

**A LINGUISTIC MOTIVATIONAL ANALYSIS  
BASED ON THE *ROMANIAN LINGUISTIC ATLAS*  
BY REGIONS. *Synthesis***

FRANCISCO-RĂZVAN CONSTANTIN, MARINELA BOTA

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this article<sup>1</sup> we are going to present the analysis from a motivational point of view of the answers recorded for the question *Adam's apple*, based on the *Romanian Regional Linguistic Atlas. Synthesis (Atlasul lingvistic român pe regiuni. Sinteză (ALRR. Sinteză))*. The answers for *Adam's apple* notion were excerpted from the second volume of ALRR. *Synthesis* (coordinated by Nicolae Saramandu) and mapped taking into account the /+motivated/ criterion (see Annex 1). Following Alinei's (1997) and Dalbera's (2006) motivational theories we focused on the terms used by the informants for denoting the linguistic reality investigated and on the common meaning that underlies these terms. We have also included in this paper a short presentation of the ALRR. *Synthesis* and other Romanian regional linguistic atlases<sup>2</sup>.

## 2. LINGUISTIC GEOGRAPHY

Linguistic geography is a method used to interpret the linguistic material marked out on (lexical) dialect maps. The linguistic atlases represent the main tool of linguistic geography research and the possibility to compare linguistic facts in a vast space gives valuable results.

The first Romanian Linguistic Atlas is the work of the German researcher in Romance languages Gustav Weigand (1860–1930), one of the founders of

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Romanian scientific dialectology. Starting with 1895 Weigand investigates the Romanian territory with a questionnaire of 114 questions applied in 752 localities. The result of these investigations is *Linguistischer Atlas des Dacoromanischen Sprachgebietes* (WLAD – Leipzig, 1909) consisting of 67 maps with the aim of presenting an overview of the Daco-Romanian regional varieties from the north of Danube river.

### 2.1. Linguistic Atlases

The *Romanian Linguistic Atlas* (*Atlasul lingvistic român* = ALR) is the second Romanian linguistic atlas and was compiled by the Cluj-Napoca's linguistic school. For the elaboration of this atlas two questionnaires were used with a total of 7,000 questions, one with general concepts known to all speakers, and the other with specialized terminology (agriculture, animal husbandry, customs and traditions, etc.). The network research included representative localities for all four dialects of the Romanian language: Daco-Romanian, Aromanian, Megleno-Romanian, and Istro-Romanian dialects. The field surveys were conducted by the linguists Sever Pop for ALR I and Emil Petrovici for ALR II.

The motivational linguistic maps method is a modern direction in the research of linguistic geography and begins with the appearance of the *Atlas Linguarum Europae* (ALE) and the *Atlas Linguistique Roman* (ALiR). Along with the ALE volumes, the *Romanian Regional Linguistic Atlas. Synthesis* (vol. I–III, 2005–2018)<sup>3</sup> represents one of the largest studies in Romanian and European linguistic geography.

The ALRR. *Synthesis* network comprises 1,203 localities, 998 localities from the regional atlases and 205 from the *Moldavian Linguistic Atlas* (*Atlasul lingvistic moldovenesc* = ALM). ALRR. *Synthesis* is compiled based on eight Romanian regional linguistic atlases: NALR. *Banat*, NALR. *Crișana*, ALRR. *Maramureș*, ALRR. *Transilvania*, NALR. *Moldova and Bucovina*, ALRR. *Muntenia and Dobrogea*, NALR. *Oltenia*, ALM. The interpretive synthetic maps (with symbols) and the publication of non-cartographic material represent an innovation of the regional linguistic atlases. They highlight the dialectal structure of Daco-Romanian and the evolution of the regional varieties. This project offers a rich perspective on the Daco-Romanian regional varieties spoken today and is a major reference point for future research in the field of dialectology and linguistic geography.

Related to the Aromanian, Megleno-Romanian and Istro-Romanian dialects, other important regional linguistic atlases we would like to mention are:

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<sup>3</sup> Under the guidance of the linguist Nicolae Saramandu, corresponding member of the Romanian Academy, the Atlas is published by the Romanian Academy Publishing House, in three volumes (2005, 2012, 2018). The third volume can be consulted at: <https://lingv.ro/atlas-lingvistice>.

