

Presence of Gypsy origin vocabulary in Latin American Spanish varieties: the case of Mexican Spanish and its *caló*

Ivo Buzek
Masaryk University, Brno

1. Foreword

The aim of the paper is to offer an introductory approach to the study of the presence of the Gypsy origin loanwords in the Latin American varieties of the Spanish language. After a first general attempt published some years ago (Buzek 2009), this time we propose to study with more detail the Gypsy loanwords in the 20th century Mexican Spanish, registered in Mexican Spanish dictionaries. In order to provide a more reliable image of their real usage, it is our intention to complement the Gypsy Mexican Spanish lexical units with texts coming from Spanish Royal Academy corpora, CREA and CORDE¹. It is redundant to keep repeating that textual documentation coming from extent textual corpora is not an ornament in lexicological studies. It is generally accepted that their function there is to provide a testimony and context of usage for words consulted, especially for those that have very low frequency or very specific field of usage.

2. *Caló* y *caló* in Mexico

As is it generally known, at least in Spanish speaking countries, the word *caló* in the European Spanish means “Spanish Gypsies’ language” and it comes from the Spanish Gypsy *caló* ‘black’, as it is stated in the last edition of the normative dictionary of the Spanish language, published by the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language in 2001, cited here as *DRAE-2001*².

It is quite curious that Mexican Spanish retains the meaning ‘criminal jargon’ that, accidentally, enriches with its highly expressive words and meanings colloquial and popular registers of the Mexican variety of the Spanish language³; it means that the Mexican Spanish maintains the meaning that *caló* had in the European Spanish in the end of the 19th century and in the first half of the 20th century, when Spanish sociologists and criminalists wrote about “criminals’ *caló* jargon”.⁴

Lara (1992: 567) states that “today in Mexico, *caló* means, in the strict sense of the word, vocabulary and idiomatic expressions used by criminals, especially by *rateros* ‘thieves’.”⁵ The collection of Mexican *caló* carried out by Lara and his collaborators is part of

¹ REAL ACADEMIA ESPAÑOLA: Banco de datos (CORDE) [online]. *Corpus diacrónico del español*. <http://www.rae.es>; and Banco de datos (CREA) [online]. *Corpus de referencia del español actual*. <http://www.rae.es>, consulted between July 17 and 20, 2012.

² For those interested in its etymology and history of its lexicographic treatment in the Spanish lexicographic tradition, see Buzek (2010: 56-57).

³ Not only the Mexican variety, but those adjoining as well; see for example Čengerová 2010, paper dedicated to the *chicano caló*, and the bibliography that is cited there.

⁴ See for example Salillas 2000 [1896], Gil Maestre 1893 or Serrano García 1935.

⁵ “En México, hoy en día, *caló* designa, en sentido estricto, el vocabulario y las expresiones idiomáticas de los delincuentes, particularmente de los *rateros*”. Cf. *Ratero*: “(Coloq) Ladrón, persona que roba” (*DEUM*); and *DRAE-2001*: ‘Dicho de un ladrón: Que hurta con maña y cautela cosas de poco valor’, without any restrictions of usage. All translations from Spanish to English in the paper are ours.

the ‘Corpus of contemporary Mexican Spanish’ (*Corpus del español mexicano contemporáneo (1921-1974)*; *CEMC*). Its main value lies in the fact that it comes from interviews “with criminals (thieves and marihuana vendors who, according to themselves, traditionally make use of *caló*) in the Lecumberri prison, in Mexico City, the purpose of which was to collect lexical material corresponding to this form of speech”⁶ (Lara 1992: 567-568).

Lara admits that it is not easy to obtain authentic testimonies of usage of *caló* in Mexico, as it was difficult for us to obtain authentic testimonies of usage of *caló* in Spain (cf. Buzek 2004 and Buzek 2010). All Spanish documents that we studied generally reflected *caló* as topics proper of bullfighting, flamenco dance, criminality, etc. (cf. Roperó Núñez 1978). In the Mexican usage, comments Lara, “in the case of *caló*, apart from two small texts included in Trejo 1959⁷ as an appendix to his thesis, we do not find any materials of this kind”⁸ (1992: 567).

Another aspect that these sources have in common on both shores of the Atlantic ocean is “that in general these *caló* collections are fragmentary and probably suffer from confusion produced by collecting speech acts by scholars who are not experts on the subject” and that “it is impossible to establish an evaluation criterion of the compiled material”⁹, because the samples that Lara and his collaborators collected for the *CEMC* and the samples present in the Trejo’s thesis are not considered representative by Lara.

And finally, the sample of Mexican *caló* collected by Lara and his team has in common with other jargons that “it has vocabulary only for certain aspects of reality (police, prison and its organization, robbing tricks [...], instruments for robbery, money, victims, etc.)”¹⁰ and that some expressions has infiltrated into colloquial and popular speech (1992: 573 and 574).

However, in this paper we will pay attention only to the part of the Mexican *caló* and the Mexican Spanish in general that contains loanwords of Gypsy origin. We will make use of etymologies defended by authors cited in Buzek 2004 and in Buzek 2010. In cases of words that are not studied there, we will make use of etymologies cited by Lara 1992.

3. The list of sources

In this chapter we will make some observations on both sources of Gypsy loanwords in the Mexican Spanish that we use in the paper: ‘Dictionary of Spanish used in Mexico’ (*Diccionario del español usual de México*; *DEUM*) directed by Luis Fernando Lara (1996); and ‘Brief dictionary of Mexicanisms’ (*Diccionario breve de mexicanismos*; *DBM*) by Guido Gómez de Silva (2001).

Although there are radical methodological differences between the two dictionaries (*DEUM* is integral and *DBM* is differential), there are some things that they have in common.

