ABSTRACT

The studies of the different forms and structures of language usually take for granted that these refer to non-linguistic entities, i.e., that language reflects the world. In the case of verbal devices, such entities happen to be time, aktionsart or aspect. In view of the proven impossibility of giving an accurate account of the behavior of such devices by means of these categories, disquisitions and further elucidations are perpetuated, what complicates the problem to not very judicious levels. Moreover, because the conclusions reached get equally in conflict with a linguistic reality which resists them, contradicts them. So there is no other choice left than to declare exceptions or special uses, or banish the insubordinate segments to the periphery of the system.

Our first goal will therefore be the previous establishment of a theoretical framework, as a cure for the a posteriori theorizing based on what is seen on the surface, which would allow us to assign a possible invariant central value to linguistic elements, for which we will rely on the metaoperational system of H. Adamczewski. In it, such elements are operators defined by their belonging to one of two phases in the process of utterance assembly, namely, by a rhematic character, of proposition of the information, or by a thematic character, of presupposition of the handled data. This would amount to a strictly grammatical or linguistic principle, by which the utterer manages their relationship with the co-utterer. In fact, from this standpoint, the assertion by J. R. Searle about the fact that the speech act constitutes an indissoluble set along with the linguistic mechanism that conveys it gets confirmed. Not an external, say pragmatic, manifestation of it.

On the basis of the application of the metaoperational or enunciative principles to the Spanish so-called progressive periphrasis ESTAR + GERUND, grammatical operator which will be the main concern of our work, we will analyze this structure in relation to other ones, inside the same Spanish language or with equivalents in other languages, so as to explore the specificities of their behavior and verify the assumed principles. Among these we have the distinction to be done between operative value, illocutionary value (of relationship with the co-utterer), and contact value (or effect of meaning), this last one being equal to the already-mentioned non-linguistic entities. Based on the proposed theoretical framework, we will also establish other principles which would assist us in grasping the mechanisms that our operator brings into play through the different conjugation forms it takes. The final objective, in which

we will try to integrate all determined facts, will be to lay down a principle of modulation of the speech act, achievable through playing with the phases. This system could explain the enriched possibilities on which the utterer can count for the management of the handled data in their relation to the co-utterer.

Key Words

metaoperational, phase theory, invariant value, enunciation, utterance grammar, speech act, illocutionary value, contact value, progressive periphrasis