

Драбовська В.А.*

КУЛЬТУРНИЙ ФОН ДІАЛЕКТНОЇ ЛЕКСИКИ АМЕРИКАНСЬКОГО ЗАХОДУ

В статті розглядаються два західно-американських діалекта, «Chicano» і «Texian», як культурний феномен, що сформував певні ставлення та асоціації із мовою та культурою американців. Ілюстративні приклади із сучасної американської прози наочно демонструють великий діапазон діалектизмів заходу США.

Today the world shows more interest in the United States of America than ever before. People from all over the globe wonder what the country is like. Their curiosity may be fixed with admiration and envy or suspicion and hostility. Regardless, the United States looms large. A striking evidence is that American culture has permeated the international media. The television evening news reflect the American language as spoken by Negroes, Turks, Mexicans, Californians and New Yorkers, American television satellite broadcasts feed international interest in the United States society.

The fact is that, almost from the beginning, the language of the American nation has been a various language of tongues beyond number, mixing in the melting pot and turning out a great feast of dialects that have enriched American English.

By various estimates anywhere from three to twenty-seven major dialect are spoken in America, Professor Hans Kurath's *Linguistic Atlas of the United States and Canada* recognizing at least twenty-four well-defined regional ways of speech [1].

There is no general accord on the definition of a dialect. Craig M. Carver defines it as a variety of language distinguished from other varieties by a set of grammatical, phonetic, and lexical features. When these features are distributed geographically over a restricted and relatively uniform area, it is a regional dialect. When they are shared by speakers of a social grouping, it is a social dialect [2, 1].

While dialect geographers summarize their findings in isoglosses, sociolinguists measure the frequency of individual variants used in defined contexts and attempt to relate those frequencies to extralinguistic demographic factors, and a cultural anthropologist is interested in studying dialects in a culturological aspect, and namely: as far as dialects are speech and language variants they are also part of culture of a particular ethnic group or nation as a whole.

This deduction is evident from the basic postulate of linguistic culturology: language is a cultural phenomenon which presupposes a certain world vision through the prism of a national language, when a language is seen as an exponent of a specific national mentality [3, 8].

So, dialect vocabulary involvement into a culturological study is justified and substantiated. A well-known Russian scholar N. Tolstoi states that any culture is dialectal by its nature. Dialect is not an exceptionally linguistic territorial unit, but ethnographic and culturological as well [4, 21].

The United States of America is often referred to as a melting pot meaning its multicultural, - ethnic and linguistic composition. And numerous US dialects have made a substantial contribution into the language and culture development of the American nation.

* асистент кафедри англійської мови Вінницького державного педагогічного університету імені Михайла Коцюбинського

According to recent American English studies, the three western phenomena «The Frontier» and «The Wild West» and «cowboy» make up the three of five hyperconcepts as constituents of the basic concept «exceptionalism» [5, 9].

In the present article our task is to determine what cultural background these hyperconcepts form. The following illustrative examples are taken from modern American fiction, word etimologies – from the ‘Webster’s New World College Dictionary’ [6], and dialect vocabulary units – from the ‘Linguistic Atlas of the United States and Canada’ by H. Kurath.

The western US dialect ‘Texian’, influenced by Southern and Mountain speech, and to a much smaller extent by General American, is the typical speech of Texas. The words of the Southwest that make up its lexicon are redolent of the so-called Wild West, evoking its history and culture.

For example, ‘corral’ [*Sp* < *corro*, a circle, ring < *L currere*, to run] is a pen or fenced enclosure for livestock. The word evokes the whole ethos of cowboys and cattle ranges so important to the early development of the West. Borrowed from Spanish by the early American settlers, *corral* is reminiscent of the influence of the Mexican *vaquero*, who had centuries of experience at raising cattle in this arid, harsh country. The pioneers of the West also used the word to refer to their innovative technique of self-protection as they crossed the open plains. To create a defensive encampment against Indian attack, they drew up their wagons into a circle known as a ‘corral’. In works of fiction this word is just inevitable while reading about cowboys’ everyday life: «*Picking up her skirts, Norah ran toward the corral*» [7, 375].

