

Translating Emotional Phraseology: A Case Study

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Abstract. This paper focuses on the classic problem of how to deal with the translation of Phraseological Units (PU) linked to emotion, and contemplates a threefold path: their omission –when the translator/interpreter does not feel capable of rendering them into another language–; the relentless search for a functional equivalence that perfectly fulfills the role of PUs in the target language (TL); and, finally, the semantic-pragmatic neutralization of phraseologism as a less compromising and more practical option.

For this purpose, we will first devote a few lines to reviewing some references that could be considered classical and current works in the area of a transversal nature and specifically focused on emotional concepts such as fear. Later, we will analyze metaphorization and metonymy from the point of view of Cognitive Grammar and the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), as a strategy for the translation of emotions in PU, as well as the false universality of phraseological representations related to emotions. This will provide us with the theoretical support to conduct a case study, which will be presented in Sect. 5. Finally, we will draw some conclusions from the findings of our research.

Keywords: Phraseology · Emotions · Metaphors · Translations · Cognitive linguistics

1 Introduction

This paper aims to analyze the presence of emotions, such as fear, in some phraseological units and their translation, particularly those linked with the more idiomatic aspects of a language. For this, we will first review the existing literature on the topic and then we will carry out a comprehensive analysis with specific examples and a discussion of the problems that may derive from them. Faced with this problem, translators will have to choose from the three options of omission, equivalence and neutralization. More specifically, the phraseological unit “ser un gallina” [literally: being a hen] as a paradigmatic example of the emotion of fear with the use of metaphors with animals as *source domain*.

In an attempt to discuss this topic in greater depth, we will analyze some phraseological units related to fear in languages such as German, English, French, Italian, Portuguese and even Latin, among others.

Finally, we will try to determine the degree of universality that apparently underlies the formation of metaphors and metonymies generated by phraseological units.

2 A Brief Literature Review

There are many authors who have devoted excellent works, not only to phraseology itself (something that, fortunately, is improving exponentially), nor merely to the phraseology of emotions (which we could already categorize as a subgenre of phraseology), but also to problems of translation posed by the combination of both aspects, since phraseology is one of the areas that presents more difficulties when rendering one language into another. Furthermore, the emotions we are talking about emerge from the depths of each language, in what has been called “the DNA of language”. In this sense, Eberwein *et al.* (2012: 5) contend that “cada lengua constituye un universo emotivo propio”¹. In their opinion, PUs are magnificent elements for the communication of emotional circumstances, due to their characteristic vagueness and difficult delimitation, but also to their rhetorical processes.

Regarding Spanish/German translation, many authors² have carried out research works which constitute a great sample of the advances in the translation of phraseology of emotions, studied from very different perspectives and problems, such as the problem of establishing a lexicographic encoding of the emotions conveyed through PUs or the emotional factor in the use of PUs in advertising and their translation, as well as the translation of emotions in children’s literature, to mention just a few.

Along with many other works addressing other languages or with a more general scope (such as the emblematic studies by G. Corpas, A. Pamies or M. García-Page), or applied to didactics –subsumed or not under phraseodidactics– (M.I. González del Rey, I. Penadés, A. Szyndler, C. Navarro, J.D., Mendoza Puertas, or A.I. Cemuda), these works make up a rigorous and motivating bibliographic corpus in order to continue moving forward in this practically infinite –but at the same time passionate– universe of emotions in phraseological units within their intercultural dimension.

As Aznárez and Santazilia (2016: 6–8) suggest, it is worth highlighting, from the numerous studies that have addressed the phraseology of emotions or feelings in different languages, those that have been considered seminal for more than 30 years (Kövecses 1986; Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Lakoff 1987) and set out to conceptualize some emotions in language. Thereafter, and following the subsequent research by Kövecses (2000), the studies have exhibited a broadening or, more exactly, a deepening, insofar as phraseology no longer only studies how people talk about emotions, but also what they know or what they think about them, what is now known as “popular psychology”, which results in the so-called “popular theory of emotions”. According to this, as established by Lakoff and Kövecses (1987) and Lakoff (1987: 389), speakers verbalize their ideas linked to emotions starting from the way they express themselves when having certain feelings. According to these authors, there is a metonymic principle, based on that popular theory of emotions, that considers that the physiological effects of an emotion represent that emotion. “Mediante este principio”,

¹ ‘Each language creates its own emotional universe’.

