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**CULTURE-BOUND METAPHORS. A CORPUS-BASED
COMPARATIVE APPROACH TO ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN
JOURNALESE¹**

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to get an overview of the metaphorical language used in both Romanian and British business press, in order to identify similarities and differences in the way in which work is conceptualized in the two cultures. The research was carried out on two self-made corpora, of approximately 500,000 words each. A first step was an analysis of work related proverbs, especially found in English and Romanian, in order to establish some proto-categories of cognitive metaphors. The instruments used were the automatic concordancing software ConcApp, various dictionaries and lexical datasets available online. I also resorted to manual identification of metaphors, which were analysed and compared against the anthropological framework of cultural categories, as defined by G. Hofstede and T.S. Hall. The results obtained revealed certain differences between Romanian and British cultures, in particular in relation to attitudes towards work, and especially towards laziness, which is especially sanctioned in the Romanian corpus.

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Keywords: Conceptual Metaphor Theory; business press; cultural categories; work-related metaphors.

1. Introduction

Figurative language is one pervasive features of business-related communication in various settings, which can be found from the beginnings of trade itself. The communicative function of metaphor, metonymy and idioms can be found in a wide range of domains, from journal article titles, in

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the financial press, marketing and advertising, business presentations, negotiations, etc. Apart from the universal cognitive concepts reflected by economic metaphors, we also need to pay heed to the interrelatedness of semantic and social change of the language, which reflect different historical and social moments, marked by political and economic transformations. Nevertheless, besides its social, political and cognitive dimensions of the language used in the business domain, it also features cultural underpinnings, revealing cultural concepts that are specific to one particular nation.

The purpose of this study is to analyse metaphors from the business discourse (found in British and Romanian business press), and to identify similarities and differences that can be assigned to cultural specificities. The main tenet is that cognitive metaphors are instantiations of cultural categories manifested in the language spoken by the community that shares a common set of characteristics within a given cultural matrix (Popescu, 2012, 2015a, 2015b). In particular, I will concentrate on a specific business domain, that is the conceptualization of work, which, as a fundamental human activity is very present both in the collective mind-set and the individual discourse, as well as social group manifestations.

2. Paper Theoretical Foundation and Related Literature

The underlying assumption of Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) is that metaphor is not only a stylistic feature of language, but they consider that thought itself is metaphorical in nature. "Conceptual metaphor is a natural part of human thought, and linguistic metaphor is a natural part of human language" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 247). Consequently, the conceptual structure of metaphors relies on correspondences or mappings between different conceptual domains. These mappings function in a natural way, as some of them are already existent in the human mind emerging from background cultural knowledge, as different kinds of similarities between concepts. Along the same line of thought, Kövecses (2005) argues that the cognitive view of metaphor can simultaneously account for both universality and diversity in metaphorical thought. He has argued that certain conceptual metaphors (for anger, time, event structure, and the self) are potentially universal or can be near-universal. He identified these as being "simple" or "primary" metaphors and/or complex metaphors based on universal human experiences (p. 64). He further delves into embedded manifestations of generic level metaphors in order to prove that they are not candidates for near universal metaphors. Besides variations in conceptual metaphors at specific level, there exist others, such as when a culture uses a set of different source domains for a particular target domain, or when a culture uses a particular source domain for the conceptualization of a set of different target domains (p. 67).

According to the cognitive linguistics theory, one concept is represented in our mind through a series of other concepts, which together make up a coherent whole, in the shape of a mental frame. Nevertheless, there exist social and cultural, even ideological concepts that are hardly generalizable, and as a result, they are not universal. The differences between linguistically encoded meanings in various cultures or communities are grounded in cultural models based on assumptions and patterns of thinking engendered by the varying environmental settings and differently conceptualised life experiences. Along the same line, similarities that can be identified in many languages and cultures, reflect the universality of

various human conceptualisation paradigms. In Wierzbicka's opinion (1997), linguistic universals afford a common groundwork from which variations found in various languages and cultures are created.