- *Atlasul lingvistic al dialectului aromân* (ALAR) vol. I by Nicolae Saramandu (2014) and vol. II by Nicolae Saramandu and Manuela Nevaci (2020)<sup>4</sup>. The field researches were conducted by Nicolae Saramandu and Manuela Nevaci for the regional varieties of Aromanian spoken in Greece, Albania, R. of North Macedonia and Bulgaria;
- *Atlasul lingvistic al dialectului meglenoromân* (ALDM) by Petar Atanasov (vol. I–2008, vol. II–2013, vol. III–2015), field research by Petar Atanasov in Greece and R. of North Macedonia;
- *Micul atlas lingvistic al graiurilor istroromâne* (2003) by Radu Flora, field research in Istria, Croatia (localities: Žejane, Šušnjevića, Nova Vas, Jesenovik, Brdo);
- *Istrorumunjski lingvistički atlas. Atlasul lingvistic istroromân. Atlante linguistico istroromeno* (vol. I–2002, vol. II–2004) by Goran Filipi. The network includes 11 localities (Žejane, Šušnjevića, Nova Vas, Jesenovik, Letaj, Brdo, Škabići, Trkovci, Zankovci, Miheli, Kostrčan), a Daco-Romanian locality (Rudna Glova, Serbia) and two Croatian localities from Istria (Brgud and Čepić) where the Čakavian dialect is spoken.

## 2.2. Linguistic Maps

The elaboration of linguistic maps in the context of these interpretive atlases represents an innovative scientific method since the analysis of lexical units is done both from the *onomasiological* and *semasiological* perspectives, as well as from a *motivational* point of view.

Semasiology and onomasiology are branches of linguistics that deal with the study of meanings. The *word* is the starting point in semasiology in order to establish the *meaning*, while in *onomasiology* the *concept* is associated with lexical forms. Motivational linguistic studies aim to transcend these two components and to shed light on the *reason/motivation* for choosing a common term to designate a reality or an object (Dalbera 2006, Viereck 2005, Saramandu and Nevaci 2008).

## 3. MOTIVATIONAL LINGUISTICS

In *Aspetti teorici della motivazione*, Mario Alinei (1997) distinguishes between *iconic* motivation and *onomatopoeic* or *phonosymbolic* motivation. There are two subtypes of iconic motivations:

a. *associative motivation*: refers to the relationship of equivalence that is established between two entities, through a process called conceptual metaphor;

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<sup>4</sup> The second volume can be consulted here: <https://lingv.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Atlasul-lingvistic-al-dialectului-aroman-ALDA.pdf>.

b. *conceptual motivation*: in order to name a referent, one of the terms that form its conceptual definition must be chosen.

Dalbera (2006) mentions that a new lexical creation is based on a set of knowledge already stored in a pre-existing linguistic background. To name the future lexeme, speakers use a set of attributes they associate with the properties of other objects or situations previously known from the mental encyclopedic background. It is a cognitive process whereby the prototypical or important features of the concept to be defined are selected. We can thus define the *reason* as the activity used by the speaker to lexicalize a concept, based on the prototypical features he selects: “[...] in the comparative study of motivations (comparative *iconomastics* in my new terminology), dating of motivations is possible, because motivations are an interface between culture and language, and this makes it possible to map well-known chronological grids of cultural developments onto motivations” (Alinei 1997: 6).

### 3.1. *Adam’s apple* – anatomical function

The well-known expression *Adam’s apple* appears and also finds its explanation in various sources such as historical, scientific, religious and folklore. From a medical point of view, *Adam’s apple* refers to the thyroid cartilage, a term that designates a prominence in the area of the thyroid gland which aims to protect the internal anatomical structure of the larynx. This cartilage is present in both men and women, with greater visibility in men. Medicine sources explain this evidence: with puberty, the secretion of testosterone produces various changes in the body, including strengthening the bone system and the development of this cartilage which has the effect of thickening the vocal timbre, a defining feature for men.

