

# Particular Features of the First Romanian Multilingual Dictionaries

Mihaela Mocanu

**Abstract**— The Romanian multilingual dictionaries – also named polyglot, plurilingual or polylingual dictionaries, have known a slow yet constant development starting with the end of the 17th century, when the first such work is attested, to the present time, when we witness a considerable increase of the number of polyglot dictionaries, especially the terminological ones. This paper aims at analyzing the context in which the first Romanian multilingual dictionaries were issued, as well as and the organization and structure particularities of the first lexicographic works of this type. The irretrievable loss of some of these works as well as the partial conservation of others renders the attempt to retrace the beginnings of Romanian lexicography extremely difficult. The research methodology is part of a descriptive and analytical approach based on two types of sources, subject to contrastive analysis: the notes made by the initiators of lexicographic projects and the testimonies of their contemporaries, respectively, along with the specialized studies regarding the history of the old Romanian lexicography. The analysis of the contents has indicated that these dictionaries lacked a scientific apparatus in the true sense of the phrase, failed to obey unitary organizational criteria, being limited, most of the times, to mere inventories of words, where the Romanian term was assigned its correspondent in other languages. Motivated by practical reasons, the first multilingual dictionaries were aimed at the clerics their purpose being to ensure the translators' fidelity towards the original religious texts, regarded as sacred.

**Keywords**—Language, multilingual dictionary, Romanian lexicography, terminology.

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE beginnings of multilingual lexicographic practice are placed by some researchers in the Sumerian époque: the first Sumero-Akkadian bilingual lists, inscribed on clay plates, date from the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium B.C. and were meant to facilitate the communication between the two peoples. They were the works of scribes, most of them representing translations [1]. History actually proves that translators were not simple users of dictionaries, they were involved in the elaboration and drafting of lexicographic works, aimed at making their work as translators more accessible. In this respect the practice of attaching to the translation certain texts where a part of the terms used were explained, respectively glossary of words that were defined and commented upon contributed to the development of bilingual and multilingual lexicography, preparing the background for the great lexicographic creations that followed [1]. Other scholars believe that “in many of the languages of Europe, the origins of lexicography can be traced back to interlinear glosses in

medieval manuscripts. Monks noted the vernacular equivalents of unfamiliar Latin Words on the manuscript as an aid to understanding the text” [2]. The church played an essential part in the foundation and development of European lexicography: in Medieval Western Europe, where Latin was the language of scholars and churchmen the need to promote Christianity determined the missionaries to draw lists of correspondences (Latin-Vulgar Latin). These glossaries usually contained regular terms that were necessary in deciphering biblical and liturgical texts and were destined to churchmen and translators ensuring their fidelity towards the religious text that was regarded as sacred.

Known as the Golden age of multilingual lexicography, the Renaissance marked the revival of the study of Hebrew, Syrian and Greek languages. The admiration for the values of the Antiquity re-positioned the Greek language, making it the equal of Latin. On the other hand, the development of international relationships and travelling increased the need for manuals and lexicographic works that could help people understand foreign languages. Latin, which was still the favorite language of communication for scholars and erudite persons, represented the source language for most lexicographic works produced at the time. The emancipation of lexicography from the dominance of Latin will only occur at the end of the Middle Ages, mostly during the Renaissance, when lexicographers and typographers dedicated to translation began to write bilingual and multilingual dictionary in which French and English take the place of Latin, omnipresent in the previous works [1].

Starting with the 17<sup>th</sup> century, an increased interest for foreign languages justified by political, commercial, didactic or various other reasons lead to an ever increasing number of lexicographic works. English and French become basic languages for a various number of combinations, in competition with Spanish and Dutch. Also known as the century of the encyclopaedists, the 18<sup>th</sup> century is the period when languages began to be inventoried and thus the number of bilingual and polyglot dictionaries continued to be on the increase. European languages – German, English, Italian, Spanish, and Dutch were still related to French in bilingual dictionary. The 19<sup>th</sup> century marks an interesting phenomenon from the lexicographic viewpoint: following the great focus placed by linguists on the Sanskrit language, there appear an increasing number of dictionaries in Sanskrit, Assyrian and Persian. Although regarded as dead languages, ancient Latin and Greek also appear in lexicographic works, in combination with the main European languages. In addition, the

Mihaela Mocanu is with the Romanian Academy Iasi Branch, Romania (phone: +40-743824280, e-mail: mocanu.mihaela@uaic.ro).

dictionaries dedicated to the modern languages continue to proliferate.

