

# Original Research

## The role of toponymic periphrasis in developing professional competence in learning Spanish

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*The article investigates the toponymical periphrasis, or toponymical metaphors of two Spanish speaking countries: Peru and Panama, and determines various aspects of their static and dynamic. The authors examine and systematise toponymical periphrases of Peru and Panama through the prism of the linguistic picture of the world consisting in linguistic-cultural analysis for the reconstruction and typology of stable associations of contemporary Peruvians and Panamanians reflected in the toponymy of their homelands. Approximately ninety place names of Peru and Panama and their periphrasis cited in this article were selected, due to their lingua-cultural, geographical, associative, and commemorative significance for Peruvian and Panamanian people. The historical, linguistic and onomastic approaches, proposed in this research, reveal different mechanisms of metaphorical naming and renaming. The authors evaluate the role of toponymical periphrases in forming professional competences of Russian university students studying Spanish and conclude that knowing toponymical metaphors enriches the professional competences of students in their lingvocreative manifestations and becomes an effective tool in teaching Spanish at Bachelor and Masters levels, contributing to students' intellectual activities and forming aesthetic values, proper to modern teaching approach.*

**KEYWORDS:** *theoretical onomastics, Spanish language, toponymy, metaphor, Peru, Panama*



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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The interest in Latin American toponymy and its linguocreative form is evident during classes in Spanish, Latin American civilisations, linguistic contacts, investigations in toponymy and translation courses. Perceived in contemporary Romance

philology as 'multinational' (Malkiel, 2019; Chesnokova & Sanchez, 2017; Geeslin, 2018; Pountain, 2016) or, in other terminology, 'pluricentric' (Muhr, 2012), the Spanish language offers a set of parameters of divergence and convergence that allows us to consider metaphorical

place names of Spanish speaking countries as a model of the perception of the universe by speakers of different varieties of the Spanish language. Knowing the meaning of the toponymical metaphors of traditional place names and appreciating their linguocreative manifestations and aesthetic values enriches professional competence and becomes an effective tool in teaching Spanish at Bachelor and Masters levels, contributing to students' intellectual and creative activities according to a modern teaching approach. In this article the authors look at two very different Spanish speaking countries, Peru and Panama, evaluate the toponymic associations of well-known cities and demonstrates their role in building professional competence in Spanish for specific purposes.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study was conducted on the basis of native speakers' reviews, Spanish dictionaries, diverse types of texts and discourse and Internet sources. The main methods used were etymological, onomastic, historical and semiotic analyses, which offer a three-dimensional interpretation concerning semantic, syntactic and pragmatic aspects, the three primary dimensions of any sign, place names included.

Cultural and onomastic analysis provides the basis for the methodology used in this article. Such analysis combines the achievements of geography, history, onomastics, and traditional studies in dialectology, which can be aided by the semiotic approach, paying particular attention to the national toponymical lexicon and national creativity, as well as cultural idiosyncrasy.

## 3. STUDY AND RESULTS

### 3.1. Peru's toponymy & toponymic periphrasis

The Republic of Peru is a country with centuries long indigenous (quechua and aymara) cultural heritage and the third largest country in South America after Brazil and Argentina. Until the middle of the XVI century, the territory of modern Peru was the centre of the Inca Empire, which created a highly developed civilisation in the conditions of a harsh alpine climate with a unique sys-

tem of nodal writing called 'quipu' (an ancient Inca device using thread knotted in different ways to record information) (Escobar, 2016).

This study aims to explore the metaphorical aspect of Peru's toponymy through the prism of the its picture of the world as presented by linguocultural analysis and the classification of toponymic periphrasis to reflect Peruvian associations reflected in the toponymy of their homeland.

The research corpus was composed of 70 periphrastic toponymic denominations for the largest (with a population of over 100,000) Peruvian settlements.