² H. Burger, S. Geck, L. Luque, B. Ahrens, L. Amigot, U. Becker, A. Torrent, L. Uria, J. Beßler, P. Eberwein, M. Marin, A. Grutschus, C. Grümpel, N. Iglesias, C. Mellado Blanco, M. Recio, R. Sánchez, R. Schröpf, or M. Soliño.

points out Comşa (2012: 154), "es como los hablantes entienden cómo se forman las proyecciones metafóricas"³.

For Stepień (2007: 393), both the metaphorical basis of thought and the physical basis of human cognition, as well as the relationship between the conceptual and semantic structure, are the key. Therefore, a cognitive categorization of phraseology – as we will analyze later – allows us to establish a series of criteria that can assist greatly in addressing PUs and their translation.

3 Phraseology in Language Learning and Proficiency

In previous studies⁴, we have already drawn attention to the suitability of PUs to express emotions, inasmuch as they are the still picture of feelings and meaning, that is to say, they reflect the emotion experienced. In this sense, we agree with Schröpf's opinion (2012: 221), for whom emotions and language are intrinsically linked. For this author, the prosody, as well as everything related to the polysemiotic, play a fundamental role.

We endorse Mellado Blanco's (1997: 288) idea: "el pensamiento humano se sirve de mecanismos cognitivos universales a la hora de expresar verbal y figuradamente determinadas emociones"⁵. There are even scholars such as Hudson (1984: 34 and ss.), for whom there is no "clara línea divisoria entre el conocimiento lingüístico y el conocimiento del mundo"⁶. This explains the reason why the greater knowledge of the world a speaker has, the easier it will be to acquire certain linguistic structures or elements, as is the case of phraseology.

In this regard, it is essential to promote those "cognitive mechanisms" that are specific for a language in the students of that language and, consequently, of that culture, and particularly in future translators/interpreters. To do so, the goal should be trying to put the functional capacities of both brain hemispheres on the same level, considering that it seems that in mother tongue acquisition, the left cerebral hemisphere is involved while, from a certain age, language learning and therefore cognitive processes take place in the right hemisphere. For Grümpel (2012: 109), the right hemisphere is dominant when it comes to musical and emotional aspects.

In Mora's opinion (2013: 17), "una buena educación produce cambios en el cerebro que ayudan a mejorar el proceso de aprendizaje"⁷. By becoming aware of the plasticity of the brain, we will have the tools to intervene and improve the learning process.

It is undeniable, with regard to the topic of study discussed here, that those specific cognitive mechanisms can find an answer in the learning process of the expression of

³ 'It is through this principle that speakers understand how metaphoric projections are formed'.

⁴ Recio (2012).

⁵ 'The human thought uses universal cognitive mechanisms when expressing some emotions verbally and figuratively'.

⁶ 'There is no clear border between linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world'.

⁷ 'A good education induces changes in the brain that help to improve the learning process'.

feelings, because they are part of one of the most idiomatic aspects of each language and each culture.

3.1 “Fear” in Phraseology

In this regard, at the beginning of the 90s, Dobrovól'skij (1992: 281) discovered that concepts typically expressed through phraseology are negative: stupidity, fear, death, etc., and constitute domains of great phraseological productivity. This tendency is associated with the idea that phraseology designates the subjectively relevant phenomena of the objective world. This principle has been confirmed by other authors in the lexical field of feelings (Marina and López Penas 1999) and more specifically in the phraseological field (Mellado Blanco 1997 or Torrent-Lenzen 2008).

In this same line, we may highlight the study carried out by Mellado Blanco (1997: 383) on German and Spanish phraseologisms in the field of emotions. She considers that “una particularidad del significado fraseológico en contraposición con el de los lexemas libres, se refiere al predominio del componente connotativo sobre el denotativo”⁸. It is even more so in the case of phraseologisms related to emotions.

