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Phraseology in teenage language in Spanish, English and Norwegian: Notes on a number of fixed expressions that articulate *disagreement*¹

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1. Phraseological Units in teenage talk

This paper analyses a set of fixed expressions or phraseological units (PUs; i.e. fixed idiomatic expressions) used in teenage language to articulate disagreement in English (1), Norwegian (2) and Spanish (3):

(1)

Jenny: Zoe, do you still fancy Steven?
Kathy: **no way.**
Jenny: eh eh eh eh. That's what you said last (COLT)

(2)

Michael: blitt dytta uti a=v Agnete, = det var kaldt. == faen meg april asså.
was pushed into the water b=y Agnete, =it was cold == the devil me April right²
Michael: **ikke faen**
not the devil
Michael: bade da igjen
bathe then again
Thomas: he he he trur jeg (OSVGGUJE1)
ha ha ha believe I

(3)

Borja: [claro que lo comprueban]
clearly that they it check
Carlos: [claro que sí]
clearly that yes
Enrique: [qué coño van a ver el DNI]
what cunt are they going to check the identity cards

¹ This paper was written within the framework of the research projects "Discurso público: estrategias persuasivas y de interpretación" [Public discourse: strategies of persuasion and interpretation] and "Metodología del Análisis del Discurso: propuesta de una lingüística del texto integral" [Discourse Analysis Methodology: towards a linguistic account of the text as an integral whole] (MICINN, ref. FFI2010-20416) carried out by GRADUN (Grupo Análisis del Discurso [the Discourse Analysis Group]) in the ICS (Institute for Culture and Society) at the University of Navarra; and the COLA Project (Corpus Oral del Lenguaje Adolescente [Oral Corpus of Adolescent Language]), compiled and managed by Annette Myre Jørgensen in the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of Bergen. In the final stage of writing this article, Inés Olza also availed of funding awarded in a scholarship from the "José Castillejo" Mobility Program (Ministry of Education (Spain); ref. JC2011-0263) to undertake research at the Centre for Advanced Research in English, University of Birmingham (UK).

² The translation of the examples follows the Leipzig Glossing Rules with a word by word assignment

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Carlos: [que síiii] (MAESB2)
that yees

This is done from a phraseological, pragmatic-discursive and contrastive perspective. Although the use of this set of phraseological units (PUs) is not in any sense the sole prerogative of teenage talk or language-use,³ the underlying assumption of the analysis outlined here is that the expression of disagreement in such terms among young people takes on certain pragmatic nuances and reflects distinctive and exclusive forms of politeness.

1.1. *Reasons, aims and methodology*

The phraseological units studied in the paper were chosen because they have not been subject to extensive research before, and there is scarce literature to refer to, except for Olza (2011b, 2017) or Mura (2012). English, Spanish and Norwegian were also selected for this analysis because they allow for parallel searches within comparable corpora developed at the University of Bergen: the Spanish oral corpus COLAm, the Norwegian UNO and the English COLT. In these three languages body parts and foul language are used in oral informal language and caught our attention because of their (more or less) unexpected disagreement value. A contrastive analysis of PUs is difficult because of the cultural context inherent to any fixed and idiomatic unit, so it was necessary to limit ourselves to some specific PUs: the disagreement expressions of an oral nature.

The goal of the analysis of these PUs which articulate disagreement is to focus on the phraseological, pragmatic-discursive and contrastive perspectives they might have in common in the three mentioned languages. Of special interest is also the politeness question, attached to the *reinforcement* of the disagreement, accomplished by the use of taboo words and bad language present in these PUs. The objective of this article is to contribute to this emerging field of inquiry by providing a comparative account of a set of expressions used in teenage language in Spanish, English and Norwegian.

The interest in looking for common aspects for disagreement in oral informal teenage talk, the translatability, the metaphors used, as well as the correspondences between the PUs from these three languages should not be underestimated. Depending on the platform of reference, or 'tertium comparationis' (see e.g. Krzeszowski 1990: 15), two objects of analysis may appear either similar or different. We want to state that in the case of the PUs analysed in Spanish, English and Norwegian teenage talk, the adequate *tertium comparationis* would be disagreement, appearing in oral PUs, common for these three languages in a certain informal oral register. However, as already stated in the introduction, the expression of disagreement in such terms among young people takes on certain pragmatic nuances, reflects distinctive and exclusive forms of politeness.

In order to achieve our goal, we have settled for a qualitative analysis by looking at the PUs from three corpora, carrying out a corpus-based study. It is not a quantitative study, first and foremost because these corpora are not tagged for PU frequency analysis and, secondly, because a qualitative analysis seems more pertinent for our aims.