⁶ “[C]on delincuentes (ladrones y traficantes de marihuana, que son, según ellos mismos informaron, los que tradicionalmente hacen uso del *caló*) en la cárcel de Lecumberri, en la ciudad de México, con el objeto de recoger los materiales léxicos correspondientes a esa manera de hablar”.

⁷ TREJO D., Arnulfo. *Contribución al estudio del léxico de la delincuencia*. Ph.D. Thesis. México: UNAM, 1959; unfortunately, we were not able to consult it.

⁸ “[E]n el caso del *caló*, salvo los dos pequeños textos que incluye Trejo 1959 como apéndice de su tesis, no encontramos materiales de esa clase”.

⁹ “[P]or lo general las colecciones del *caló* son fragmentarias y posibles víctimas de la confusión que produce recoger un habla que sus estudiosos no dominan”; “no es posible establecer un criterio de evaluación de la calidad del material recopilado.”

¹⁰ “[S]ólo tiene vocabulario para ciertos aspectos de la realidad (la policía, la cárcel y su organización, los trucos del robo [...], los instrumentos para robar, el dinero, las víctimas, etc.).”

Both of them are advances and/or adaptations of major dictionaries; *DEUM* is an advance of the ‘Dictionary of the Mexican Spanish’ (*Diccionario del español de México*; *DEM*) and *DBM* can be taken for a forerunner of the ‘Dictionary of Mexicanisms’ (*Diccionario de mexicanismos*) published by Mexican Academy of the Spanish Language. Both “major” dictionaries were published in 2010.

They could be interpreted as well as reductions of much more extensive corpora because *DEUM* is based on data of the *CEMC* and *DBM*, for its part, is a reduction of much wider repertory, called ‘Index of Mexicanisms’ (*Índice de mexicanismos*). Nevertheless, it must be stated that similarities are mainly formal or external; internal characteristics of both dictionaries have very little in common.

Let us take *DEUM* and *DBM* as repertoires that represent a state of Mexican Spanish lexicography in Mexico in the threshold of the third millennium.

4. The Gypsy origin vocabulary in contemporary Mexican Spanish dictionaries

Speaking in numbers, both dictionaries bring together rather small results, as we have found only eighteen lexical units (or twenty two, if we take into account orthographic varieties as well). However, we are more interested in the quality of their lexicographic treatment and in their textual documentation in the Academic corpora than in large numbers.

With a couple of exceptions made, we will not waste time on etymology; for etymology, see Buzek 2010 and the bibliography that is cited there. We will be interested here in other aspects of microstructure and in the textual background of the words. If their meanings count with adequate examples in microstructure, it means, if those correspond to texts included in the Academic corpora, we will limit ourselves to cite examples from lexicographic sources and leave behind textual illustrations from the corpora.

4.1. *andovas* or *andobas* (*DBM*)

It comes only in *DBM*:

andovas o **andobas**. (Del caló español *andoba*, *andóbal* ‘persona cualquiera que no se nombra’.) com. Persona no especificada explícitamente (muchas veces presente) pero que el interlocutor entiende quién es.

It is included in *DBM* only because it figures as Mexicanism in *DRAE-2001*:

andobas. com. *Méx.* **andoba**.

[**andoba** o **andóbal**. (Del caló). com. Persona cualquiera que no se nombra. U. m. en sent. despect.]

We have not found any Mexican textual background for the word in the Academic corpora. Please see the note about the level of usage in the article *andoba* in *DRAE-2001* where the user is forwarded to from the supposed Mexicanism *andobas* and see that there is no note referring to the level of usage in *DBM*.

4.2. *caló* (*DEUM*)

We have found the word only in *DEUM* and it comprehends three meanings there:

- 1 Conjunto de vocablos, locuciones y algunos morfemas que constituyen buena parte del habla de los ladrones y otros maleantes, por la cual se reconocen entre sí e impiden parcialmente la comprensión de su habla a otras personas; caliche
- 2 Jerga de origen popular, basada por lo general en el habla de los maleantes, como el pachuco, y otras expresiones juveniles
- 3 Lengua de los antiguos gitanos españoles

We have located only three Mexican examples of the word in the Academic corpora. The first and the second ones come from CREA from the same document and if we do not misinterpret the meaning, they refer to the second one in *DEUM*. The third example comes from CORDE and illustrates the first meaning in *DEUM*, i.e. *caló* as a criminal jargon (Lara 1992).

Por lo pronto, lo que yo gozo es el ejercicio de tomar el **caló** chilango o urbano moderno para el poema; se goza ese lenguaje, esa intromisión en el verso; no más.
(CREA: 2012-07-17 [*Proceso*, 08/09/1996])

Pero sean versos de cuidada sonoridad o prosas, lo importante es que el poema crezca, que se ampare en algún vigor formal; que vaya a algún lado más allá de complacerse en poner en verso el **caló** moderno o ejercitar buenas rimas.
(CREA: 2012-07-17 [*Proceso*, 08/09/1996])

Pasmado se quedó el ancho y anguloso cabecilla cuando tales tempestades oyó en mi boca; pero comprendió lo que las producía, y con su tono airado de costumbre lanzó cuatro o seis voquibles de esos que no son para verso en tipos de imprenta y de que es tan espléndidamente rico nuestro infame **caló**.
(CORDE: 2012-07-17 [*Rabasa Bola*])

4.3. *catorrazo* (DBM)

The article repeats the same pattern of treatment as in the case of *andobas*. The word is documented only in *DBM* because it comes as Mexicanism in *DRAE-2001*, but we do not find it in any Mexican texts in the Academic corpora:

catorrazo. (Del español *cate* ‘golpe’.) m. Golpe. (*DBM*)

catorrazo. m. coloq. *Méx.* Efecto que produce un cate (|| golpe). (*DRAE-2001*)