In the 20th Century the intensification of International exchanges lead to the intensification of lexicographic activities. After the First World War, French, which was the dominant language in the Western diplomatic relationship started to share hegemony with English. After the Second World War, bilingual and multilingual lexicography has a new period of glory, so that an inventory from 1966 signalled the presence of 40 general dictionaries in which German was associated with languages such as Russian, Polish, Romanian, Czech, Bulgarian, Hungarian or Albanian [1].

Even if at the beginning the material support for dictionaries was the clay plate, the papyrus, and the parchment, the printing technology developed in Germany in 1450 by Johannes Gutenberg placed European lexicography on new coordinates. The editing and circulation of lexicographic works develop year by year, being dictated by the practical necessities of the European world. In the modern age, the development of computerized lexicography opened the way for huge possibilities: besides making possible the digitization of older lexicographic works as well as the elaboration of new dictionaries with the help of informatics tools, it also facilitated the achievement of a data bank (where a very high number of words can be stored), based on which multilingual lexicons are drawn by exclusively computerized means. On the other hand the migration phenomenon forced the European countries to identify a viable solution for ensuring interlingual communication. All these factors, added to the ever-increasing globalization of political, economic, scientific and cultural relationships lead to an accelerated development of the polyglot lexicography at the European level.

## II. THE BEGINNINGS OF ROMANIAN LEXICOGRAPHY

The history of Romanian lexicography goes back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, from when we preserved two fragments of Slavic-Romanian vocabulary, in close connection with the issue in the Principalities of the first religious texts translated from Slavic. The first lexicography works were a response to actual practical necessity, being conceived as annexes of the religious literature, either Slavic or translated, circulating in Muntenia. From the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century a fragment of *Vocabular biblic sârbesc-românesc (Serbian-Romanian Biblical Vocabulary)*, was partially preserved, about which lexicographers established that it was written around the year 1630. Additionally, the *Lexiconul slavo-românesc al lui Macarie Cozianul (Macarie Cozianul's Slavic-Romanian Lexicon)*, dated 1649, was entirely preserved. Romanian lexicography of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was thus undoubtedly born in Muntenia.

The increasing number of glossaries is motivated by the proliferation of translations from Slavic, their source being *Lexiconul slavo-rusesc și tâlcuirea numelor (The Slavic-Russian Lexicon and the Interpretation of Names)*, printed in 1627 by the Russian hieromonk Pamvo Berînda. Starting from this material, the Romanian authors add or eliminate words

from the original inventory, according to their practical needs. Out of the glossaries drafted by these, we can distinguish, based on the perspective of originality, two works: *Lexiconul păstrat în Codicele Sturdzan (The Lexicon Kept in the Sturdzan Codex)* (aproximately 1660-1670) and *Lexiconul lui Mihai (1672)*, extremely rich lexical inventories (over 8 000 title words), with numerous new entries as compared to Berînda's work [3].

A radiography of the Romanian polyglot lexicography in its early times is performed by Mircea Seche in the monograph entitled *Schiță de istorie a lexicografiei românești (Short History of Romanian Lexicography)*. Seche identifies three stages in the development of Romanian lexicography (1687-1825; 1826-1880; 1880-1969), established in relation to three essential moments: the issue of the first multilingual dictionary – *Dicționar latin-român-maghiar (The Latin-Romanian-Hungarian Dictionary)* (1687-1701); the editing of the first explanatory polyglot etymological dictionary – *Lexicon romanescu-latinescu-ungurescu-nemțescu (The Romanian-Latin-Hungarian-German Lexicon)* (1825); the changes in the international technical and scientific context which lead to the issue of plurilingual terminological dictionaries that included the Romanian language [3].

Unfortunately, most of the first Romanian lexicographic works were not preserved and we can only collect information about them from indirect sources, while others were only partially preserved, fragments of these glossaries being identified in private book collections. The lack of original documents makes it very difficult to attempt to reconstitute the beginning of Romanian lexicography and favours the preconceived idea that old Romanian lexicography has poor achievements.