The names of large cities in Peru generally refer to a fixed area, reflecting the Peruvians' perception of the terrain and landscape, as well as the facts of the historical heritage associated with a particular locality. The linguistic creativity of the Peruvian people and the verbal expression of their love for the motherland can be traced in the associations that arose in the collective consciousness of the Peruvians in relation to the large cities of the country, which are reflected in toponymic periphrasis.

The analysis of linguistic material and a survey of 30 native speakers of the Peruvian national version of the Spanish language have shown that structures with such lexemes as *ciudad* (*city*), *tierra* (*land*) turn out to be the most semiotically significant and regularly reproduced examples of periphrasis, along with *capital* (*capital*), *sede* (*centre, headquarters*), *cuna* (*cradle*), *joya* (*jewel, treasure*), *perla* (*pearl*) and others.

The analysis of the linguistic material and a survey of informants revealed periphrastic constructions as something far from unique to Peruvians. In all likelihood, due to similar climatic conditions, mentality and peculiarities of the aesthetic perception of reality by Latin Americans, there are similar or identical examples of periphrasis in the toponymy of Latin America that relate to different cities both within Peru and other South American countries, in particular, Ecuador, Venezuela, Colombia and Portuguese-speaking Brazil.

As for homogeneous examples of periphrasis, it is noted that, for example, *La Perla del Pacífico*

(*The Pearl of the Pacific*) relates to Callao (Peru) and the capital of the country, Lima, as well as to the cities of Guayaquil, in Ecuador and Valparaíso, in Chile.

It is no coincidence that many Ecuadorian or Peruvian restaurants all over the world are often named *La Perla del Pacífico* (*the Pearl of the Pacific*). The frequency of this periphrasis is illustrated in media discourse, i.e. in the digital archive of the Peruvian newspaper *El Comercio*.

*Luego, de acuerdo a la Municipalidad del Callao, los inspectores llegaron a la avenida Sáenz Peña para inspeccionar la panadería **La Perla del Pacífico**, la misma que también fue clausurada por falta de condiciones higiénicas en la preparación de pan y pasteles.* (According to the Municipality of Callao, the inspectors then arrived at Saenz Peña Avenue to inspect **The Pearl of the Pacific** bakery, which was also closed due to the lack of hygienic conditions in the preparation of bread and cakes) (El Comercio, 2018).

*Sus apuntes sobre la capital salieron en revistas de su país y se compilaron en 'Recuerdos de la América Española', libro imprescindible por su genio literario. El maestro Raúl Porras Barrenechea decía que fue 'uno de los creadores de la leyenda de Lima como '**la perla del Pacífico**' y como centro de la cortesanía y cultura americana del sur'.* (His notes on the capital appeared in magazines in his country and were compiled in 'Memories of Spanish America', an essential book in its genre. The teacher, Raul Porras Barrenechea, said that he was one of the creators of the legend of Lima as '**the Pearl of the Pacific**' and as the centre of Cortesian culture in South American culture) (El Comercio, 2014).

In terms of comparison, examples referring to Valparaíso (Chile) and Guayaquil (Ecuador) are also relevant:

*Los emigrantes que llegaban de Europa para poblar el país convertían a Valparaíso, llamada '**La Perla del Pacífico**', en la ciudad más cosmopolita de Chile.* (The emigrants who came from Europe to populate the country made Valparaíso, called '**the Pearl of the Pacific**', the most cosmopolitan city in Chile) (El Diario, 2011).

*'The names of large cities in Peru generally refer to a fixed area, reflecting the Peruvians' perception of the terrain and landscape, as well as the facts of the historical heritage associated with a particular locality'*

*Guayaquil, la denominada **Perla del Pacífico**, celebra hoy 476 años de fundación española.* (Guayaquil, the so-called **Pearl of the Pacific**, celebrates today 476 years since its foundation by the Spaniards) (El Diario, 2011).

In the case of the *White City* (*La Ciudad Blanca*), it is as a description of Ibarra in Ecuador, as well as Arequipa in Peru.

