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THE DREAM AS AMBITION IN THE ENGLISH, FRENCH AND ROMANIAN LINGUISTIC PICTURES

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The present article focuses on the cultural specificity of the concept of "dream" seen as ambition in the English and Romanian Linguistic Pictures. We will analyze the cognitive process that takes place when using various phraseological units by identifying both common and different aspects in the above mentioned languages. The method applied will be the cognitive prototypical scenario which is specific to cognitive linguistics.

Keywords: *dream, ambition, concept, cognitive prototypical scenario, linguistic picture.*

The main purpose of our article is to identify common and different aspects of the cognitive process that occurs when we use various phraseological units in the English, French and Romanian linguistic pictures.

Before referring to the main purpose of our article, we must briefly clarify certain theoretical aspects. According to The APA Dictionary of Psychology the *cognitive process* is defined as any of the mental functions assumed to be involved in the acquisition, storage, interpretation, manipulation, transformation, and use of knowledge. These processes encompass such activities as attention, perception, learning and problem solving (APA Dictionary of Psychology). We continue by giving a few details about phraseology and phraseological units which are the core of the present article. From an etymological point of view, the term *phraseology* comes from the Greek *phrasis* which means *speech, way of speaking* and *logos* which is *word, notion*. The researcher Th. Hristea affirms that phraseology can be defined as "the discipline which studies the totality of phraseological units in a given language" and that "the true richness of a language manifests itself, to a great extent, through her phraseology. It can even be said that, in addition to the actual "lexical thesaurus", the "phraseological" one allows us more than anything to classify a language among the poor, rich or very rich ones"[19] (A. Vulpe, Apud). The phraseological units represent an inexhaustible source of both linguistic and cultural enrichment due to the fact that behind any phraseological unit stands a socio-cultural situation. Going back to what the linguist Th. Hristea states, the phraseological units represent "stable combinations of two or more words with a unitary meaning. This means that they name a single object, a single property, a single action, a process, or a unique phenomenon"[20] (ibidem).

Having as a starting point the theoretical aspects mentioned above, we first search for the definition of the concepts of "dream" and "ambition" in various English, French and Romanian dictionaries and we highlight the relationship between the two in all three languages, by analysing both the similarities and differences.

[19] Our translation.

[20] Our translation.

We begin by analysing the definitions of our two concepts, *dream* and *ambition*, in Merriam Webster Dictionary:

Dream- *noun*

1. a series of thoughts, images, or emotions occurring during sleep
had a dream about climbing a mountain
gives me bad dream
2. an experience of waking life having the characteristics of a dream such as:
a: a visionary creation of the imagination: DAYDREAM
the dreams of her youth
b: a state of mind marked by abstraction or release from reality : REVERIE
walking around in a dream
c: an object seen in a dreamlike state : VISION
a man that was her dream come true
3, something notable for its beauty, excellence, or enjoyable quality
the new car is a dream to operate
4. a: a strongly desired goal or purpose
a dream of becoming president
b: something that fully satisfies a wish: IDEAL
a meal that was a gourmet's dream

Ambition- *noun*

1. a: an ardent desire for rank, fame, or power
With her talent and fierce ambition, she became a very successful actress.
b: desire to achieve a particular end
2. the object of ambition
Her ambition is to start her own business.
2. *a desire for activity or exertion*
felt sick and had no ambition (Merriam Webster Dictionary).

By taking a closer look to the two definitions provided by the same dictionary, we can see that "ambition" is described as a strong desire to achieve something whereas the "dream" is defined as something that you want it to happen very much but that is not very likely. But "ambition" and "dream" can also be seen as synonyms, according to our dictionary which defines the "dream" as a strongly desired goal or purpose and the "ambition" as an ardent desire. For the definitions of *dream* and *ambition* in French, we choose as research source Le Dictionnaire de l'Acadèmie Française.