## III. THE FIRST ROMANIAN MULTILINGUAL DICTIONARIES

The Romanian multilingual lexicographic history allows for the identification of two prototypes: on the one hand the polyglot tradition manifested in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and the modern development of terminological dictionaries and technical vocabularies corresponding to certain fields of activity respectively [4]. The project *Romanian Multilingual Dictionaries. History and Typology* aims to develop a monograph of all Romanian multilingual dictionaries, realizing a systematization of multilingual lexicographical works of Romanian space. The project, conducted by Alina-Mihaela Pricop, is implemented during 2016-2017, by the Institute of Philology "A. Philippide" of Romanian Academy Iasi Branch. The research team includes: Anca-Diana Bibiri, Andreea-Giorgiana Marcu, Mihaela Mocanu, Eugen Munteanu, Alina-Mihaela Pricop, Emilian Pricop and Oana Zamfirescu.

This study includes a critical presentation of the first Romanian polyglot dictionaries from the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the first Romanian polyglot etymological explanatory dictionary is issued. The presentation of the first Romanian lexicographic projects with a multilingual character is achieved in relation to two categories of sources: on the one hand, the notes made by

the initiators of lexicographic projects, the testimonies of contemporaries, respectively, and on the other hand the specialized studies regarding the history of old Romanian lexicography.

At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Romanian lexicography crosses an important boundary. First of all, the place of Slavic language is taken by Latin, another Romanic language respectively, in the bilingual and multilingual dictionaries. Moreover, there is an increase in the number of dictionaries so that in less than a couple of decades six such lexicographic attempts are recorded: a Latin-Romanian vocabulary and a Romanian-Latin vocabulary, a Romanian-Latin one, a trilingual Latin-Romanian-Hungarian dictionary, an attempted Greek-Romanian vocabulary and a glossary of neologisms. On the other hand, the center of gravity of Romanian lexicography is now transferred from Muntenia to Transylvania where, for the next two centuries most of the initiatives in the Romanian lexicographic area will be recorded. As opposed with the Principalities, in Transylvania the direct contact with the Western world is made through the young scholars who either attend the Blaj school or continue their studies in colleges in Rome or Vienna, where they become acquainted with Latin “Romanic westernization takes place here, first of all, by the study of Latin as a language of culture, which satisfy the national vanity of Romanian origin and continuity, as well as an argument in the effort of spiritual and social and political emancipation and affirmation as the fourth nation with equal civic rights within the state” [5].

The first trilingual dictionary in Romanian lexicography is *Dicționarul latin-român-maghiar (The Latin-Romanian-Hungarian Dictionary)*, identified in the library of the Italian count Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli [3]. Marsigli had been an ambassador at the court of C. Brîncoveanu, but he used to know Transylvania very well, as he had lived there for a while. In the specialists’ opinion the author of the vocabulary purchased by Marsigli was a Transylvanian of German origins and the possibility that he wrote the vocabulary at the request of the Italian diplomat is not excluded. Marsigli’s trilingual dictionary, also known as, *Lexiconul marsilian*, marks the beginning of Hungarian influences upon Romanian lexicography. This work retains most of the entries list from *Dicționarului latin-maghiar (The Latin-Hungarian Dictionary)*, written by Albert Molnár, most probably according to an edition issued about the year 1700 [3]. The author’s foreign origin is reflected by the transcription with Latin characters of the Romanian correspondents and the influence of the Hungarian writing style (ex. *szluga*, *karnacz* = cărnați; *kovács* = covaci „fierar”). The lexicon comprises 2500 terms, but it also records numerous omissions of correspondences in Romanian and Hungarian, empty spaces that the author was unable to fill in with his language expertise.

The period between 1704 and 1780 marks a decrease in the development of Romanian lexicography, at least from a quantitative viewpoint: two Slavic-Romanian glossaries are attested for that period, as well as two Latin-Romanian

glossaries and two small Italian-Romanian dictionaries, the latter by foreign authors. In the second decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century there appear the first projects for monolingual explanatory Romanian dictionaries, which remain only in the project stage. They are attributed to representatives of the Transylvanian School, the school that will provide, at the beginning of the following century the first Romanian scientific dictionaries [6].