In Ecuador the city of Tena is known as *The Capital of Orchids*, while in Peru the same periphrasis is used to describe Moyobamba. Colombians refer to Medellín and Bogotá as *The City of Eternal Spring* (*Ciudad de la Eterna Primavera*) and *The Athens of South America* (*Atenas Sudamericana*), respectively, while the Peruvians in Trujillo also consider their city eternally spring-like. The inhabitants of Cuenca, Ecuador, are proud of living in *The Athens of Ecuador*. Among the periphrasis of Peruvian toponyms, several associations with another ancient European city – Rome – have been observed. Moreover, Arequipa is famous as *The Peruvian Rome* or *The Rome of America*, due to the profound catholic sentiments and the traditions of the population, as Pope Pius XII affirmed in 1940.

It is worth mentioning that the association with *A Very Noble and Loyal City* is common to several Peruvian toponyms, like *Chachapoyas*, *Huaraz*, *Arequipa* and *Ayacucho*.

When it comes to comparison with other European cities, the city of Ayacucho is referred to as *La Sevilla Peruana* (*The Peruvian Seville*), referring to a number of cathedrals and churches there:

*Visita a nuestra ciudad colonial, cuna de artesanos, la '**Sevilla Peruana**'. Conoce la belleza del Convento Santa Teresa y la Basílica Catedral. Visitaremos varios talleres artesanales: De Tallado de*

*Piedras de Huamanga, de Bordados, de Retablos, donde conocerás el arte en las manos de nuestros artesanos locales. El Mirador de Acuchimay es un punto de la ciudad que no puedes dejar de visitar.* (Visit our colonial city, cradle of craftsmen, the 'Peruvian Seville'. Enjoy the beauty of the Santa Teresa Convent and the Cathedral. We will visit several craft workshops with artists carving Huamanga stone, doing embroidery and creating altarpieces, where you will get to know the art from the very hands of our local craftsmen. The Mirador de Acuchimay is a 'must see' visit) (Turismo, 2020).

Favourite cities are personified in the collective creative conscience of the Peruvians and they are described as possessing great human qualities and dignity. Interestingly, such examples are also characteristic of the linguistic creativity of Venezuelans.

LOYALTY AND DEVOTION: *muy noble y leal* (very noble and loyal) – Maracaibo, Venezuela; *muy noble y leal* – Chachapoyas, Perú; *muy noble y leal* – Arequipa, Perú; *muy noble y leal ciudad* (a very noble and loyal city) – Arequipa, Perú; *la muy noble y generosa ciudad* (the very noble and generous city) – Huaraz, Perú.

CORDIALITY AND HOSPITALITY: *ciudad cordial de Venezuela* (the city of Venezuelan cordiality) – Puerto Cabello, Venezuela; *capital de la hospitalidad* (the capital of hospitality) – Huacho, Perú.

FRIENDLINESS: *embajada de la amistad* (the embassy of friendship) – Caicara del Orinoco, Venezuela; *capital de la amistad internacional* (the capital of international friendship) – Huaraz, Perú; *ciudad de la amistad* (the city of friendship) – Chiclayo, Perú.

### 3.2. Panama's toponymy and toponymic periphrasis

Panama, officially The Republic of Panama, is a country located in south-eastern Central America. It is bordered by the Caribbean Sea in the north and the Pacific Ocean in the south, Colombia to the east and Costa Rica to the west. Located on the isthmus of the same name, a strip that connects

South America with Central America, its mountainous territory is interrupted only by the Panama Canal basin, the interoceanic road that joins the Atlantic Ocean with the Pacific. Its location as a transit country between the Atlantic and the Pacific, most recently via the Panama Canal, made it an early meeting point for cultures from all over the world. Its key geographical feature is the canal, which facilitates communication between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and significantly influences world trade. Its current population is 4, 567, 000 people.