Rêve- *noun*

1. Ensemble d'images, de représentations résultant de l'activité cérébrale qui a lieu lors des phases de sommeil paradoxal ; par métonymie, cette activité cérébrale elle-même. Un rêve agréable, angoissant. Un mauvais rêve, un cauchemar. Faites de beaux rêves ! Un sommeil sans rêve. Rêve prémonitoire. Les chats font souvent des rêves de chasse, de poursuite. Il m'est apparu en rêve. « Aurélia », de Gérard de Nerval, témoigne de l'épanchement du rêve dans la vie réelle. La veille et le rêve. Le rêve fut pour les surréalistes une source majeure d'inspiration.

Loc. adj. fig. De rêve, parfait, idéal, sans défaut. Nous avons fait un voyage de rêve. Un temps de rêve. Une créature de rêve.

Fig. Situation qui procure une satisfaction, un bonheur tels que sa réalité en paraît douteuse. Ces quelques jours de vacances furent un rêve. Vivre un rêve, un rêve éveillé.

2. Souvent au pluriel. Pensée vague et décousue, sans rapport avec la réalité présente ; rêverie. Il n'entend pas ce qu'on lui dit et semble perdu dans ses rêves. Arracher quelqu'un à ses rêves.

3. Ce à quoi on aspire le plus ardemment ; désir très vif, dont on ne sait si on pourra le réaliser. Le mythe d'Icare illustre le rêve de voler que l'homme a toujours nourri. Des rêves de gloire. Caresser un rêve. Un rêve devenu réalité. Je fais un rêve, phrase du célèbre discours

prononcé par le pasteur américain Martin Luther King le 28 août 1963 en faveur des droits civiques des Noirs.

Loc. De mes rêves, de ses rêves…, se dit de ce qui est parfaitement conforme à ce que l'on désire. Il a enfin trouvé la maison de ses rêves. Ce n'est pas le rêve (fam.), ce n'est pas ce que l'on souhaitait vraiment. Le rêve américain, expression qui traduit l'idée que les États-Unis d'Amérique offrent à chacun, quelle que soit son origine, la possibilité de trouver le bonheur, de jouir de la liberté et de faire fortune. Le rêve européen, l'idéal d'une Europe pacifiée et prospère, unie sur la base de références historiques et culturelles communes.

Péj. Idée chimérique, irréaliste. C'est le rêve d'un imprudent, d'un esprit exalté. Ce projet n'est qu'un beau rêve.

Ambition- noun

1. Vif désir de s'élever pour réaliser toutes les possibilités de sa nature ; recherche passionnée de la gloire, du pouvoir, de la réussite sociale. Elle ne manque pas d'ambition. C'est l'ambition qui le pousse. Avoir de l'ambition. Il est sans ambition. Être dévoré d'ambition. Une noble ambition. Une ambition louable, honnête. Une ambition démesurée, insatiable.

2. Vive aspiration ; désir profond. Sa seule ambition est de vivre tranquille. Ce souverain n'avait d'autre ambition que de rendre son peuple heureux. Il avait l'ambition de l'estime publique. Toute son ambition se borne à remplir ses devoirs. Il a toutes les ambitions. Elle a de grandes ambitions pour ses enfants. Charles Quint réalisa son ambition de devenir empereur.

Loc. Ne pas avoir l'ambition de, ne pas avoir la prétention de réussir à. Je n'ai pas l'ambition de résoudre tous vos problèmes. Tirer d'ambition, avec ardeur. (Dictionnaire de l'Acadèmie Française).

According to Dictionnaire de l'Acadèmie Française, the concept of *dream* in French is defined as something to which we aspire ardently, a strong desire that we do not know if we could accomplish. *Ambition* is defined as strong desire and aspiration, just the way we found it in English. In this situation, we cannot conclude that *dream* and *ambition* can be seen as synonyms, the *ambition* being more "ardent" than the *dream* that we don't know if we could make it happen.

