

FOREIGN LANGUAGE PHRASEOLOGY IN THE US: CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF VERBAL COLLOCATIONS

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Abstract. This article discusses one of the main problems that is associated with various phraseological units, in particular the use of verbal language collocations in the Spanish field. F. J. Hausmann was one of the authors who contributed to collocation theory, arguing that the components of collocations do not have a similar status, given that one of them determines the choice of the other. In this case it should be distinguished between a basis (a word that defines a possible combination) and a collocation. Another contribution to the collocation theory, also from a semantic point of view, are the works of I. A. Melchuk with the development of the concept of “lexical function” for describing restricted words and derivation phenomena. V. V. Vinogradov’s contribution to phraseology is invaluable. However, it was D. O. Dobrovolsky who was the forerunner of the idea of interlinguistic phraseological equivalence, insisting that many language phenomena are defined by culture. In the process of learning collocations difficulties arise, since stable phrases are always difficult and impossible to predict. Usually the components of combinations in one language do not coincide with those in other languages, since there is an influence on the language of the culture in which their own use is manifested, even when it comes to the language variation of the same language, in this case Spanish. This

article highlights the importance of language variations in Spanish for the study of language collocations as fixed expressions set in a particular culture. It also presents a comparative study of collocations characteristic of spoken Spanish in the United States and, consequently the degree of complexity of its interpretation not only for students of Spanish as a foreign language, but also for its native speakers.

Keywords: language collocation, linguistic variation, pragmatics, phraseological unit, colloquial speech

Introduction

Today we know the problems that exist in the study of phraseological units. If we go back to the research that has been conducted in this area, we can see that it is not easy to distinguish the concept of phraseological unity because of the large variety of stable expressions observed in the usus.

In order for the reader to know what a linguistic collocation is, we consider the term "collocation" as a stable combination of words that corresponds to a certain meaning. So, in Russian it is said *произносить речь*, (to give a speech) using the verb *произносить* "to accept" and not *дать* "to give" as in Spanish *dar un discurso*. Another example in Spanish is the red wine that is called *vino tinto* [lit. colored wine] instead of the expected *vino rojo* [lit. red wine]. They are clear examples of unmotivated stable collocations in both languages that are known to native speakers, but at the same time are not so obvious to non-native speakers. The term "collocation" comes from the Latin words "con", which means "with" and "locare", which etymologically means "connect", so they are a combination of words.

Collocations are often unpredictable and not deducible from the basic rules of the language: in Spanish it is usually used spoken *dar un paseo* (совершить прогулку/to take a walk) or *dar una vuelta* (совершить путешествие/to take a trip), but *hacer una excursión* (совершить экскурсию/to take a tour). As we can see, in Russian, a productive model with the verb *совершить* is used

for such nominations, while in Spanish, different verbs are used: the first two examples are based on the model with the verb *dar* (дать/to give), and the second example with the verb *hacer* (делать/to do).

All this seems obvious when we talk about different languages belonging to different language codes, such as Russian and Spanish. However, referring to the cultural component that we mentioned earlier in the Latin American world, there is a wide variety of fixed combinations that refer to the same meaning. Thus, it would be a contradiction if we say that there are fixed expressions in Spanish, such as language collocations, that do not allow their components to change when other expressions are used in another Spanish-speaking country to denote the same thing.

It should also be said that these differences are not only characteristic of the spoken language, but also manifest in the formal language. Each of the Spanish-speaking countries has many proper expressions that are not simple variants of peninsular idioms. According to A. Zuluaga (1980) "*No se puede considerar como variantes en sentido estricto las comúnmente llamadas variantes regionales o diatópicas*". ("The commonly called regional or diatopic variants cannot be considered as variants in the strict sense"). For example, the Peruvian expression *hacer vaca* [lit. to make cow] corresponds to the Spanish expression *hacer novillos* [lit. to make steers] if we want to express the idea of "skipping school", which will not be understood in Spain if there is no explanatory context. In Mexico, *pintar un venado* is used for the same expression [lit. to draw a deer]. In Colombia is used in the expression *hacer un conejo* [lit. to make a rabbit], while in Ecuador prefer *hacerse la pava* [lit. to pretend to be the turkey], which may be misinterpreted in Spain with an expression that stands for fooling around *hacerse el tonto*. This means that we are talking about independent combinations, ignorance of which can make it difficult to understand the functional language in question. It does not seem to be a common figurative expression for all Spanish-speaking countries to express the concept of "skipping