Starting with the year 1780, the number of Romanian lexicographic works is again on the increase. In 1783 the first trilingual dictionary containing names of plants is issued, drafted by professor Benkő József. This special terminology glossary, the second in a chronological order after the bilingual dictionary of geographical terms written by Constantin Cantacuzino, comprises three languages: Latin, Hungarian and Romanian and signifies the beginning of printed lexicography in our country. As compared to manuscript dictionaries that had a restraint circulation and thus minimal influence, printed dictionaries have larger circulation and are thus used in the following lexicographic works. The botanical glossary of Benkő József contained 620 names of plants and appeared in the summary of a magazine (*Magyar Könyvház*, Pozsony, vol. II, 1783, p 407) [3]. The transcription of Romanian words was done in Hungarian writing and the lexical material was grouped according to classes of plants and not alphabetically.

In the last decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century three polyglot and three bilingual dictionaries are issued in Romanian. The first polyglot dictionary of the series is *Dictionarii trium lingvarum germano-latina et daco-romana*, a large manuscript in three volumes. The works belong to Transylvanian Aurelius Antoninus Praedetus Nasody and dates from the period 1792-1793. It is believed that the manuscript was written during the author’s stay in Moldova, a fact proven by the high number of Moldavian regionalisms. Title words in German, in alphabetical order and written in cursive gothic characters are followed by several correspondents in Latin, which are synonyms and are written in Latin characters. The word list is arranged into two columns, and the works have a scientific apparatus.

Another polyglot dictionary is *Dicționarul în patru limbi (român-german-francez-latin) (Dictionary in four languages, Romanian-German-French-Latin)* written by Paul Iorgovici, from Banat, who also wrote *Observațiile de limbă rumânească (Observations upon the Romanian Language)*, printed in 1799. Unfortunately, Iorgovici’s work was not preserved, all the data regarding it are indirectly available through *Observațiile de limbă rumânească*. The author of this dictionary opens the series of purist Romanian lexicographers, as he attempts to print a special glossary that would comprise the Latin equivalents of Romanian words of non-Latin origin, in order to replace the latter with words of Latin origin. Iorgovici aimed at re-modelling, in an etymological sense the Romanian words of Latin origin whose form grew too much apart from its Latin correspondents, as well at the creation of new words by derivation with Latin suffixes from roots of the same origin. Knowing French the author supported lexical

borrowings from French, as a means of enriching our language. Paul Iorgovici's dictionary, dating from around the year 1800, is the first dictionary in four languages in Romanian lexicography.

The small *Dicționar francez-grec-român (French-Greek-Romanian Dictionary)* discovered by Nicolae Iorga among the manuscripts of Gh. A. Sturdza also dates from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This work that contained 203 title words seems to have been written in Moldova, as indicated by its phonetic and lexical characteristics.

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the center of gravity of Romanian lexicography moves from Țara Românească and Moldova to Transylvania. An extremely fertile period will follow, especially as far as lexicographic preoccupations are concerned; at least ten dictionaries and lexicographic projects are attested in that period. Even if these works are obviously under the formal influence of Hungarian lexicography, they reflect, at the level of concepts and objectives, Latinist tendencies that were specific for that age: the authors try to prove the Latinity of the Romanian language lexis, often sacrificing objective reality. The selection of words and lexical forms, as well as etymological indications are meant to serve a tendentious desiderate.

One of the prominent figures of the epoch, a representative of Transylvanian School is the scholar Samuil Micu-Klein. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 1801, Micu finishes writing a bilingual dictionary: *Dictionarium valachico-latinum*. Two years after finishing his work the author decides to turn it into a polyglot dictionary in four languages by adding German and Hungarian. In order to achieve his project he asks for the help of two specialists in Hungarian and German: professor I. Molnar-Halitzki, for German, and Virág Benedek, for Hungarian. In 1805, the polyglot dictionary is concluded, this work being regarded as the first form of the *Lexicon of Buda* that will be issued in 1825. At the request of the headmaster of schools in Timișoara, Samuil Micu-Klein adds to the work correspondents in Latin characters of Romanian words (which were written in the first version in Cyrillic characters). The work is handed to the Typography of the University of Buda that at the beginning of 1806 announces the printing of the two lexicographic works elaborated by Micu: *Dictionarium latino-valachico-germanico-hungaricum* and *Dictionarium valachico-latino-germanico-hungaricum*. It is actually the same paper, in which the order of the languages is modified. Micu's work represents the first polyglot dictionary that besides the correspondents in other languages, also includes explanatory definitions of the Romanian title words. Even if the explanatory dimension of the dictionary is rather incidental, it must be mentioned for the novelty it brings in Romanian lexicography. Eight years after the death of Samuil Micu, the admirers of Transylvanian school reprint the "Announcement" publish by the typography of the University of Buda mentioning that Micu's lexicon was brought a series of modifications by Vasile Codoși. This was the beginning of the lengthy process of modifying this work that would lead, 11 years later, to the issue of *The Lexicon of Buda*. Although Micu's version is considered inferior to the *Lexicon of Buda*,

there are still researchers who attribute the paternity of the work issued in 1825 to Micu.