4.4. *¡chale!* (DEUM)

It is quite interesting word. Lara (1992: 579) holds that:

[I]t must have had a more ancient variety *¡chane!* ‘be quiet!’, from *chanar* ‘to be quiet’ coming from Gypsy *chanar* ‘to be informed’; [...] a good explanation would be needed on how *chane* could have evolved into *chale*, from ‘to be informed’ to ‘to be quiet’, which is right the opposite. The step from ‘be quiet!’ to ‘take care!’ that Wagner registers in 1953 in the Californian pachuco and the unspecified character of the exclamation as I have registered it would be easier to explain if we take into account that the expression ‘be quiet!’ can be heard in conversations of Mexican middle-class as a support to maintain a dialogue and as a comment similar to *¡caramba!*, *¡vaya!*, and so on.¹¹

¹¹ “[T]endría una forma más antigua, *¡chane!* ‘¡cállense!’, de *chanar* ‘callar’ y ésta del gitano *chanar* ‘tener noticias’; [...] haría falta una buena explicación de cómo pudo haber evolucionado *chane* a *chale*, de ‘tener noticias’ a ‘callar’, que es todo lo contrario. El paso de ‘¡cállense!’ a ‘¡cuidado!’ que registra Wagner 1953 en el

The explication given by Lara could sound a bit forced, but it is true that *chanar* or *chanelar* ‘to know’ is well documented in the Spanish *caló*, and in the European Spanish, and *chanarse* ‘to be quiet’ is listed in the Santamaria’s dictionary¹² as a word that “belongs properly to the *caló* of the underworld”¹³.

The phonetic variation between *chane* and *chale* could be explained as a case of lexicalization of one verbal form, left alone by the rest of paradigm that had fallen into disuse. It is defined in *DEUM* as follows:

¡chale!

interj (Popular) ¡Caray! ¡Caramba!: “¡*Chale* contigo, Raúl!, hay que tratar de sacar la luz de donde se pueda”, “¡*Chale*, ahí está la tira!”

There are to be appreciated indications on the level of usage, as well as examples that become even more important for users that are not native Mexican Spanish speakers, or those who are not native Spanish speakers at all. Valadez (2006: 153) states that examples in *DEUM* were excerpted mainly from *CEMC* but from time to time they had to be:

[M]odified or reduced in order to be able to carry out better their function of proof or verification of the definition, in order to show their syntactic-semantic outline, or in order to reflect our culture and our signs of identity, i.e. those of a Spanish speaking society. In other cases it was the editor who wrote the example from his or her own competence as a native Mexican Spanish speaker.¹⁴

We agree that lexicographical practice demands adapting or inventing examples when circumstances require it. However, users would certainly appreciate, if they could easily identify adapted or invented examples, as it was carried out, for example, in *Diccionario del español actual* by Manuel Seco (1999).

The textual documentation generally comes from recent sources. It is registered only in CREA:

Porque si es cierto que el público se puede aburrir de tú música y decir “**chale**, ya no me gusta cómo toca Ramón”, entonces tienes que buscar la manera de voltearle el disco, ya sea en melodía, con unos arreglos bonitos, darle otros toques más sabrosos a esa música para que el público te siga apoyando. (CREA: 2012-07-17 [*La crónica de hoy*, 01/04/2002])

4.5. *chaviza* (DBM)

The lexical unit appears only in *DBM*, probably shielded by the influence of *DRAE*, although in *DRAE*-2001 it does not come as a Mexicanism but as a word proper of Honduras.

chaviza. (De *chavo*.) f. Conjunto de muchachos. (*DBM*)

pachuco de California y a la inespecificidad de la interjección tal como la he registrado, sería más explicable si se toma en cuenta que la muletilla *¡cállate!* se escucha en conversaciones de la clase media mexicana como apoyo al mantenimiento del diálogo y como comentario semejante a *¡caramba!*, *¡vaya!*, etcétera.”

¹² SANTAMARÍA, Francisco J. *Diccionario de mejicanismos*. 4^a edición. México: Porrúa, 1983; unfortunately, we do not have the dictionary at our disposal at the moment and we cite through Buzek 2004.

¹³ “[P]ropiamente pertenece al *caló* del hampa”.

¹⁴ “[M]odificados o reducidos, para que cumplan mejor su función de prueba o comprobación de la definición, para que muestren su contorno sintáctico-semántico o para que reflejen nuestra cultura y nuestras señas de identidad, es decir, las de una sociedad hablante del español. En otros casos ha sido el redactor el que ha elaborado el ejemplo a partir de su competencia de hablante del español usado en México.”

chaviza. f. *Hond.* Conjunto de jóvenes que suelen divertirse juntos y se visten a la moda. (*DRAE-2001*)

Its frequency is certainly not very high, given the fact that it is documented only two times and in the same text.

Les diré lo que yo soy a estos tres exponentes de la cruel **chaviza**.

(CREA: 2012-07-17 [Espinosa *Jesús el bisabuelo*])

En cambio al carismático nombre de Pepe Clítoris la **chaviza** se vuela la mente en aclamaciones, sobre todo cuando se avienta uno de sus chingoncísimos discursos, de los que muchas veces sale en hombros de la raza.