Although Easterners were familiar with the gentle gorges and hollows of the Appalachians, they had never encountered the Western mountain versions that were steep sided and cut deep by swift streams. These required a new word altogether, and once again Spanish was raided in the early nineteenth century for such a word: ‘canyon’ [*Sp canon* < *Sp*, a pipe, tube, gorge < *L canna*, a reed]. Like *corral*, *canyon* is also known in the East, but is rarely used there. Here’re the following examples from fiction: «*Morning was breaking over the canyon, shattering the darkness, igniting the rocks into glorious colors*» [8, 398].

«*Jerky*» [*<Sp charqui* < *quechua*, sliced meat dried in the sun in order to preserve it] as a borrowing from American Spanish ‘charqui’, which in turn is a borrowing from Quechua, an Indian language of Peru, is particularly evocative of the West. It is thin strips of usually spiced or salted beef preserved by drying and was at times an important source of protein in the diet of early Westerners: «*Hopalong had put some broth, made from jerky and a handful of flour, on the fire*» [9, 9].

The following selection gives the flavour of the social and cultural relations between Anglo-Americans and Hispano-Americans in the Southwest:

‘*Mesa*’ [*Sp* < *L mensa*, a table], a high plateau or a plain, is a feature of the regional landscape: «*That old flat-top mesa south of here lost a corner*» [9, 206].

‘*Remuda*’ [*Sp remuda* (*de caballos*), relay (of horses) < *remudar*, to exchange < *L – re + mutare*], American Spanish for a spare horde or remount from Spanish «*remudar*» – to exchange, is known in both Texas and South California, but it all the same tends to be more common in West Texas: «*His horse was gone, too. When I turned from checking the remuda, everybody was up and armed*» [10, 47].

‘*Vaquero*’ [*Sp* < *vaca*, cow < *L vacca*], cowboy, a man who herds cattle, is used widely throughout the Southwest: «*Out in California the vaqueros used to rope ‘em for fun*» [9, 133].

‘*Arroyo*’ [*Sp* < *L arrugia*, shaft or pit in a gold mine] has in the Southwest the specialized meaning of ‘dry creek’ or ‘dry wash’ which cuts a rather sharply defined and deep crevice into the ground. After a cloudburst, a deep torrent roars down between the often narrow walls; most of the time, however, only infrequent stagnant pools and cracked mud bear witness to the occa-

sional presence of a 'running stream', the Spanish meaning of the word: «*The wagon dipped suddenly into an arroyo, slowed as loose sand caught at the wheels*» [11, 63].

'Burro' [Sp < burrico < L burricus, small horse], donkey, seems at first glance an unnecessary importation, but the Mexican animal must have struck the Anglo-American settlers as generically different from the Yankee «donkey»: «*The fellow was obviously old and driving a burro*» [9, 121].

'Hombre' [Sp < L homo, man] is a term of Spanish origin for a Mexican or Hispanic American: «*This hombre either asked for a scrap or had it forced on him*» [9, 7].

'Ranch' [Sp rancho] has come to embody the western approach to agriculture and has an interesting social history. Mexican Spanish «rancho» originally meant 'the place where ranch employees live', itself a development in the Americas of the European Spanish word meaning 'mess hall'. In the American Southwest the word is used in its primary meaning: «*Surely he had seen no such girl on the lonely ranches where most of our time was spent*» [12, 31].

Spotted or piebald western pony is known in both California and Texas as 'pinto' [Sp pinto, painted] or 'paint', but the latter term is the more common usage in Texas. The terms entered English in the mid-nineteenth century as adjectives in the combinations 'paint horse' and 'pinto horse', the latter influenced by the former: «*One of the horses in the corral was that same white-splashed paint horse he had seen in the holdup bunch!*» [9, 90].