### 3.2. *Adam’s apple* in colloquial language

In both medical language and the vernacular one, the phrase *Adam’s apple* is preferred for denoting the neck’s prominent cartilage. Popular science and beliefs interfere at the lexical level and although *Adam’s apple* has a well-established scientific name ‘thyroid cartilage’, speakers prefer to use the popular name not the scientific one.

Lat. *pomum Adami*, rom. *mărul lui Adam* is a common phrase in many languages: fr. *pomme d’Adam*, it. *pomo d’Adamo*, port. *pomo de Adão*, sp. *manzana de Adán*, engl. *Adam’s apple*, germ. *Adamsapfel*.

### 3.3. *Adam’s apple* in religious texts

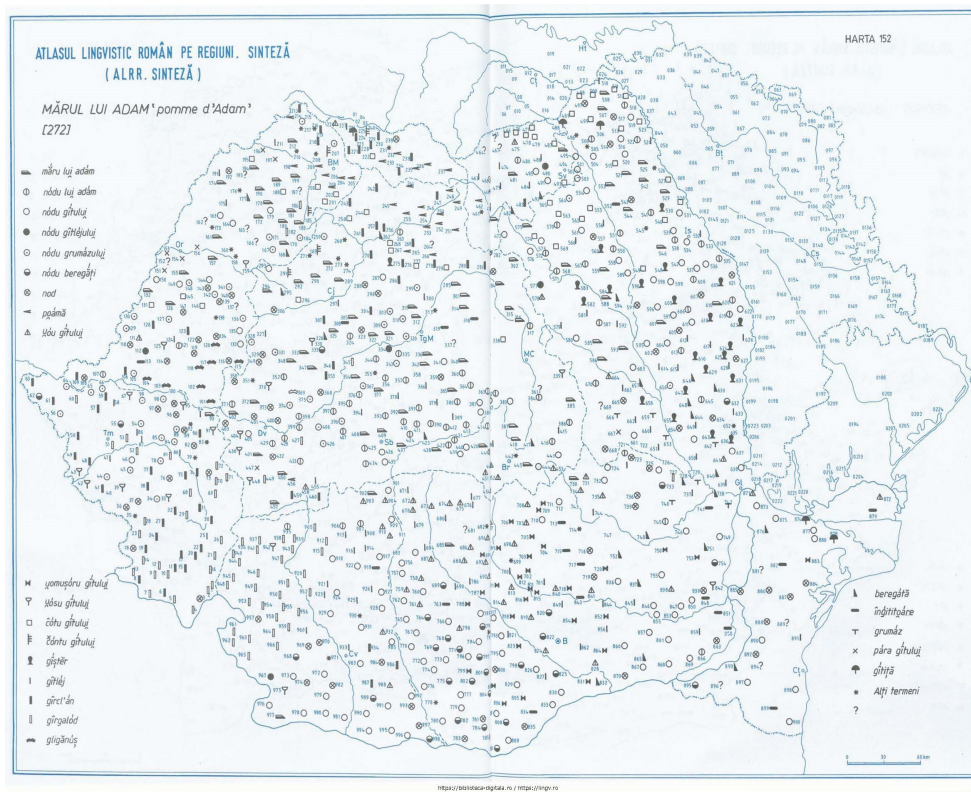
The origin of this phrase is controversial, in the first religious texts, the Hebrew *tappûah* appears with the meaning of ‘apple tree’ or ‘apple fruit’. Later, in the Septuagint appears the term *mēlon*, and in the Vulgate, the Latin *malum*.

In The Old Testament, Chapter 3 of Genesis speaks of a fruit (and a tree bearing this generic fruit) that has become a symbol of the knowledge of good and evil from which Adam and Eve were commanded not to eat. The first complete translation of the Old Testament into Romanian was made by Nicolae Milescu between 1661 and 1668, having as main source the Greek text from the Septuagint, a translation in which we signal the presence of the terms *roadă* ‘fruit’ and *măr* ‘apple’.