(CREA: 2012-07-17 [Espinosa *Jesús el bisabuelo*])

4.6. *chavo, va* (DEUM, DBM)

It is registered in both dictionaries but their treatment there differs greatly from one dictionary to another. In *DBM* it is defined only as ‘boy, young man’ ‘muchacho, niño, joven’, while in *DEUM* we can find a second meaning ‘fiancé’ ‘novio o compañero estable’ and two idiomatic expressions: *chavo fresa* ‘one that behaves with courtesy and good manners, that belongs in general to a well-established family’ ‘el que se comporta con urbanidad y buenas maneras, que generalmente pertenece a una familia sin problemas económicos; el que conserva gustos tradicionales’ and *chava rol* ‘lesbian that plays an active paper in a relationship’ ‘lesbiana que tiene el papel activo en una relación amorosa’.

Another important difference can be found in register. In *DBM* it appears as stylistically neutral, while in *DEUM* it is treated as a colloquial word. The textual background confirms that *DEUM* offers more adequate treatment.

Excluding the meaning ‘fiancé’ from *DBM* could be explained pointing to *DRAE-2001* that treats it as proper of Nicaragua; the meaning ‘boy’ is associated, as a matter of fact, with Mexico there.

Chavo and *chava* have a rich textual documentation in CREA but, on contrary, there are not many examples in CORDE. There are presented below some examples from CREA for meanings ‘boy/girl’ and ‘fiancé’. We could not find in the Academic corpora examples for *chavo fresa* and *chava rol* that, unfortunately, do not come this time in *DEUM* with examples.

Aunque se manejan espacios simultáneos y varios ámbitos de realidad, los **chavos** se involucran por la evolución de su percepción, toda vez que ellos están acostumbrados a ver diez canales de televisión simultáneamente.

(CREA: 2012-07-17 [*Proceso*, 07/07/1996])

Pero no salir casi nunca y no ver a ninguna **chava** te ponen bastante mal, bastantito.

(CREA: 2012-07-17 [Villoro *Noche*])

Marta: No, gracias, viene mi **chavo** a buscarme...

(CREA: 2012-07-17 [Vilalta *Mujer*])

Y la muchacha, mi **chava**, después se retencabronó.

(CREA: 2012-07-17 [López Páez *Doña Herlinda*])

Although the form *chaval* is much more frequent in the European Spanish, it is not at all strange in Mexico, as can be deduced from examples that follow:

De toda esta lamentable situación ya nadie saldrá ileso, finalice como finalice, y mucho menos los **chavales** Julio y Omar.

(CREA: 2012-07-17 [*Proceso*, 08/12/1996]).

Los vi allí en las fiestas con que mi hermano celebraba su progeñe, los vi inventándose un color, una lengua, un dios, tres en vez de mil, ¿cuál lengua?, ¿escuinle o **chaval**, **chaval** o chavo, guajolote o pavo, Cuauhnáhuac o Cuernavaca donde nació mi hermano, maguey o agave, frijol o judía, ejote o habichuela?, ¿cuál Dios, espejo de humo o espíritu santo, serpiente emplumada o Cristo crucificado, dios que exige mi muerte o dios que me da la suya, padre sacrificador o padre sacrificado, pedernal o cruz?, ¿cuál Madre de Dios, Tonantzín o Guadalupe?, ¿cuál lengua, si española: Guadalupe misma, Guadalquivir, Guadarrama, alberca, azotea, acequia, alcoba, almohada, alcázar, alcachofa, limón, naranja, ojalá?, ¿cuál lengua, si náhuatl: seri, pima, totonaca, zapoteca, maya, huichol?

(CREA: 2012-07-17 [Fuentes *Naranja*]).

Allí estableció el señor Fernando, una placita de toros, donde acostumbraba entrenarse con otros amigos, lidiando becerras y algunos torotes, y allí, siendo todavía un **chaval** de ocho a nueve años, comenzó Rafael a adiestrarse en el arte del toreo.

(CORDE: 2012-07-17 [Córdoba *Figuras*])

— Oye tú, ¿y qué me dices de aquel pase por alto? ¡Coño! Que si las puede el **chavalillo**.

(CORDE: 2012-07-17 [Fuentes *Región*])

4.7. *chingada* (DEUM, DBM)

It is the first derivative from the verb *chingar* ‘to copulate; to bother’ that is considered obscene and offensive in all its derivatives and in all their meanings.

In both dictionaries the word appears as a member of various phrases and exclamations and there are various examples included. In the case of *DBM*, it is to be supposed that they come from the article’s source document, because there are very few examples in *DBM* in general.

However, the principal difference between treatments offered in *DBM* and in *DEUM* lies in information about the level of usage. *DBM* takes it for granted that users know the adequate register and context of usage. But it should be stated many users, mainly those less familiar with the Mexican Spanish or simply with limited competence in Spanish en general, for example foreigners, may not be sure about all possible pragmatic values of the word, although they can see that it probably will not be stylistically neutral. Possible misinterpretation then could lead to very embarrassing situations.

The only meaning where *DEUM* and *DBM* differ is the first one registered in *DBM*: ‘prostitute, promiscuous woman’ ‘prostituta, mujer promiscua’ that appears as Mexicanism in *DRAE-2001*, but has no textual background in the Academic corpora.

