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A CASE STUDY OF PHRASEOLOGY USED IN COLOMBIA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF AN AD HOC CORPUS OF PHRASES

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to fill a gap in the study of the phraseological universe of Spanish spoken in Colombia, with particular attention to the sphere of locutions. The methodological design of the study was divided into two phases: first, an ad hoc corpus of more than 1400 phraseological units was compiled, extracted mainly from the *Dictionary of Colombianisms* and the *Dictionary of Americanisms*; second, the phraseological content of these units was analyzed according to quantitative and qualitative criteria. For the analysis of the corpus, we considered the sentence function performed in the discourse, the semantic field to which the main lexical constituent of the phraseological unit belongs (Sánchez and Aguirre 1992), the communicative situation, the register (Penadés Martínez 2015), the intention of the speaker, the variants (Corpas Pastor 1996; Mellado Blanco 2004) and its presence in the *Dictionary of the Spanish Language*.

Keywords: Phraseology. Phraseological Unit. Phrases. Colombia. Diaphasic Variation.



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Resumen

El objetivo del presente artículo es cubrir un vacío al someter a estudio el universo fraseológico del español hablado en Colombia, con particular atención a la esfera de las locuciones. El diseño metodológico del estudio se ha dividido en dos fases: en primer lugar, se ha compilado un corpus ad hoc de más de 1400 unidades fraseológicas, extraídas principalmente del *Diccionario de colombianismos* y del *Diccionario de americanismos*; en segundo lugar, se ha analizado el contenido fraseológico de estas unidades siguiendo criterios cuantitativos y cualitativos. Para el análisis del corpus se tuvo en cuenta la función oracional desempeñada en el discurso, el campo semántico al que pertenece el principal constituyente léxico de la unidad fraseológica (Sánchez y Aguirre 1992), la situación comunicativa, el registro (Penadés Martínez 2015), la intención del hablante, las variantes (Corpas Pastor 1996; Mellado Blanco 2004) y su presencia en el *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*.

Palabras clave: Fraseología. Unidad Fraseológica. Locuciones. Colombia. Variación diafásica.

1. Introduction

A detailed approach to the phraseology used in Colombia is urgently needed, since, despite the phraseological richness demonstrated by the *Dictionary of Phraseology* used in Colombia (Espejo Olaya 2015), it has not been studied in a structured way, as has been the case with the Peninsular Spanish. Therefore, the main objective of the present research is to analyze the phraseology currently used in the Latin American country¹, with particular attention to the sphere of phrases. The backdrop of the study is represented by the approaches to Spanish phraseology and, particularly, it is rooted in the classification and contributions of Corpas Pastor (1996, 2002, 2003, 2013).

First of all, the theoretical framework will be examined, understanding phraseology as an autonomous science rooted in two areas of knowledge: on the one hand, terminology and, on the other hand, lexicography.

1. It should be noted that the present study does not analyze “Colombian phraseology”, that is, those phraseological units used exclusively in the Latin American country, but rather “phraseology used in Colombia”, that is, phraseology used in the country, including those MWU that its speakers share with other Spanish-speaking countries.

Since this is an empirical study in which a large phraseological file is analyzed, we have chosen to study the phraseological units following a purely terminological method. For this reason, we have used the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and, in particular, ISO 704 Terminology work - Principle and methods and ISO 1087 Terminology work - Vocabulary, which are fundamental standards in order to respect terminological and, therefore, phraseological rigor. The study also draws on lexicography through the approaches to lexical availability initiated in the 1960s by Georges Gougenheim (1964, 1967) and his research group, as well as the proposals of Sánchez Lobato and Aguirre Beltrán, who, in their book *Fundamental Spanish Lexicon* (1992), defined fifteen semantic fields to bring together the lexicon.

Two complementary phases form the methodological design of the present research. This formula has made it possible to exploit an ad hoc corpus composed of more than 1400 MWUs extracted from primary sources, including the *Dictionary of Colombianisms* (Caro y Cuervo Institute 2018) and the *Dictionary of Americanisms* (Association of Academies of the Spanish Language 2010). The application of a rigorous method and the theoretical pillars on which the study was built have made it possible to exploit the partial results of a phraseological card.

2. Theoretical Framework

Phraseology is a liquid area of linguistics, to paraphrase Zygmunt Bauman. The Polish sociologist and humanist used the concept of liquid modernity (1999) to define the current historical moment, in which solid realities have vanished, leaving room for a world that is more precarious, provisional and often difficult to pigeonhole. Something similar happens with phraseology: in comparison with the simple lexicon, the intrinsic properties of phraseology make it evade labels and pre-established frames, slipping away from pigeonholing.

For this very reason, phraseological units have aroused the interest of lexicographers and terminologists who, attracted by their properties, have tried with more or less success to pigeonhole this area of knowledge into classifications of different natures. The classifications used in this study will

be analyzed below, with particular attention to the one elaborated by Corpas Pastor in 1996.

2.1. *Classification of Multi-word Units (MWUs)*

For centuries, MWUs have been recorded in the Spanish-speaking world through lexicographic works, grammars and other types of texts, mainly literary (Sevilla 2012). However, it was in the mid-twentieth century when Julio Casares, a member of the Royal Spanish Academy, marked a milestone in phraseological and paremiological studies with his *Introduction to the Modern Lexicography* (1950). His pioneering work called the attention of numerous lexicographers, Alberto Zuluaga among them. Zuluaga published his *Introduction to the Study to MWUs* (1980), which draws on Casares' intuitions but also adds some relevant novelties for future phraseological studies.

However, we had to wait until the 1990s to observe the real boom in Spanish phraseology. Since then, numerous classifications of Spanish phraseology have been presented, some of which have been widely accepted by the scientific community. Due to the limited space available, the following is only a brief outline of the main taxonomies in Spanish phraseology².

In 1996 Gloria Corpas Pastor published her *Manual de fraseología española* ('Spanish Phraseology Handbook'), managing, for the first time, to bring together all phraseology in a holistic taxonomy that is still considered a classic reference in phraseological studies and is still used to classify the broad spectrum of the phraseological universe (Barani 2012; Velázquez Puerto 2015; Martín Salcedo 2017). Likewise, such classification has been successfully applied to other languages, such as Catalan/Valencian, by Josep Guia (1999) and by Sancho Cremades (1999); to Galician, at the Ramón Piñeiro center, and an approach to the Italian language was carried out by Jorge Jesús Leiva Rojo (2005).

2. For lack of space, we mention other contributions that, despite not offering a holistic classification of the phraseological universe, are relevant to define the theoretical framework of the present research: Carmen Mellado Blanco (2004, 2008, 2015), Julia Sevilla Muñoz (1993, 1997, 2013, 2015), Mena and Pamies Bertrán (2002), Castillo Carballo (2017), Mogorrón Huerta (2009, 2015) and Zamora Muñoz (2003).

