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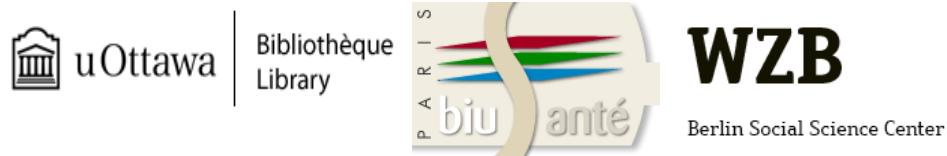
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## SPANISH PAROEMIAS WITH HEADWORD AJENO: CULTURAL-LINGUISTIC ASPECT

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### Abstract

The article deals with the result of the cultural-linguistic analysis of Spanish paroemias with the headword ajeno. Due to their syntactic and semantic structure, proverbs are considered the most representative genre of paroemias. Using the example of proverbs, the authors examine the ethnic and cultural distinctiveness of the language, the pragmatic and functional capability of paroemias in speech, the way of comprehending reality, as well as the creation of the cultural meanings of paroemias. The Spanish paroemias analyzed in this work are, as a rule, proverbs. During the analysis, the authors study the combinability of the lexeme ajeno with the words that collocate with it the most frequently: nouns, verbs and possessive pronouns. Proverb variations, their differences and the reasons for their existence are explored. The logical and thematical analysis of proverbs makes it possible to divide them into six groups according to the assessment or the attitude towards someone else's belongings that are expressed in them. This serves as the basis for the conclusions on the cultural-linguistic particularities of paroemias with the headword ajeno.

### Keywords

Paremiology – Paroemia – Ajeno – Spanish language – Cultural linguistics – Phraseology

Spanish paroemias with headword ajeno: cultural-linguistic aspect pág. 316

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## Introduction

In the most traditional interpretation of paroemias, the main function of proverbs is didactic<sup>1</sup> as it is believed<sup>2</sup> that proverbs contain folk wisdom or advice about what to do in a situation, although proverbs are often contradictory as they reflect different world views. The analysis of proverbs is connected with studying the culture of the people whom the paroemias belong to. In view of this, there are a lot of linguistic studies of the so-called "proverbial worldviews" that are part of the linguistic worldview and represent the view of the world through the lens of proverbs. Proverbial worldviews reveal the particularities of thinking not only of the people as a whole but an individual image of a person who uses them in speech<sup>3</sup>. Studying culture through language occurs within the framework of cultural linguistics. Modern cultural linguistics is indissolubly linked to studying concepts and these studies are part of linguistic conceptology<sup>4</sup>. Cultural linguistic studies are inextricably linked to axiology as the worldview created by the language and consisting of elements that carry a positive or negative evaluation, which, in turn, can be expressed implicitly or explicitly. Evaluativity can be examined on the level of semantics or grammar of a single word or the level of a completed utterance.

Paroemias are traditionally studied in two main directions: "horizontally" when the semantics of the paroemia as a whole is studied, and "vertically" when the spotlight is on one of the headwords of the paroemia<sup>5</sup>. In this work, the layer of Spanish paroemias is examined vertically and the paroemias with the headword *ajeno* are chosen as the subject of the study. This layer of paroemias makes it possible to interpret the proverbial fragment of the concept *AJENO* ("someone else's") in the Spanish linguistic culture and examine the ideas of otherness that are represented in the Spanish language by the word *ajeno*. By examining this group of paroemias, we established what Spanish speakers consider belonging to someone else, what is the people's attitude towards other people's belongings and to what extent otherness and strangeness have a positive or negative connotation. It was G.L. Permyakov who noted the importance of the notion of otherness when he described in detail the group "Mine or someone else's?" in Eastern languages while

<sup>1</sup> V. M. Mokienko; T. G. Nikitina y E. K. Nikolaeva, *Predislovie. Bolshoi slovar russkikh poslovits* (Okolo 70 000 poslovits) (Moscow: OLMA Mediya Grupp, 2010) y G. L. Permyakov, *Osnovy strukturnoi paremiologii* (Moscow: Glavnaya redaktsiya vostochnoi literatury izdatelstva "Nauka", 1988).

<sup>2</sup> J. M. Jaime Lorén, J. Jaime Gómez, *El queso en la refranística castellana*. *Proverbium*, 25. (Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2008).