### 3.4. Adam’s apple in folkloric texts

In the Romanian cultural space, we find out from a collection of texts that when Adam was tempted by Eve to taste the apple, in the last moment, after he had already bitten the apple, he remembered God’s command and put his hand on his neck to prevent swallowing the fruit:

„Adam, fără să judece mult, a gustat din *măr*, dar îndată și-a adus aminte de porunca lui Dumnezeu, a pus mâna în gâtă, ca să nu înghiță măcar, și astfel *mărul* i s-a oprit în gât” (Pamfile 1913: 175).



[Adam, without much judgment, tasted the *apple* but immediately remembered God's command, put his hand in his throat so that he would not swallow it, and so the apple stopped in his throat.]

Also, in ALRR. *Synthesis* one of the answers is formulated as: *Măru cări i s-o oprit în gât lu adám* (610) 'the *apple* that stopped in Adam's throat'.

The explanation for the phrase *Adam's apple* is the result of people's 'common thinking' (Nevaci and Saramandu 2008), and not the reproduction and translation of terms from religious texts (fr. *calque linguistique*).

### 3.5. Classification

Starting from the theories proposed by Alinei (1997) and Dalbera (2006) we will further classify the types of motivations for denoting rom. *mărul lui Adam* 'Adam's apple', based on the answers gathered for this notion in ALRR. *Synthesis*, vol. II (see map below). We exemplify iconic motivations (associative and conceptual).

#### a. Human referent (biblical reference)

The answers can be grouped under two constituents *măr* 'apple' and *nod* 'node':  
*m<sup>2</sup>ru lu~ adám* 'Adam's apple'      *nódu adámulu~*, *nódu di la adám* 'Adam's node'  
*m<sup>2</sup>ru lu avrám* 'Abraham's apple'      *nódu lu~ avrám* 'Abraham's node'  
*m<sup>2</sup>ru dómnulu~* 'God's apple'      *nódu lu s.Ántă mări~ě* 'Saint Mary's node'

The answer *m<sup>2</sup>ru lu~ adám* appears mainly in the north of Crişana, the south of Maramureş and the center of Transylvania. It also occurs sporadically in southern Transylvania continuing to eastern Moldova. The *nod* 'node, knot' structures form a unit area in the eastern part of Oltenia and the western extremity of Muntenia (Wallachia), along the Mureş River to the center of Transylvania, in Dobrogea and northern Moldova.

#### b. Mythological reference

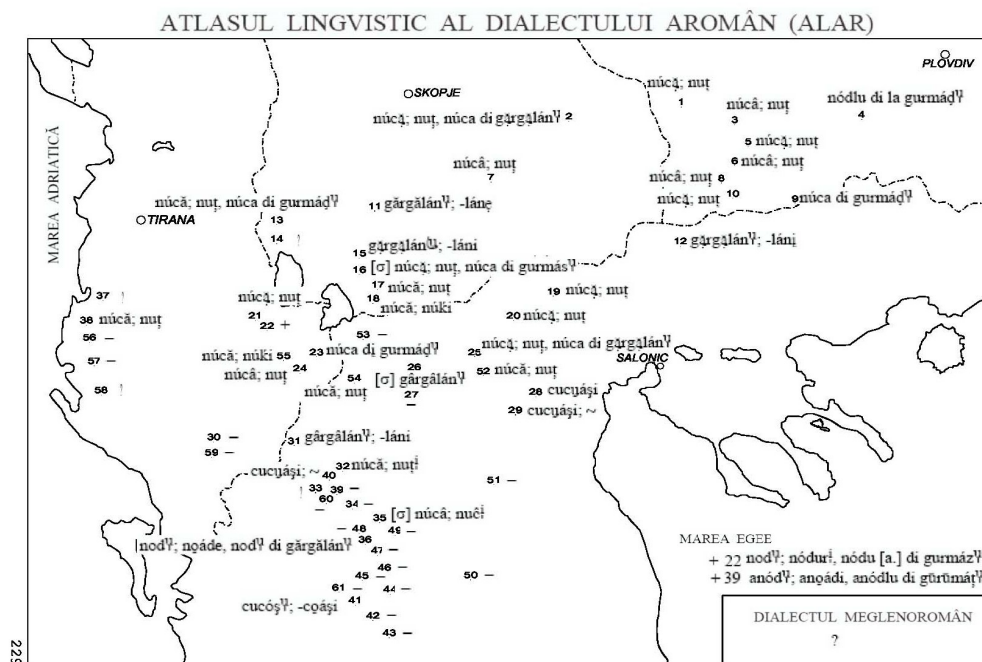
Four answers were recorded for these forms with the nominal center from lat. *imperator*, three of them in Moldova and one in Maramureş (Satu Mare): *împărătúş* 'uvula', *împărătúşu g.Átulu~* 'the neck's uvula'. The forms are used to designate the palatine uvula. This motivation is explained by analogy or confusion with other nearby parts/organs of the body.