It is precisely Corpas Pastor's classification that defines the theoretical framework of the current study. The author divides the phraseological universe into three spheres. The first is constituted by collocations, which the author considers MWUs fixed in the norm, do not constitute complete speech acts, and present that "property of languages by which speakers tend to produce certain combinations of words among a large number of theoretically possible combinations" (Corpas Pastor 1996: 82)³.

The second sphere is constituted by phrases. They are units fixed in the system that are not speech acts either and are characterized by their "institutional nature, their syntactic-semantic stability and their denominative function" (1996: 89), characteristics that distinguish them from free word combinations. Like all phraseological units, phrases are composed of at least two terms that do not show orthographic union; otherwise, they would be compound words, typical of agglutinative languages.

The third and last sphere referred to by Corpas Pastor in her manual is formed by phraseological utterances, or units which, unlike collocations and phrases, represent speech acts in themselves and present internal and external fixation. The author includes two subgroups in phraseological utterances: paroemias and routine formulas; and she insists that the separation between one and the other is not clear-cut, and that it is sometimes even difficult to distinguish them from phrases.

Another taxonomy that stands out in this brief overview is the one presented by Leonor Ruiz Gurillo (1997) in her *Aspectos de fraseología teórica española* (*Aspects of Theoretical Spanish Phraseology*), a fundamental work, because, among other reasons, it is articulated around the concepts of center and periphery within the language system proposed by the New Prague School⁴. In particular, the author points out that the peripheral zones of the language represent a dynamic area more prone to change, and this transformation can take place in divergent directions, since there can be an attraction of the peripheral elements towards the center of the system or, on the contrary, they can move away until they disappear. Ruiz Gurillo considers that the nuclear classes, that is to say, those that present greater fixity and

3. All translations from languages other than English are the authors'.

4. For more information on the so-called Prague school, see Vachek (1967).

idiomaticity, do not exhibit significant variation to the same extent as the peripheral classes, which reflect great richness. It establishes, therefore, a gradual scale that goes from totally fixed and idiomatic phrases to those with a high degree of idiomaticity (among them, semi-fixed combinations). In this model, the progression of continuity is fundamentally established by fixation and idiomaticity: the greater the idiomaticity of the UF, the greater its fixation and, therefore, the greater the approach to the nucleus.

Finally, the last classification is the one García-Page presents in his *Introducción a la fraseología española. Estudio de las locuciones* (*Introduction to Spanish Phraseology. Study of phrases*) (2008). The author adheres to the narrow view of phraseology, meaning that he considers that phrases are the only MWUs that would fully enter the phraseological universe, since collocations belong to a phenomenon proper to syntax, and paroemias and sayings, in line with Casares (1950) and Zuluaga (1980), are the object of study of paremiology, so they would not have a place in phraseology studies either. In this sense, his taxonomy is limited to phrases, which he classifies into eight categories according to their sentence function, namely: nominal, pronominal, adjectival, adverbial, prepositional, conjunctive, verbal and sentence phrases.

2.2 Phraseology in Colombia

Phraseology studies in Colombia gained momentum with the work of Zuluaga Ospina, who has been dealing with the analysis of fixed expressions, both at a theoretical and practical level, in works such as *Estudios generativo-transformativistas de las expresiones idiomáticas* (*Generative-transformative Studies of Idiomatic Expressions*) (1975a) and *La fijación fraseológica* (*Phraseological Fixation*) (1975b). Subsequently, he published his doctoral thesis *Introducción al estudio de las expresiones fijas* (*Introduction to the Study of Fixed Expressions*) (1980), in which he offers an analysis and classification of fixed or idiomatic expressions, with emphasis on phrases.

Francisco Octavio Zuluaga Gómez continued the line of work traced by Zuluaga Ospina. His doctoral thesis *Análisis pragmalingüístico de las unidades fraseológicas en español con atención especial a los refranes* (*Pragmatic*

Analysis of Phraseological Units in Spanish with Special Attention to Sayings) (2003) is devoted to the pragmatic analysis of sayings, phrases, set phrases, proverbial phrases, sayings, politeness formulas, among other units, from a perspective that integrates syntax, semantics and pragmatics, emphasizing this last aspect, which according to the author has not received a detailed analysis. In the words of Zuluaga Gómez:

The frequent use of all kinds of fixed expressions in everyday language and their presence in literary works, in journalistic discourse and in other types of discourse, allows us to affirm that MWUs are far from being a marginal phenomenon or of use restricted to certain levels of language (2003: 1).

In 2004 the author published *Locuciones, dichos y refranes sobre el lenguaje: unidades fraseológicas fijas e interacción verbal* (*Phrases, Sayings and Proverbs about Language: Fixed Phraseological Units and Verbal Interaction*). In the said article, Zuluaga Gómez states that phrases and sayings about language can be considered as metalinguistic formulas in everyday language (the acronym of which is “fomelcos” in Spanish), which function as pragmatic instructions of the language. According to the specific function they perform in discursive practice and interaction, he presents a classification into three categories: descriptive, instructive and regulative. In order to illustrate this approach, he analyzes some samples following a lexical input model, in which the semantic structure and pragmatic function of the expressions are explained, and concludes that the *fomelcos* are a record of the speaker’s knowledge of the rationality that governs the relations of language use.

Finally, in a recent publication edited by the Caro y Cuervo Institute and co-authored with Viviana Díaz Orozco and Lirian Astrid Ciro, under the title *Dichos, refranes y locuciones en las novelas de Gabriel García Márquez*. (*Sayings, proverbs and phrases in the novels of Gabriel García Márquez*)(2018), the author studies the phraseology in the narrative of the Colombian writer. Such work is of particular interest because, according to the authors:

the studies of phraseology applied to literary works make up a fruitful field of research and are practically unexplored in the case of Colombian literary works.⁵

In addition, it is worth mentioning the *Phraseology Lexicon of Colombian Spanish* (1996), by Siervo Mora Monroy, a researcher at the Caro y Cuervo Institute. In it, the author elaborates a review of the phraseology of the five main dictionaries of Colombianisms existing at that time with the objective of exploring the current uses of the phraseology employed in Colombia.

Another work of interest to present studies of Colombian phraseology is the *Estudio gramatical de las locuciones verbales con doble pronombre clítico* (*Grammatical Study of Verbal phrases with Double Clitic Pronouns*), a study by Orduña López (2011). In it, the researcher describes and classifies from a grammatical perspective a set of verbal phrases that present two clitic pronouns in their structure. Through these verbal phrases, collected from the lexicographic corpus of the macro research project *Las locuciones y sus variantes en el Diccionario descriptivo del Valle de Aburrá* (*Descriptive Dictionary of the Spanish of the Aburrá Valley*), the author analyzes the structure of this type of lexical units in relation to various grammatical aspects (form and function of the clitics, subcategory of the verb, arguments and adjuncts of the verb and the phrase).

Among the main conclusions, Orduña López identifies the need to harmonize the concept of phrase and proposes restricting it to phraseological units that fulfill a syntactic function within the sentence. On the other hand, he leaves open the debate on the phraseological character of phrases formed by a verb and two clitic pronouns, while, as for non-reflexive clitics, he highlights the predominance of the dative clitic, which is followed by the feminine accusative in its singular form. Finally, he underlines that phrases with double clitics present a great structural variety in relation to the arguments that appear linked both to the verb of the phrase, internal level of analysis, and to the phrase per se, external level of analysis.