In this regard, she states that “fear” is represented in German and in Spanish by means of a set of situational invariables: the act of defecation, which she illustrates with *Hose (n) voll haben* (‘estar cagado de miedo’⁹); feeling of physical weakness (*weiche Knie haben*, ‘temblarle a alguien las piernas’¹⁰); paralysis of the body (*jm erstarrt/gefriert/gerinnt/stockt das Blut in den Adern*, ‘helársele a alguien la sangre [en las venas]’¹¹) and, finally, the act of fleeing (*jm würde (vor Angst) am liebsten in ein Mauseloch kriechen*, which refers in Spanish to ‘alguien se metería de buena gana en una ratonera’¹², which, in turn, may be interpreted as ‘no saber dónde meterse’ (‘not know which way to turn’). However, we believe that this translation does not seem the most appropriate, given that ‘no saber dónde meterse’ (and the English PU) is not necessarily linked to fear, but to embarrassment, since this expression is often used to refer to embarrassment, sometimes second-hand embarrassment, which may be felt at a certain moment.

The *embodiment* hypothesis is attested by various studies by showing that emotions have been conceptualized in different languages based on their physiological effects, because it is essentially in the body where emotions manifest themselves. By the same token, as Aznárez and Santazilia (2016) summarize it, an emotion such as fear is conceptualized from its physiological effects, such as the decrease in body temperature, in the expressions “to have cold feet” in English, (*jemandem) gefriert das Blut in den Adern* in German, *se glacer le sang* in French, *sentirsi gelare il sangue nelle vene* in

⁸ ‘One particular feature of the phraseological meaning when compared with the meaning of free lexemes is that there is in the former a predominantly connotative component, rather than a denotative one’.

⁹ In English ‘to be scared shitless’.

¹⁰ ‘Someone’s knees are knocking’.

¹¹ In English ‘someone’s blood froze [in their veins]’.

¹² ‘Someone would willingly jump into the fire’.

Italian or *helársele a alguien la sangre (en las venas)* in Spanish (Pamies and Iñesta 2000: 43–79).

We could consider the body as the first sphere of knowledge of human beings. While animals would constitute, along with home or family, the second sphere. This sphere comprises a perfect symbolic system to create emotional metaphors that crystallise in phraseology, because it belongs to the most intrinsic sphere of language, where the expression of the most intimate, most spontaneous, most visceral and personal feelings have a perfect place, which is equivalent to saying, despite the obvious, more universal. From all the so-called source domains, the predominance of some features of any animal serves, by metonymy, to express feelings, thanks to the simple comparison of body parts, shapes, colours, functions or attitudes of animals and people. This means that, for example, *ser un gallo* serves to represent fear, while *ser un gallo* is used almost entirely as the opposite¹³.

4 Cognitive Grammar and Conceptual Metaphor Theory

From the point of view of Cognitive Grammar (CG), for example, the semantic structure must be seen in terms of conventionalized conceptual structure, i.e., this conception of grammar emphasizes the capacity for conceptualization: the ability to allocate mental images to linguistic meaning. This term refers to how a certain situation is conceived, the mental image that it evokes. There seems to be a need to define more exhaustively the description and content of CG for didactic purposes, albeit in this work, for reasons of space, we cannot delve into this topic. However, we believe that this can be extrapolated to phraseology, thus it would be necessary to reflect on a fundamentally holistic and integrative approach when dealing with the translation of emotions in phraseology.

According to Stępień (2007: 393–395), Cognitive Linguistics has offered a theoretical-practical apparatus that allows rigorous linguistic analysis. An example of this is the Theory of the Conceptual Metaphor (TCM), proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), developed by Lakoff and Turner (1989) and improved by Lakoff himself (1993), which is based –as Moreno (2005: 645) points out– on “la noción de correspondencias entre conceptos de diferentes dominios”¹⁴.

This theory directly addresses the question of figurative meaning, so it is convenient to analyse idiomaticity, by means of three major principles:

1. the metaphorical nature of thought,
2. the bodily basis of human cognition, and
3. the connection between the semantic structure and the conceptual structure.

¹³ In Spanish, there is a large number of animals' names in masculine and feminine that, apart from sexist interpretations, appear in phraseological units of many languages and represent not only different but opposite values: gallo/gallina, toro/vaca, perro/perra, lagarto/lagarta, gato/gata, caballo/jaca, liebre/conejo, etc.

¹⁴ ‘The notion of a correspondence between concepts from different domains’.