<sup>3</sup> E. V. Ivanova, *Poslovichnye kartiny mira* (na materiale angliiskikh i russkikh poslovits) (St. Petersburg, 2002); L. G. Babenko, *Kontseptosfera russkogo jazyka: klyuchevye kontsepty i ikh reprezentatsiya v jazyke i rechi* (na materiale leksiki, frazeologii i paremiologii): a dictionary (Moscow: Tsentr "Azbukovnik", 2017); A. M. Melerovich, *O sposobakh reprezentatsii fragmentov natsionalnoi yazykovoi kartiny mira v slovare Kh. Valtera i V. M. Mokienko "Antiposlovitsy russkogo naroda". Slovo v slovare i diskurse: A collection of works for Harry Walter's fiftieth anniversary* (Moscow, 2006) y G. Mironova y E. Kuptsevich, *Paremiynyi fond natsionalnogo yazyka kak otrazhenie krizisnykh yavlenii v obshchestve* (Ostrava: Paremie narodů slovanských, 2007).

<sup>4</sup> T. S. Medvedeva y D. I. Medvedeva, "Reprezentatsiya kontsepta gora v russkoi lingvokulture i ego analogov v bolgarskoi i serbskoi lingvokulturakh", *Vestnik Udmurtskogo universiteta*, seriya Istoryia i filologiya Vol: 26 num 6 (2019): 933-941.

<sup>5</sup> F. Čermák, *Pragmatics of Proverbs: Basic Types of Evaluation. Proverbs: Their Lexical and semantic Features*. (Burlington, Vermont: "Proverbium" in cooperation with the Institute of the Czech National Corpus, the University of Vermont, 2014) y A. Doulaveras, *Wine in the Proverbial Discourse of the Greek People* (Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2006).

describing the concept of the logical and thematical classification of paroemias<sup>6</sup>. V. Mider notes that, despite leaving next to each other, European peoples are very different and have varying, sometimes negative attitudes towards each other<sup>7</sup>.

## Materials

The material of the study consisted of the Spanish paroemias that included the headword ajeno ("someone else's", "other"). In this work, we did not make a distinction between paroemias according to national varieties of the Spanish language, although such differentiation could yield results that would allow us to characterize the particularities of perception of "someone else's" by people from different Spanish-speaking countries. The paroemias were taken from online sources. Most paroemias were found on the platform Centro Virtual Cervantes<sup>8</sup> that offers a multilingual tool of lexicographic analysis of paroemias called Refranero Multilingüe which is based on the corpus of monolingual and polylingual proverbial dictionaries of the Spanish language. In total, we identified 229 paroemias with the headword ajeno including variations.

## Methods

The analysis of the proverbial worldview requires turning to ethnolinguistics and cultural linguistics. Examining proverbs with the headword ajeno essentially means examining one of the ethnical concepts of the Spanish language and is connected to cluster analysis of the binary opposition "mine – someone else's" with the emphasis on the element "someone else's". The following general scientific methods and approaches were used in the study: analysis, observation, description, interpretation, lexicographic analysis and definitional analysis.

## Results and Discussion

The analysis of paroemias with the lexeme ajeno allows one to establish what exactly is seen as someone else's or strange in the Spanish linguistic culture. The lexeme ajeno is not unambiguously positively or negatively colored in Spanish, unlike the words with prototypical pragmatic evaluativity – adjectives with the meaning "bad", "good", etc.<sup>9</sup>. The Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy defines the adjective ajeno as follows: 1) perteneciente a otra persona; 2) de otra clase o condición; 3) impropio, extraño, no correspondiente; 4) que no tiene conocimiento de algo, o no está prevenido de lo que ha de suceder; 5) distante, lejano, libre de algo<sup>10</sup>. The word ajeno is an adjective and the Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy defines it as such. However, adjectives in Spanish can be easily substantivized with the help of the article lo. That is why the paroemias in this study include the word ajeno in the category of the adjective, as well as the noun. The list of paroemias with the headword ajeno includes slightly more adjectives than nouns<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> V. M. Mokienko, "Sovremennaya paremiologiya (lingvisticheskie aspekty)", MIRS Vol: 3 (2010).

<sup>7</sup> W. Mieder, Origin of Proverbs. Introduction to Paremiology: A Comprehensive Guide to Proverb Studies (Warsaw/Berlin: Published by De Gruyter Open Ltd, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> W. Mieder, "Historia y futuro de los refranes comunes en Europa", Paremia num 9 (2000): 15-24.