Arboleda (2012) publishes *La intensificación de las locuciones de la prensa escrita de Medellín: una aproximación pragmática* (*The Intensification*

5. For further information see: <https://prensaalterna.com/editaran-libro-con-lenguaje-dicharachero-de-gabo/>.

of *Phrases in the Written Press of Medellín: a Pragmatic Approach*). In it, he presents the description of phrases and their pragmatic function within the journalistic discourse of the written press of Medellín. Starting from some theoretical foundations in the syntactic and semantic fields, he analyzes phrases from a pragmatic point of view, considering intensification as a communicative production strategy.

But then, in 2012 Adriana María Ortiz Correa published *Las locuciones y sus variantes en el Diccionario descriptivo del Valle de Aburrá* (*The phrases and their Variants in the Descriptive Dictionary of the Aburrá Valley*) and observed that the linguistic phenomenon of variation is typical of some phrases. In particular, she notes that changes or alterations of a morphological, grammatical, syntactic or lexical nature occur in many phrases registered in the *Descriptive Dictionary of the Aburrá Valley* (DEVA). The concept of variation questions the fixed character of the phrases and raises the discussion about the possibility of creation by the speakers and the interpretation that they themselves make of their meanings in relation to the discursive contexts of emission.

In this sense, the researcher concludes that phrases belong to the social linguistic norm and are not explained at the system level, since they are fixed by the use made by speakers. Variations are necessary because they are adaptations made by speakers to the needs of the discourse and can produce different discursive effects of meaning, such as providing expressiveness to an utterance, achieving the understanding of the message by the receiver, clarifying a situation, etc.

On the other hand, Mira (2011) publishes *Función pragmática de las unidades fraseológicas en Rosario Tijeras* (*Pragmatic Function of Phraseological Units in Rosario Tijeras*) in which he presents a pragmatic analysis from the point of view of politeness theory of a corpus of phraseological units extracted from a novel with a high content of colloquial language. The units are analyzed in context by contrasting them with theoretical concepts related to the politeness strategies used, the conversational maxims observed, and the speech acts present in the utterances. The result of the analysis allows us to conclude, firstly, that the universal principles of politeness are maintained in the conversational interactions analyzed, and secondly, that politeness strategies vary and are closely conditioned by the

social and situational context of the interactions, since the type of MWU used would be considered impolite in another context, but in the context reflected in the novel, they contribute to the bond of group identity and belonging, so that group members do not perceive them as impolite.

Villegas (2012) publishes *Unidades fraseológicas en Aire de tango de Manuel Mejía Vallejo* (*Phraseological Units in Aire de Tango by Manuel Mejía Vallejo*). In this essay we find sayings, proverbs and other phraseological units typical of the Antioquian culture of the time. This work highlights the study of the fixed phraseological units present in the book, which were compared with three dictionaries of phraseologisms, and at the same time its currency is verified through a survey of 50 people of different ages. Some of the MWUs collected and classified do not appear in the dictionaries, but speakers use them today, while others have fallen into disuse. In addition, we note the permanence in urban speech of the popular tradition of the countryside, expressed in the knowledge and use of MWUs in the verbal exchange of speakers.

Lopera Medina (2017) publishes “Las unidades fraseológicas en los cumplidos en hablantes universitarios de Medellín, Colombia” (“Phraseological Units in the Compliments of University Speakers in Medellín, Colombia”), an essay in which he analyzes phraseology in compliments. The sample was collected by means of a questionnaire applied to the university population of Medellín. The questionnaires had simulated situations for the informants to produce and answer compliments. For the analysis, the MWUs were checked in the *Parlache Dictionary*, the *Documented Phraseological Dictionary of Current Spanish* and the Spanish Royal Academy of Sciences (DRAE). In addition, the linguistic computer program Cratilo was used to search for frequencies and yield statistical information on some of the MWUs. The results indicate that adverbial phrases and the routine formula *muchas gracias* appear more frequently in the compliments and that the MWUs are more present in the responses than in the production of the compliments.

Finally, with the aim of offering a broad state of the question with respect to the studies carried out on the phraseology used in Colombia, the *Dictionary of phraseology used in Colombia* (2015) is presented, a phraseographic approach based on the collection of data from some students at the

School of Education of La Salle University. This compilation is presented as an outline of an online dictionary in which more than 300 phraseological units used in the country are offered.

3. Phraseology and Terminology

Phraseology is a discipline closely related to terminology and lexicography, since its application is not limited exclusively to specialized languages, but also includes the common language, in other words, the language used in everyday life. It is therefore essential, first, to have a solid knowledge of terminology in order to be able to develop a methodological approach to the study.

Silvia Pavel and Diane Nolet (2001: xvii), in their *Manual de Terminología (Handbook of Terminology)*, define terminology as the “linguistic discipline devoted to the scientific study of the concepts and terms used in specialty languages”. It is therefore a science that is part of applied linguistics and includes work in specialized lexicography, translation, writing and language teaching. This discipline is standardized by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and one of the main publications in this regard is ISO 704:2000, Terminology work - Principle and methods. In this document, the International Organization provides a structuring and standardization of the essential elements for quantitative terminology work (ISO 704 2000: vi). This protocol

establishes and harmonizes the basic principle and methods for preparing and compiling terminologies both inside and outside the framework of standardization [...] is applicable to terminology work in scientific, technological, industrial, administrative, and other fields of knowledge (ISO 704 2000:1).

Given its academic rigor, the elaboration of this methodology and, in particular, the structuring of the phraseological file has followed the guidelines provided by the ISO as a foundation for the construction of the file used in the annotation of the phraseological units used in Colombia, which is defined below.

4. Methodology

The methodological design elaborated for the present study includes two steps that lead to the development of an exploratory research with descriptive features with a qualitative approach. Namely:

1. Compilation of more than 1400 phraseological units used in Colombian Spanish.
2. Annotation of the units through a monolingual phraseological file.

The two phases of this methodological design are described in detail below, along with the preparation of the monolingual phraseological record or file, that is, the recording of the data collected from the sample in order to report on its characteristics (Padel & Nolet: 2001).

4.1 *Creation of the corpus under study*

The ad hoc corpus was made up of more than 1400 phrases. To collect the data, we accessed the Internet portal of the *Dictionary of Americanisms* (Association of Spanish Language Academies 2010) and used the digital archives of the *Dictionary of Colombianisms* (Caro y Cuervo Institute 2015). Likewise, we used data for the corpus from digital newspapers such as *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, mainly.