#### c. Flora

The answers are divided in two categories, containing terms denoting fruits and vegetables. For fruits we encountered *mÇăr*, *m<sup>2</sup>ru*, *merişóru gítirézî* 'the throat's little apple' or *p<sup>□</sup>ámă*, *p<sup>□</sup>ma lu~ adám*, *p<sup>□</sup>ma grumázulu~* 'the neck's fruit'. Actually, a few answers were recorded for the generic fruit referent

*poamă* (lat. *poma*, fr. *pomme*), and most of the occurrences can be found in the eastern part of Maramureş and the northern part of Transylvania. Other expressions containing fruits were *pára lu~ adám* ‘Adam’s pear’ and *nócă, núca grumázulu~*, *núca gĂtulu~* ‘the neck’s nut’. There are five occurrences recorded for *pară* ‘pear’ (sl. *para*, lat. *pira*) without forming a compact area and five occurrences for *nucă* ‘nut’ (lat. *nox*).

In the Aromanian dialect the term *nucă* ‘nut’ is the most used to indicate *Adam’s apple* (see map below).



For the vegetable category, the regional form for ‘corn’ *cucuruz* (bg. *kukuruz*) has five occurrences in Transylvania (Cluj county) and one in Crişana (Bihar county): *cucurúz*, *cucurúzu* #i *la grumáz* ‘the neck’s corn’.

#### d. Fauna

The answers are divided in two categories, containing terms denoting birds and lizards. We included in the category of birds the answers containing the term *ou* ‘egg’. The structures containing *ou* (lat. *ovum*) are mainly found in the south of Moldova and north of Muntenia along the southern part of the Carpathian chain: *óóu* ‘egg’, *óu gĂtulu~* ‘the throat’s egg’, *oóuşór* ‘little egg’, *ouşóru lu adám* ‘Adam’s little egg’. Five disparate points were found on the map for

structures containing the ‘rooster’ referent *cocoș* (sl. *kokoši*): *cocoș*, *cocoșu gĂtulu* ‘the throat’s rooster’, *coc<sup>o</sup>ș li adám* ‘Adam’s rooster’. There is also one structure where the term for apple and cuckoo are associated: *m<sup>2</sup>ru cúculu* ‘cuckoo’s apple’. For the category of lizards, among the structures containing phonetical variants of the term *gușter* ‘lizard’ (bg., srb. *gušter*) only the *gășter* variant forms a scattered area in Moldova region: *gĂștěr*, *gîștĂÉrez*, *gîștir~átá*, *gĂștíru gĂtulu* ‘the neck’s lizard’.

#### e. Part-hole relation (metonymy/synecdoche):

The structures contain terms denoting component parts of the rom. *gât* ‘neck’:

*Gítlėj* (sl. *glutu*) has the meaning of ‘throat, the inner part of the neck’ and it appears sporadically without forming an unitary area with the following variants: *gítlēju*, *gídlėj*, *gí<sup>d</sup>lėj*, *gílfėj*, *gĂlfěr*, *gĂt:ířă*, *gírlėj*, *gírlėj—*, *gírlēju*, *gírtėj*, *gírcėj<sup>o</sup>*, *gírt*, *gíclėj*, *gíglėj*, *gícl<sup>TM</sup>ézu*, *gírlécéc*, *gírlíř*. It also appears in three structures, associated with terms denoting ‘neck’: *gíclėj la beregátă*, *gírlēju gĂtulu*, *gíșlézu gĂtulu* ‘neck’s throat’.