<sup>9</sup> N. N. Semenenko. Kognitivno-pragmatischeeskaya paradigma paremicheskoi semantiki (na materiale russkogo yazyka) (Belgorod, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> Refranero Castellano, Available at: <http://www.refranerocastellano.com/>

<sup>11</sup> Refranero Castellano, Available at: <http://www.refranerocastellano.com/> y Real Academia Española. Diccionario de la lengua Española. Available at: <https://dle.rae.es/contenido/actualizaci%C3%B3n-2019>

There are a lot of paroemias connected to bread in the Spanish language (for example, contigo, pan y cebolla "love makes a cottage a castle", pan agradecido "a person who remembers the good", mas bueno que el pan "the kindest person, the heart of gold", pan de Dios "a kind person, a kind soul, blessed innocence", miga de pan "a kind person, a kind soul, the heart of gold", como un cacho de pan "kind, gentle, accomodating", etc.) and this is reflected in the obtained results. The word pan is most commonly combined with the lexeme ajeno. At the same time, someone else's bread is almost unambiguously evaluated negatively. Someone else's bread is not soft, not nourishing, not delicious (El pan ajeno hace al hijo bueno<sup>12</sup>. Pan ajeno nunca es tierno<sup>13</sup>. Pan ajeno, nunca sabroso ni tierno<sup>14</sup>. Pan ajeno caro cuesta<sup>15</sup>. Pan ajeno nunca es tierno<sup>16</sup>. Pan ajeno poco engorda<sup>17</sup>. Pan ajeno quita deseo<sup>18</sup>. Dar santo y bueno, pero del pan ajeno<sup>19</sup>).

On the whole, some material possessions that belong to other people such as money, goods, food or something abstract, not material, like misfortunes, worries, aches, illnesses are most commonly labeled as someone else's in the corpus of all studied proverbs. Both are evaluated differently in proverbs – as something good, useful, virtuous and as something bad and cruel.

The word ajeno in paroemias also qualifies nouns that denote people, but it is much less common. The proverbs include the combinations dueño del ajeno, heredero de lo ajeno, as well as hijo ajeno. The first two combinations denote some material goods or valuables that belong to a person but the latter describes the "strangeness" and "otherness" of the person: Hijo ajeno, brasa en el seno<sup>20</sup>. Brasa trae en el seno, la que cría hijo ajeno<sup>21</sup>. No críes hijo ajeno, no sabes si te saldrá bueno<sup>22</sup>. Thus, someone else's son is seen as a potential source of evil, trouble and misfortune.

In the studied paroemias, ajeno as a substantivized noun collocates with fewer verbs than nouns and often involves prepositions in the syntactical structure. For example, Lo ajeno clama por su dueño<sup>23</sup>. Repartiendo de lo ajeno, ninguno es cicatero<sup>24</sup>. Así usa lo tuyo, que no cures de lo ajeno<sup>25</sup>. Moreover, in a number of paroemias, the substantivized adjective ajeno is used independently from a verb or a noun. For example, De lo propio, se da un puñado, de lo ajeno, llena el saco<sup>26</sup>. De lo ajeno, gastar sin miedo, de lo propio, poquito a poco<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación", Paremia num 22 (2013) 105-114.

<sup>13</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>14</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>15</sup> W. Mieder, "Historia y futuro de los refranes comunes en Europa", Paremia num 9 (2000): 15-24.

<sup>16</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>17</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>18</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>19</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>20</sup> Buscapalabra, Available at: <https://www.buscapalabra.com/>

<sup>21</sup> Buscapalabra...

<sup>22</sup> Buscapalabra...

<sup>23</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>24</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>25</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>26</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>27</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

The substantivized adjective *ajeno* also collocates with indefinite pronouns *algo* (1), *mucho* (1) and *todo* (1): *Lo mucho ajeno ten en poco, y lo poco tuylo, en mucho*<sup>28</sup>. *Todo lo ajeno parece bueno, menos el hombre ajeno sobre la mujer propia*<sup>29</sup>. These examples show that "someone else's" has a collective meaning and often it is unimportant which object is called *ajeno*.

Following G.L. Permyakov's logical and thematic classification of paroemias<sup>30</sup>, we divided all the identified paroemias with the headword *ajeno* into several groups according to their semantics. The largest group (I) of paroemias with the headword *ajeno* was united by the seme "something material that belongs to someone else". This group includes the paroemias that reflect people's attitude to other people's property – things, food, animals, house: *Quien da pan a perro ajeno, pierde el pan y pierde el perro*<sup>31</sup>. There is a clear wish of a person to have someone else's possessions, envy, sadness that they belong to someone else.