4.2 *Annotation of the units in the phraseological file*

The compilation of a phraseological file requires rigor in the method of recording the units collected from a corpus. Given the previously defined formal connection between phraseology and terminology, the present study is modeled on the guidelines established by the International Standard Organization, particularly, in two international standards: Terminology work - Principles and methods (ISO 704:2000, second edition) and Terminology work - Vocabulary (ISO 1087:2000, first edition). These standards have guided the compilation of the phraseological file to examine Colombian phraseology. The following guidelines offered by ISO 704 have been respected in the annotation of the MWUs:

1. Phraseological units are typed in lowercase.
2. Nouns in singular number, except if their canonical form is in plural, and in masculine gender.
3. Articles are not included.
4. Verbs in their infinitive form.
5. The natural order of appearance of the components that make up the MWUs is respected.
6. Correct spelling is used.

The annotation of the phrases in the phraseological file has adopted the single-concept principle, a fundamental criterion of terminological studies according to which only one concept corresponds to each entry. Thus, the phraseological variants are not integrated in the same entry but have their own entry. The entries have been recorded according to their alphabetical arrangement (ISO 1087, 2000: 13), which means according to the order of the letter of the alphabet with which the unit begins. The tool chosen to prepare the file was Microsoft Excel, a tool widely used in terminology because it is more versatile than others and can be customized at various levels.

After defining the guidelines used to compile the phraseological file, the composition of the file and the parameters studied in each phraseological unit are detailed below. The phraseological file is composed of ten columns: first, the 'Phraseological unit' column, in which the MWUs have been annotated following the previously described guidelines. The second column, 'Definition'⁶, provides a concise and clear explanation of the concept (Pavel & Noet 2011: 26) of the analyzed unit together with its reference. In order to provide an adequate definition for each unit, initially we used the *Spanish Language Dictionary* (DLE) and, when this did not meet the requirements of conciseness and clarity or did not contain the unit, we developed our own definition. The third column is the 'Context'; there an effective context is provided, and its reference is noted. Regarding the transcription of

6. According to Pavel and Noet, definition is understood as the "lexical-graphical formula that explains the concept designated by a term" (2001: 124).

the contexts, we have used the IATE⁷ user's manual, available online on the database website:

A context (i.e., a short quotation from a reliable source that illustrates the use of a term) is always useful, particularly if your entry does not have a definition. The use of specific formatting (e.g., using quotation marks or not, putting the relevant term in bold, etc.) should be agreed upon at inter-institutional level by each language community. It is fine to use a context containing an inflected or plural form, or a context where a term composed of more than one word is split in the running text. (IATE2 User Handbook 2019: 55-56)

The fourth column, 'Sentence function', describes the type of phraseological unit in relation to the taxonomy proposed by Corpas Pastor (1996) and specifies the grammatical level that the phrase plays in the language (verbal, nominal, adverbial, adjectival, prepositional, conjunctive or clausal). The fifth column identifies the 'Semantic field' to which the main lexical constituent of the unit belongs. In this sense, we have chosen to group the units according to one of their lexical constituents instead of prioritizing the holistic meaning of the unit⁸. For this purpose, we have drawn on the lexicographical classification elaborated by Sánchez Lobato and Aguirre Beltrán in *Léxico fundamental del español (Fundamental Spanish Lexicon)* (1992), in which the authors propose fifteen themes or notions to group the lexicon or, in this case, the phraseological units, according to the following associative fields:

1. Personal identifications.⁹
2. Personal circumstances: place of residence.

7. IATE (Interactive Terminology for Europe) was established in 1999 and is now the largest terminology database in the world, with more than eight million terms in the 24 official languages of the EU. IATE is coordinated by the Translation Center for the Bodies of the European Union. For more information see: <<https://iate.europa.eu/home>> and <<http://cdt.europa.eu/es/iate-es>>.

8. This procedure is considered as an alternative to the grouping by unit meaning of the units and is endorsed by Mario García-Pagé in *VI Congresso Internazionale di Fraseologia e Paremiologia Phrasis Fraseologia e paremiologia: Modelli, strumenti e prospettive* (2019, proceedings in press).

9. This semantic field includes words corresponding to: name, person and age, marital status, family, intellectual activities and feelings.

3. Profession, work, beliefs.
4. Landscape, fauna.
5. Atmospheric conditions.
6. Entertainments, hobbies.
7. Artistic activities, the press.
8. Hobbies: sports and bullfighting.
9. Travel, lodging and transportation.
10. Health, illness and the human figure.
11. Education and teaching.
12. Food, eating and drinking.
13. Trade, industry, clothing.
14. Currency, mail, society and the state.
15. Weights and measures: numbers.

It should be noted that the present work draws on the contributions on lexical availability elaborated by Georges Gougenheim, Paul Rivenc, René Michéa and Aurélien Sauvageo (1964). In this sense, the difficulty of being able to fit the whole lexicon, and therefore phraseology, into a reduced number of semantic fields is evident.¹⁰

The sixth and seventh parameters analyzed for each MWU follow the prescriptions of Penadés Martínez (2015: 265) and correspond respectively to the ‘Communicative situation’ of the phraseological units, in which the author distinguishes between formal and informal, and to the ‘Register’, neutral and slang. To do this, we have relied on the 23rd edition of the *Spanish Language Dictionary* (DLE) and, specifically, we applied the lexicographic marks proposed by the dictionary¹¹ to the prescriptions of Penadés Martínez (2015). In this sense, the extracted units were contrasted with the DLE corpus with the aim of assigning an objective parameter to the communicative situation and to the register of the units.¹² In the case that the

10. For further insights into lexical availability see: Zuccalà (2014).

11. See sections 2.4. and 5.3.2 of the DLE, “Warnings for the use of the dictionary”: https://www.rae.es/diccionario-de-la-lengua-espanola/que-contiene/item-numero-2#_Toc85519289.

12. The following correspondence was established: the slang and neutral registers of our corpus correspond respectively to the marks “slang.” (slang) and “coloq.”

dictionary did not present any lexicographic mark for a MWU, the authors opted to assign such values according to our experience and native knowledge of the Colombian variety of Spanish.

The eighth characteristic studied in each phrase has been defined as ‘Presence in the DLE’; in this sense, it has been noted whether the MWU is compiled in the 23rd edition of the *Spanish Language Dictionary* (DLE), the result of the collaboration of the twenty-two corporations integrated in the Association of Spanish Language Academies (ASALE), whose electronic edition includes the modifications approved by all the academies in 2018.

The ninth feature studied in each MWU corresponds to ‘Variants’. For the definition and identification of the variants, we have followed Zuluaga, who states that “they are partially identical in their structure and in their components” (1980: 109), as well as Mellado Blanco, for whom “phraseological variants are recognized because the number of elements that do not vary in them exceeds the number of elements that vary” (2004: 91). On the other hand, it was decided to use Corpas Pastor’s classification to identify and distinguish those that are variants from variations.¹³ The author (1996: 28-30) divides the variants into two, namely:

1. Structural variants: variations concerning the use of prepositions, articles, number and order of constituents, shortened forms of constituents or grammatical number of constituents, which do not change the internal organization of phraseological units (irse de/a picos pardos).

(colloquial) of the DLE; the formal and informal communicative situation correspond respectively to “cult.” (cult.) and “jerg.” (jergal) of the DLE.

