according to a combined classification of criteria and demonstrated with personal examples. However, due to the same wish for completeness, and in order to lose as little as possible of the idiomatic wealth of the English and Romanian languages, some examples drawn from grammar books have also been preserved.

In this endeavour, the first encountered difficulty was to analyse both English prescriptive and descriptive grammar books. The second was to combine the findings with a synthesis of the Romanian taxonomies and establish a unified perspective of both, in a rather holistic approach. In doing so, different degrees of "prescriptiveness" and "descriptiveness" stood up from grammar books, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. Only some outstanding aspects are mentioned here:

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[1] Vinay and Darbelnet use a conclusive quote from Hippolyte Taine to argument this statement : "Traduire en français une phrase anglaise, c'est copier au crayon gris une figure en couleur. Réduisant ainsi les aspects et les qualités des choses, l'esprit français aboutit à des idées générales, c'est-à-dire simples, qu'il aligne dans un ordre simplifié, celui de la logique. (1960 :59)

English grammar books are not exhaustive, either in classifications, or in examples. Onomatopoeias are not included, except for some very specific statements that interjections are an open class of words as innovative ones can emerge from different semantic uses of onomatopoeia (Quirk, 1985: 74). In short, English grammar books focus mostly on the speaker's linguistic performance.

On the other hand, Romanian grammar books have the tendency of being over comprehensive, to offer very detailed classifications that are rather related to linguistic competence. Romanian grammar books do not emphasise Romanian as it is currently spoken with examples – which are extracted mostly from literary writings. One important aspect for the study of interjection is that GALR I (2005) offers a detailed parallel among illocutionary speech acts and the semantic meaning of pragmatic markers.

Although the main tendency of this paper is to emphasise descriptive approaches, the logic sequencing of traditional grammar books is of certain help in our further research. Therefore, I ultimately propose in this thesis a combination of both prescriptive and descriptive perspectives. More specifically, in Chomskian terms, both linguistic competence and performance will be considered in this study. Linguistic competence proves to be utterly different, and often divergent from the actual linguistic performance. Although spearkers' linguistic performance is observed and tested, in order to study, define and draw conclusions on the linguistic competence, the gap between the two can be extremely obvious, as shown in the following relevant image:
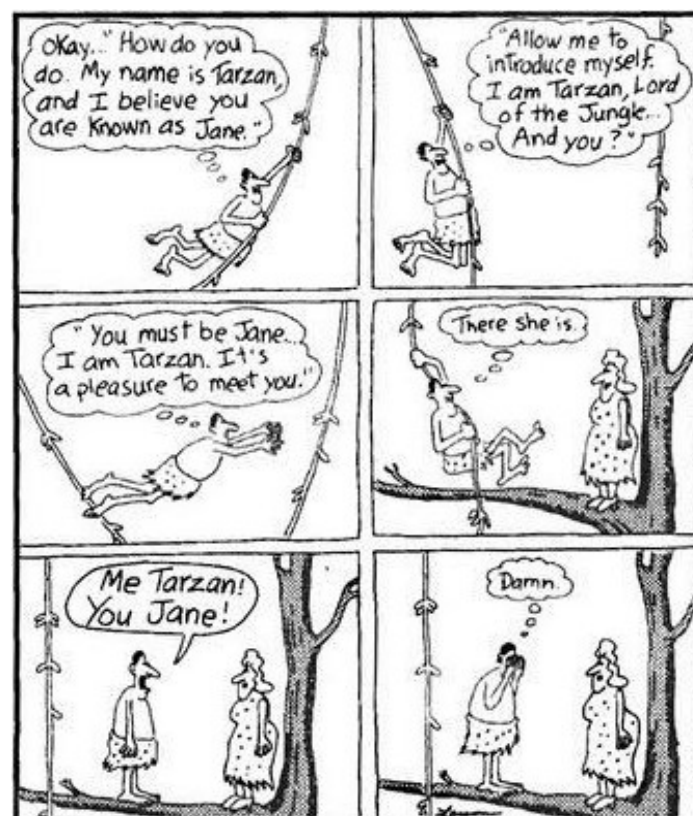
Larson, Gary, *The Far Side Comics*, https://www.thefarside.com/

Fig. I.1. Observation of linguistic performances for understanding linguistic competence

Grammatical historical approach

According to John Lyons (1995:14-32, 359) the dispute over the nature of the linguistic sign, seen either as motivated or as arbitrary, dates back to the Greek philosophers, being mentioned in Plato's dialogue Cratylus. Thus, the philosophical dichotomy between what is 'natural' and 'conventional' in language extended over time, gaining new shades (e.g. analogist vs. anomalist, naturalist vs. conventionalist, realistic vs. nominalist controversies), but basically debated on the same issue, namely, the origin of language, and fundamentally speculated on the connection between words and their meanings. Proponents of the naturalistic school identify different ways in which the form of a word might be 'naturally' fit to its meaning. Thus, such words, few in number, as "to miaou, to bleat, to hoot, to crack, to smack, to buzz, to tingle" (Lyons, 1995:15) that 'mimic' the things they name, "form the core of the vocabulary" (ibid.) and fuel further fruitless theories about language origins[2]. The following comic cartoon tackles the theories regarding the emergence of language, but also hints to pragmatic values embedded within pragmatic markers that will be discussed in the Second Chapter of this research. In this case by means of dialogic implicatures the author brings along two contextual meanings.

Fig. I.2. Assumptions on the emergence of language[3]

The first import implicates a social tense situation via a request and an interjectional agreement for couples-talk. The second implication is found in the title, dialogue and drawing itself and: a cave-couple seriously discuss their obligation to create language.

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[2]Arika Okrent lists the childish, yet reasonably motivated in our opinion, language theories that were banned by the Paris Linguistic Society in 1866: the *bow-wow, pooh-pooh, yo-he-ho, ta-ta* and *la-la theories* stipulate that speech arose from different surrounding sounds;
[3] A Leo Cullum cartoon, cavewoman to caveman: "We Need to Talk";