The TCM describes a set of correspondence relations between two sources that provide meaning: the categories of thought and the categories of language. A cognitive experimental basis relates, on the one hand, the words to their meaning and, on the other, the concepts of mind to their meaning. That is to say, throughout his life, and through the perception of an infinite number of images and concepts, often based on stereotypes, the human being forms a system of conceptual relations of which he is not always aware, because, among other reasons, many of them are inherited and con-substantial to the same language. Consequently, linguistic forms are acquired in relation to these same concepts in such a way that it is possible to infer a prototypical or literal semantic value for a great number of words.

The cognitivist approach is fundamental in this sense, due to the pivotal role that metaphors usually play in the conceptual processes of the individual, as we noted above. In other words, it is therefore undeniable that Cognitivism and its precepts may be provide a useful contribution to the phraseology of emotions and, more specifically, of fear. In this regard, Domínguez Chenguayen (2013: 65) claims that metaphorical language (based on Lakoff and Johnson 1980), both from the point of view of metaphor and metonymy, is linked to the way thought is articulated, and therefore to our conceptualization of the world.

For Zimovets and Komanova (2016: 8) the world around us is fundamentally represented in three ways:

- a. real image of the world;
- b. cultural or conceptual image of the world and,
- c. linguistic image of the world.

The real image of the world refers to the objective perception of it, whereas the cultural image indicates the perception or conception based on the reflection of the real image through the prism of the concepts created on the basis of personal impressions, both collective and individual. As far as the linguistic image of the world is concerned, it reflects reality precisely through the cultural image of the world. These authors believe that the individual is able to label objects or phenomena that surround him or her and, thereby it is possible to determine to which culture a person belongs through the study of PUs: "phraseological units help to define which historical, intellectual and emotional significance this or that culture contains", as Gutiérrez (2010: 71) puts it:

En muchas ocasiones, es la propia cultura la que nos ayuda a captar el significado metafórico de una expresión. Por ejemplo, en la metáfora "él es un gallina", [as we will discuss later in this study], relacionamos inmediatamente la gallina con la cobardía, y no con la falta de fortaleza. Por tanto, muchos conceptos o proyecciones metafóricas son puramente culturales y son el fruto de la tradición, la educación y el folklore.¹⁵

Although we believe that the progress in the research on automatic translation – which is growing exponentially and may provide solutions in the future that are

¹⁵ 'It is often the culture itself which helps us to understand the metaphorical meaning of an expression. For example, in the metaphor "él es un gallina" [he is a hen], we immediately associate the hen with cowardice, rather than with a lack of strength. Therefore, many metaphorical projections or concepts are purely cultural and are the result of tradition, education and folklore'.

currently unknown— is a positive fact, we consider that automatic translators have not yet demonstrated the capability of achieving that with fairly acceptable results in the translation of emotions.

4.1 Phraseology and Translation

With regard to phraseology in translation, it should be noted that we must speak in terms of equivalence. Torrent-Lenzen (2011: 190), for instance, emphasises the fact that “(...) el cotexto y el contexto intervienen de manera decisiva a la hora de buscar una equivalencia traductora”¹⁶. This author believes that it is necessary to speak fundamentally of a translation unit in the field of phraseology, inasmuch as its meaning is usually interpreted “(...) sobre la base de implicaturas convencionales y de connotaciones (...)”¹⁷, hence “una teoría dinámica que parta de la unidad de traducción (...)”¹⁸ should be considered.

Regarding translation, it is worth quoting the opinion of García Álvarez (2011: 25), who states that “la analogía que lleva a cabo el traductor a la hora de establecer los inputs que componen los referentes de las distintas culturas (...) depende a su vez de la percepción sensorial del traductor”¹⁹.

We are aware of the need to delve in greater depth into this issue; however, it would lead us along paths that, for reasons of space, we cannot cover in this paper, but that we will certainly develop in future work.

5 A Case Study

5.1 Idiosyncratic Nature of PU

An ancestral coexistence of domestic animals with human beings—today limited to pets—has encouraged the establishment of the symbolic system we are discussing, which has helped for generations to explain to children, for example, concepts such as death, procreation, family, beauty, ugliness, cruelty, paternal/maternal instinct, intelligence, ignorance, courage or fear. In this study, we will focus on fear, verbalised in the phraseologism *ser un gallina*, with the aim of illustrating what has been explained up to now.