13. According to the author, these are not variants but variations: 1. variations by derivation (*ser un culo/culillo de mal asiento*); 2. variations by transformation (*metedura de pata a partir de meter la pata*); 3. variations by structural antonyms (*cabeza arriba* and *cabeza abajo*); 4. diatopic variations (such as the Spanish expression *hacer dedo* and the Spanish-American *ir al dedo*); 5. diaphasic variations such as *tirar dedo* (neuter plane) and *ir al dedo* (informal plane); 6. MWUs with empty boxes such as *¡a tu (su (su), vuestra, nuestra, etc.) salud!*; 7. Creative modifications, personal to each speaker and directly proportional to the degree of fixation of the same (Corpas Pastor 1996: 29).

2. Structural synonyms: they are distinguished by complete structural congruence or partial identity of the lexical constituent (poner a uno las peras a cuatro/ocho).

To give an example, taking a sample of the corpus under study, the units *meter la mano al fuego* and *meter la mano a la candela* will be variants, since they present “complete structural congruence” as well as “partial identity of the lexical component” (Corpas Pastor 1996: 28). On the other hand, the phrases *comer como un pajarito* and *vivir del aire*, two different units that express the same concept: eat little, will not be considered variants.

As mentioned above, the insertion of the variants also follows the single-concept principle, according to which only one concept corresponds to each entry. In this sense, the variants of a phrase have been annotated, on the one hand, as independent entries and, on the other hand, added in this column in a specular manner: if an entry has two variants, each variant will in turn be an entry per se and each of them will in turn have two variants. Finally, the last column is dedicated to the ‘Comments’ that the authors of this publication have considered relevant in the analysis of the MWUs.

To finalize the process of transferring the MWUs, the steps of the verification of terms standardized by ISO 1087-2:2000, Terminology work - Vocabulary - Part 2: Computer applications on Terminology Management and Quality Control have been respected. These steps are carried out with the aim of detecting errors *a posteriori* in the database produced and are summarized below:

1. Double-entry check: “Data validation to determine whether the same data entry has been stored more than once” (ISO 1087-2), i.e., verifying that the same term has not been recorded twice or more times. The SynchroTerm terminology extraction tool was also used to identify any double entries and eliminate any repetition.
2. Consistency check: “Data validation to check whether interdependent entries comply with predefined conditions” (ISO 1087-2). In this sense, it has been verified that there were no cross-references between the different entries in the database prepared.
3. Spelling check: “Data validation to determine that all words comply with predefined spelling rules” (ISO 1087-2). In manual

transcription, but also in automatic transcription, typos are frequent. Moreover, it is preferable to use a single spelling system in accordance with the canons suggested by the Academy of the language under study. Even so, there may be cases of localisms or regionalisms that must be marked as variants and assigned to a specific entry.

4. Completeness check: “Data validation to see whether data are presented where required” (ISO 1087-2). Due to the characteristics of the present research, it was not necessary to define any of the categories that characterize the concept (e.g., definition, gender, number, context, source, etc.). Therefore, this evaluation criterion has not been adopted, since it is unnecessary to evaluate both the grammatical information and the semantic information of the entries.
5. Format check: “Data validation to determine whether data conform to a specific format” (ISO 1087-2). Ensuring that data are transferred into the correct column of the database is fundamental to the development of any research.
6. Plausibility check: “Data validation to determine whether data conform to a specified criterion (ISO 1087-2). In the drafting of a common terminology base, it is necessary to confirm that the grammatical categories (gender, number, etc.), definitions, sources and the entire descriptive apparatus follow the rules that have been established for the constitution of the terminological model used.

5. Results

The main results of the research are presented below from a syntactic and semantic perspective. In particular, the results obtained regarding nominal, adjective, adverbial, clausal and verbal phrases are detailed. Likewise, for the latter class, the verbal phrases that are formed with the verb ‘dar’ are defined separately. Finally, the phrases that make up the corpus are described from a semantic point of view according to the 15 semantic fields used.

5.1. Nominal Phrases

In general, these phrases have the following structures: N + Prep + N and N + Adj. In the database we found the following: *arroz con mango* (mess, problem, on the Atlantic Coast), *burro con plata* (ignorant but wealthy person), *callejón sin salida* (conflict without solution), *golpe de ala* (colq. bad smell in the armpits), *golpe de gracia* (to finish off), *lágrimas de cocodrilo* (to simulate a non-existent penalty), *mano dura* (severity in command or in personal treatment), *policía acostado* (colq. highlight, speed reducer).

5.2. Adjective Expressions

The structure of this type of phrases is usually as follows: Adj (participle) + Prep + N, such as *duro de corazón* (unable to sympathize with or pity others, insensitive), *chapado a la antigua* (old-fashioned). On the other hand, within this group, the phrases that indicate stereotyped comparisons stand out and are constituted by the structure Adj + *como* + N: *fuerte como un roble*, *fuerte como un toro* (very strong), or Adv + Adj + NS: *más suave que la seda* (very smooth), *más cansón que novia fea* (very annoying). On the other hand, we observe units formed by PS composed of the preposition *de* that functions as a syntactic nucleus and its corresponding nominal syntagma or determiner that acts as a clausal element: *de medio pelo* (of low quality), *de ambiente* (sociable), *de perros* (of the lowest class), *de pelo en pecho* (vigorous, manly), etc.

In adjective phrases we find structures such as the following: Prep + N, although there are also structures made up of Prep + Art + N, Prep + N + Adj, Prep + Adj. Let us look at some examples: *a la francesa*, *de ataque*, *de buenas*, *de malas*, *de quinta* (of poor quality), *de un cacho* (about to finish), *en carne viva* (without skin), *en blanco y negro* (that does not reproduce the colors), *en la olla* (in bad condition), *común y corriente* (usual, regular), *ligero de cascos* (thoughtless), *sin igual* (without equal), *sin compromiso* (free), *sin oficio* (without work, idle), etc.

5.3. Adverbial Phrases

In the corpus analyzed, it has been observed how adverbial phrases carry different referential values (Corpas Pastor 1996). In this sense, those of

manner predominate: *a ciegas* (blindly), *a pie* (walking), *a escondidas* (secretly) and, to a lesser extent, those of time, *al instante*, *a primera hora*, *a deshoras*, and of place, *al lado*, *a lo lejos*, *por detrás*, *de cerca*.

From a syntactic point of view, the adverbial phrases that make up the corpus follow the following structure: Prep + N, Prep + Art + N, Prep + Art + Adj, Prep + N + Prep + N + Prep + N: *en picada* (downward and at great speed) *a conciencia* (with determination), *a la brava* (abruptly), *a la guachapanda* (carelessly), *a la lata* (in great quantity), *a lo desgualtado* (in great quantity, without measure), *a morir* (a lot), *a palo seco* (without anaesthesia), *a precio de huevo* (very cheap), *a vuelo de pájaro* (quickly, superficially), *de golpe* (suddenly), *de papayita* (colq. conveniently), *de un solo tacazo* (all at once), etc.