We present below the whole article as it comes in *DEUM*, hoping that this time we can spare examples from CORDE and CREA – there are plenty of them in both corpora – because they are very similar to those offered in the article from *DEUM*.

chingada

s f (Groser y Ofensivo)

1 interj Se usa para intensificar cualquier exclamación o para adjetivar violenta y fuertemente cualquier expresión: “¡Ah, que *la chingada*! ¿Así que me estás engañando!”, “¡Sálganse de aquí, con una *chingada*, ¿no ven que estamos ocupados?”, “Pues los padrotes las cuidaban, las manejaban y *la chingada*”

2 *La (tu, su, mi, etc) chingada (madre)* La madre, concebida como violada o mancillada: “¡Miren a ese cabrón, debería de darle vergüenza no pagar la bicicleta, hijo de *su chingada madre*!”, “Te dije que dejáramos la locomotora estacionada en una curva, sordo, hijo de *la chingada*”, “Tú ya no respetas ni a *tu chingada madre*”

3 *Llevarse la chingada o irse a la chingada* Recibir alguien el mayor daño o el daño del que ya no podrá recuperarse: “¡*Me lleva la chingada*, me expulsaron de la escuela!”, “Ahora sí que *te llevó la*

chingada: descubrieron el fraude que hiciste”, “¡Vete a la *chingada*, ya me jodiste la vida!”, “¡Cómo eres chillón, *me lleva la chingada!*”

4 *Mandar a la chingada* Deshacerse de alguien o de algo, desentenderse de él o no hacerle caso: “Ya ni oyó mis razones: me *mandó* directamente a la *chingada*”, “*Mandó* su trabajo a la *chingada*”

5 *De la chingada* Muy mal: “La situación económica está *de la chingada*”, “En este viaje me fue *de la chingada*”.

4.8. *chingadazo* (DEUM, DBM)

It is defined in both dictionaries as ‘strong hit’ ‘golpe fuerte’ (DBM) or ‘very strong hit’ ‘golpe muy fuerte’ (DEUM).

In DEUM the obscene meaning of the word is highlighted through the proper mark of usage but in DBM the mark of usage is integrated in the definition and it probably comes from adapting the corresponding indication of usage present in the same article in DRAE-2001. It is to be supposed that the unit was registered in DBM because it is classified as Mexicanism in DRAE-2001 as well.

We present below the article from DEUM, mainly because of the illustrating capacity of its examples, and afterwards an example coming from CREA. There are not many occurrences there, and they do not differ substantially from examples in DEUM.

chingadazo

s m (Groser) Golpe muy fuerte: “Si se pone necia la agarro a *chingadazos* y se está en la casa”, “¡Tú sólo entiendes a *chingadazos!*”, “Durante la pelea se pusieron muy duros los *chingadazos*”, “Yo siempre le entro a los *chingadazos*”.

—Se dio un buen **chingadazo** —respondió el indio.
(CREA: 2012-07-17 [Chao Altos])

4.9. *chingado* (DEUM, DBM)

In DBM it is defined as ‘harmed’, i.e. as a past participle used adjectivally of *chingar* ‘to make harm’ ‘hacer daño’. There are also registered exclamations *¡ah, chingado!* or *¡ah, chingao!* ‘exclamation of surprise or protest’ ‘exclamación de sorpresa y protesta’. However the information about the level of usage is missing there, as it is usual in the whole dictionary. It means that it cannot be useful to a great part of its possible users.

In DEUM we find in the first place the information about the level of usage (obscene and offensive) and three subentries: past participle of *chingar* or *chingarse*, as in DBM, ‘that is contemptible’ ‘que es despreciable’, meaning not listed in DBM, and an exclamation *¡Chingado!* or *¡Chinga(d)os!*, similar to those from DBM. It is obvious that DEUM offers much more coherent treatment than DBM, and that it reflects better the current usage.

There are plenty of examples in the Academic corpora that are identical in values and levels of usage to those offered in DEUM and we could feel perfectly satisfied with reproducing the whole article. Nevertheless, we selected as well a complementary example from CREA that shows a formal variant of the exclamation registered in DEUM.

chingado

(Groser y Ofensivo)

I

pp de *chingar* o *chingarse*

II

adj Que es despreciable: “¡*Chingado* escuincle, deja de joder!”, “Toma tu *chingada* máquina”

III

interj ¡*Chingado!* o ¡*Chinga(d)os!* Se usa para intensificar cualquier exclamación, dando un tono violento y fuerte a cualquier expresión: “¡Ay *chingado*, me quedó rebién!”, “¡Cálmense, *chingaos*, no se peleen!”

PADRE Esta es la parroquia de Santa Catarina. Yo soy el padre Armando Mena, encargado de ella, y tú estás aquí por suerte, ya que de otra manera estarías en el panteón.

GENARO ¡**Ah chingao!**

(CREA: 2012-07-17 [Santander *Milagro*])

4.10. *chingar* (DEUM, DBM)

It is clearly a source word from which has derived others. It is registered in both dictionaries and its treatment is more homogeneous this time.

In *DBM* it is defined through a chain of (supposed) synonyms and the indication of usage is inserted in the text of definition. Then there are three verb phrases, two of them with no indication of the level of usage:

chingar. (Del español *chingar* ‘importunar, molestar’.) tr. Hacer daño, ocasionar perjuicio, dañar, romper, descomponer. Es voz malsonante. || **chinga a tu madre**. expr. que es una injuria muy grave. || **chingarse**. loc. Resultar mal, haber fracasado. || **chingárselo**. loc. Hacerle daño, herirlo.

We suspect that the article comes from some hidden Mexican source of the *Index of Mexicanisms* and not from *DRAE* because we do not find there any similar or corresponding meaning to the Mexican one.

There are four meanings in *DEUM* and two of them belong to the pronominal form *chingarse*. The level of usage is obscene and offensive, as in its derivatives. There are incorporated as well a lot of examples. This is the reason why we decided to present here the whole article:

chingar

v tr (Se conjuga como *amar*) (Groser y Ofensivo)

1 Molestar o causar grave daño a una persona: “Hay cabrones que nomás lo están a uno *chingue* y *chingue*”, “¡No me *chingues*, necesito dinero!”, “¡Vete a *chingar* a otra parte!”

2 Violar sexualmente a una persona: “Me *chingué* a la pinche vieja”, “¡Vete a *chingar* a tu madre!”

3 *Chingarse* prnl Sacrificarse en extremo: “Yo me *chingo* trabajando día y noche y tú te gastas todo el dinero”

4 *Chingarse* prnl Fallar o fracasar alguna cosa: “Se *chingó* el negocio”, “Se me *chingó* el motor en plena carretera”.

