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SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECT OF THE STUDY OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS: ON THE BASIS OF ENGLISH AND SPANISH LANGUAGES

The article is devoted to the substantiation of the problem of social differentiation of phraseological units on the material of English (American version) and Spanish languages. The article analyses the subsystems of the English language in the communication of representatives of different social groups in an unusual social environment. The publication determines that communication in an unusual environment is often characterized by the fact that its participants master different subsystems of one national language: some – exclusively or mainly the literary language, others – dialects (the vernacular) or some social jargon, etc. The features of phraseological units of the American variant of English in the speech of African-Americans are determined. According to the social and professional status of the speaker, several subgroups were identified (military personnel, sailors, athletes). The basic and derivative meanings of phraseological units, characteristic of each socio-professional group as well as the peculiarities of colloquial phraseological units used by poorly educated speakers of the American version of English and Spanish, are considered. It is proved that phraseology is a promising and developed area of linguistics. Almost every researcher has the opportunity to propose his own social differentiation of phraseological units or to improve the classification developed by other scholars before him taking into account the needs of his own research. The authors have determined that language communication can take place using the means of each of the subsystems. Native speakers use local dialects, vernacular words and phrases or literary language communicating with each other in their familiar environment. However, with a common relative understanding communicative failures are possible due to the fact that outwardly similar or even identical linguistic signs have different meanings in different subsystems: they differ in meaning, connotations, expressive and stylistic coloring.

Key words: phraseological units, sociolinguistics, social environment, socio-professional group, subgroup, dialect, colloquial words.

Statement of the problem. At the present stage, due to the global dominance of the English language in politics, economics, technology, advertising and mass media, the American version of English is also becoming dominant. Its elements, both lexical and grammatical, are actively penetrating other language variants, despite its “original” nature. This also applies to phraseological units. Today, phraseology is such a promising and developed area of linguistics that almost every researcher has the opportunity to propose his or her own social differentiation of phraseological units or to improve the classification developed by other scholars earlier taking into account the needs of his own research.

Analysis of recent research and publications. According to modern researchers, language communication is a complex process, in the study of which three aspects can be distinguished: linguistic – analysis of phonetic, intonation, lexical, grammatical lan-

guage means used in communication; psychological – the attitude of those who communicate towards each other; their communicative intentions – expectations, individual behavioral characteristics, etc. The latter aspect includes status and role of differences between people who are involved in acts of communication, social standards and requirements for certain forms of linguistic behavior, social differences between speakers in their attitudes toward their own and others’ models of linguistic behavior. Various aspects of this problem have been studied by Ukrainian and foreign linguists: Zirka V., Kochergan M.P., Lebedeva G.V., Ammer K., Dillard J., Kalles V. and others.

The rules for using language differ depending on whether communication takes place in a social environment familiar to the speaker or not. In the first case, deviations from the normative forms of speech are not uncommon, for example, family words, phrases, sayings, etc. When communicating in an unusual social

environment, the speaker is forced to follow the rules of using language tools with greater care, and, on the contrary, he/she may face a communicative failure (misunderstanding, refusal to communicate) or peculiar sanctions from those with whom he/she comes into contact (ridicule, condemnation, indignation, etc.) [1, p. 140].

Everyday language is a reflection of history, culture and shared experiences. In the United States, a country known for its linguistic diversity, vernacular phrases play a significant role in everyday speech. These idiomatic expressions, specific to certain regions and communities, add a certain flavor and character to conversations. In this article, we will consider folk phraseology in the speech of ordinary, everyday Americans and Spaniards and analyze the richness and diversity of their language.

Task statement. The purpose of our study is to analyze social differentiation of phraseological units on the basis of English (American version) and Spanish languages. In order to achieve this goal, we set ourselves the following objectives: to study the problem of social differentiation of phraseological units of the American version of English and Spanish languages in the comparative aspect at the present stage of its development; to analyze the typology of phraseological units of the American variant of English and Spanish languages on the basis of sociolinguistic knowledge. The following methods were used in our research: systematic and theoretical analysis of literature on the research problem, comparative analysis of social differentiation of phraseological units on the material of English (American version) and Spanish languages.

Outline of the main material of the study. The issues of social differentiation of linguistic units are dealt with by such a branch of linguistics as sociolinguistics which studies the patterns of the development and existence of language determined by specific social conditions of society. Professor M.P. Kochergan notes that sociolinguistics studies problems related to its social functions, the social nature of language, the mechanism of influence of social factors on language and the role of language in society. The whole complex of sociolinguistic problems, according to the scientist, can be summarized as follows: how the social factor affects the functioning of languages; how it is reflected in the language structure; how languages interact [2, p. 176].