school". For this reason, some native speakers do not fully understand individual humorous jokes or word games, even when dealing with the same language. In addition to this linguistic diversity, the existence of homonymous forms, such as the expression *pelar la pava* [lit. to clean the turkey], which in Spain means *ligar* (to flirt), but in Mexico means *matar el tiempo* (to kill time).

Objectives/Purpose of the study

The reason why we chose language collocations as an object of research is due to the high relevance of the topic both from the point of view of translation and from the point of view of teaching languages. One of the language blocks that students should assimilate in order to form language-pragmatic competence are extralinguistic factors and existing language differences, in addition to linguistic factors. We also try to show that on different continents of the Spanish-speaking world there are differences in similar objects in fixed forms of expressions, characteristics of logical and pragmatic combinations of words, and the choice of vocabulary depending on the realities and continental differences. Spoken language is currently a complex reality that is evolving to the point where it is of great interest for linguists to be able to incorporate the presence of new words used in slang in the communication process, and thus establish phraseological equivalences. This is achieved due to the influence in other areas of language and, of course, the media phenomenon in marketing and dissemination of information through social networks. The problem lies in the literary level, that is, in the vocabulary used to reflect external and internal reality with a predominance of expressive and poetic functions that may differ in the language due to cultural factors.

Methodology

In Spain, the term "collocation" was introduced By M. Seco (1978). Subsequently, this term begins to appear in dictionaries with its own definition. In the 80's, it was still very limited in use, but only in the 90's. this theory began to develop actively.

V. V. Vinogradov (1977) divides phraseological units into stable unmotivated combinations and phraseological combinations in which one of the components is used in the literal sense and the other in the figurative sense. This concept was most acceptable in Soviet times until it became necessary to describe phraseology in other languages, which led to new classifications. I. E. Anichkov (1997) although does not name the concept of "collocation" as such, he proposes it as a new class of classification.

A. N. Baranov and D. O. Dobrovolsky (2011) raise the idea of interlinguistic phraseological equivalence and name 4 types of equivalences, insisting that many language phenomena are determined by culture. In this sense, one of the most important aspects of traditional Russian phraseology is that phraseological units are not purely linguistic, but represent a cognitive phenomenon in the language that determines the choice of aspects and their interpretation. Therefore, we should not forget about the contribution of A. Wierzbicka (1991), which showed that the categorization of the language of the world depends largely on culture.

Results/Findings

The stability of collocations is primarily related to the randomness of the choice of the semantic element. For the collocation "to take a decision", it is difficult to explain why it is used the verb to make, rather than another one. In Russian for this expression is used the collocation *принимать решение* using the verb "to accept". It should be emphasized that the main typological comparisons show that different verbs are used in other languages in this case: *To take a decision/tomar una decisión/eine Entscheidung treffen*. The irregularity of collocations lies in this arbitrariness.

A fundamental concept that encompasses collocations is the property of languages by which speakers "produce" certain combinations of words among a large number of theoretically possible combinations. Depending on the grammatical category and the existing syntactic relationship between collocates, we create their taxonomy for both Romance and Slavic languages.

Dialectology is a discipline that has its own methodology with a significant amount of data on changes, especially phonetic and lexical, and numerous linguistic atlases.

As for phraseological diatopic variation, we note that there are few serious studies of diatopic phraseology, and there are no dialect atlases that specialize in phraseology. Although some dialect atlases currently contain information on phraseology, it can be argued that in general diatopic phraseography is still clearly lagging behind in comparison with lexicography or phonetics (Luque Durán, 2008: 8).