Around the year 1802, another man from Transylvania, Ștefan Crișan, an ex-teacher at the protestant colleges of Cluj and Tg. Mureș, has a Romanian-Latin-Hungarian Lexicon Reddy for print. Finding out about Samuil Micu's work, Crisan withdraws his lexicon. The manuscript of Crișan's dictionary is brought by Gh. Asachi in Iași, where it can still be found today. This work, comprising over 10000 title words, displays the same purist tendencies which are so obvious for those times. As compared to Micu's work, Crisan's dictionary also includes a series of etymologic observations, the same such observations in the history of Romanian lexicography.

Another polyglot dictionary from this period belongs to Gh. Șincai. It is entitled *Vocabularium pertinens ad tria regna naturae*, and it was written around 1808-1810. The author aimed at including the general terminology of nature sciences, as the 427 vocabulary entries designate names of plants, animals and minerals in Latin-Romanian-Hungarian- German and Romanian-Latin-Hungarian-German. For the inventory of terms the author used German sources. The Romanian terms have mostly a popular, folk character, as Șincai seemed reluctant as far as neologisms were concerned. Even if it was never printed, his work was used in the completion of the *Lexicon of Buda*.

The last multilingual lexicographic work issued before the *Lexicon of Buda* is *Dicționarul rumanesc, lateinesc și unguresc (Romanian-Latin-Hungarian Dictionary)*, in two volumes, drafted at the initiative of Ioan Bobb and printed in Cluj between the years 1822 and 1823. This is the first lexicographic work of great proportions prima printed in our country, comprising about 11000 words. The word list includes many proper names, words of Latin origin and regional terms of Hungarian origin. The phraseological units, quite frequent along the work, appear as independent articles, after the significant title word and are not included in the body of the latter's explanation. For some less usual words the author indicates short definitions or synonymic correspondents (ex. *armentariu*: „pastoriu e vite”; *ager*: „iute, grabnic, străduitoriu”). The dictionary is printed entirely in Latin characters and the form of Romanian words is generally adapted to Latin and etymologizing. This work opens the path for extreme purism by isolating, in an appendix at the end of the second volume of the Romanian popular words of non-Latin origin. The author used three Hungarian lexicographic sources: the main source was Fr. Páriz Pápai's *Dictionary*, in the 1708 edition, while the other two secondary sources are A. Molnár's *Dictionary* and I. Márton's *Dictionary* [3]. Ioan Bobb's work proves to be inferior to the *Lexicon of Buda*.

#### IV. THE ROLE OF THE BUDA LEXICON IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN ROMANIAN MULTILINGUAL LEXICOGRAPHY

The work that marked the beginning of modern Romanian lexicography was issued in 1825, in Buda, with the original title of *Lexicon romanescu-latinescu-ungurescu-nemțescu (Romanian-Latin-Hungarian-German Lexicon)*. The dictionary is at the same level with the foreign lexicographic