The research corpus included 50 periphrastic toponymic denominations of various settlements in Panama. Panamanians call their country *el país de las mariposas* (the country of the butterflies), because in spite of the fact that there are several theories about the meaning of the word, Panama, the most common term and one taught for decades in schools, means 'abundance of fish and butterflies' (Dressler, 2019). Panama has between 9,000 and 16,000 species of butterflies, and moths, equivalent to 10% of the global population. Besides, Panama has more species per square metre than countries such as Colombia, Ecuador or Peru, who, although they have more types of butterflies, have a land area 10 times bigger than Panama. Panama's biodiversity is compact, while the silver-blue Morpho butterfly is considered to be a national symbol (Conniff & Bigler, 2019).

The rapid industrial development of the country, in particular the construction of skyscrapers, led to the use of periphrasis referring to the capital of the country as *el nuevo Dubái de América Latina* (the new Dubai of Latin America). The use of this paraphrase is illustrated in media discourse, i.e. in the digital archive of the Panamanian newspaper *Crítica*.

*En la actualidad, Panamá es conocido como 'El Dubái de América', gracias a que es una ciudad que está creciendo de manera masiva. Este destino está lleno de contrastes, en él podrás encontrar desde calles populares, hasta los restaurantes más sofisticados, de hoteles de diseño a manicuras justo en medio de la calle. Sin duda, un espectáculo sublime para la vista. Panamá es uno de los princi-*

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*pales ejes de Centroamérica, debido a sus colosos de aluminio, sin embargo, además de contar con grandes ejemplares arquitectónicos, esta ciudad se ha convertido en una joya por descubrir, gracias a su palpitante y restaurado casco viejo.* (Currently, Panama is known as 'The Dubai of America', because it is a city that is growing massively. This destination is full of contrasts, from popular streets, to the most sophisticated restaurants, boutique hotels and manicurists right in the middle of the street. Without a doubt, a sublime sight to behold. Panama is one of the main axes of Central America, due to its aluminium colossi. However, in addition to having great architectural structures, this city has become a jewel to discover, thanks to its throbbing restored old town) (Crítica, 2015).

The language used illustrates how structures including such lexical units as *ciudad* (city), *tierra* (land), *cuna* (cradle), *joya* (jewel), *sitio* (site, place) turned out to be the most frequently used by Panamanian Spanish native speakers and regularly reproduced by the Panama mass media. Let's look at random examples from media discourse.

The province of Veraguas, located in the centre-west of the country and characterised by being the only one in the Republic to a coastline on both the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean, was frequently described as *tierra de dos mares* (land of two seas). It has about 60 km of coastline on the Caribbean Seaboard and more than 350 km of coastline on the Pacific, not counting the large number of islands that belong to it, including the largest in the country, Coiba and Cébaco.

The city of Chitré is known as *la ciudad que crece sola* (the city that grows by itself) and *la ciudad donde nadie es forastero* (the city where no one is a stranger) because its inhabitants are very

hardworking and enterprising. Chitré is full of people who provide solutions to all the problems.

The city of Boquete and by extension the entire province of Chiriquí are known as the small Panamanian Switzerland. We can find examples of periphrasis such as *Chiriquí la pequeña Suiza Panameña* (Chiriquí, the little Panamanian Switzerland), *Boquete, Nuestra Pequeña Suiza* (Boquete, Our Little Switzerland), *Boquete: la Suiza de Centroamérica* (Boquete: the Switzerland of Central America). Boquete is the greenest, most natural, quietest area of Panama, the most important city surrounded by mountains in the province of Chiriquí. Many people come to this area in search of rest, pure air and mild temperatures. There are also those who visit it for all the opportunities it offers to lovers of active tourism. Many citizens of the United States upon retirement move to live in Boquete. In Panamanian media discourse we have found the following examples of the use of this kind of periphrasis.

*Boquete ha sido objeto de un gran desarrollo en la última década y 'desafortunadamente' no ha tenido el orden debido, puesto que no contó con un plan de uso de suelos que contemple las áreas comerciales, residenciales y turísticas, y su vinculación posterior, advierte el funcionario. Son el pasado, el presente y el futuro de **nuestra pequeña Suiza**, menos fría que la original, pero seguramente más cálida.* (Boquete has undergone great development in the last decade but 'unfortunately' has not had proper organisation, since it did not have a land use plan that considers the commercial, residential and tourist areas, and their subsequent linkage, warned the official. They are the past, the present and the future of **our little Switzerland**, less cold than the original, but surely warmer) (Díaz, 2015).