In Romanian, the two concepts, *dream* and *ambition*, are defined as follows:

Vis- *noun*

visuri 1. Faptul de a visa; înlănţuire de imagini, de fenomene psihice şi de idei care apar în conştiinţa omului în timpul somnului. ◊ Carte de vise = carte care cuprinde semnificaţia profetică a visurilor. Loc. adj. De vis = propriu visului; fig. extrem de frumos, de necrezut, ireal. Loc. adv. Ca prin vis = vag, confuz. Fig. Atmosferă, imagine, frumuseţe ireală. 2. Reverie, meditaţie, visare. 3. Fig. Iluzie deşartă; gând, idee, aspiraţie irealizabilă. Dorinţă arzătoare. Expr. A-şi vedea visul cu ochii = a-şi (sau a i se) îndeplini cea mai arzătoare dorinţă, a-şi (sau a i se) realiza tot ce şi-a propus. [Pl. şi: vise] – Lat. visum.

(Dicţionarul explicativ al limbii române)

vis~uri 1. 1) Succesiune de fenomene psihice (imagini, reprezentări, idei) care se manifestă involuntar în timpul somnului (păstrându-se uneori şi după trezire). ~ frumos. ~ rău. Visuri plăcute formulă de urare care se spune seara, înainte de culcare. De ~ a) care atinge culmea perfecţiunii; sublim; b) ceea ce nu poate fi real; ireal. Ca prin (sau ca în) ~ lipsit de claritate; puţin determinat; vag; confuz. 2) Stare a celui cuprins de gânduri şi de amintiri plăcute; visare. 3) fig. Idee fantastică, irealizabilă. 4) fig. Dorinţă puternică; aspiraţie; năzuinţă. A-şi vedea ~ul cu ochii a-şi vedea dorinţa împlinită. [Pl. şi vise] /<lat. Visum.

(Noul dicţionar explicativ al limbii române)

Vis (-se) 1. înlănţuire de imagini în timpul somnului. – 2. Iluzie, himeră.

(Dicţionarul etimologic român)

Synonyms:

Vis s. 1. visare. 2. aspiraţie.

(Dicţionar de sinonime)

Antonyms:

Vis ≠ realitate, trezie
(Dicţionar de antonime)

Ambiţie- *noun* *1. Dorinţă arzătoare de a realiza ceva; dorinţă de glorie, de onoruri, de parvenire. Expr. A pune pe cineva (sau a se pune) la ambiţie = a (se) ambiţiona. [Var.: (înv.) ambiţiúne s.f.]. (Dicţionarul explicativ al limbii române)*

2. Dorinţă puternică de a realiza ceva (de a dobândi glorie, onoruri etc.). Om lipsit de ~. A-şi pune ~a a-şi pune în gând să facă ceva cu orice preţ. A pune pe cineva la ~ a ambiţiona pe cineva. (Noul dicţionar explicativ al limbii române) (Dicţionar Român Explicativ Online).

As we can see in the above mentioned Romanian dictionary, the concept of *dream* can be seen as an unattainable, fantastic idea or as a strong desire or aspiration. The concept of ambition however, refers only to the ardent desire of achieving something, glory, honors and upstartness.

By taking a closer look at the definitions provided by our dictionaries, we can conclude that in all the three languages the concept of *dream* is seen as a strong desire or aspiration but with a different level of achievement. In English, the *dream* can be seen as something that we *want* but it is not very likely to happen and, at the same time, it can be a *strongly desired goal or purpose*, this being the common aspect with the definition for ambition. In French, the *dream* is a *strong desire* but we lack the certainty of its accomplishment. *Ambition* here cannot be a synonym for *dream* since *ambition* is stronger than the *dream* which is not likely to be accomplished. In Romanian, the *dream* is both an *unattainable idea* and an *ardent desire,* whereas the *ambition* is seen mostly in relation to a more negative *desire of material achievement*.

Further on in our article, we try to analyse a series of phraseological units which are based on the concept of *dream* seen as *ambition* in all the three languages and then try to compare them by using the researcher's Anna Wierzbicka cognitive- prototypical scenario method. The selection of phraseological units presented in the following table was collected from Dicţionar de Expresii Româneşti (Marin Bucă, 2007), Dicţionar Englez- Român cu Expresii şi Locuţiuni (Horia Hulban, 2007), ESL Initiative (eslinitiative.wordpress.com) and Expressio.fr.