The next group (II) of paroemias is united by the seme "non-material, not mine but my fellow man's". It includes the paroemias wherein secrets, pain, hunger, vice, talent, pride, etc. are referred to as someone else's: *Vientre lleno, no cura el ajeno*<sup>32</sup>. *El dolor que mejor se soporta, es el dolor ajeno*<sup>33</sup>. In these paroemias *ajeno* means something abstract, remote from people. Most paroemias from this group reflect people's unwillingness to have anything to do with other people's misfortunes or sorrows or indifference towards them.

The next group (III) is united by the seme "not on my/on someone else's territory". The paroemias in this group express the idea that someone else's territory is inhospitable; it is dangerous, difficult and unwise to be there: *Asno que entra en dejesa ajena, volverá cargado de leña*<sup>34</sup>. *Gallo que es bueno, lo mismo canta en su corral que en el ajeno*<sup>35</sup>.

The next group (IV) is united by the seme "not mine, unfamiliar, unknown". This group features a new meaning of the word *ajeno* which reveals the unknown and strange nature of the subject of the utterance: *A caballo ajeno, espuelas propias*<sup>36</sup>. *A pan ajeno, navaja propia*<sup>37</sup>. *Todo lo ajeno parece bueno, menos el hombre ajeno sobre la mujer propia*<sup>38</sup>. These paroemias sound like a warning, a recommendation to be careful and cautious with something unfamiliar, strange. The next group (IV) features the seme "not mine and strange, hostile". It includes the paroemias that unambiguously interpret someone else's property as harmful for a person's life: *Pan ajeno nunca es tierno*<sup>39</sup>. At the same time, something that is hostile and strange can season a person and make them stronger: *El pan ajeno hace al hijo bueno*<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>29</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>30</sup> V. M. Mokienko, "Sovremennaya paremiologiya (lingvisticheskie aspekty)", MIRS num 3 (2010).

<sup>31</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>32</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>33</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>34</sup> Fernando Martínez de Carnero, Available at:  
<http://www.martinezdecarnero.com/glossword/index.php>

<sup>35</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>36</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>37</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>38</sup> Buscapalabra...

<sup>39</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>40</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

The last identified group of paroemias (VI) features the seme "not mine and exotic/desired": Gusta lo ajeno más por ajeno que por bueno<sup>41</sup>. La fruta más sabrosa es la del mercado ajeno<sup>42</sup>. These proverbs are not about material possessions that a person wants to obtain rather than about the fact that these possessions seem better than they are because they are unfamiliar and belong to someone else.

Coming back to the semantic opposition ajeno – propio, we must briefly mention the paroemias that have only one part of the opposition – the lexeme propio that we made the main component for the search in the corpus of paroemias and the calculation of their number. Paroemias with the headword propio belong to almost all types of paroemias. Most (21) of the identified paroemias overlap with the paroemias with the headword ajeno, although the search for the lexeme propio yielded several paroemias that include both components of the semantic opposition that did not appear during the search for the word ajeno. For example, the following proverb was identified: El perro propio cuida mejor la casa que el ajeno<sup>43</sup>.

The corpus of the studied paroemias with the headword ajeno was found to include a small number (18) of directive paroemias with verbs in the imperative mood. According to the classification by C.A. Crida Álvarez and J. Sevilla Muñoz<sup>44</sup>, four of them belong to the category proverbios and contain a verb in the negative form in the imperative mood: No cacarees en corral ajeno<sup>45</sup>. No pisas nunca lo ajeno, ni las piezas, ni el terreno<sup>46</sup>. These proverbs have a distinct directive function and inform one about what must not be done. All the paroemias feature a verb in the second person singular, which creates the effect of personal address to the recipient of the instruction.

## Conclusion

The interpretation of systems of values makes it easier to understand an ethnos' attitude towards a phenomenon from the synchronic point of view. The analysis of the corpus of Spanish paroemias with the headword ajeno indicated that the Spanish proverbs that show the attitude towards other people's belongings are quite numerous compared to the paroemias with the word propio which is its antonym. Therefore, Spanish proverbs tend to teach one how to treat the belongings, problems and misfortunes of others rather than one's own.

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<sup>41</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>42</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

<sup>43</sup> Buscapalabra...

<sup>44</sup> Centro Virtual Cervantes, Refranero Multilingüe de Centro Virtual Cervantes Available at: <https://cvc.cervantes.es/lengua/refranero/Default.aspx>

<sup>45</sup> J. Sevilla Muñoz y C. A. Crida Álvarez, "Las paremias y su clasificación..."

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