El Valle de Antón is known for its fresh and spring-like weather throughout the year. It is characterised as a picturesque and hardworking town, located in a fertile valley of 18.3 km, and rising to 600 m above sea level, with a climate of around 18°C. This makes it a visitor attraction throughout the year and that is why it is known as *el sitio de la eterna primavera* (the place of eternal spring).

Las Perlas, a historic natural paradise that opens its doors to tourists, who have wonderful settings at their disposal that make it a special place, is known as *la gema turística de Panamá* (the tourist gem of Panama). The unique history of La Peregrina, the gem discovered in the sixteenth century in the Pearl archipelago that today constitutes one of the tourist jewels of Panama, is as unique as the journey through some paradise islands.

The city of La Villa de Los Santos, located in the southwest of Panama in the province of Santos, is metaphorically associated by the Panamanians with *cuna de la libertad panameña* (the cradle of freedom of the country), because the struggle for the independence of Panama from Spain began there. There the Panamanian people rose with sticks, machetes and a few arcabuces (guns) under the direction of Don Segundo de Villarreal in search of freedom and better days for future Panamanian generations. The patriotic and libertarian deeds which took place there in 1821 constitute, at the level of Panama's national history, the first independence movement (known as the Santeño movement) generated by the spontaneous combustion of people hungry for freedom and equality, who had been subject to subjection and degrading treatment by Colonial Spain. The independence movement had planned to declare independence on November 28th, but on that day they were forced to bring forward their declaration before another declaration of independence given in the Villa de Los Santos, starting a process whose initial trigger was the Santeño movement, later reproduced in the capital and in the other towns of the country. Simón Bolívar called this settlement *La Heroica Villa de Los Santos* (The Heroic Villa of Los Santos).

Colon, the second most important city after Panama City, located on the Atlantic coast of Panama, is famous for its gastronomy and coconut cultivation. The city is traditionally called *a tacita de oro* (the golden cup) because in the collective consciousness of the Panamanians it is associated with plentiful gourmet food, metonymically indicated by the word *taza* (cup). Colon as a province is known as *tierra de campeones* (land of champi-

ons) and *tierra de gente alegre, luchadora y talentosa* (land of happy, fighting and talented people). In mass media one can find numerous examples of its use.

*Colón es tierra de campeones. La provincia atlántica ha aportado un enorme legado al boxeo de nuestro país. Hoy, Lo Mejor del Boxeo le rinde homenaje. La provincia de Colón es el segundo punto de nuestra república en producción de campeones mundiales de boxeo, solo superada por la capital del país. Esta tierra ha visto nacer a figuras deslumbrantes que consagraron su esfuerzo haciéndose campeones.* (Colon is land of champions. The Atlantic province has contributed an enormous legacy to the boxing of our country. Today, The Best of Boxing pays tribute to them. The province of Colon is second in our republic in the production of world boxing champions, only surpassed by the capital of the country. This land has seen the birth of dazzling figures who have devoted their efforts to becoming champions) (LMB, 2016).

*Colón, tierra de gente alegre, luchadora y talentosa. Si hay algo que tiene la provincial de Colón es que su gente siempre se destaca en todas las áreas a nivel nacional e internacional. Han llenado de orgullo al pueblo panameño y en especial a ellos. Glorias como Irving Saladino, Alonso Edwards, Jermaine Cumberbatch, Hugo Stocker, las modelos Roshny, Hillary, el diseñador Jean Quijano entre otros, son ejemplos de que en la Costa Atlántica hay talento, gente laboriosa y es tierra de campeones y reinas.* (Colon, land of happy, fighting and talented people. If there is something the provincial capital of Colon has it is that its people always stand out in all areas at national and international level. They have filled the Panamanian people with pride. Glories, such as Irving Saladino, Alonso Edwards, Jermaine Cumberbatch, Hugo Stocker, the models, Roshny and Hillary, and the designer, Jean Quijano, among others, are examples of the talent on the Atlantic Coast, hardworking people and a land of champions and queens) (Trujillo, 2016).