*Grumáz* (cf. alb. *gurmaz*) is a popular term for *gât* ‘neck’, and has four occurrences, while the *gurmáz* variant obtained through metathesis (inversion of *ru > ur*) has only two. It also appears once in a structure where is associated with another term denoting the neck: *grumázu bereg<sup>2</sup>ți* ‘neck’s nape’.

*Beregátă* (cf. srb. *berikat*) has the meaning of ‘upper throat, larynx’. Only one occurrence for each of the variants was recorded: *verigáta*, *d<sup>~</sup>erigáta ásta*, *berigúș*, *beregúș*, *beregúșu*, *beregúșu gĂtulu*, *bereg<sup>~</sup>éta gĂrtulu*, *cápu bereg<sup>2</sup>ți*. The etymology of *beregátă* is somewhat controversial. In an article where Romanian words with unknown etymology are treated, the author Părvu Boerescu (2011) explains possible etymologies based even on motivational aspects. One of the hypotheses evoked would be that in old Italian and in Provençal the forms *gargatta* and *gargata* would be reconstructed by derivation with a suffix from an onomatopoeic root *garg-* which refers to the sound produced by the throat (‘gargling’), a fact which would have led W. Meyer-Lübke to consider the dissimilation of *g-* to *b-* and therefore the possible Romanian *beregátă* form. However, this hypothesis does not seem plausible in the opinion of Al. Graur, the arguments being insufficient (cf. Boerescu 2011). The most convincing theory seems to be the one elaborated by Petar Skok, which starts from the lat. noun *umbilicāta* ‘in the shape of an umbilical cord’, where the initial syllable disappears in Romanian for *buric* ‘navel’, and in Italian for *bèllico*. Subsequently, the semantic transfer from ‘in the form of an umbilical cord’ to *beregátă* with the meaning ‘organ with tubular form’, seems to be produced in an appropriate extralinguistic context (cf. Boerescu 2011).



*Gîrc:án* (sl. *grŭlo*) derives from *gârlan* meaning ‘throat’ and forms a compact area in Banat and a small one in terms of attestations from the north of Maramureş to the center of Crişana, with a few occurrences for the variants *gríc:án*, *gícl÷án*, *gíc:ánu*, *glicl<sup>TM</sup>án*, *giltán*, *gîreán*, *gîrlán*, *gîrl÷án*, *gítlán*, *gîrgă@~án*, *gîrligán*, *grícléř*, *gîrl<sup>÷</sup>ánu gĂtulu~*.

*Gîrgălód* represents a contamination between *gîrc:án* + *nod* ‘node’ and forms a compact area in the west of Oltenia, with only one occurrence for each of the variants *gîrgălóz*, *gîlgăróz*, *gîrgăló'u*, *gîrgalót*, *gîrg,r<sup>o</sup>ót*, *gîrcán<sup>o</sup>ód*, *gîrg:ót*, *gítl<sup>~</sup>t*, *gîrg@~óz*, *gîrl<sup>TM</sup>ónř*, *gríc:ód*, *gîrc:ón*, *gîrgălÇ<sup>2</sup>©*, *gîlkił<sup>o</sup>'*, *gíc×er<sup>o</sup>ónř*, *gărgălódu gĂtulu~*, *gĂrOiřa gĂtulu~*. The variants *gărgălód*, *gîrcalód*, *gîrgălót* have been recorded with three or more occurrences.

*Limburiş* represents a contamination between *limbă* ‘tongue’ and *řumburuş* (the term is used to denote small round objects like the uvula) appears included in the structure *limburíşu gĂtulu~*.

*Guşó~* derives from *guşă* ‘goiter’ with the augmentative suffix *-oi* and refers to the ‘part under the neck’.