And finally, the last term particularly characteristic of Texas is 'roping rope'. 'Roping' was coined in the Southwest probably somewhere in the 1880s and is a common term for lassoing stock. A 'roping rope', then, is the rope or lariat used in roping. The fact is, the Southwest cowboys had differences in approach to raising cattle, which led to differences in the culture and language. The California buckaroo used 'dallies' or 'dally weltas'. To avoid strain on the reata that, especially when it was made of leather, had a tendency to break, the cowboy would wrap it around his saddle horn and then, as the animal pulled and jerked at the other end, he could let it strip slowly reducing the effects of the jerks on the rope. These turns of the rope around the saddle horn were called 'dallies' or 'dally' or 'dolly weltas' from the Spanish imperative 'dale vuelta' = 'give it a twist'. A cowhand that used them was a 'dally welter'. Texas cowboys preferred to tie the rope fast to the horn and so were generally not dally men. The following paragraph shows how actual this topic was to Texas cowboys: «*Tex fed a few sticks into the fire and started a long story about running cattle down on the Brozos, and in a few minutes he and Shorty were arguing hotly over respective methods of roping whether it was better to tie or dally the rope*» [9, 206].

'Chicano', or 'Spanglish' is linguistic paella of English and Spanish that is also known as 'Tex-Mex', though it is not confined to the State of Texas. 'Spanglish' is audible in the American Southwest where there are concentrations of Hispanic people, notably in Southern California.

The Spanish period of settlement of California began with the first mission at San Diego in 1769 and ended with Mexican independence in 1821. The Spanish colonies left a rich historical record, abundant both in connected narratives and in original documents. The Spanish borderlands have inspired modern-day English – writing authors, who have made the Hispanic tradition one of the enduring values of American literature.

Words of this region have one unifying factor – the pervasive Spanish influence. They fall into three general referential categories: ranching, topography, domestic and social relationship, some of them also being vividly presented in the Texian dialect:

- 'corral' – a pen or fenced enclosure for livestock: «*He wandered the plains, attaching himself to this or that band of horses for a while, and sometimes hanging around corrals and ranch houses...*» [11, 34].

- 'reata' or 'lariat' [*Sp la reata, a rope < reatar, to tie*] – a rope originally made of rawhide and usually kept on the saddle horn for ready access: «*Halter and rope. Nose bag of oats. Lariat. The other horses tied to trees beyond any possibility of getting loose*» [7, 353].

- 'vaquero' – a cowhand: «*It is beautiful, si? By my own hand came my reata. In my country, senorita, the vaquero must be skilled with his reata*» [13, 181].

- 'buckaroo' [*Sp vaquero, cowboy < vaca, cow < L vacca infl. By buck – a male deer, antelope etc.*]: «*Okay, buckaroo*», he called over his shoulder, 'you've got two choices today as far as your hi-fiber bar is concerned...'» [14, 33].

- 'bronco' [*MexSp < Sp, rough < VL brunkus, a block*] – an unknown or wild horse: «*Obediently Carey drew the chintz curtains then stood fingering them, fascinated by the pattern of miniature bucking Broncos and stage coaches*» [11, 70].

- 'rodeo' [*Sp, a going around, cattle ring < rodear, to surround < L rotare, rotate*] – a public show that features cowboy contests, such as cattle roping and bronco riding: «*Only thing with a horse like that is, race him, or put him in rodeos*» [7, 273].

- 'bracero' [*Sp < brazo, an arm < L brachium, brace*] – a migratory worker: «*It wasn't a propitious place, even in the best of times, and Candido had never seen a single bracero hunkered over his heels here*» [7, 330].

The topographical and related terms include:

- 'mesa' – a flat elevated area of land: «*The ground is broken here and there by black bearded ridges and cones, or sharp profiled mesas of red granite, or huge pines standing solitary and twisted by the winds, like sardonic old men who know a thing or two*» [7, 5].

- 'arroyo' – sun-dried clay: «*Nothing... Only sand, shallow arroyos, low, rolling hills, and empty sky*» [11, 7].

Among the domestic and social terms are:

- 'patio' [*Sp < VL patium, open area, aphetic for L spatium, space, infl. By patere, to lie open, stretch out*] – a court usually paved and adjacent to a dwelling: «*The boy had been stretched out on the sofa like a recumbent monarch when Delaney had gone over to Jack's to confer with him about the accident, and Delaney had thought it odd that Jack didn't offer to take him into another room or out on the patio where they could talk in private*» [10, 47].