La Chorrera, the tenth province of Panamá, situated next to the province of Panama, is called

*tierra del bollo y del chicheme (the land of bollo and chicheme)*. Articles describing this geographic location provide a lot of examples.

*Hablar de La Chorrera seguro nos hace recordar la décima provincia o tal vez el conocido Chorro de La Chorrera, pero algo que salta a la mente de todos es el famoso apoyo de la tierra del bollo y del chicheme. Esta receta hecha de maíz y leche, más la receta secreta que le da el sabor único chorrerano, es el imán que atrae a cientos de personas, al punto que la reconocida refresquería 'El Chorro', ha empezado a vender el producto las 24 horas. Chorreranos o no, cuentan que cada vez que van al interior del país, esa es la parada obligada y algunos dicen que es hasta un 'almuerzo' y 'la mejor comida de Panamá'. Pero todo no queda allí, pues preparan al fiel acompañante del chicheme, el bollo. (Talking about La Chorrera reminds us of the tenth province and also the well-known Chorro de La Chorrera, but something that comes to everyone's mind is the famous support of the land of the bollo (bun) and the chicheme (filling). This recipe, made from corn and milk, plus the secret recipe that gives it the unique chorrerano flavour, is the magnet that attracts hundreds of people, to the point that the producer of the renowned refreshment, 'El Chorro' soda, is selling it 24 hours a day. Chorreranos or not, people say that every time they go to the interior of the country, it is an obligatory stop and some say it is even a 'lunch' and 'the best food in Panama'. But this isn't all because they also prepare the faithful companion of the chicheme, the bollo) (Cejas, 2014).*

The District of La Pintada in the Province of Coclé is called *una del Sombrero Pinta'o (Cradle of the Painted Hat)*. Though it is not a very developed place it has tourist potential and there is a wide variety of handicrafts, among the best known and representative, the painted hat made with typical natural materials from the area.

Coiba Island where Coiba National Park is located, which is a nature reserve located in the homonymous archipelago belonging to the Montijo and Soná districts of the Veraguas province, is known as *la joya salvaje del Pacífico panameño (the wild jewel of the Panamanian Pacific)*.

*Coiba, la joya salvaje del Pacífico panameño. Condenada durante 85 años a servir de cárcel de máxima seguridad, esta isla del Golfo de Chiriquí logró proteger su invaluable tesoro de la colonización y la explotación. Hoy, la joya del Pacífico panameño guarda intactos sus bosques mientras sus aguas color turquesa sirven de hábitat a ballenas, tortugas, delfines, toda clase de peces y una gran abundancia de corales. (Coiba, the wild jewel of the Panamanian Pacific. Condemned for 85 years to serve as a maximum-security prison, this island in the Gulf of Chiriquí managed to protect its invaluable treasure from colonisation and exploitation. Today, the jewel of the Panamanian Pacific keeps its forests intact while its turquoise waters serve as a habitat for whales, turtles, dolphins, all kinds of fish and a great abundance of corals) (Pinzón, 2020).*

The islands of Bocas del Toro are the essence and reflection of the Panamanian Caribbean. Bocas del Toro is called *la tierra del oro verde (the land of green gold)* because the expression *oro verde (green gold)* metaphorically refers to bananas and Bocas del Toro has been traditionally known and referred to as the main producer of bananas in Panama.