Another big problem is that expressions collected in dialect dictionaries are often common to all (González Aguiar, 2007: 9), sometimes even phrases that exist in all European languages, as stated by E. Piirainen & J. A. Balázs (2012). Thus, there are phraseological dictionaries in the Spanish language of Argentina or Chile, completed with phrasemes, which are also given in European Spanish (Barcia & Pauer, 2010: 15).

In his dissertation on Chilean phraseology, M. Nilo (2015) believes that at least phrases used throughout the Spanish-speaking space should be distinguished: *echar leña al fuego* [lit. to throw wood into the fire (to add fuel to the fire)]; *tirar la toalla* [lit. to throw in the towel]; those used only in Spain: *partirse de risa* [lit. to break into laughter (to be in stitches)]; *hincar los codos* [lit. to stick the elbows (to study hard)]; those used in many countries of America: *ser uña y mugre* [lit. to be nail and mud (to be like two peas in a pod)], but not in Spain: *ser uña y carne* (to be nail and flesh), and those used only in Chile *andar pato* [lit. to walk like a duck], which means informally to be broke.

K. Kazumi's research (2001) distinguishes between phrases used in Spain and phrases used in America, which makes it possible to establish a boundary between phrases specific to Spain and new World formulations, despite geographical differences that affect these variants. Its surveys identify common speech units used in all Spanish-speaking countries, such as *no tener pelos en la lengua* “not mince your words” or *meter la pata* “to put your foot in it”.

However, *ganarse las habichuelas* “to earn a living” is registered only in Spain, *buscarse los frijoles* in Peru, *buscarse los porotos* in Mexico, *buscarse la papa* in Santo Domingo and *ganarse el puchero* in Argentina. It is interesting to see how each Latin American country uses the same expression, changing its components according to its culture. In Spain, they cook beans (habichuelas), in Mexico they are called frijoles, while in Santo Domingo and Argentina they choose another type of food that is abundant among the population, such as papa (potatoes) or puchero (stew).

Phraseological units are the main obstacle not only for learning foreign languages or translating, but also for understanding between diatopical varieties of the same language. Collocations are considered free combinations of some phraseologists, such as A. Zuluaga (1980). However, their fixation even if biased forces them to resist not only other languages, but also other dialects of Spanish (Luque Durán, 2008: 13). This is the case of the combination *mantener una conversación* used in Spain. In Chile, *armar una conversación* is used with the verb *armar* (to arm), while *dar una opinión* is used in Spain (to express one's opinion), and in Chile, *entregar una opinión* is preferred with the verb *entregar* (to deliver).

Regional variations appear in all languages, and in the case of languages such as Spanish, which are spoken by millions of people in many countries there are "a significant number of unique creations specific to each culture and its cultural references" (Mogorrón, 2010: 20).

However, Mexico's proximity to the United States and the frequent contacts of its working classes along the border led to a major "smuggling" of words and expressions that were passed from one language to another, contributing to the enrichment of both “slang” and jargon. Both languages have such similar vernacular expressions that they look like literal translations of each other, and it would be difficult to understand where they were coined (De la Rosa, 1939: 11).

The words used in it are not used in their literal meaning, but using their various connotations. In this sense, the American expression *To win by the skin of my teeth* will be voiced by the Mexican *ganar por un pelo de tortuga*. In Spain, the expression *ganar por los pelos* is chosen [lit. win by hair].

In General, different language collocations emphasize the complexity and richness of the Spanish language, which therefore determines the need to create databases that combine not only Spanish expressions, but also most of the expressions used in every country that speaks that language, including the United States.

Russian dictionaries and productive collocation models can significantly expand the scope of the Russian language acquisition by foreigners, as well as the Spanish language of the mother country and Latin American countries.

Discussion

Thus, we can conclude that existing collocations in colloquial speech are based on accepted forms of communication established by society, and national and cultural characteristics may differ geographically even in one state.

In modern conditions of a multicultural world and intercultural and language contacts it is necessary to introduce the teaching of the basics of "language variability" into the educational process. The new needs of the world community are experiencing a boom in globalization not only in the political, economic, but also in the language field.

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