English	French	Romanian
To elbow one's way	Jouer des coudes	A da din coate
Hitch one's wagon to a star	Bâtir des châteaux en Espagne	A visa cai verzi pe pereţi
Reach for the moon	Dėcrocher la lune	A apuca luna cu dinţii
To keep one's chin up	Contre mauvaise fortune, bon coeur	A ţine capul sus
Don't count your chickens before they are hatched	Adieu veau, vache, cochon, couvėe	S-a dus baba cu colacii
Fortune favours the brave	A cœur vaillant, rien d'ímpossible	Norocul îi ajută pe cei îndrăzneţi
Blood, sweat and tears	A la sueur de mon front	A stropi ceva cu sudoare
Fight tooth and nail	Lutter bec et ongle	A se ţine de ceva cu dinţii
Go to great lengths	Se donner un mal de chien	A se da peste cap
Pull out all the stops	Mettre le paquet	
Explore all avenues		
Have one's heart set on		
Hell-bent on something		
Make headway		

By analyzing the phraseological units selected in the above table, one can easily see that the English linguistic picture seems to be richer than the French and Romanian ones when it comes to *dream* as *ambition*, native English speakers proving to be more enthusiastic and perseverant in attaining their desires.

In what follows, we apply the cognitive- prototypical scenario method implemented by the researcher A. Wierzbicka in three seemingly similar situations from the three languages to see if there are any differences.

(1). "She's prepared to *fight tooth and nail* to get the job". (The Free Dictionary by Farlex)

1) X wants a job very much.

2) X knows she has to get the job by all means.

3) When X feels that, X fights tooth and nail.

In this situation, X is driven by a strong desire to attain what she wants and her success seems guaranteed by her will of perseverance.

(2) « Durant ces années de grande pauvreté, la mère lutte bec et ongle pour sa famille ».

(Le Robert Dico En Ligne)

1) X has a family.

2) X is very poor.

3) X makes effort to keep her family safe.

4) When X feels that, X makes effort to keep her family safe.

X who is a poor mother struggles to keep her family safe, but her perseverance in what she wants doesn't seem to help her achieve it in the end.

(3) „Procurorii Parchetului Militar Braşov… *au păstrat cu dinţii* secretul asupra acestui incident". (ebooks.unibuc.ro)

1) X has got a secret.

2) X tries to keep it by all means.

3) When X feels this, X does this.

In the Romanian example, "being perseverant in attaining one's desire" is not enough no matter how ardent the desire might be.

Although we found equivalent phraseological units in all three languages, the English *to fight tooth and nail* is charged with more optimism and this way with more chances of achievement. At the opposite pole there is the Romanian *a ţine de ceva cu dinţii*. Although it might look the perfect equivalent, it lacks the optimism which secures the final success. And in between the two, there is the French *lutter bec et ongle* which does not guarantee the achievement of a certain desire but it certainly proves perseverance and so here result is implied.

As a final conclusion to our article, after examining the definitions found for the concepts *dream* and *ambition*, we saw that the two can be synonyms only in certain situations when they both express a [+strong desire], mostly in English. In French *the dream* is [-ardent] in comparison with *ambition* whereas in Romanian, the *ambition* has a more [+negative] aspect being related more to the desire of material achievement.

The phraseological units in English, French and Romanian presented in the table above, serve as a proof that the English linguistic picture is richer in more optimistic examples for which we could not find an equivalent in the other two languages. From the situations in which we applied Wierzbicka's cognitive- prototypical scenario method, we can conclude the same thing as above. In all three languages, *ambition* is the "fuel" for making "a dream come true", the fuel which also comes in different quantities, depending on the language we refer to. The highest "dose of ambition" is found in English and the lowest one in Romanian.

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