Vernacular phraseology in the speech of ordinary people is a testament to the linguistic richness and cultural diversity of countries. These expressions, often shaped by regional influences and common his-

tory, create a sense of belonging and identity among communities. A number of common phraseological units in the United States are only variants of well-known British phraseology. In terms of their semantic meaning, these units are not different from their British equivalents. Only one of the components of a phraseological unit can be replaced by a synonym: to *cross somebody's path* (British) – to *cross someone's track* (American); to *make a cat laugh* (British) – *enough to make a horse laugh* (American).

Of particular interest are those cases when an element of a phraseological unit is replaced by Americanism. Let's compare, for example: British: *lock the stable door* – when the horse has been stolen; American: *lock the barn door* – when the horse has been stolen. The above mentioned phraseological units have the same meaning in both language versions: *it is too late to take security measures*. However, in the American version, the word *stable* is replaced by the word *barn* which has expanded its semantics to mean not only *a barn* but also *a stable*.

The number of phrases borrowed from French is quite large. They came into English mostly by calquing the original expressions, and many of these calques have a Latin prototype. If the French expression is a complete calque of the Latin original, it can sometimes be difficult to decide whether the calqued English phraseological unit was borrowed directly from Latin or via French. *Castles in Spain* – *air castles* (an expression associated with a French medieval epic whose heroes, knights, were rewarded with unconquered estates in Spain); *For smb.'s fair eyes* (or *for the fair eyes of smb.*) – *for the sake of someone's fair eyes, for nothing* (an expression from J.B. Molière's comedy *Les Misérables*).

One of the most famous phraseological units of Spanish origin in the American version of English is the expression *to tilt a windmill*, “*to fight against windmills*” (Spanish: *acometer molinos de viento*), which comes from one of the most famous episodes in Cervantes' novel *Don Quixote*). A modern American dictionary of idioms gives the following meanings of this phraseology: *to fight battle with imaginary enemies, to fight against unimportant issues* [3].

Lexicographic sources also give an example of the phraseological unit *blue blood* which has an aristocratic origin. This is how aristocratic families of the Spanish province of Castile called themselves, proud of the fact that their ancestors had never married Moors and other peoples with dark skin. It is believed that the metaphor is based on the observation that people with fair skin have blue blood vessels which people with dark skin did not. Differentiation in the

use of lexical means of the language depends on the general educational level of native speakers, their social status and occupation, area of their interests, environment to which the native speaker belongs, etc. Factors that determine social and dialectical differentiation of languages are so diverse that they cannot always be identified. Moreover, they are often emerged simultaneously which lead to the integration of social and dialectical deviation from the national language [4, p. 56].

Based on the basic principles of sociolinguistic research by modern Ukrainian linguists and foreign scholars, we will analyze groups of phraseological units used by native speakers depending on their age, degree of education and their social status [5; 6; 7]:

The first group, according to the speaker's age, includes phraseological units labeled by dictionaries used by juveniles or teenagers, those that are characteristic of children's speech or communication of teenagers. Their opposite can be phraseological units with the stylistic note of bookish words, those that can be used only by speakers with a sufficient level of education, i.e. almost by adults.

However, using such phraseological units is not typical for the everyday speech of ordinary children. However, there may be exceptions, for example, when a bookish phraseology is popularized among children's audience, most often with the help of cartoons, movies or computer games.

All better now – "improved, cured" (juvenile): I fell off by tricycle and bumped my knee. Mommy kissed it, and it's all better now.

It is not surprising that many children's phrases are dedicated to relationships with other children: *All right for you – That's the last chance for you!* (Usually said by a child who is angry at a playmate). *All right for you, John. See if ever play with you again. To be a copy-cat* means to imitate, to follow someone's mannerisms, appearance, etc. *Sally wore a pink dress just like Mary's. Mary called Sally a copy-cat.* Some of phraseological units are related to the relations between children at school where the teacher plays an important role. Here is an example of a phraseological unit dealing with student-teacher relationship: *to be a teacher's pet – "to be a favorite pupil or student"; Sally is the teacher's pet. She always gets special treatment.*

This group of phraseological units also includes those ones used mostly by parents when they address their children, demanding that they must follow discipline, be obedient: *to act one's age, to behave more maturely, to act as a grown-up.* For example, *Mary! Stop picking on your little brother. Act your age. To*

button one's lip – to get quiet, stay quiet (often used with children); *Button your lip, Tom! I'll tell you when you can talk.*

For most adolescents the issue of autonomy from their parents and the ability to make their own decisions is extremely important and painful. Many of them go through a severe struggle and life school to assert their rights. At this age young people consider their parents to be outdated, misunderstood and incomprehensible, but at the same time parents have the power to allow or forbid a teenager to do something. This causes anger, indignation, and protest among adolescents and these emotions, in turn, give rise to idioms, such as: *My father said that if I didn't get at least C's, he'd ground me.*

