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Chronemic Features of the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking Linguacultures

In the current period of active international cooperation development, it has become more than ever essential to study different aspects of cross-cultural communication. One of them is chronemics, whose features can be seen while comparing various linguacultures.

For Anglophones, “time is money”, which is said to emphasize that it’s better to do things as quickly as possible and not to waste time, because the latter is a valuable resource and could be used to earn money [3, 4]. Hispanophones say “el tiempo es oro” (time is gold) inviting you to be diligent and reminding you of the shortness of life and the necessity of making the most of the time you are given [2]. Thus, in both of the linguacultures, time is perceived as a precious thing, but English-speaking people regard it as a business resource, while Spanish-speaking ones consider it among the values in life.

The fact that the latest time by which something should be finished is called a deadline by Anglophones and a closing date (una fecha tope, una fecha limite) by Hispanophones suggests that English-speakers are more inclined to adhere to their schedule. While doing deals, Spanish-speakers, in their turn, frequently use the word ‘mañana’ (having a wide range of interpretations: from ‘tomorrow’ to ‘never’ [1]) which indicates their propensity for procrastination. As a result, there are diverse attitudes towards punctuality in the two linguacultures: Anglophones believe it to be “the soul of business”, whereas Hispanophones prefer being late, but not sleepy (“tarde, pero sin sueño”).

After analyzing some lexical units, we can say that chronemic features of different linguacultures can be found in verbal means of communication. It is quite necessary and important to continue studying the subject to reduce difficulties in cross-cultural communication.

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