3. Methodology

Considering the fact that I turned my attention to business metaphors in the two languages, the cultural categories constituting my framework of analysis are derived from the anthropological research pertaining to the influence of culture on business. This framework of analysis draws on Geert Hofstede's (1997) cultural dimensions - Power Distance Index (PDI), Individualism (IDV), Masculinity (MAS), Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI), Long Term Orientation (LTO), E.T. Hall's (1966) factors influencing culture-bound behaviour (context, time, and space). My analysis is based on two corpora (British and Romanian), consisting of articles from general audience and financial broadsheets, written during 2012-2015. The newspapers used for this study are: *The Economist*, *The Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Telegraph* for the English corpus; and *Adevărul*, *Adevărul Financiar*, *Business Magazin*, *Gândul*, *Capital*, *România Liberă* and *Ziarul Financiar* for the Romanian corpus. The methods employed were: quantitative analysis, based on statistical data starting from headwords and collocations frequently identified in the corpora; and qualitative analysis, in which I analysed the metaphors found from the perspective of universality and cultural variation. The instruments used were the automatic concordancing software ConcApp, various dictionaries (The Romanian Explanatory Dictionary – DEX, Cambridge Dictionaries Online) and lexical datasets available online (WordNet). The size of the two corpora was comparable, i.e. approx. 500,000 words per corpus, which afforded a greater reliability to the investigation.

The first step was to identify work-related proverbs in the two languages, after which I performed a semi-manual identification of work-related metaphors in the two corpora, using the ConcApp software, which provides concordance searches, and includes full editing support and testing activities, and also word frequency text analysis. Identification of metaphor is a time consuming process, as it entails identification of “ideational meaning”, by which one has to establish whether metaphors can be identified in a text and if there is some “tension between a literal source domain and a metaphorical target domain” (Charteris-Black 2004, p. 35).

In order for me to have a reference point, I took into consideration the information provided by the WordNet online and since there exists no freely available WordNet for the Romanian language, I referred to the DEX online information. In the following I will present both, as well as the ensuing comparisons.

MUNCĂ, *munci*, s. f. **1.** Activitate a omului îndreptată spre un scop, în procesul căreia omul modifică și adaptează lucrurile din natură pentru satisfacerea trebuințelor lui. *În Republica Populară Română munca este o datorie și o chestiune de onoare pentru fiecare cetățean capabil de muncă, după principiul « cine nu muncește nu mănâncă ».* CONST. R.P.R. 13. *Munca e pulsul de viață al omenirii, e biruința veacurilor viitoare.* SADOVEANU, O. VI 337. *În mai, când rozele-nfloresc... Popoarele sărbătoresc A muncii sfântă sărbătoare.* DEMETRESCU, O. 80. *Și cu muncă mai puțină va fi lan mai roditor, Când descoperiri mărețe vor sta lumii de-ajutor.* BELDICEANU, P. 126. ◊ (Ec. pol.) *Forță de muncă* v. f o r ț ă. *Muncă abstractă* = cheltuire de forță de muncă omenească socotită în general și care creează valoarea mărfurilor. *O valoare de întrebuințare, un bun, nu are deci valoare decât pentru că în el se află concretizată sau materializată muncă omenească abstractă.* MARX, C. I 72. *Muncă concretă* = cheltuire de forță de muncă omenească într-o formă specială, îndreptată către un anumit scop și care creează valoarea de întrebuințare a mărfii. *Orice muncă este, pe de altă parte, cheltuire de forță de muncă omenească într-o formă specială, îndreptată asupra unui scop anumit, și în această calitate a ei de muncă utilă concretă ea produce valori de întrebuințare.* MARX, C. I 79. *Oamenii muncii* = toți cei care muncesc permanent cu brațele sau cu mintea într-un sector al producției. *Protecția muncii* = ansamblul măsurilor luate pentru a evita accidente de muncă, a asigura desfășurarea activității muncitorilor în condițiile cele mai bune. *Muncă în acord* v. a c o r d. *Muncă salariată* v. s a l a r i a t. *Muncă calificată* v. c a l i f i c a t. *Diviziunea muncii* v. d i v i z i u n e. ◊ Expr. **A cuprinde munca** = a face față cu succes, a îndeplini cu succes anumite sarcini de îndrumare sau de conducere. **A scoate din muncă** = a îndepărta pe cineva dintr-un anumit post. **2.** Efort de a realiza ceva; osteneală, strădanie. *Stilul artistic al lui Eminescu este rezultatul unei munci îndelungate de selectare a materialului din limba comună.* ROSETTI, S. I, 37. *Toți aceia care vorbe mari aruncă Numai banul îl vinează și câștigul fără muncă.* EMINESCU, O. I 151. ◊ **Ocupație, îndeletnicire.** *Care muncă mi-e mai dragă? Munca cea de haiducie.* ALECSANDRI, P. P. 290. ◊ (La pl.) *Lucrul câmpului; muncă agricolă. O să vii să ne rogi să sărim să-ți facem muncile-n primăvară.* SANDU-ALDEA, D. N. 209. *Care cu poveri de muncă Vin încet și scârțîind.* COȘBUC, P. I 47. *Văzui oameni... Cu plugurile la munci.* ALECSANDRI, P. P. 285. **3.** Folosul material agonisit prin lucru; agonisită. *Cînd își aducea ea aminte de puicele cele nadolence și baghete, de vinișorul din cramă, de răsipa ce s-a făcut cu munca ei... crăpa de ciudă.* CREANGĂ, P. 12. *Munca-ne de zece ani Pun p-o haină de purtare.* BOLLIAC, O. 203. **4.** (Învechit, mai ales la pl.) **Torturi, cazne.** *Muncile cele groaznice ale usturimei.* ISPIRESCU, U. 78. *Și-n temniță să-i bagi, Și la muncă să-i ții Pîn-or pieri de vii!* TEODORESCU, P. P. 106. ◊ (Rar) **Suferință, chin.** *Cîte munci, cîte necazuri... Inimi, soarta hotărește să răbdați.* CONACHI, P. 82. **5.** (Numai în e x p r.) *Muncă silnică* = pedeapsă care se aplică pentru fapte penale grave, pentru crime (pronunțată printr-o hotărîre judecătorească). *Didina... îl orbește, riscînd astfel să fie arestată și să meargă la munca silnică.* GHEREA, ST. CR. I 366.