If we compare the lexicographic treatment offered by both dictionaries, we can see that the meaning ‘to make harm’ ‘hacer daño’ is registered in both of them, but *DEUM* informs its users that the usual indirect object is a person there. It is very important information, mainly for students of Spanish as a foreign language. The phrase *chinga tu madre* listed in *DBM* is present in *DEUM* as an example of the second meaning. The meaning ‘to fail’ ‘fracasar’ is registered in both of them as well, but in *DBM* without any further information about the level of usage. And finally, the meaning ‘to make extreme sacrifices’ ‘sacrificarse en extremo’ listed in *DEUM* does not come in *DBM*. The conclusion is that *DBM* again does not reflect adequately the Mexican linguistic and pragmatic reality.

We have already seen that examples from *DEUM* are able to illustrate very well Mexican usages of the word. Nevertheless, we have found in the Academic corpora some quotations that seem to illustrate other meanings, like ‘to make love’ ‘hacer amor’ and not ‘to

rape’ ‘violar [a una persona]’, although it must be stated that there is only a couple of them. We present below one of those rare examples of the meaning ‘to make love’ ‘hacer amor’.

[...] pedacito de mi memoria... me **chingaste** de a buenas... [...] (CREA: 2012-07-17 [Leyva *Piñata*])

4.11. *chingón, ona* (DBM)

This is the last one of the derivatives of *chingar* that we will speak of here. It comes only in *DBM*, probably because it is listed as Mexicanism in *DRAE-2001*. Once more it is to be stated that *DBM* does not offer any information concerning the level of usage of the word.

chingón, chingona. m. y f. Excelente en alguna actividad o rama del saber. (*DBM*)

chingón, na. adj. malson. *Méx.* Dicho de una persona: Competente en una actividad o rama del saber. U. t. c. s. (*DRAE-2001*)

It is a well documented word in the Academic corpora and the context helps to deduce its real level of usage. See the following two examples below:

—Eres una vieja **chingona**. Aprendiste bien. Ya puedes dedicarte a la política. Mantenme así al Gordo —dijo.
(CREA: 2012-07-17 [Mastretta *Arráncame*])

Por regla general, los mexicanos, cuando mejores, llegamos a ser competentes, **chingones**, como decimos, pero de ahí no pasamos, por lo que nos es casi imposible alcanzar cimas, campeonatos, los primeros lugares internacionales, salvo en box ligero y tauromaquia ya que, por naturaleza, somos capoteadores y peleoneros.
(CREA: 2012-07-17 [Chávez *Batallador*])

4.12. *gil* (DEUM)

It is one of the classic Gypsy loanwords, studied already by Clavería in 1950’s (cf. Buzek 2010: 135-136). It is registered only in *DEUM*. Unfortunately, we could not find any Mexican examples in the Academic corpora and so we have to be satisfied with the example listed in *DEUM*.

gil
s m (Caló) Persona a la que se toma como víctima para un robo, una estafa o un timo: “Mientras uno entretenía al *gil*, el otro le sacaba la cartera”.

4.13. *jaña* (DEUM)

It is considered a jargon caló word and it is documented only in *DEUM*.

The word is not listed in Buzek 2010, and so we offer here a short etymology note. As Lara states (1992: 579-580), citing Wagner¹⁵, the Mexicanism *jaña* ‘woman, fancy woman’ ‘mujer, querida’ comes from the Gypsy *jañí*, *jaña* ‘virgin’ ‘virgen’, and this one from old Indian *kañi*.

¹⁵ WAGNER, Max Leopold. Mexikanisches Rotwelsch. *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, 1919, n° 39, págs. 513-550; it is a paper that we were not able to consult.

We could not find the word in the Academic corpora and so we have no other choice than reproduce here the article from *DEUM*, together with its example.

jaña

s f (Caló) Mujer o querida: “Me dijo tu *jaña* que no estabas ahí”.

4.14. licar (DEUM)

As in the previous article, this one is an original Mexican form too and got excluded from Buzek 2010.

Concerning its etymology, Lara (1992: 580) points out that “*licar*, through a change, not strange at all, of the dental *d*, says Wagner 1953¹⁶, is together with *diguelar* [*sic*], in Spanish caló, an intensive form of the Gypsy *dicar*.”¹⁷

It is listed only in *DEUM*. We present the article below, together with the only quotation found in CREA.

licar

v tr (Se conjuga como *amar*) (Caló) Mirar u observar a alguien con precaución: “Nomás se nos quedaba *licando*, sin hacernos nada”.

“Nel ése, no me entona, guacha al bato aquel, me laika toriquear con esa morra, no puedo **licar** el otro lado porque la barda está calota”.

(CREA: 2012-07-17 [*Proceso*, 07/07/1996])

4.15. marro (DEUM)

Also this lexical unit is listed only in *DEUM*. According to Lara (1992: 580) it is a formal variant of *manró* ‘bread’ ‘pan’, a well documented word in various Spanish Gypsy dictionaries.

We could not find any examples in the Academic corpora and so we present the corresponding meaning and its example from *DEUM*.

marro

s m

2 (Caló) Bolillo: “¿No tienes unos *marros*, aunque sean duros?”

4.16. sandunga or zandunga (DEUM, DBM)

DEUM forwards its users directly to the variant *zandunga* where it is defined as follows:

zandunga

s f (También *sandunga*) Música, baile y canción típica del Istmo de Tehuantepec; la música y la canción es melodiosa, doliente y triste; el baile es muy ceremonioso: “¡Ay! *Zandunga*, *zandunga*, mamá por Dios/ *zandunga* no seas ingrata / mamá de mi corazón”.