The PU *ser una gallina* is deeply rooted in the history of Spanish language, since we can trace it back to the reign of the Roman emperor (from 218 to 222) Varius Avitus Bassianus (Syria, c. 203 - Rome, 222), under the title of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus. When he was young, he served as a priest of the god El-Gabal in his hometown, Emesa (Homs, Syria), this is why long after his death he was known as Heliogabalus. Apparently, according to the historian Dio Cassius, Heliogabalus imposed drastic changes in Roman religion, including circumcision (and even castration

¹⁶ ‘(...) the context and cotext play an essential role in the search for equivalence in translation’.

¹⁷ ‘(...) on the basis of conventional implicatures and connotations (...)’.

¹⁸ ‘a dynamic theory based on the translation unit’.

¹⁹ ‘the analogy proposed by the translators when they establish the inputs that make up the references from different cultures (...) depends, in turn, on the sensory perception of the translator’.

in some cases), which led the Praetorian Guard, who had never supported the new Asian emperor, to start defaming him to reveal his supposed cowardice. Even a play on words with the name of the emperor spread, and was immortalized by some writers of the time, who told how the phrase *Non Helioga(ba)llus sed Heliogallina* ('It is not Helioga(ba)llo but Heliogallina') started to appear painted in Rome. This circumstance may have originated or reinforced the association of the bird with cowardice or fear.

However, the first reference that we find in our literature appears in Juan de Salina's *Poesías*²⁰, although it is not until Lope de Vega's *Nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín, reyes de Francia* (1604) that the expression combines the reference to the ridicule of warrior ardour and eschatological jokes, with a double sexual meaning, starring a woman and a soldier:

[SOL 2] Caminaré diligente / por el campo diez y veinte. / ¿Veinte? ¡Qué digo, y mil leguas!

[MUJER] ¡Mal hayan estas treguas! / Y el hombre que las consiente / debe de ser un gallina²¹.

More than a century later, Don Sebastian de Covarrubias included the expression in his *Dictionary of Authorities* (1726) and it is defined as follows:

GALLINA. Por analogia se llama al que es cobarde, pusilánime y tímido. Dixose así aludiendo a la cobardía que tiene esta ave. Latín. *Timidus. Iners.* INC. GARCIL. Part. 1. Lib. 9. Cap. 23. Hai entre los Indios el mismo refrán que los Españoles tienen, de llamar a un hombre *gallina* para notarle de cobarde. [...] ²²

It is worth noting that Covarrubias chooses an *authority* like the Inca Garcilaso, who in his "*Comentarios reales de los incas*" provides very valuable information about the sociolinguistic transference of phraseologisms. He points out that the same PU is used in two very different cultures. However, if we continue reading, the author describes the following:

[...] El refrán de llamar a un hombre *gallina*, por motejarle de cobarde, es que los indios lo han tomado de los españoles, por la ordinaria familiaridad y conversación que con ellos tienen; y también por remedarles en el lenguaje [...].²³

In other words, it is a phraseological loan, which the *Indians* had adapted to their culture, despite the fact that they had other ways of calling a man a coward.

²⁰ Dated ca. 1585. Henry Bonneville, *Poesías humanas*, Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1987.

²¹ '[SOLDIER 2] I shall walk diligently / through that field for ten and twenty... / twenty? What am I saying! for a thousand leagues!

[WOMAN] Damn these truces! / Any man who consents to them / must be a hen'. In: *Nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín, reyes de Francia*: <http://buscador.clemit.es/ficheros/El%20nacimiento%20de%20Urs%C3%B3n%20y%20Valent%C3%ADn.pdf>.

²² 'HEN: Used as an analogy to refer to somebody who is a coward, fainthearted or shy. The term alludes to the cowardice of this bird. Latin. *Timidus. Iners.* INC. GARCIL. Part. 1. Book 9. Chap. 23. Indians have the same saying as Spaniards, in which they call a man a hen when they want to call him a coward. [...]

²³ '[...] The proverb in which a man is referred to as a *hen* when he is accused of being a coward is something that Indians have adopted from Spaniards due to the familiarity and the conversations they have, and also in an attempt to mimic their language. [...]