Fig. 1 DEX entries for 'muncă' – noun category

As can be seen in the above table, five meanings are given to the noun ‘muncă’ (work): 1. human activity aimed at satisfying his own needs; 2. effort made in order to realise something; 3. material benefit gained through work; (in the pl.) 4. torture, strain; 5. in an idiomatic expression ‘muncă silnică’ (penal labour). Mention should be made that the verb displays an inflected form, different from the noun.

As far as the verb ‘to work’ is concerned, there are four main meanings: 1. intr.v. to make a physical or intellectual effort; tran.v. to transform sth; 2. to torture sb, to provoke moral suffering; 3. refl.v. to suffer, to try hard; 4. tran.v. to earn sth with hard work.

MUNCÍ, *muncesc*, vb. IV. **1.** Intrans. A depune un efort fizic și intelectual pentru a produce, a crea, a pregăti sau a prelucra ceva; a face o muncă, a depune o activitate; a lucra. *Muncește el, că de muncit nu-i rușine, ș-ascultă, și-i supus, și-și face ochii în patru când îi spune cineva ceva.* VLAHUȚĂ, O. A. II 10. *S-a statornicit în satul aceala pentru totdeauna, trăgându-se la casa lui și muncind ca pentru dînsul.* CREANGĂ, P. 139. *Nu-mi trimite-atîta dor Pe gurile tuturor, Că n-am vreme să-l doresc: Ziua lucru și muncesc, Noaptea voi să odihnesc.* JARNÍK-BÎRSEANU, D. 117. ◊ *Cei ce muncesc = oamenii muncii.* ♦ Tranz. (Cu privire la pămînt, cîmp, ogor) A lucra, a efectua munci agricole. *învăța poporimea cum să-și muncească cîmpurile mai cu folos.* ISPIRESCU, U. 73. ♦ Tranz. (Cu privire la obiecte concrete sau la creații ale spiritului) A prelucra, a modifica; a meșteri, a meșteșugi. *Sînt și meșteri care dintr-o coasă rea fac una bună... o muncesc în fel și chip.* PAMFILE, A. R. 129. **2.** Tranz. A supune la cazne, la tortură; a provoca suferințe morale, a chinui, a necăji, a oapăra. *Pintea, fraged copilandru, La ciobani intrase slugă, Și-l muncea într-una gîndul Cum ar face el să fugă.* IOSIF, P. 70. *Puse de tîie... pe alți mulți boieri, muncindu-i, mai întii, spre a le afla toate avuțiile.* ODOBESCU, S. I 425. *Mă muncește dorul cînd îmi aduc aminte De vremile trecute.* ALECSANDRI, P. I 240. ◊ A b s o l. *Desperarea ucide, această simțire muncește.* EMINESCU, N. 73. **3.** Repl. A suporta suferințe fizice, a se chinui, a îndura, a suferi. *A dat poroncă pin toată cetatea lui să-i vie doforii în clipă să facă ceva, ca să nu i se muncească copila.* SBIERA, P. 301. *Așa se munci biata noră, pînă după miezul nopții; dar, despre ziuă, somnul o doborî.* CREANGĂ, p. 6. *Că de-ai ști tu cum trăiesc, Cum trăiesc, cum mă muncesc, Ți-ai înțeșta minele și ți-ai plînge zilele.* JARNÍK-BÎRSEANU, D. 318. ♦ (Cu sens atenuat) A se strădui, a se sili, a se frămînta, a se osteni, a se obosi. *Un cocostîrc stătea cu capul ridicat, muncindu-se să înghită ceva care-i umfla gîtul subțire.* DUMITRIU, V. E. 120. *Se muncea Simina să-și aduc-aminte Cînd s-a prins la ceartă.* COȘBUC, P. I 246. *Asta nu poate s-o facă, oricît s-ar munci.* ȘEZ. IV 170. ◊ x p r. **A se munci cu gîndul** (mai rar **cu gîndurile**) = a fi chinuit, preocupat de un gînd. *Și-și duse mîna la gură, scoborîndu-și ochii în jos, muncindu-se cu gîndul să afle ce-i de făcut.* MIRONESCU, S. A. 33. **4.** Tranz. (Rar) A cîștiga ceva cu osteneală, cu muncă. *Banii mei, muncii de mine.* DELANVRANCEA. O. II 365.