¹⁶ WAGNER, Max Leopold. Ein mexikanisch-amerikanischer Argot: das Pachuco. *Romanistisches Jahrbuch*, 1953-1954, n° 6, págs. 237-266; it is a paper that we were not able to consult.

¹⁷ “[L]icar, mediante un cambio no extraño de la dental *d*, dice Wagner 1953, es con *diguelar* [*sic*], del caló español, una forma intensiva del gitano *dicar*”.

DBM offers the same information but unlike *DEUM*, it divides it into three independent meanings:

sandunga (Del español *sandunga* ‘gracia, donaire, salero’) o **zandunga**. f. 1. Baile popular de la zona del Istmo de Tehuantepec, que se acompaña con música de marimba. || 2. La música sentimental que acompaña este baile. || 3. La canción de versos románticos que acompaña la música y el baile. En la letra de la canción, Sandunga es también la mujer amada; ejemplo: “Eres jaulita de plata / donde vivo prisionero; / Sandunga, tu amor me mata, / y por tu amor yo me muero”.

DBM registers the variant *zandunga* too, but unlike *DEUM*, it forwards users from *zandunga* to *sandunga*.

We could not find in the Academic corpora any Mexican examples of *sandunga*, but we found one case of *zandunga* in CREA:

— Por eso cuando sintió que la calaca le pisaba los talones, me fue a pedir que uniéramos nuestras vidas en una sola —cerró Estelita, más que con lástima, con quiebro de **zandunga**.
(CREA: 2012-07-17 [Alatraste *Vivir*])

The question is why one dictionary prefers one variant and the other another one. In the case of *DEUM*, there are no doubts: it must be for the textual documentation in the *CEMC*. In the case of *DBM* we do not know for sure but it is possible that it is due to influence of *DRAE* where we find the variant *sandunga*, although it does not list any Mexican reference.

4.17. *sandunguear* or *zanduguear* (DBM)

It is documented only in *DBM* and it is defined there as ‘to go out partying’ ‘andar en jolgorios’, probably due to the influence of *DRAE* where we find a Mexicanism ‘to go out on the town’ ‘ir de parranda’. In both cases there is no indication referring to the level of usage.

There are no Mexican quotations in the Academic corpora.

4.18. *sandunguero* or *zandunguero* (DBM)

Both varieties appear in *DBM* defined as ‘the one who dances sandunga’ ‘quien baila sandunga’, without any indication of usage. Again, there are no Mexican examples in the Academic corpora.

5. Summing up (and concluding)

Our brief overview focused on the treatment of Gypsy loanwords in two representatives of current Mexican Spanish lexicography and on their textual background has brought some interesting observations.

If we take into account orthographic variants as well, from the twenty two lexical units found, fourteen of them are listed in *DEUM*. Their lexicographic treatment there can be considered adequate and well processed: the article structure is coherent, there are many examples and the information on the level of usage corresponds to the reality, as it can be proved by consulting Mexican textual documentation in the Academic corpora. However, although there are cases of words that are missing in the Academic corpora, users need not be

worried because they are informed in detail in the Foreword of *DEUM* about textual base for the macro as well as microstructure of the dictionary.

On the other hand, *DBM* registers twelve Gypsy loanwords and generally does not inform its users about the level of usage of its word list. Nevertheless, even a foreign user with an intermediate level of Spanish can guess that it does not comprehend only stylistically neutral words. Ávila (2003-2004: 12) confirms users' suspicion when he points out that:

In a random sample I found about 50 per cent of headwords belonging to the colloquial usage – although it was not always indicated by the author –, and about 22 per cent corresponded to characteristic referents of Mexican nature – mainly plants and animals – and names given to people coming from particular regions – *soconusqueño*, *silaonense* [*sic*] and others.¹⁸

Other deficiency of this dictionary is its lack of documentation. Given the fact that more than half of the words does not figure in the Academic corpora, users would tend to think that the dictionary lacks not only the information on the level of usage but also the indication on low frequency or even disuse of more than one word. It should not be forgotten that the origin of *DBM* lies in a compilation of lists of words and that some of them are more than two hundred years old.

However, radical differences in basic platform, but mainly little reliability and poor lexicographic treatment given in *DBM* come in the surface in cases of lexical units that both dictionaries have in common – they are six – where information on usage present in *DEUM* contrasts with its total absence in *DBM*. They are colloquial words, like *chavo*, but there are obscene and offensive terms as well, like *chingada* or *chingado*.

It means that *DBM* is not a dictionary, i.e. a reliable reference source, but rather a compilation of local curiosities with rather limited practical usage that is not to be trusted.

And what does these data say about the state of Gypsy loanwords in the 20th century Mexican Spanish? Apart from being few in numbers, most of them belong to jargon of petit criminality – the Mexican caló – and their frequency must be very low. However, some of them are very frequent words that could be even considered “identity words”, like *chavo* or the lexical family of *chingar*.

We could conclude the paper stating that there are some highly expressive terms (of Gypsy origin here) coming from the bottom of the society that infiltrate colloquial and vulgar registers of the Mexican Spanish and in some cases they achieve to get extended and get lexicalized, reasserting their position in the lexicon and giving it some unmistakable signs of identity.

Bibliography

- ÁVILA, Raúl. ¿El fin de los diccionarios diferenciales? ¿El principio de los diccionarios integrales? *Revista de Lexicografía*, 2003-2004, n° X, págs. 7-20.
- BUZEK, Ivo. *La visión del gitano en la lexicografía española*. Tesis doctoral inédita. Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2004.
- BUZEK, Ivo. Léxico gitano documentado en las variedades latinoamericanas del español. *Études romanes de Brno*, 2009, vol. 30, n° 2, págs 187-202.
- BUZEK, Ivo. *La imagen del gitano en la lexicografía española*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2010.