works of the time, displaying a modern scientific apparatus. The issue of the Lexicon of Buda was a lengthy process and was achieved in several stages. The first stage, regarding the lexicographic activity of the scholar Samuil Micu-Klein was mentioned above. After his death, the printing house of the University of Buda designates Vasile Coloși, the vicar of Săcărîmb, with the task of finishing the works for the lexicon. He had already handed in, around the year 1805, a Romanian-Latin-Hungarian-German Dictionary, with the intention to have it published. Coloși unites the two dictionaries changing the order of the two last languages in the version of Micu. Fragments of the work provided by Coloși were discovered in the Episcopal library of Oradea which indicate that the author profoundly altered Micu's version. The 1810 version is enlarged and some of the articles written by Coloși remain unaltered until the printed edition of the Lexicon of Buda. After Coloși, the work is taken over, in 1815, by the canonical Corneli from Oradea. Supported financially by Samuil Vulcan, Corneli leaves for Buda, where he revises and completes the dictionary from the letter I forward, adding numerous technical-scientific terms. Based on fragments, lexicographers managed to reconstitute Corneli's contribution to the dictionary: the articles drafted by him are significantly longer than in the lexicon of Buda, with sometimes endless definitions. The novelty brought by Corneli refers to etymological indications that are more extended in his version than in the final version of the Lexicon of Buda. Corneli is forced to go back to Romania and in 1820 the revision of the work is entrusted to Petru Maior. Although he worked at the dictionary for a short while, until his death in 1821, the contribution of Maior is extremely important, especially with regard to the final contributions for the etymologies. The final revision and completion of this vast work are attributed to the priest Ioan Teodorovici and his brother, Alexandru Teodori, doctor in medicine and philosophy [3], [5].

A polyglot dictionary in four languages, the Lexicon of Buda represents the first explanatory and etymological dictionary of the Romanian language ever printed. Almost all the words in this dictionary display short semantic indications (periphrases or synonyms), which confer the explanatory character of the work. Compared to the Micu-Klein version, the definitive form of the Lexicon of Buda also comprises grammatical information: each title word is included in the corresponding morphological category, the plural forms of nouns and adjectives is listed, as well as the long form of the infinitive and the participle of verbs. Polysemous words are grouped according to their meaning, as opposed to the Micu-Klein version which concentrated semantic nuances in a unique enumeration. Word meanings are presented in a diachronic perspective, from the etymological meaning to the most recent one. The value of the dictionary is also increased by the high number of fixed phrases contained in the structure of the articles, often accompanied by definitions. The purist tendency of the authors is reflected by the systematic indication of the etymon for words of Latin origin and the constant circumventing of etymologic indications in the case of non-Latin words. Despite the purist exaggerations it

reflects, the Lexicon of Buda contains over one thousand Latin etymologies that are still valid today, bringing a huge contribution to the development of Romanian etymology [3]. The influence of the Lexicon of Buda on Romanian lexicography was enormous, representing a point of reference for almost all dictionaries issued in the 19th century. The prestige of this work lead to the proliferation of the Latinist current in most lexicographic works from Țara Românească and Moldova, up to 1870 and even later [8]-[10].

## V. CONCLUSION

The dictionary, regardless of its type, represents a mirror in which the person who uses it recognized both language history data and culture history data [7]. Starting from this postulate we note that the first Romanian lexicographic works are marked by the extra-linguistic context generating them. The issue of the first lexicographic works in the Principalities is closely connected with the circulation of the first religious texts translated from Slavonic. They answer certain practical needs, being conceived as annexes to religious literature, either Slavonic or translated, that circulated in Muntenia. The first polyglot Romanian dictionary is issued at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, after which the number of multilingual works continued to increase slowly, starting with the second decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The attempt to reconstitute the old Romanian lexicography proves to be extremely difficult due to the fact that most of the works have either disappeared or were preserved only partially. Consequently, some lexicographic projects are only known to us through the authors' notes or the testimonies of the contemporaries, while about some others we can only have a certain perspective starting from the fragments discovered in private book collections. Many lexicographic initiatives were left in their initial stages, being however important for the history of the Romanian lexicography, due to the objectives and organization concepts revealed by their initiators.

The study of indirect sources allowed us to distinguish some specific features for the Slavic-Romanian lexicography of the first centuries. The lack of any scientific apparatus, the limitation to simple multilingual registers, in which a correspondent in the Romanian language is indicated an equivalent in the other languages, the heterogeneous character of the entries inventories (besides simple words these contain combinations of words, short sentences or proper names), the lack of accurate criteria in the organization of the lexical material, manifest purist tendencies in the drawing of the lists of terms and in the etymologic indications are but a few of the characteristics displayed by the Romanian lexicographic works until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Lacking the rigorous, scientific concept of a lexicographic school, the first Romanian dictionaries are the expression of the initiative of some scholars and reflect not only their vision upon the role of such lexicographic tools, but also the degree of development of the Romanian language at that specific time.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research and Innovation, CNCS – UEFISCDI, project number PN-II-RU-TE-2014-4-0195.

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