Fig. 2. DEX entries for ‘a munci’ – verb category

Noun

- S: (n) **work** (activity directed toward making or doing something) *"she checked several points needing further work"*
- S: (n) **work**, piece of work (a product produced or accomplished through the effort or activity or agency of a person or thing) *"it is not regarded as one of his more memorable works"; "the symphony was hailed as an ingenious work"; "he was indebted to the pioneering work of John Dewey"; "the work of an active imagination"; "erosion is the work of wind or water over time"*
- S: (n) employment, **work** (the occupation for which you are paid) *"he is looking for employment"; "a lot of people are out of work"*
- S: (n) study, **work** (applying the mind to learning and understanding a subject (especially by reading)) *"mastering a second language requires a lot of work"; "no schools offer graduate study in interior design"*
- S: (n) **work** ((physics) a manifestation of energy; the transfer of energy from one physical system to another expressed as the product of a force and the distance through which it moves a body in the direction of that force) *"work equals*

Fig. 3. WordNet entries for ‘work’ as noun category

As can be seen, there are seven meanings attached to the noun ‘work’. The last meaning is not to be found in Romanian, i.e. a work of art would be best rendered through ‘operă de artă’ and not ‘muncă’. As for the verb, there are also many meanings that the verb ‘a munci’ in Romanian does not provide, e.g. ‘work the raisins into the dough’ would be ‘a introduce’ (to introduce).