Some examples of phraseological units from the US student slang: *a chalk talk; a cheat sheet.* It is interesting to note that both units belong to the so-called rhyming slang which is one of the most productive means of forming slang-phraseological units in modern American version of English. Another productive process of word formation in American slang is reduplication. The following lexemes are also actively used as epithets in youth slang phrases: *Go-go – fashionable, popular, intense; no-no – forbidden.*

The second group includes phraseological units used mainly (or sometimes even exclusively) by speakers of African-American origin. When describing the lexicon of Black English, J. Dillard identifies several main thematic areas, including: religion and church, music, the criminal world: *to come through – to come back to faith; gravy sermon – a sermon that brings listeners to ecstasy; gravy train preacher – a preacher who delivers a sermon; setting up (happy) wake – awake; to live sweet – to live righteously; licorice stick – a clarinet; numbers banker – an owner of an illegal lottery; numbers runner – an agent who collects bets; second-story man – a burglar* [6, p. 160].

The most difficult is to identify the criteria for the third group, which we have conditionally called socio-professional because of taking into account not only the profession, specialty in the narrow sense of the word but also the general social position of a speaker, his or her belonging to certain social circles.

Military slang constitutes a separate group. In the speech of the US Army officers, formal, statutory and colloquial, slang nomination is clearly contrasted, for example *firs sergeant – top kick – sergeant major; brigadier – buck general – brigadier general; marching drill – foot stamping – drill training; salute, high ball – greeting* [6, p. 170].

Military slang is often a source for enriching the layer of common vocabulary. Some military phraseology is not a one-day thing. It continues to exist in other times and in other spheres acquires derivative meanings. Such are, for example, the following phraseological units: *to bring up the rear* – to follow everyone else, *to lag behind*, *to fall behind* (came into use from the vocabulary of marching soldiers). In Spain, military slang is used to describe combat operations, tactics and strategies, and also conveys important aspects of military life. For example, *saer prisionero* means to be captured by the enemy, *enfilar al enemigo* means to direct fire or attack enemy positions, *batir en retirada* means to retreat under the pressure of enemy forces.

Slang of sailors as a specific socio-professional group has also added a number of phraseological expressions to the common vocabulary layer: *to get the (old) heave-ho* – to get thrown out of a place, to get dismissed from one's employment. In dictionaries of American phraseology and idioms they are accompanied by a note "nautical expression" and, sometimes, with a corresponding commentary: *heave-ho* to coordinate hard physical labor. *One sailor called heave-ho, and all the sailors would pull at the same time on the ho*). Spanish sailors use the following phraseological units: *echar el ancla* – *Ante los desafíos que se nos presentan, debemos "echar el ancla" y evaluar cuidadosamente nuestras opciones antes de tomar una decisión; en aguas desconocidas* – *Al iniciar este nuevo proyecto, nos adentramos "en aguas desconocidas" y debemos estar preparados para enfrenar lo inesperado*.

Phraseological units of sports origin are an extremely productive group, undoubtedly due to the very high popularity of sports in the United States and Spain. However, of course, the popularity of sports games contributes to the generation of new phraseological units and the development of derivative meanings in existing ones: *to get two strikes against one* – be in a situation where success is unlikely; *to pinch-hit for someone* – replace someone (for example at work). *Наприклад: Sorry, I can't pinch-hit. I don't have the time; to pitch somebody a curve (ball)* – to surprise someone with an unexpected act or event. For example.: *You really pitched me a curve ball when you said I had done a poor job. I did my best*.

The Kingdom of Spain is famous for its burning love of football. The most widely used are: *lee el partido* – read the game: *El mediocampista tiene una visión de juego excepcional, siempre "lee el partido" y encuentra espacios para distribuir el balón; un olfato goleador* – goal flavour: *El delantero tiene*

"un olfato goleador" impresionante, siempre se encuentra en el lugar correcto para marcar; el alma del vestuario – spirit of the locker room: *El capitán del equipo es «el alma del vestuario», siempre motiva a sus compañeros y los impulsa a dar lo mejor de sí mismos* [5].

The vernacular language includes phraseological units with the stylistic note "Folksy" which are characteristic of the poorly educated stratum of the population, living mostly in rural areas or small towns. Such phraseological units can also be used by older people of the corresponding social status with a more traditional mentality, even if they now live in a big city. They are well reflected in the direct speech of the characters in Jack London's stories from the Northern Cycle: *'An' he went like greased lightning' once he got started. Couldn't 've seen 'm for smoke. 'They ate 'm hide an' all,' Bill announced. 'The stick's as clean as a whistle*.

Their semantics cover all areas of everyday life of an average person (food, clothing, emotions – especially feelings of fatigue or nervousness, common characteristics of objects and phenomena: big, expensive/cheap, honest/deceitful. For example, *best bib and tucker* – the best clothes; *to do something fair and square* – *to do something honestly; to play possum* - *to pretend to do something, etc*.