'tortilla' [*Sp, dim. of torta, a cake*] – thin flat cornmeal cake: «*... a plastic package, trough which Delaney could make out a stack of tortillas, clung to the man's crotch as if fastened there*» [10, 7].

'frijoles' [*Sp frijol < L faseolus < Gr phaseolos, kind of bean*] – beans: «*He made coffee with sugar and condensed milk and they drank it out of frijole can*» [10, 326].

'madre' [*Sp, mother*] – mother: «*Madre, if I could shield you all from this pain, I would. But Madre, stay out of this*» [11, 266].

With varying degrees of derogation, there are several terms of Spanish origin for a Mexican or Hispanic American:

'hombre': «*Sure*», he said, 'sure, hombre, you can help me» [10, 228].

'cholo' [*Mex Sp pachulo, a young Mexican-American, esp. one belonging to a neighbouring gang or in trouble with the law*]: - «*Then, we will show the lonely senorita she does not need this cholo. She will have a fine, brave caballero in me*» [7, 177-178].

'vago' [*Sp < L vagus, wandering*] - vagabond, 'mendito' [*Sp < L mendicare, to beg*] - beggar: «*But she couldn't do that, of course – that's what bums did, street people, vagos, menditos*» [10, 231].

And the final group exemplifies some food terms, clothes names which are all of Mexican-Spanish origin: «*She dreamed of food, of the romeritos stew, her mother made on Holy Thursday, tortillas baked with chopped tomatoes, chiles and grated cheese, chicken heads fried in oil, shrimp and oysters and a mole sauce so rich and piquant with serranos it made the juices come*

to her mouth just to think about it» [10, 81]. «The *serapes* of the men were so thin and threadbare that the light shone through them, and the woman's *rebozo* had long lost its color» [7, 77].

It is known that vocabularies, as the most fluid aspect of dialects, are always expanding. Here, in the present analysis we were interested in the specific western vocabulary, which was able to manifest itself not only as a specific dialect vocabulary of the American Southwest, but also as the linguistic phenomenon which has spread over the whole American English.

The population shift in the USA was generally from east to west. The surge of population westward, the phenomenon of expanding frontier in which the restraints and standards of more settled society were thrown off, was reflected in the language. In contrast to the East, where education flourished, the West was 'wild and woolly'. Obvious are its very different physical environment, a great expanse of rugged, relatively empty territory, once known as the 'American desert'; its distinctive mix of people and its insular settlement pattern, in which the primary cultural areas are separated from each other by great distance and harsh country. Altogether, it presents a great interest for a culturologist and a linguist, for all these specific features could not remain unreflected in the language.

California, the most populous Western state, had considerable impact on the development of the Southwest and on the West as a whole. It is complex both culturally and linguistically, but unlike Northern California, which grew rapidly thanks to settlers from the East, Midwest and North, Southern California remained a pastoral Hispanic region.

Texas was also a significant factor in the genesis of the Southwest, as well as in the definition of the West as a whole, both in the popular mind and in certain aspects of western speech.

The pervasive Spanish influence in the western US region is evident: out of thirty vocabulary units analysed here (and some more which were not included in the present analysis, like *siesta*, *mustang*, *lasso* etc.) none is of English origin.

So the three culturally marked hyperconcepts of the American nation 'The Wild West', «The Frontier' and 'cowboy', as they were exemplified, are made up of lexical units with a demonstrative cultural connotation – terms of a specific physical environment, animal names, activities, way of life (food terms, clothes, family and social relations) all of which are of Spanish origin.

For a culturologist the American West presents a great interest. The American Southwest, with Texas and Southern California as the two nuclei, is characterized by the strong Hispanic cultural strain which is, of course, one of the unifying factors of the two regions. The Southwestern dialect terms are heard throughout the whole western region and are well-known to the rest of the Americans. They are not confined to the Southwestern states, but intermingle with the other dialects. This fact allows us to conclude that the Southwest has formed itself as a specific dialect region in the Western US which has become a nucleus, from where its particular features have spread throughout the whole area of the west and the rest of the US having become something special in the minds of Americans – a symbol and talisman of the history and culture of the American Nation.

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