| Verb |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> S: (v) work (exert oneself by doing mental or physical work for a purpose or out of necessity) <i>"I will work hard to improve my grades"; "she worked hard for better living conditions for the poor"</i> S: (v) work, do work (be employed) <i>"Is your husband working again?"; "My wife never worked"; "Do you want to work after the age of 60?"; "She never did any work because she inherited a lot of money"; "She works as a waitress to put herself through college"</i> S: (v) work, act (have an effect or outcome; often the one desired or expected) <i>"The voting process doesn't work as well as people thought"; "How does your idea work in practice?"; "This method doesn't work"; "The breaks of my new car act quickly"; "The medicine works only if you take it with a lot of water"</i> S: (v) function, work, operate, go, run (perform as expected when applied) <i>"The washing machine won't go unless it's plugged in"; "Does this old car still run well?"; "This old radio doesn't work anymore"</i> S: (v) work, work on, process (shape, form, or improve a material) <i>"work stone into tools"; "process iron"; "work the metal"</i> S: (v) exercise, work, work out (give a workout to) <i>"Some parents exercise their infants"; "My personal trainer works me hard"; "work one's muscles"; "this puzzle will exercise your mind"</i> S: (v) make, work (proceed along a path) <i>"work one's way through the crowd"; "make one's way into the forest"</i> S: (v) work (operate in a certain place, area, or specialty) <i>"She works the night clubs"; "The salesman works the Midwest"; "This artist works mostly in acrylics"</i> S: (v) work (proceed towards a goal or along a path or through an activity) <i>"work your way through every problem or task"; "She was working on her second martini when the guests arrived"; "Start from the bottom and work towards the top"</i> S: (v) work (move in an agitated manner) <i>"His fingers worked with tension"</i> S: (v) bring, work, play, wreak, make for (cause to happen or to occur as a consequence) <i>"I cannot work a miracle"; "wreak havoc"; "bring comments"; "play a joke"; "The rain brought relief to the drought-stricken area"</i> S: (v) work, put to work (cause to work) <i>"he is working his servants hard"</i> S: (v) cultivate, crop, work (prepare for crops) <i>"Work the soil"; "cultivate the land"</i> S: (v) work (behave in a certain way when handled) <i>"This dough does not work easily"; "The soft metal works well"</i> S: (v) influence, act upon, work (have and exert influence or effect) <i>"The artist's work influenced the young painter"; "She worked on her friends to support the political candidate"</i> S: (v) work (operate in or through) <i>"Work the phones"</i> S: (v) work (cause to operate or function) <i>"This pilot works the controls"; "Can you work an electric drill?"</i> S: (v) work (provoke or excite) <i>"The rock musician worked the crowd of young girls into a frenzy"</i> S: (v) work (gratify and charm, usually in order to influence) <i>"the political candidate worked the crowds"</i> S: (v) shape, form, work, mold, mould, forge (make something, usually for a specific function) <i>"She molded the rice balls carefully"; "Form cylinders from the dough"; "shape a figure"; "Work the metal into a sword"</i> S: (v) work (move into or onto) <i>"work the raisins into the dough"; "the student worked a few jokes into his presentation"; "work the body onto the flatbed truck"</i> S: (v) knead, work (make uniform) <i>"knead dough"; "work the clay until it is soft"</i> S: (v) exploit, work (use or manipulate to one's advantage) <i>"He exploit the new taxation system"; "She knows how to work the system"; "he works his parents for sympathy"</i> S: (v) solve, work out, figure out, puzzle out, lick, work (find the solution to (a problem or question) or understand the meaning of) <i>"did you solve the problem?"; "Work out your problems with the boss"; "this unpleasant situation isn't"</i> |

Fig. 4. WordNet entries for ‘work’ as verb category

4. Results

The results of the investigation revealed that work-related metaphors clustered in cognitive categories account for cultural categories, both in terms of conceptual universals and variants, resulting in a complex mapping of interrelated cross-connections.

I first carried out an analysis of work-related proverbs in both Romanian and English, in order to identify the metaphorical conceptualisations that have been preserved through popular wisdom. The most frequent conceptualisation was that of **WORK is GOLDEN / WORK is WEALTH**: “Munca e brătară de

aur²”; “Munca e prima dintre virtuți³”, “Munca înobilează pe om⁴”, “Munca e mama săracilor⁵”; “Munca sfințește locul⁶”, “Munca e comoară⁷”, “Munca pământului e bogăție⁸”, “Omul muncitor, ca un pom roditor⁹”, “Munca e bogată ca Dumnezeu¹⁰”, “Dintr-o muncă cât de mică, dacă nu curge, pică¹¹”, “Munca face poftă de mâncare¹²”. Less instances were found in English with reference to this metaphorical conceptualisation. Another metaphor was that of **WORK is DULY REWARDED**: “Vrednic este muncitorul de plata sa¹³”, “Munca e blagoslovită, când te ții de ea, ai pită¹⁴”, “Omul muncitor, de pâine nu duce dor¹⁵”, “Prin muncă și stăruință, vei ajunge la dorință¹⁶”, “Diligent work makes a skillful workman.” “Cum muncești, așa se plătește¹⁷”, “De unde muncești, de acolo trebuie să mănânci¹⁸”, “Parcă a muncit cuiva și nu i-a plătit¹⁹”, “No bees, no honey, no work, no money”, “You cannot pull a fish out of the pond without work”, “Learning comes through work”, **WORK is HEALTHY**: “Munca lungește viața, iar lenea o scurtează²⁰”, “Lucrul face sănătate, trândăvia tot păcate²¹”, “De făcut treabă, nu mai cade coada nimănui²²”, “Hard work never did anyone any harm”, **LAZINESS is EVIL**: “Lenea e începutul sărăciei²³”, “Poverty is an older daughter of laziness”, “Lenea e mama tuturor relelor²⁴”, “Leneșul e frate cu cerșetorul²⁵”, “Când lenea încalecă pe om, sărăcia îi sare în spate²⁶”, “The devil finds work for idle hands to do”, “Poverty is the reward of idleness”, “The seed of all evil is laziness”, “Laziness goes so slowly that poverty overtakes it”, “Munca muncitorului, pe mâna risipitorului²⁷” (var. “Averea zgârcitului se duce de mâna risipitorului²⁸”), “Leneșul caută lucrul, dar nu dorește să îl gasească²⁹”, “Când chemi la muncă, ia-ți sapa în mână³⁰”, **WORK is PRUDENCE FOR OLD AGE**: “Cât ești tânăr, muncește ca să ai la bătrânețe³¹”, “Muncești azi, ca să mănânci mâine³²”, “Cine la tinerețe e leneș, suferă la bătrânețe³³”, **WORK is MORAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**: “Omul e dator să muncească, să nu-l prindă moartea