#### f. Physiological functions

Related to the physiological functions motivation, we can group the terms in two categories, those of swallowing and sound emission. Related to the swallowing motivation, there are recorded nouns derived from the verb *înghiři* ‘to swallow’ (lat. *inglutire*): *înghiřitoáre*, *înghiřířgúşu*. Only the first form is 10 times attested in Muntenia, forming a small unitary area. In the sound emission category, we can place the terms denoting musical instruments: *flú~erul gĂtulu~* ‘the neck’s pipe’ and *dîrló~c* ‘shepherd’s pipe’. By reference to the sound-emitting function, both musical instruments *fluier* ‘pipe, flute’ (cf. alb. *floere*) and *dârloi* ‘shepherd’s pipe’ (noun *dârlă* + augm. suffix *-oi*) appear with a single attestation.

#### g. Explanatory motivation

Under this type of motivation, we placed the structures containing terms denoting bone, because of the user’s tendency to explain the cartilage anatomy using analogies with a bone. We encountered structures with the nominal center: (i) *os* ‘bone’ (lat. *ossum*): *ósu gĂtulu~* ‘neck’s bone’, *ósu grumázulu~* ‘neck’s bone’, *ósu înOiřítóri* ‘the bone of the swallower’, *ósu díM í gúşă* ‘the bone inside the goiter’, *ósu lu~ adám* ‘Adam’s bone’, *ósu m<sup>o</sup>ort* ‘the dead bone’; (ii) *ciot* ‘knob, stump’ (unknown etim.) in nominal groups meaning ‘neck’s knob’: *cótu gĂtulu~*, *řot la gítlán*, *řot la grumáz*, *óntu gĂtulu~*; (iii) *ciolan* ‘big bone’ (sl. *članŭ*) in nominal groups meaning ‘neck’s big bone’: *ř<sup>o</sup>olánu gítléřílu*, *ř<sup>o</sup>olánu gĂtiří*.

#### h. Aspect

For the aspect motivation, we identified two categories referring to the round or long form of the notion. We grouped into the round category terms like *blonț* and *blonci* ‘knot’ in Transylvania, *bumba* (magh. *gomb*) meaning ‘button’ or a small spherical ornament, *momicu* meaning ‘mound’ or ‘uvula’ and *buba* (ucr. *buba*) a name given to the swellings. In the category designated to long forms we included *gligăniș* and *glică*n (bg. *gliga*), both of them are terms derived from *gligan*, the first one with diminutive suffix *-uș* and the second one with the augmentative suffix *-an*.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The lexical forms that researchers recorded during the field surveys are the living proof of the expressiveness and creativity at dialectal level. Whether it’s a semantic motivation or the motivational process of the speakers’ ability to produce analogies based on the surrounding reality in order to generate new lexemes, dialects and regional varieties of the Romanian language generated creative linguistic innovations.

Most of the terms that form the motivational areas for our matter are derived from Latin, and the predominance of inherited motivational areas is also evident. Etymologies from Slavic languages, Albanian and German also appear in smaller numbers.

Regarding the nature of the terms selected by the informants, there is a tendency to use the phenomenon of analogy, where an object is named by another object, either in close proximity or with similar features or functions.

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## A LINGUISTIC MOTIVATIONAL ANALYSIS BASED ON THE ROMANIAN LINGUISTIC ATLAS BY REGIONS. *Synthesis*

### Abstract

The paper presents the analysis from a motivational point of view of the answers recorded for the question *Adam’s apple*, based on the ALRR. *Synthesis* and mapped taking into account the /+motivated/ criterion, exemplifying iconic motivations, associative and conceptual. Following Alinei’s (1997) and Dalbera’s (2006) motivational theories we focused on the terms used by the informants for denoting the linguistic reality investigated and on the common meaning that underlies these terms.

Institutul de Lingvistică „Iorgu Iordan – Alexandru Rosetti”  
al Academiei Române  
Universitatea din București, Școala Doctorală Litere  
francisco-răzvan.constantin@drd.unibuc.ro  
marinela.bota@drd.unibuc.ro

## ANNEX 1