It should be noted that a significant number of adverbial phrases denote rapidity or speed and their structure begins with the prepositions *a* or *en*: *a toda* (with great speed), *a toda prisa*, *a las carreras*, *a toda mierda* (slang.), *a toda mecha* (inf.), *a marchas forzadas*, *a toda máquina*, *a toda prisa*, *a vuelo de pájaro* (quickly) *al galope*, *al trote*, *en bombas* (inf. fast), *en par patadas* (inf.), *en un abrir y cerrar de ojos*, *en un dos por tres*, *en un ya*.

Finally, a sample of frequently used adverbial phrases extracted from the corpus is presented below: *a borbotones*, *a brazo partido*, *a cada instante*, *a cada momento*, *a cada rato*, *a calzón quitado*, *a cántaros*, *a carcajadas*, *a carta cabal*, *a ciegas*, *a ciencia cierta*, *a conciencia*, *a crédito*, *a cuerpo de rey*, *a destajo*, *a destiempo*, *a diestra y siniestra*, *a discreción*, *a disgusto*, *a distancia*, *a domicilio*, *a duras penas*, *a empujones*, *a escondidas*, *a fin de cuentas*, *a flor de piel*, *a flote*, *a fondo*, *a fuego lento*, *a gatas*, *a golpes*, *a gran escala*, *a grandes rasgos*, *a granel*, *a grito herido*, *a gusto*, *a hombros*, *a hurtadillas*, *a intervalos*, *a la antigua*, *a la brava*, *a la buena de (mi) Dios*, *a la deriva*, *a la fuerza*, *a la lata*, *a la intemperie*, *a la izquierda*, *a la larga*, *a la ligera*, *a la moda*, *a la parrilla*, *a la perfección*, *a la plancha*, *a la postre*, *a la sombra*, *a la(s) carrera(s)*, *a las buenas*, *a las claras*, *a las malas*, *a lo grande*, *a lo lejos*, *a lo loco*, *a lo mejor*, *a lo moderno*, *a lo pobre*, *a lo salvaje*, *a lo sumo*, *a mano*, *a mano armada*, *a manos llenas*, *a mansalva*, *a media noche*, *a media voz*, *a menudo*, *a montones*, *a morir*, *a muerte*, *a ojo*, *a pata*, *a patadas*, *a pedir de boca*, *a pequeña escala*, *a pesar de los pesares*, *a pico de botella*, *a pique*, *a plomo*, *a precio de huevo*, *a presión*, *a pulso*, *a punta de*, *a puntapiés*, *a quemarropa*, *a rastras*, *a ratos*, *a raudales*, *a*

regañadientes, a rienda suelta, a sabiendas, a simple vista, a sorbos, a sueldo, a todas luces, a todo full, a tontas y a locas, a (los) trancazos, a trechos, a tuta, a veces, a voluntad, a voz en cuello, al ajillo, al azar, al clima, al contado, al dedillo, al descubierto, al detal, al fin y al cabo, al natural, al ojímetro, al pelo, al peluche, al pie de la letra, al por mayor, al rape, al rato, al rompe, al unísono, al vapor, al vuelo, con bombos y platillos.

5.4. Verbal Phrases

Verbal phrases constitute the most numerous class in the corpus analyzed. In general, they have a V + NS structure: *gastar pólvora en gallinazos* (strive for something unimportant), *alzar el codo* (colq. to consume alcoholic beverages), *ganar terreno* (to gain an advantage in something), *pagar el pato* (to suffer an undeserved punishment), *perder los estribos* (to get angry, to act unreasonably out of anger or rage).

Likewise, there are verbal phrases made up of V + NS that express manner, place, time, etc., such as *salir con un chorro de babas* (not to fulfill the expectations generated). Special mention should be made of the phrases formed with the verbs *dar* insofar as they present defining characteristics of this class.

It should be noted that a representative number of verbal phrases are constituted in negative in a crystallized form. Of these, the predominant verbal constituent is the verb ‘*tener*’ followed by, in terms of frequency, the verbs ‘*ser*’, ‘*dar*’, ‘*caber*’ and ‘*poder*’: ‘*no caber duda*’ (with all certainty), ‘*no caber en la cabeza algo*’ (do not understand or comprehend), ‘*no caber en sí de gozo*’ (to be full of great joy), ‘*no caber ni un tinto*’ (crowded), ‘*no casarse con nadie*’ (to retain independence of opinion or attitude), ‘*no cocinarse en dos aguas*’ (not to be young), ‘*no dar a abasto*’ (not to be enough, not to perform sufficiently), ‘*no dar el brazo a torcer*’ (not to give in; not to let oneself be convinced), ‘*no dar marcha atrás*’ (not to go backwards), ‘*no dar pie con bola*’ (to make frequent mistakes), ‘*no dar puntada sin dedal*’ (to do something in a calculated way, in search of one’s own benefit), ‘*no dar una*’ (not getting anything right), ‘*no decir ni mu*’ (to remain silent), ‘*no decir ni pío*’ (not to say a word), ‘*no dejar lugar a dudas*’ (to be clear), ‘*no dejar ni a sol ni a sombra*’ (unwelcome persecution of a person, at all times and in all places), ‘*no dejar*

títere con cabeza (harshly discrediting a certain number of people without excluding any by speaking or writing), *no despegar los labios* (not to speak at all), *no dirigir la palabra a alguien* (not to talk to anyone), *no entender ni papa* (not understanding anything), *no estar el palo para hacer cucharas* (being in a bad financial situation), *no estar en sus cabales* (to be out of one's mind), *no hay manera* (not being able to do something in spite of persistent trying), *no haber más remedio* (become resigned to something that has no alternative), *no matar ni una mosca* (be harmless), *no pegar ojo* (not sleeping), *no perder de vista*, *no perder ripio* (be attentive to a conversation), *no perderse ni la corrida de un catre* (to be curious, to ask everything), *no poder ver ni en pintura* (not to bear, to hate), *no poder* (not to bear), *no probar bocado* (not to eat anything), *no quitarle los ojos de encima* (keep looking at someone or something), *no saber ni papa* (to ignore), *no saber ni pío* (to ignore), *no ser manco* (to be skillful), *no ser moco de pavo* (to be difficult to achieve, to have courage), *no ser ni chicha ni limonada* (to be something undefined or imprecise), *no soltar prenda* (not to tell anyone anything that could compromise oneself), *no tener arte ni parte* (be a matter totally unrelated to someone else's business), *no tener desperdicio* (ironic, to be profitable), *no tener dos dedos de frente* (lacking the slightest common sense or intelligence), *no tener la película completa* (not having all the information), *no tener más remedio* (have no choice), *no tener ni cinco* (have no money at all), *no tener ni idea* (to be clueless), *no tener ni pies ni cabeza* (make no sense), *no tener nombre* (to be very unfair), *no parangón* (to be unique, not comparable), *no tener para la yuca* (colq. not having money), *no tener pelos en la lengua* (say what you think or feel without shame or fear), *no tener pierde* (success is guaranteed), *no tener precio* (be invaluable), *no tener sangre en las venas* (have a cold and impassive character), *no tener un pelo de tonto* (being a person difficult to deceive with lies), *no tragar entero* (analyze the facts in detail), *no tragar a alguien* (feeling a strong dislike for a person), *no ver más allá de sus narices* (to see little; not to be shrewd), *ser incapaz de matar una mosca* (to be harmless).

