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Marcela Alina Fărcașiu, Vasile Gherheș. 2025. *An English-Romanian Dictionary of Language and Intercultural Communication*. București: Editura ProUniversitaria. ISBN: 978-606-26-2024-0. 273p.

Book review

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In an academic climate where intercultural communication has moved from a peripheral concern to a core competency across disciplines, specialized bilingual dictionaries that map this vocabulary between language pairs remain surprisingly scarce. *An English-Romanian Dictionary of Language and Intercultural Communication*, compiled by Marcela Alina Fărcașiu and Vasile Gherheș of the Politehnica University of Timișoara (UPT), addresses this gap directly, offering

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approximately 5,000 terms drawn from sociology, psychology, anthropology, politics, economics, linguistics and communication studies, translated with attention to both linguistic and conceptual accuracy. The dictionary opens with a bilingual preface (English and Romanian) stating this rationale, and notes a deliberate choice of American English spelling, reflecting the prevalence of US-based scholarship in the field.

The main body is organized alphabetically from A to Z, each entry presented as a headword-translation pair. A substantial number of entries carry a parenthetical gloss supplying field label, register, or cultural context, for instance *kaftan* ("caftan - mantie purtată în Orientul Mijlociu și Turcia"), *hedonism* ("hedonism - caracteristică a culturilor orientate spre prezent"), or *yellow peril* (explicitly glossed as a racist metaphor, with its referential scope specified). This annotation layer does real interpretive work beyond what a bare glossary would offer and is arguably the volume's most valuable feature for the non-specialist user. The glossary is followed by two appendices: a list of the world's official languages with their language family and country of use, and a list of idioms and set phrases built around nationalities or countries (*Dutch courage*, *Indian summer*, *Scotch mist*). The volume closes with a combined bibliography and webography drawing on established sources in sociology, linguistics and intercultural studies.

Bilingual dictionaries of culture-bound vocabulary are not new, but a work of this specific kind, pairing English and Romanian, organized around the terminology of intercultural communication as a discipline rather than around a single thematic domain fills a genuine gap. International examples include Shuttleworth and Cowie's *Dictionary of Translation Studies* (1997), which canonized translation-specific terminology in monolingual form, and Bolaffi et al.'s *Dictionary of Race, Ethnicity and Culture* (2003), which, like the present volume, blends etymological and encyclopedic glosses with headword entries. In Romanian scholarship, Petcu's *Dicționar enciclopedic de comunicare și termeni asociați* (2014) and Ungureanu's *Dicționar de terminologie sociolingvistică* (2017) are citable domestic precedents. In the same vein, Lungu-Badea's *Mic dicționar de termeni utilizați în teoria, practica și didactica traducerii* (2003), a book that first introduced the term *culturem* into Romanian translation-studies dictionaries is perhaps the closest structural relative in spirit. None of these, however, is bilingual and organized specifically around intercultural-communication terminology, which leaves the present dictionary's closest relatives among the prior projects of the same research collective at UPT's Department of Communication and Foreign Languages: Stoian and Șimon's *An English-Romanian and Romanian-English Cultural Thematic Dictionary* (2018) and Șimon, Fărcașiu, Dejica and Dejica-Carțiș's *A Multilingual Dictionary of Translation and Interpreting* (2023).

Read against that trajectory, the present volume reads as a natural continuation of the research program: where the 2018 dictionary organized cultural vocabulary thematically and the 2023 dictionary served translators and interpreters across three languages, this one offers the first dedicated, alphabetically organized English-

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Romanian inventory of intercultural-communication terminology as such, a useful and citable contribution to bilingual lexicography for this language pair.

Beyond its value as a study aid, the dictionary's strongest claim to usefulness for translation practice lies in something the preface gestures at but does not name explicitly: a large share of its entries represents, in the technical sense developed in Translation Studies, *culturemes*. The concept, introduced by Oksaar (1988) and subsequently taken up within functionalist translation theory by Vermeer and Witte (1990), designates a culture-specific unit of meaning that cannot be transferred by literal translation alone because its content is anchored in the practices, institutions or worldview of a specific speech community. Poyatos (1976) further proposed a staged model of culturemes, from basic to sensorially differentiated, that has since informed much of the applied literature on the concept. The notion has a well-established place in Romanian translation studies specifically, most prominently through Lungu-Badea's foundational *Teoria culturemelor, teoria traducerii* (2004) and Rădulescu's *Les culturèmes roumains: problèmes spéciaux de traduction* (2010). The concept has also been discussed directly in this journal's pages by Mața Țaran Andreici (2018), who traces its ethnolinguistic roots and its function as a critical-apparatus term for evaluating translation. The present dictionary's practice of pairing a translation with a cultural note also resonates with a native tradition of Romanian dictionary criticism: Angela Bidu-Vrănceanu's foundational *Lectura dicționarelor* (1993) argues that a lexicographic definition must be actively "read" for its full semantic and contextual content rather than consulted as a fixed, self-sufficient equivalent, a principle this dictionary's parenthetical glosses put directly into practice.

Viewed through culturème theory, many of these entries can be read as culture-bound units whose translation requires contextual mediation, and tipping the translator to decide, case by case, whether to borrow, calque, explain, or substitute a cultural equivalent. This is precisely the gap that purely bilingual glossaries (which give only an equivalent) and monolingual encyclopedic dictionaries (which give only an explanation) each leave open on their own. The present dictionary's compilers decided to combine both: a translation and a cultural note, within a single entry. This gives the book practical value beyond the classroom, for working translators and interpreters handling English-Romanian texts with cultural content. These theoretical and practical angles make the volume a valuable translation-practice resource connected to the line of Romanian-authored scholarship that has been developing for more than two decades within the humanities-oriented research community at Politehnica University of Timișoara.

A small number of refinements would strengthen an already solid volume. The preface states that terms were "carefully selected" but does not specify selection criteria or corpus sources; a brief methodological note would help readers understand the principles of inclusion, particularly given how the entries range from general vocabulary (*adolescence*, *birthday*) to highly field-specific terms (*ecocultural theory*, *acrolect*). A "see also" convention linking thematically related entries (the cluster of *maxim of quality/quantity/relation/manner*, for instance) would make the alphabetical

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structure easier to navigate thematically, reinforcing the browsability the authors already achieve through the appendices. Finally, given how quickly research on digital and virtual intercultural contact is evolving, a handful of recent sources would keep the reference apparatus fully current. Félix-Brasdefer's (2025) *The Pragmatics of Intercultural Communicative Competence*, for instance, addresses exactly this kind of current terrain (pragmatic and intercultural competence in foreign-language and study-abroad contexts) and would sit well alongside the volume's existing theoretical anchors.

This is a well-conceived and carefully executed reference work that fills a genuine gap for the English-Romanian language pair in a fast-growing field, and it stands as a worthy successor to the authors' earlier lexicographic and sociological projects. Its combination of broad disciplinary coverage, culturally annotated glosses, and complementary appendices distinguishes it from a plain bilingual glossary and gives it real classroom and professional utility. Read through the lens of cultureme theory, this is a necessary working tool for translators handling English-Romanian intercultural content, not just a study reference. It is also a "must have" book for authors who write bilingually and need a ready-to-use tool to find the exact (consecrated) term in the evolving Romanian specialized language for culture studies.

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