Analisis pragmalinguistico de las unidades fraseologicas en espanol con atencion especial a los refranes
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The pragmatic analysis of bound phraseological units in Spanish, with special attention to proverbs

This thesis is concerned with the pragmatic analysis of what are usually called 'proverbs', 'sayings', or 'fixed expressions'. The technical term that is used here is bound phraseological units (BPU). The point of departure for the research that this thesis reports upon is a theoretical framework in which the basic levels of linguistic analysis, i.e. syntax, semantics, and pragmatics, are integrated. Pride of place is given, however, to pragmatics, an area that has received little attention so far, at least as far as the analysis of Spanish is concerned, which seems paradoxical when taking into account that BPUs are characterized by having highly specific conditions of use.

In order to grasp the kind of strategies that are expressed through the use of BPUs, and to pave the way for the pragmatic analysis of these expressions, the first part of the thesis is dedicated to the characterization of BPUs from various perspectives. BPUs are considered as constructions that are defined by a combination of syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic characteristics. In the first section of chapter 1 (1.1 and 1.2) it is shown that BPUs have formal features that set them off from non-bound phraseological expressions. Furthermore a distinction is made between different types of BPU: proverbs and phraseological expressions.

The semantic characterization in 1.3 takes as its point of departure the specific meaning-generating form of the BPU, taking into account its idiomatic and connotational characteristics. Furthermore a classification of these characteristics is presented on the basis of their semantic structure. In the same section the relevance of the BPU with respect to the shared general knowledge of speaker and addressee is stressed. This relevance is furthermore seen as the key to the basic properties of the BPU, which offers an explanation for the fact that in order to invoke a proverb it is sufficient to cite a fragment of it. Establishing the nature of the relation between the BPU and the general knowledge of members of the speech community enables us to consistently discuss the status of the truth value generally assigned to proverbs in existing approaches. At the same time it allows us to show that, in principle, the aforementioned relation is not homogeneous. Therefore one could say that proverbs in themselves represent statements of a moralizing nature. As becomes clear from an inventarisation of Spanish proverbs, there are proverbs that express opinions about real states of affairs; others express moral judgements; and yet others express social judgements.
Section 1.4 discusses the properties of BPU s that have to do with their pragmatic function: on the one hand this concerns the properties that are typical of bound expressions and that have to do with the use of proverbs in conventionalized strategies. On the other hand, this concerns the formal properties that enhance the use of proverbs in defocalizing expression, given their generic nature. Subsequently, an analysis of the typical use of proverbs by a speaker in representing direct speech is discussed. Searle's (1969, 1983) speech act theory serves as the point of departure for this analysis.

The second chapter is the core of this thesis: it is concerned with the interactional functions of the BPU. First the characteristic functions of BPU s commenting on language use in verbal interaction are discussed (2.1); these functions are fundamental and are most frequent. After that the question of how BPU s function as general politeness strategies is studied (2.2). In addition to this, an analysis of the pragmatic function of the proverb as an expression of the reasonableness condition of the speech act (2.3). For the analysis of BPU s that concern the choice of linguistic strategies, or, more precisely, the metalinguistic formulas (fomelcos) that occur in spontaneous language, Grice's (1975) theory on the cooperation principle and conversational maxims is taken as the point of departure. For the analysis of politeness phenomena Brown and Levinson's (1987) model is used. This model is based on the assumption that politeness is a universal principle of interaction that manifests itself in language in a prototypical way.

Section 2.1 shows that fomelcos - proverbs and sayings concerning language - can be expressed in different ways; fomelcos can be defined rather precisely within the framework of speech act theory. Thus, descriptive fomelcos often take the form of a statement. Similarly, directive fomelcos often take the form of an advice or an instruction. Regulating fomelcos, finally, often take the form of a reproach or an excuse. In the latter case the speaker regulates his own behaviour.

In brief, it seems as if the mechanism of fomelcos coincide with the function of any type of speech act: presenting a propositional content that receives an illocutionary value in a specific context. The difference is that, in the case of fomelcos, the possibilities to exploit certain illocutionary values are more restricted. Many fomelcos that take an elliptical form do not contain formal illocutionary force indicating devices. Furthermore, their propositional content is often expressed in a figurative sense, without there being an explicit reference to language and language use.

How is it that the speaker is capable of interpreting fomelcos semantically and pragmatically without problems? How is it possible that speakers use them to refer to the domain of language use and that they actually have a function in verbal interaction? Probably one would have to consider an explanation from the perspective of conventional implicatures; in this interpretation fomelcos function as formulas that activate this kind of implicature.
We may therefore formulate the following hypothesis: the metalinguistic formulas that occur in everyday language use - and that we have called *formelcos* - can be considered to constitute a register of the competence of the speaker, of the knowledge he possesses and that he derives from the speech community, that is the knowledge that concerns the rationality that exercises an all-encompassing influence on the relations defined by language use.

In the chapter dedicated to the investigation of BPU s as politeness strategies it is shown that BPU s can be used to express both positive and negative politeness. They are used to express positive politeness since they encode in-group relations and transmit shared knowledge; in both cases they invoke a bond between speaker and addressee, to the extent that they encode a typical positive politeness strategy or solidarity. BPU s are used to express negative politeness when they are used as conventional means to express indirectness, which is enhanced by their intrinsically defocalizing nature. At the micro level of the speech act a large number of proverbs is interpreted as directive formulas of a conventional nature; at the macro level of the conversation proverbs function as an argument in support of a directive speech act. In this way the speaker tries to reduce loss of face of his interlocutor as a result of the nature of his speech act. For this reason one could say that a pragmatic function of a proverb is to express the reasonableness condition of the speech act. Consequently, there is reason to assume that proverbs function as formulas used in practical reasoning that the speaker uses when he is looking for arguments to arrive at conclusions in everyday life. Everyday life provides the context for verbal interaction, in the sense of the framework developed by van Eemeren & Grootendorst (1993). Within this framework the argumentative speech act always takes place in the context of another speech act. The condition governing the use of proverbs as formulas to express a line of argumentation provides a means to explain why the speaker uses them in expressing the reasonableness condition of the speech act.

Some final remarks: the analysis of BPU s in verbal interaction, which focuses on the way in which they are integrated into the conversation, has made it possible to stress their added value. This value, which may constitute an integral part of the text or conversation, manifests itself in different ways: as a cognitive function which the proverb, in view of its formal constitution, may fulfill within the text when it functions as a macro proposition; secondly, as an interactional strategy to express positive politeness or solidarity, a function which it may have as a result of the fact that it expresses shared knowledge. On the basis of this the proverb may enhance familiarity among interlocutors. Furthermore, negative politeness may be expressed as a result of the fact that many proverbs not only function as conventional formulas of a directive nature, but are also used frequently to justify directive speech acts. These added values of BPU s do not show up when they are considered exclusively from a formal perspective, irrespective of the contexts in which they are used. This has led all too
often to a definition of proverbs as statements of a general or evaluative nature, without attention for their interactional functions.

The examples cited in this thesis are taken from articles from Colombian newspapers and novels of famous Colombian novelists such as Tomás Carrasquillo and Gabriel García Márquez.