5.2 Translation Problems

It seems that what might be deemed a universal in the attribution of cowardice to the laying bird, is actually not so. A cursory comparison of the PU in neighbouring languages shows that, although the phraseologism may be understood in other languages, it is not a formula shared by all cultures. On the contrary, the form of the PU can be misleading when trying to recognise it or identify it with other similar existing in different languages. As it was already stated in previous works (Torijano and Recio 2017):

El problema es la superficialidad, es decir, cuando el aprendiz o el traductor no trasciende la superficie de la expresión sin tener en cuenta su evolución y su más que posible evolución divergente. La mayoría de las veces esta evolución se debe a que pertenecen a fraseologismos completamente idiomáticos cuyo origen es de cada lengua en sí, su historia y evolución, así como su cultura.²⁴ (p. 53)

Let us illustrate this with an example: although in Portuguese you can use *ser uma galinha*, being *uma galinha choca*, that is, 'broody', means practically the opposite: 'enraged, hostile, aggressive, irreducible, indomitable, rude', etc. This would pose a serious problem of communication and translation. To further complicate the issue of two seemingly close languages, in Brazilian Portuguese the expression *homem-galinha*, defined as 'mulherengo, conquistador, galanteador' or as 'homem que corteja várias mulheres'²⁵, could be translated into English as 'playboy, womanizer' or, more vulgarly, 'masher'²⁶, which in Spanish is much closer to 'gallito', characterized by its bravado, than to a hen, the symbol of cowardice or fear.

On the other hand, in another Latin language such as French, and documented since 1680²⁷ –almost at the same time as in Spanish–, we find *être une poule mouillée* ('to be a chicken'), having the same phraseological value as its Spanish counterpart ('ser una gallina mojada'). While in Italian the object of metonymy becomes a "rabbit", instead of *gallina*, "*fare il coniglio*", because the attribution of fear changes the animal, which is perfectly acceptable by the mere observation of reality before the trembling image of these animals²⁸.

²⁴ 'The problem here is the superficial nature of the expression, that is, when the apprentice or the translator does not go beyond the surface of the expression and does not take into account its evolution and the fact that this transformation has very likely been divergent. Most of the times this development is due to the fact that they belong to utterly idiomatic phraseologisms whose origins are part of each language in itself, as well as of their history, their evolution and their culture.'

²⁵ DLP: 1. Que ou o que gosta de namoriscar ou namoriscar várias mulheres; que ou o que anda sempre metido com mulheres. / Someone who likes to flirt with several women; someone who is always surrounded by women.

²⁶ Wordreference: s.v. mulherengo. / A womanizer.

²⁷ In the *Dictionnaire français contenant les mots et les choses*, by Pierre Richelet.

²⁸ In the 17th century, the *Diccionario de Autoridades* (1726–1739) includes the term *lebrón*, which Covarrubias defines as follows:
LEBRÓN. It is used metaphorically to refer to someone who is shy and cowardly, and it alludes to the timidity and suspicion of hares. Latin. *Timidissimus*. [...] (IV Volume, 1743).

As far as English is concerned, the metaphorical figure is considerably close to that of Spanish, as there exists "to be a chicken" (*Don't be a chicken!*)—apart from other phraseologisms such as *Don't be a sissy* or *Don't be a wuss-*, in which *gallina* becomes a chicken. As we can observe, the chicken reference is closer than the rabbit, in the case of Italian, despite the fact that the latter is a supposedly closer language to Spanish. Nevertheless, in English it can also become a *cat* in *to be a scaredy-cat*.

With regard to German, the option we consider most valid for translating the PU is *ein Angsthase sein*²⁹, which reflects the pragmatic value of the Spanish PU, although there is not the slightest reference to **eine Henne sein*. Once again, the arbitrary nature of languages underlies the fact that the symbolic animal that represents fear in German (in addition to many other values³⁰) is the hare ('*der Hase*'), undeniably related to the Italian *coniglio*, despite them being two languages from different families and with distant systematic features.