*A oscuras en la tierra del oro verde. La vida está siendo tormentosa y dolorosa para Armando Baker con 160 perdigones de plomo incrustados en su cuerpo, los cuales invaden su hígado, riñones e intestinos. Este hombre, quien en 2010 era trabajador de la empresa productora de banano Bocas Fruit Company, en la provincia de Bocas del Toro, decidió participar en julio de ese año en las protestas contra la Ley No. 30, también llamada 'ley chorizo', que afectaba las libertades sindicales del país. (In the dark in the land of green gold. life is stormy and painful for Armando Baker with 160 lead pellets embedded in his body, invading his liver, kidneys and intestines. This man, who in 2010 was a worker at the banana production company, Bocas Fruit Company, in the province of Bocas del Toro, decided to participate in protests against Law No. 30 in July of that year, also called the 'chorizo law', which affected the union rights in the country) (Jaramillo, 2017).*

Las Tablas, where Panamanians traditionally meet during the four days of Carnival, is called *cuna del folclor, belleza y splendor* (*cradle of folklore, beauty and splendour*). Independence Day is also widely celebrated there when men, women, boys and girls wear typical Panamanian national dress, as a tribute to the homeland.

The Anton region is known as *tierra del manjar blanco y el Torito Guapo* (*the land of the white delicacy and the Handsome Torito (calf)*). There every year the traditional National Festival of the Handsome Bull of Antón is celebrated, a folk activity that was created in 1969 to highlight the work and leisure activities of the farms of the area. The white delicacy (a product made of sweetened milk) is also produced there.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Both Peru and Panama belong to so-called 'emotional cultures' (Trompenaars, 2013). The overall results of the analysis of Toponymic Periphrasis relating to these two Spanish-speaking countries demonstrate their differences, due to the particular history and modern situation of Peru and Panama. The rapid industrial development of Panama, as well as the construction of skyscrapers, led to the emergence of a stable paraphrase for its capital as *The New Dubai of Latin America*. The capital of Peru is known by the paraphrase *The Pearl of the Pacific*, alluding rather to the beauty of the capital than to its place and role in business communication. It is quite notable that the paraphrase, *The Pearl of the Pacific*, is applied also to the Peruvian city of *Callao*, Ecuadorian *Guayaquil* and the Chilean *Valparaiso*, a fact that shows toponymical homonymy among different varieties of the pluricentric Spanish language (Clyne, 1992) and shows similar mechanisms of metaphorical re-naming.

For toponymical metaphors of both countries the lexemes *ciudad* (*city*), *tierra* (*land*) turned out to be the most semiotically significant and regularly reproduced periphrases, as well as *capital* (*capital*) and *cuna* (*cradle*).

The comparison with famous cities is culture bound and different in the countries analysed. Ac-

ording to our material, the Peruvians have preferred Rome and Seville, while the Panamanians preferred Dubai and Switzerland, reflecting different collective assumptions and beliefs, to a degree.

From the teachers' and students' perspective Peruvians, as well as Panamanians trend to personify their favourite famous place names, Peruvians tending to stress their virtues and the Panamanians, their actions. Peru and Panama's toponymic periphrasis can be used as a set of special creative exercises which can be integrated in Spanish language classes, such as commentaries on toponymic periphrasis, deciphering it from media discourse. The results obtained can help promote the multidimensional application of toponymy study in developing professional competence.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

The toponymic linguistic creativity of the Peruvians and Panamanians forms part of the Latin American linguistic continuum, which is observed in a certain coincidence of the motivation of the periphrases, such as *Ciudad de la Eterna Primavera* (*A City of Eternal Spring*), which create inter-variant toponymic homonyms. Toponymic linguistic creativity studies develop creative professional competence, which have a long-term perspective as they help build creative skills in communication with representatives of different Spanish speaking countries in general. These competences provide benefits in personal business relations by effective interpretation of linguistic and cultural idiosyncrasies. Getting more acquainted with the cultural and linguistic heritage of a nation also means blurring the barriers that are often palpable in intercultural communication on different levels. These are the skills needed in successful business communication, as well as in successful interpreting of mass media texts. Managing toponymical metaphors enriches the professional competence of university courses and by helping students in their linguo-creative understanding becomes an effective tool in teaching Spanish at Bachelor's and Master's levels, contributing to students' intellectual activities and forming aesthetic values appropriate to the modern teaching approach.



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