5.5. Verbal Phrases with the Verb 'dar'.

There is a representative number of phrases formed with the verb 'dar' that have diverse functions and frequently present the structure *dar* + NS: *dar pasto* (advantage), *dar pedal* (encourage), *dar lora* (to lecture), *dar lata* (to annoy), *dar en el clavo* (get it right), *dar papaya* (to expose oneself, to risk), *dar sopa y seco* (to show superiority or sufficiency).

From a semantic prism, it is observed that the nouns that present among their meanings that of 'golpe' are accompanied by the verb 'dar' as a verbal constituent: *dar un cocotazo*, *dar garrote*, *dar leña*, *dar por la cabeza*, *dar por la nuca*, *dar palo*, *dar una garrotera*, *dar una tunda*, *dar un coñazo*, *dar un garrotazo*, *dar vara*, *dar un trancazo* (to give or receive a violent blow).

5.6. Semantic Fields

When studying the 1400 phrases according to the semantic field (SF) to which the main lexical constituent of the phraseological unit belongs, it is observed that the most productive are the following: SF4 Landscape, fauna; SF10 Health, illness and the human figure; SF12 Food, eating and drinking; SF13 Commerce, industry, clothing. In this sense, Colombian speakers use more phrases whose main lexical component is associated with the human body, animals, age, marital status, family, feelings and clothing.

The phrases semantically close to fauna present connotations socially considered as negative in that they qualify defects or personal attitudes such as anger, brute strength, cunning, slowness, etc. Such phrases are used in informal communicative situations in which the speaker's intention is to express these feelings. On the other hand, few phrases highlight positive attributes: *ser una hormiguita* (to be thrifty and industrious), *tener ojos de águila*, *de lince* (to be a good observer).

Likewise, it has been observed that a significant number of phrases belonging to the SF10 of health, illness and human figure are used in informal communicative situations and express help, interest in something or someone, effort, meddling and various attitudes in interpersonal relationships.

The following is a sample of phrases that make up each semantic field:

SF1. *capar clase* (slang. to miss class), *botar corriente* (to think a lot), *cumplir quince años* (to turn fifteen), *llorar lágrimas de sangre* (to cry with pain and regret), *matar de hambre* (to starve), *morir(se) de hambre* (to be irresistibly hungry), *no cocinarse en dos aguas* (not to be young), *peinar a alguien* (to beat someone in an argument with reasoning), *poner apodos* (to give a nickname to a person, taken from his or her bodily defects or some other circumstance), *poner sobrenombre* (to nickname), *ponerse arrozudo* (to get angry), *quedarse para vestir santos* (to remain single), *quemarse las pestañas* (to study hard), *ser hijo de papi y mami* (to be wealthy), *ser un tronco* (to be unskilled at performing an activity), *tener celos* (to be jealous).

SF2. *cortar los servicios* (to suspend utility services for non-payment), *echar rulo* (jerg. to gossip), *estar para recoger con cuchara* (exhausted), *parar antena* (inf. to listen), *ser cuchilla* (youth slang. to be strict), *ser lámpara* (youth slang. someone who wants to be the center of attention), *ser boleta* (youth slang. person who is notorious for his bad taste).

SF3. *ganarse el pan* (to support oneself with the product of one's labor), *ganarse la papa* (inf. to work to support oneself), *ganarse la vida* (to work), *matarse trabajando* (to work hard and a lot), *patear la lonchera* (inf. to risk work), *ponerse las pilas* (to set out to undertake something with energy and resolve).

SF4. *a vuelo de pájaro* (quickly, superficially), *colgar un mico* (article, paragraph or term that appears in a parliamentary text at the last moment), *como pez en el agua* (with comfort or ease), *creerse muy gallito* (furious), *dormir como una foca/morsa* (to sleep soundly), *estar como un tigre* (furious), *estar como un titi* (furious), *estar como una ballena/vaca* (fat), *estar como una tatacoa* (furious), *estar con el mico al hombro* (in a bad mood), *estar de malas pulgas* (in a bad mood), *hablar como cotorra* (a lot), *hacer conejo* (leave an establishment without paying), *oler a mico/ tigre* (smell bad because of sweat), *pagar el pato* (suffer an undeserved punishment), *parecer una jirafa* (tall), *puyar el burro* (inf. to rush, to hurry, Atlantic Coast) *ser abeja* (clever), *ser burro* (stupid; ignorant), *ser gallina* (inf. cowardly), *ser una hormiga*, -ita (hardworking), *ser una tortuga* (slow), *ser un burro* (inf. to be strong), *ser la oveja negra* (person who, in a small family or collective, differs unfavorably from the others), *ser picaflor* (inclined to fall in love), *ser (un) sapo* (whistleblower), *ser un águila* (to have great perspicacity and liveliness, especially

in practical matters), *ser un pulpo* (hoarder; person who touches another repeatedly for sexual purposes), *ser un zorro* (clever), *ser un lince* (sharp), *tener ojos de águila/ de lince* (to have keen eyesight).

SF5. *Caerle la gota fría* (to have bad luck), *cogerle la noche/tarde* (to be late), *dar la ventolera* (to suddenly feel like doing something), *estar lloviendo hasta maridos* (inf. to rain hard), *hacer su agosto* (to do business, to make a profit, taking advantage of an ideal opportunity to do so), *llover sobre mojado* (to repeat something unnecessary or annoying).

SF6. *hacer show* (to attract attention and cause astonishment or scandal), *hacer teatro* (to attract attention by causing astonishment or scandal), *hacer un videofilm* (youth slang, to make up stories to deceive about something or someone), *poner las cartas sobre la mesa* (to reveal a hidden purpose or opinion), *salírsele un gallo* (incorrect and shrill note emitted by a singer or speaker) *ser un hombre orquesta* (to perform different activities skillfully at the same time, without losing control), *tocar el violín* (to accompany a couple to go out).

SF7. *dárselas de artista* (to be funny), *mojar prensa* (to be in a newspaper), *robar pantalla* (to appear repeatedly in a TV recording without being necessary).

SF8. *capotear la crisis* (to evade a difficulty), *capotear la tormenta* (to skilfully evade), *capotear un problema* (to evade), *coger el toro por los cuernos* (to face problems), *dar pedal a alguien* (to instigate), *echar los perros* (to court).

SF9. *acumular millas* (on some airlines, frequent flyer points, which can offer a variety of benefits), *ir viento en popa* (with good luck, happiness or prosperity), *irse a pique* (go wrong, go off the rails).