² (Transl.) Work is a golden bracelet.

³ (Transl.) Work is first among virtues.

⁴ (Transl.) Work dignifies man.

⁵ (Transl.) Work is the mother of the poor.

⁶ (Transl.) Work blesses the place.

⁷ (Transl.) Work is a treasure.

⁸ (Transl.) Tilling the land is wealth.

⁹ (Transl.) A hard-working man is like a tree in bloom.

¹⁰ (Transl.) Work is wealthy like God.

¹¹ (Transl.) Even with little work, if it doesn't rain money, it will drop it.

¹² (Transl.) Work whets the appetite.

¹³ (Transl.) The worker is worthy of his pay.

¹⁴ (Transl.) Work is blessed, when you keep to it, you will have what to eat.

¹⁵ (Transl.) The hard-working man won't need bread.

¹⁶ (Transl.) Through work and obstinacy you will make your dreams come true.

¹⁷ (Transl.) You will be paid according to what you work.

¹⁸ (Transl.) You will eat from where you work.

¹⁹ (Transl.) He behaves as if he has worked for someone and hasn't been paid.

²⁰ (Transl.) Work makes you live longer, sloth makes you die younger.

²¹ (Transl.) Work keeps you healthy, sloth brings you into trouble.

²² (Transl.) Work has killed anyone (Nobody's tail is lost while working – the meaning is that work does not debase anyone, no rank is lost).

²³ (Transl.) Laziness is the beginning of poverty.

²⁴ (Transl.) Laziness is the mother of all evil.

²⁵ (Transl.) The sluggard is beggars brother.

²⁶ (Transl.) When laziness saddles somebody, poverty gets a piggyback.

²⁷ (Transl.) The work of the hard-worker will be spent by the waster.

²⁸ (Transl.) A stingy man's wealth is spent by the waster – meaning that generally, the children of a stingy man will squander away his wealth to compensate for the restrictions of their youth.

²⁹ (Transl.) The sluggard looks for work, but doesn't want to find it.

³⁰ (Transl.) When you summon to work, prepare your own tools – meaning that one should set an example when they want to achieve something.

³¹ (Transl.) Work while you're young, so that you won't be in need when you're old.

³² (Transl.) Work today and tomorrow you won't starve.

³³ (Transl.) He who is lazy when young, will suffer when old.

șezând³⁴, “No man is born into this world, whose work is not born with him, “Mergi, muncește ca să ai, și la un sărac să dai³⁵”, “Să fii înțelept ca șarpele, muncitor ca albină și doritor ca turturica³⁶”, “What man has done, man can do”, **ORGANISED WORK is WORTHWHILE**: “Decât să muncești degeaba, mai bine să șezi degeaba³⁷”, “Contrivance is better than hard work”, “All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy”, “Omul gospodar își face iarna car și vara sanie³⁸”, “Make hay while the sun shines”, “The early bird catches the worm”, “One keep cleans is worth ten make cleans”, “Drive not too many plows at once, some will make foul work.”, “Too many cooks spoil the broth”, “De-oi munci, de n-oi munci, mai bogat de-așa n-oi fi³⁹”, “Cine lucrează și tace, mai multă treabă face⁴⁰”, “A bad workman always blames his tools”, “Vorba multă, sărăcia omului⁴¹”, “More talk than work”, “A dog that barks is never a good hunter”.