The semantics of Spanish colloquialisms can be quite diverse, as they are used to convey different meanings and expressions. Here are examples of several typical semantic categories that can be found in Spanish colloquialisms. Many colloquialisms use metaphorical images to convey a certain meaning. For example, *"estar en las nubes"* (to be in the clouds) is used to describe a state of absent-mindedness or thoughts that are far removed from the current situation. Some colloquialisms give anthropomorphic characteristics to inanimate objects or animals. For example, *"tener más moral que el Alcoyano"* (to have more morals than Alcoyano) is used to describe endurance or optimism in difficult situations. Many colloquialisms use similes to convey a certain meaning. For example, *"ser pan comido"* (to be as easy as pie) is used to describe something very simple or light [7].

Some colloquialisms are allegorical and are used to convey certain moral or socio-cultural ideas. For example, *"más vale tarde que nunca"* (better late than never) conveys the idea that it is important to do something even if it is delayed. Many colloquialisms use hyperbole to emphasize certain traits or states. For example, *"ser el ojo derecho de alguien"* (to be someone's favorite) is used to describe a person who is particularly loved or valued by someone. These cat-

egories help to understand the diversity of semantics of colloquialisms in English and Spanish. They allow us to express certain ideas, emotions, and states, creating a figurative and colorful language [5].

Ebonics has made a kind of “revolution” not only in American social life and politics, but also in the language. This includes the so-called Ebonics words and phrases. In terms of creating new words and phrases, it has proven to be extremely productive, firmly entering the English language and showing how quickly a new element can spread in the language [6]. For example, “*Bless your heart*” (a polite way to show empathy or sympathy, often used to comfort someone). “*Yonder*” (a way to refer to a place or location that is not nearby).

Conclusions. Thus, the problem of social differentiation of phraseological units of the American variant of English and Spanish languages in the comparative

aspect at the present stage of its development attracts attention of researchers. On the basis of sociolinguistic knowledge which is the achievement of modern linguistics, the typology of phraseological units of the American version of English and Spanish has been analyzed. The main groups of phraseological units are distinguished according to sociolinguistic criteria: by the age of the speaker; by his ethnic origin; by the socio-professional status of the speaker; by the nature of the socio-communicative situation. Particular attention was paid to the peculiarities of phraseological units of the American version of English in the speech of African Americans. According to speaker’s social and professional status, several subgroups were identified (military personnel, sailors, athletes). Further study of the social differentiation of phraseological units, in particular in the field of gender linguistics, seems to be promising.

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Тишакова Л. Т., Харковський Є. М. СОЦІОЛОГІЧНИЙ АСПЕКТ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ФРАЗЕОЛОГІЧНИХ ОДИНИЦЬ: НА МАТЕРІАЛІ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ ТА ІСПАНСЬКОЇ МОВ

Стаття присвячена обґрунтуванню проблеми соціальної диференціації фразеологічних одиниць на матеріалі англійської (Американський варіант) та іспанської мов. Проаналізовано підсистеми англійської та іспанської мов при спілкуванні представників різних соціальних груп у незвичному соціальному середовищі. У публікації визначено, що спілкування в незвичному середовищі часто характеризується тим, що його учасники володіють різними підсистемами однієї національної мови: одні – виключно або переважно літературною мовою, інші – діалектом, треті – просторіччям або якимось соціальним жаргоном тощо. Визначено особливості фразеологічних одиниць американського варіанту англійської мови у мовленні афро-американців. За соціальним та професійним становищем мовця було виокремлено кілька підгруп (військовослужбовці, моряки, спортсмени). Було розглянуто основні та похідні значення фразеологізмів, характерних для кожної соціально-професійної групи, особливості просторічних фразеологізмів, вживаних малоосвіченими носіями американського варіанту англійської та іспанської мов. Доведено, що фразеологія є перспективним і розвинутим напрямом мовознавства. Майже кожен дослідник має можливість запропонувати свою власну соціальну диференціацію фразеологізмів або вдосконалити класифікацію, розроблену іншими вченими до нього з огляду на потреби свого власного дослідження. Авторами визначено, що мовне спілкування може відбуватись з використанням засобів кожної з підсистем: носій діалекту використовує місцеві говірки, носій просторіччя – просторічні слова й звороти, носій літературної мови – засоби літературної мови. Однак, при спільному відносному взаєморозумінні можливими є комунікативні провали (невдачі), обумовлені тим, що зовні схожі або навіть тотожні мовні знаки мають у різних підсистемах неоднаковий зміст: відрізняються за смислом, конотаціями, функціонально-стилістичною приналежністю, експресивно-стилістичним забарвленням.

Ключові слова: фразеологічні одиниці, соціолінгвістика, соціальне середовище, соціально-професійна група, підгрупа, діалект, просторічні слова.