¹⁸ “En una muestra aleatoria encontré que cerca de 50 por ciento de las entradas eran de uso coloquial —aunque no siempre lo indicaba así el autor—, y un 22 por ciento correspondían a referentes característicos de la realidad natural de México —sobre todo plantas y animales— y a gentilicios regionales —*soconusqueño*, *silaonense* [*sic*] y otros.”

- ČENGEROVÁ, Zuzana. El caló chicano. In *Setkání hispanistů – Encuentro de hispanistas (Brno, 9.-10. října 2009)*. Ed. en CD-ROM. Ed. Daniel VÁZQUEZ; Ivo BUZEK. Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2010, págs. 219-229.
- GIL MAESTRE, Manuel. Estudios de sociología criminal. El argot, caló o jerga en sus relaciones con la delincuencia. *Revista General de Legislación y Jurisprudencia*, 1893, no 82, págs. 282-298 y 465-475.
- GÓMEZ DE SILVA, Guido. *Diccionario breve de mexicanismos*. México: Fondos de Cultura Económica, 2001. In: <http://www.academia.org.mx/dicmex.php>.
- LARA, Luis Fernando. El caló revisitado. In *Scripta Philologica in Honorem Juan M. Lope Blanch a los 40 años de docencia en la UNAM y a los 65 años de vida*. Tomo 2. *Lingüística española e iberoamericana*. Ed. Elizabeth LUNA TRAILL. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Filológicas, 1992, págs. 567-592.
- LARA, Luis Fernando (dir.). *Diccionario del español usual en México*. México: El Colegio de México, Centro de Estudios Lingüísticos y Literarios, 1996. In: <http://dem.colmex.mx/Default.aspx>.
- REAL ACADEMIA ESPAÑOLA. *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*. 22^a ed. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 2001.
- ROPERO NÚÑEZ, Miguel. *El léxico caló en el lenguaje del cante flamenco*. Sevilla: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Sevilla, 1978.
- SALILLAS, Rafael. *El delincuente español. El lenguaje* [en línea]. Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, 2000. In: <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/servlet/SirveObras/08145085499769451867857/index.htm>.
- SECO, Manuel; RAMOS, Gabino; ANDRÉS, Olimpia. *Diccionario del español actual*. 2 tomos. Madrid: Aguilar, 1999.
- SERRANO GARCIA, Pedro. *Delincuentes profesionales*. Madrid: Imprenta de Justo López, 1935.
- VALADEZ, Carmen Delia. El papel de los ejemplos en el *Diccionario del Español Usual en México*. In *América y el diccionario*. Ed. Mar CAMPOS SOUTO; Félix CÓRDOBA RODRÍGUEZ; José Ignacio PÉREZ PASCUAL. Anexos de *Revista de Lexicografía*, n° 2. A Coruña: Universidade da Coruña, 2006, págs. 153-163.

Fuentes de citas extraídas del *Corpus de Referencia del Español Actual (CREA)*

- [Alatríste *Vivir*]: ALATRISTE, Sealtiel. *Por vivir en quinto patio*. México: Joaquín Mortiz, 1985.
- [Chao *Altos*]: CHAO EBERGENYI, Guillermo. *De Los Altos*. México: Diana, 1991.
- [Chávez *Batallador*]: CHÁVEZ Jr., Gilberto. *El batallador*. México: Joaquín Mortiz, 1986
- [*La crónica de hoy*, 01/04/2002]: *La crónica de hoy*, 01/04/2002. Ramón Ayala (c) cantante.
- [Espinosa *Jesús el bisabuelo*]: ESPINOSA, Enrique. *Jesús el bisabuelo y otros relatos*. México: Siglo XXI, 1995.
- [Fuentes *Naranja*]: FUENTES, Carlos. *El naranja*. Madrid: Alfaguara, 1993.
- [Leyva *Piñata*]: LEYVA, Daniel. *Una piñata llena de memoria*. México: Joaquín Mortiz, 1984.
- [López Páez *Doña Herlinda*]: LÓPEZ PÁEZ, Jorge. *Doña Herlinda y su hijo y otros hijos*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993.
- [Mastretta *Arráncame*]: MASTRETTA, Ángeles. *Arráncame la vida*. Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1995
- [*Proceso*, 07/07/1996]: *Proceso*, 07/07/1996. LA DRAMATURGIA JOVEN, INFLUIDA POR LOS MEDIOS.
- [*Proceso*, 08/09/1996]: *Proceso*, 08/09/1996. EL FILO DE LA SENCILLEZ.
- [*Proceso*, 08/12/1996]: *Proceso*, 08/12/1996. El alma rota.
- [Santander *Milagro*]: SANTANDER, Felipe. *Y, el milagro*. México: Consejo Nacional de Recursos para la Atención de la Juventud, 1988.
- [Vilalta *Mujer*]: VILALTA, Maruxa. *Una mujer, dos hombres y un balazo*. México: Fondo Cultura Económica, 1989.
- [Villoro *Noche*]: VILLORO, Juan. *La noche navegable*. México: Joaquín Mortiz, 1981.

Fuentes de citas extraídas del *Corpus Diacrónico del Español (CORDE)*

- [Córdoba *Figuras*]: CÓRDOBA, Juan del. *Las grandes figuras del toreo*. México: Impulsora de Publicaciones, 1945.
- [Fuentes *Región*]: FUENTES, Carlos. *La región más transparente*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1968.
- [Rabasa *Bola*]: RABASA, Emilio. *La bola*. Alicante: Universidad de Alicante, 2003.