Generally speaking, the work-related proverbs are far more numerous in Romanian, sometimes with contradictory overtones – either praising the benefits of industry and hard work, or sometimes alluding to overworking which may be futile. On the other hand, there is a vast array of proverbs related to laziness, which has represented a constant preoccupation for the Romanians, and is always vehemently criticised. The famous story of the sluggard has entered the Romanian consciousness forever, as well as the adage: Pică pară mălăiață în gura lui Nătăfleată⁴².

As for the two corpora, not all the categories identified above were found. In general, ‘work’ was associated with the human activity needed in order to make a living and perform one’s civic responsibility. A recurrent conceptual metaphor here is the previously identified one: **WORK is MORAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**:

(1) When the market exists to meet human needs, government requirements for taxation diminish, making good wages and purposeful **work** all we need for the economics of enough. (Maclurcan, & Hinton, 2014)

(2) I look forward to seeing 2015 headlines reflecting renewed optimism, innovative approaches to the future of **work** and meaningful positive impact. (Weinreb, 2015)

(3) O tranziție ecologică ar putea pune bazele **locurilor de muncă** de mâine și ar putea transforma sistemul de educație din viitor, după cum se menționează în Scenariu 2015⁴³... (Ionascu, 2016)

The current economic and social situation leaves no room for outside-the-norm behaviours. Man needs to have a job in order to survive and belong to the society. This might explain the infrequent instances of laziness identified in the British corpus. Laziness is a luxury that the post-modern man cannot afford any more, completely unconceivable in our globalised world. There exist, however, differences in the workplace settings, working patterns, or company cultures: Romanians, for example, are considered to spend too much time at the workplace, not necessarily because they are more efficient, but because working patterns have changed, which in turn might affect family life, as well as the physical and mental

³⁴ (Transl.) Man’s duty is to work, not to be found idling around by death.

³⁵ (Transl.) Go work, to earn money and give away to the poor.

³⁶ (Transl.) Be as sly as a snake, as hard-working as a bee and as eager as a turtle-dove.

³⁷ (Transl.) Better idle for free that work for free / Better to sit idle than work for naught.

³⁸ (Transl.) A hard worker builds a cart in winter and a sledge in summer.

³⁹ (Transl.) If I work or if I work not, I won’t get richer than this.

⁴⁰ (Transl.) He who works and keeps silent, will do a better job.

⁴¹ (Transl.) Much talk, little work.

⁴² (Transl.) Fall overripe pear in Dopeys open mouth – about somebody who is very lazy and considers that everything comes for granted.

⁴³ (Transl.) An ecological transition might lay the bases of tomorrow’s workplaces and might transform the future education system, as mentioned in Scenariu 2015.

health of the employees. They may well while away their time at the place of work, finding time for breaks or giving in to various interruptions, especially those offered by social media.

(4) În medie, un angajat pierde în jur de 1,7 ore (dintr-un program de lucru de 8,5 ore) pe zi, pe Internet, conform unui studiu al celor de la Salary.com, efectuat pe un eșantion de 2.057 de respondenți. Discuțiile cu prietenii sau membrii familiei, vizionarea filmulețelor sau a diverselor fotografii care circulă online, cumpărăturile online, cititul presei și jocurile sunt principalele **distracții la locul de muncă** pentru mai mult de 40% din salariații care au acces la Internet la locul de muncă⁴⁴. (Cât timp pierde un angajat cu Internetul și ce site-uri taie cheful de muncă, 2014)

A cultural dimension of Romanians is that of a polychromic approach to time, a certain reluctance to tight schedules and a preference to taking things in their own stride. This explains the need for variety at work, in order to avoid getting stuck in a rut:

(5) Întârzierile sunt și ele la ordinea zilei. Practic, managerii s-au obișnuit ca angajații lor să se prezinte la **lucru** respectând 'regula' sferului academic. În plus, obișnuita cafea de dimineață taie în jur de 30 de minute din timpul dedicat **lucrului**, iar dacă adăugăm în ecuație și pauzele de țigară, reiese că foarte mulți salariați **muncesc** în jur de 90 de minute **mai puțin**, zilnic, decât ar trebui în mod normal⁴⁵. (Cât timp pierde un angajat cu Internetul și ce site-uri taie cheful de muncă, 2014)

For the Romanian corpus, 27% of the collocations with “muncă” were found in the construction ‘place of work’, with a semantic prosody laden with anxiety for a possible (sometimes imminent) loss of it. A preoccupation for the creation of new jobs was also present, especially with reference to the Romanian labour market. Thus, the metaphorical category in this case is **WORKPLACE CREATION is ECONOMIC PROSPERITY**, meaning that the advancement of an economy is based on employment of the active population, and this idea is pervasive throughout the texts under scrutiny.