SF10. *a pedir de boca* (as desired), *abrirle los ojos a alguien* (to make someone realize something he/she was previously unaware of), *agachar la cabeza* (to obey submissively), *andar agachachado* (to walk bent over; to conform in the face of an injustice), *caer parado* (to be lucky in adverse circumstances), *con pelos y señales* (in detail), *costar un ojo de la cara* (to be excessive in price), *dar la cara* (to answer for one's actions and face their consequences), *dejar con un palmo de narices* (failure to fulfill a promise to someone, depriving him of what he expected to get), *echar un pulso* (to arm-wrestle), *echar una mano* (to help), *en un abrir y cerrar de ojos* (in an

instant, quickly), *estar alguien como quiere* (to be good-looking), *estar con el culo al aire* (slang. to be in a bad financial situation), *estar pasando aceite* (an elderly person who is ill), *hablar hasta por los codos* (a lot), *hacer de tripas corazón* (to try to conceal one's fear, to restrain oneself, to overcome adversity), *irse de culo* (to be surprised), *lamer el culo* (slang. to flatter), *levantarse con el pie derecho* (to start the day well), *meter la pata* (to do or say something inopportune or wrong), *meter las de caminar* (to make a mistake), *morderse la lengua* (to speak prudently without expressing what one really feels), *no dar el brazo a torcer* (not to give in, not to let oneself be convinced), *no decir esta boca es mía* (to remain silent), *no dolerle una muela* (to be in good health, not to have financial problems), *no pegar el ojo* (not to sleep at all), *no levantar cabeza* (to be very busy), *no mover un dedo* (not to worry or make an effort for anything or anyone), *no tener ni pies ni cabeza* (to make no sense), *patear el arpa* (to put the job at risk), *poner el dedo en la llaga* (to know and point out the true origin of a problem, the difficult point of an issue, that most affects the person you are talking about), *poner el pecho* (to face adversities or dangers with courage), *poner/ prestar el hombro para llorar* (to be supportive), *ponerse con los pelos de punta* (to feel fear or dread), *quemarse las pestañas* (to study hard), *romperse el culo* (to do hard work), *romperse la espalda* (to do heavy work), *sacarle el culo alguien* (slang. to avoid a person), *ser una teta* (slang., stupid), *ser uña y mugre* (to have a close friendship), *tener a alguien entre ceja y ceja* (to regard someone with unfavorable prevention), *tener a alguien pasando aceite* (to have someone in love with oneself), *tener cerebro de gallina* (to be absent-minded, forgetful), *tener la lengua larga* (to gossip), *valer un culo* (to be unimportant).

SF11. *tener palabra* (to keep one's word), *adelantar cuaderno* (to catch up, usually with a good friend, on personal and third-party matters), *perder el año* (to not do things right and suffer the consequences).

SF12. *comer callado* (slang. to keep silent for convenience), *cuidar la cuchara* (inf. to take care of the job), *tener malos tragos* (to become aggressive or annoyed when drinking alcoholic beverages), *ser mala copa* (same meaning as the previous one), *salir más caro el caldo que los huevos* (sometimes the means by which we are going to obtain something is more expensive than the benefit it actually gives us), *estar rojo como tomate* (flushed), *ser zanahorio* (naive), *ser lenteja* (slow), *estar como un fideo* (very thin),

estar como un hielo (cold), *estar como una uva/como un lulo* (very well, physically, to be in good health), *parecer un bagre* (ugly), *pedir cacao* (beg, plead), *ponerse trucha* (slang. to be attentive), *estar frito* (to be bad), *comer a la carta* (to be chosen by the consumer), *ser buena papa* (inf. good person), *ser buena muela* (inf. to be of good appetite), *ser harina de otro costal* (to have no relation one matter with another).

SF13. *apretarse el cinturón* (to reduce expenses due to lack of means), *chuparle las medias a alguien* (to flatter someone), *estar de moda*, *hacerse el de las gafas* (to play the fool), *ponerse los pantalones* (to impose one's authority), *alzarse la bata* (to go out and have fun), *meterse en camisa de once varas* (to meddle in things that are none of one's business or do not concern one's business), *ponerse la camiseta* (commit to do something), *ponerse en los zapatos del otro* (understand their problems and needs), *pasar de moda* (go out of fashion), *ser una corbata* (have a high-paying job with little work), *tener pantalones* (have strong character), *tirar la casa por la ventana* (spend money excessively on the occasion of a celebration).

SF14. *tomar cartas en el asunto* (intervene).

SF15. *no valer ni cinco* (nothing), *en un dos por tres* (quickly).

6. Conclusions

The analysis of more than 1400 units used in Colombia has made it possible to demonstrate the phraseological richness of the country under study. In fact, the presence of variants and structural synonyms (Corpas Pastor 1996) observed in the phraseological file is considered as a further indicator of the phraseological richness of this country.

The syntactic analysis has shown that the most abundant phrases in the corpus under study are of verbal type and present a V + NS structure; the most frequent nominal phrases are of type N + Adj. and N + Prep. + N, while the most frequent adjective phrases consist of Adj. (participle) + Prep. + N. Finally, the most abundant adverbial phrases are those of mood and time and their most frequent structure is reflected in Prep. + N; Prep. + Art + N; Prep. + Art + Adj. and Prep. + N + Prep. + N + Prep. + N.

From a semantic point of view, the analysis of the corpus under scrutiny has allowed us to corroborate that, grouping the phraseological units

according to the main lexical constituent, the most productive semantic fields are those related to the human body, animals and clothing. The phrases of SF 4. Landscape and fauna, moreover, mainly convey concepts socially considered as negative: *estar gordo*, *estar furioso*, *ser bruto*, etc. These phrases are used in informal communicative situations in which the speaker's intention is to express feelings of anger or bad mood.

Likewise, the phrases that belong to SF 10. Health, illness and human figure are mainly used in informal communicative situations and express help, interest in something or someone, effort, meddling and various attitudes in interpersonal relationships as can be observed in *a pedir de boca* (as desired), *a espalda de alguien* (taking advantage of someone's absence, without them knowing), *tener a alguien entre ceja y ceja* (to look at someone with unfavorable prevention), *tener a alguien pasando aceite* (to have someone in love with oneself). Finally, certain items of clothing are related to the economy, character or attitude of people: *apretarse el cinturón* (to reduce expenses due to lack of means), *alzarse la bata* (to go out to have fun), *amarrarse alguien los pantalones* (to behave with courage and decision), *ponerse la camiseta* (to make an effort to defend the interests of an institution or any joint undertaking), *ser una corbata* (to have a job with little effort and good remuneration).

It is worth mentioning that the work presented is a pilot study that aims to fill the gap in the studies on phraseology used in Colombia and that, for future lines of research, it will be necessary to expand the corpus to extract and analyze a greater number of phrases. Likewise, it will be necessary to limit the study to purely Colombian phrases since the phrases studied, or part of them, are not exclusive to the Colombian variety of Spanish, but are shared with other Spanish-speaking countries. Finally, in future studies it will be necessary to analyze the phraseology used in Colombia not only from a syntactic, semantic and diaphasic perspective as has been done in the present study, but also to analyze them from a diatopic, diastratic and diachronic perspective, aspects that were not considered in this work.

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