In a standard approach to the understanding of the PU, it does not seem difficult to discover that the metaphorical image is complemented by the compositional element *die Angst*, which accompanies the nuclear noun in adjective function, a sort of conceptual hyperonym of dozens of terms semantically linked with 'fear', under which nouns, verbs and adjectives could be grouped ranging from *Abneigung*, *Angstgefühl* or *Ängstlichkeit* to *Schrecklichkeit*, *Unruhe*, *Unterdrückung* or *Zwang*³¹. In this case, the German speaker has reinforced the chosen trait of the hare by adding the noun to emphasise the idea that it is a fearful hare, a kind of unnecessary but very expressive epithet, as if in Spanish we were saying "eres un gallina miedoso".

The term, present in German as early as the 8th century, has its roots in the Proto-Indo-European **angú-*, having the same value as the Latin *angŭstĭa*, -æ ('narrowness, difficulty'), still present in *angosto*, for instance.

As mentioned above, our understanding of phraseologism is based on a standard approach. As further proof of the complexity and depth that characterizes the interpretation and study of phraseology, it is likely that the hare in the PU (related to the English, Norwegian and Swedish *hare* or the Dutch *haas*) is not such and has nothing to do with the metonymy of the flight instinct of the hare, but with something very different. There are many scholars who do not rule out the hypothesis that it actually is an alteration of a possible **Angsthose* form, from *Hose* (i.e. 'trousers'). This would lead us to transfer the source domain of domestic animals to that of clothing, another

²⁹ It would also be valid, according to the contexts, *sich ins Hemd machen*, which would lead us to the Spanish analogous *no llegarle a uno la camisa al cuerpo*, for example.

³⁰ For *ser un perro viejo*, German uses *ser una liebre vieja* [to be an old hare] (*ein alter Hase sein*), in which wisdom based on experience is praised, while apparently the same animal is the protagonist of the PU *Mein Name ist Hase*, which we could freely translate as *A mi que me registren / Yo no tengo ni idea / Yo no sé nada* or *Yo pasaba por aquí* [You can search me / I don't know what is going on here / I don't know anything / I was just passing by]. Although the origin actually goes back to a student of Heidelberg, Karl Victor von Hase, involved in a duel in 1854 and stripped of his identity card so as not to be arrested.

³¹ 'aversion, anxiety or anxiety horror, restlessness, oppression or coercion', respectively.

area also related to sensations due to their physical proximity to the body. This can be noticed in the German PU that we mentioned before: *sich ins Hemd machen* or in the colloquial constructions *sich in die Hose(n) machen* or *die Hose(n) voll haben*, conceptually identical to the English *to shit one's pants*, and, of course, to the Spanish *cagón* or to the phraseologisms *cagarse en los pantalones* or, in their euphemistic forms, *hacérselo en los pantalones* or *hacérselo encima*³².

A deep understanding of the PU, its historical-cultural location, and the exhaustive knowledge of the language are indispensable premises for a correct interpretation and, therefore, a correct rendering of the phraseologism. In order to achieve this, a good translator will draw heavily on various strategies (equivalence, omission, translation, explanation and neutralization)³³, which should be employed according to the demands of the text and the given pragmatics.

6 Conclusions

In this study, we set out to show a brief overview of the great interest that the treatment of phraseology arouses, and more precisely the phraseology of emotions, especially from the field of translation studies, which represents a threefold challenge, due to the subjective nature of the former and the susceptibility to error of the latter. The professional translator must face not just a linguistic form, but the crystallization of feeling, culture, the understanding of the universe by the source language and the idiosyncrasy of the text underlying phraseological units.

A correct rendering of PUs of emotion requires being able to recreate the metaphorical potential of the linguistic community to which they belong and to unavoidably complement linguistic knowledge with socio-cultural sentiment. So far, automatic translators have not demonstrated the capability of achieving that with fairly acceptable results.

The acquisition, or more accurately, the apprehension of the way in which thought is articulated and the conceptualization of the world (symbolized in metaphor and in metonymy in its linguistic expression) from which the original text is born is the only way to approach a translation with a certain guarantee of success. Additionally, in our opinion, only through cognitive grammar, the professional translator will be able to use those three images which Zimovets and Komanova (2016) formulate: real, conceptual and linguistic.

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³² Or to regionalism *die Bangbüxe* (from *Bang*, 'coward' and *Büxe*, a less frequent variant of *Buxe*, 'pants'), very similar to the Dutch *bangebreek*.

³³ Toury (1995: 82).

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