(6) În afară de firmele care au anunțat că vor face câteva sute de angajări, fiecare companie mai scoate câte un post - două la concurs, astfel că avem în prezent 1.900 de locuri de **muncă vacante** în Cluj, chiar dacă o parte dintre acestea se ocupă prin migrare de la o companie la alta⁴⁶. (Ciriperu, & Mihai, 2014)

(7) The Juncker investment plan may have many flaws but, if directed to the right opportunities, it could be the best option available to **boost** growth and **employment**. (Cash-rich European groups need to follow Juncker’s lead, 2014)

The **UNEMPLOYMENT is an ENEMY** metaphor, identified by Charteris-Black (2005, p. 91), is also present in our British corpus. It was not found in the Romanian corpus, apparently because in the Romanian culture, although a more serious issue than in the UK, unemployment is still something that people need to learn to deal with.

(8) Since 2008 America, like many other countries, **has struggled with** slack demand and high **unemployment**. (Janet Yellen will stick to her predecessor’s expansionary policies, 2013)

⁴⁴ (Transl.) On average, an employee wastes approximately 1.7 hours (out of an 8.5-hour programme) a day surfing the Internet, according to a study by Salary.com, carried out on a sample of 2,057 respondents. Discussions with friends or family members, watching short movies or various photos that are available online, online shopping, reading the press and gaming are the main distractions at the place of work for more than 40% of the employees that have Internet access at work.

⁴⁵ (Transl.) Late arrivals are also frequent. Practically, managers got used to their employees’ coming to work obeying the ‘academic quarter’ law. Moreover, the customary ‘morning cigarette’ cuts approximately 30 minutes of the time dedicated to work, and if we add the smoking breaks to the equation, it results that many employees work daily around 90 minutes less than they normally should.

⁴⁶ (Transl.) Except for the companies that announced they would make some hundreds hirings, each company will advertise one or two openings, so that we currently have 1900 vacancies in Cluj, even if part of these will be occupied through migrating from one company to another.

(9) Of course, with short-term interest rates stuck at zero, the Fed has also found it harder to stimulate the economy to **combat high unemployment**. (Volatility has disappeared from the economy and markets. That could be a problem, 2014)

By extension, the above metaphor has some variation in the shape of **UNEMPLOYMENT is A DISEASE**:

(10) Even if Mr Weiner's grand vision were realised, it could not **cure global unemployment** on its own, though richer data ought to make a difference. (The social network has already shaken up the way professionals are hired. Its ambitions go far beyond that, 2014)

Even the lack of trained workers is a disease:

(11) Lipsa absolvenților de școli profesionale a devenit în ultimii ani „tumoarea” pieței muncii din provincie, având în vedere că multe companii, în special din industrie, caută candidați care să cunoască o meserie⁴⁷. (Mihai, & Dorobanțu 2015)

5. Discussions

There are universal instantiations (especially in relation with the benefits of work and in close connection with religious culture and practices), but also group-related ones (closely connected with work distribution patterns, as well as purely individual instantiations. These categories are not clear-cut and well defined, as there is an osmotic dynamics between these levels and categories. On the other hand, there are untranslatable concepts and metaphorical language chunks. An extremely interesting aspect is to be found in metaphors about laziness (procrastination), much more frequent in Romanian, much more consistently sanctioned, in an ironical and sarcastic vein when compared to English, whereas in English we found a more neutral and impersonal vein.

6. Conclusions

The relationship between language and culture is undoubtedly indissoluble, however, it is extremely revealing to see how economic, social and political advancements have changed or enhanced the conceptualisations of various human activities, in our case, those related to work. The patterns and structures of work have undergone different developmental stages, also influenced by the cultures of the different linguistic groups. Some conceptual metaphors connected with work, e.g. **WORK is HEALTHY** have almost disappeared, while others were preserved, e.g. **WORK is MORAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**.

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⁴⁷ (Transl.) The lack of graduates from vocational schools has become lately the ‘tumour’ of the provincial labour market, considering that many companies, especially those in the industry, are looking for candidates who know a trade.

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