The oral corpora used in the research have given access to these constructions, whose particular grammatical and functional basis has been laid through the works of González Ruiz and Olza (2011), Olza (2011b) and Mura (2012), all of them devoted to Spanish. This is the main reason why we decided to use the principles and classifications of the Spanish phraseological tradition here – for other traditions, see for instance Moon (1999) and Fiedler (2007).

³ On this point, see the studies by González Ruiz and Olza (2011), Olza (2011b) and Mura (2012).

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1.2. Corpus-based linguistics

The general consensus nowadays is that corpus linguistics, a research strategy based on extensive collections of real texts, is entering a golden age in studies of linguistics generally. Indeed, Biber et al. (2007: ix) have argued that "empirical investigation of corpora can shed light on previously intractable research questions in linguistics": certain aspects of language – in particular, aspects of language in use such as the expression of disagreement – ought to be studied on the basis of an inductive, empirical method, which yields data and information that cannot be arrived at by means of intuition alone (Svartvik et al. 1991: 8ff).

The corpora on which this study is primarily based (COLAm, COLT, UNO; see Section 1.2.1) enable a privileged approach to research on teenage speech; they comprise samples of colloquial conversations between teenagers in Madrid, London and Oslo (Jørgensen and Drange 2012), and may be sorted using computer-based search tools (Hofland et al. 2005; Jørgensen 2008, 2010, 2013). Hence, the notes and comments on the use of given PUs in colloquial teenage language outlined in Sections 2 to 5 may be accounted for by reference to real examples that illustrate the metapragmatic and discursive values such phraseological terms have acquired.

To a somewhat more limited degree, this article also draws on other English language corpora (British National Corpus and EnTenTen)⁴ and occasionally, in the case of Spanish, gives examples from the Internet (chat-rooms or forums, which reflect in written-text form the specific characteristics of colloquial and/or teenage language, at least to a certain extent.⁵

1.2.1 The corpora used

The corpora used are not big by today's standards. Although large corpora have come to dominate corpus and lexicographic work, advocates of "small" corpora maintain that they also hold a crucial place in providing data, not least for genre and discourse studies (Minugh 2014, 19). Relevant chapters in O'Keeffe and McCarthy (2010) and the article by Vaughan and Clancy (2013) as well as Minugh (2014) provide useful overviews of further issues involved in creating and using small corpora.

The *Corpus de Lenguaje Adolescente de Madrid* (COLAm)⁶ [Madrid Corpus of Adolescent Language], is a corpus of 500.000 words, recollected by Annette Myre Jørgensen and Esperanza Eguía Padilla at the University of Bergen. Teenage talk about any issue such as parents, teachers, love relations, drinking (which are indeed treated as if they were questions of paramount importance) is frequent among our Madrid, London and Oslo youngsters (Hofland et al. 2005; Jørgensen 2008) in informal situations. Briz (2003) and Zimmermann (2002: 141) insist that the study of teenage language needs to be based on real interaction: "The point of departure for its study should be the communicative act, the conversation among the teenagers: the elements of their speech should not be taken separately or in an isolated way".⁷ This is what the Corpus Oral de Lenguaje Adolescente Madrid (COLAm-corpus) has made possible: the observation of teenage language in real interaction. The COLA corpus has a strategic point of departure: teenagers talking with their friends are recorded, and it is thus possible to get the most natural and analysable data (Jørgensen and Eguía 2015).

⁴ Corpora were accessed using Sketch Engine (<http://www.sketchengine.co.uk/>). British National Corpus official URL (<http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>). TenTen Corpora URL: <https://www.sketchengine.eu/documentation/tenten-corpora/>.

⁵ A detailed discussion of whether or not the use of the web as a corpus for linguistic research is appropriate and/or enabling (see, among others, Renouf et al. 2007) does not come within the scope of this article. However, as far as corpus-based study is concerned, and subject to certain methodological precautions, it is hard to ignore the instances of real and colloquial/conversational phraseological usage afforded by the Internet, especially as they appear to confirm and complement (see Section 5) the intuitions we have as speakers in this regard.

⁶ Accessible at <http://www.colam.org>.

⁷ "La base de partida para su estudio ha de ser el acto comunicativo, la conversación de o entre jóvenes: no pueden tomarse los elementos por separado o de manera aislada [...]" (Zimmermann 2002: 141).

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The COLT corpus (The Bergen Corpus of London Teenage Language; COLT) is the first large English Corpus focusing on the speech of teenagers. It was collected in 1993 and consists of spoken language of 13 to 17-year-old teenagers from different boroughs of London. The complete corpus, under half a million words, has been orthographically transcribed and word-class tagged, and is a constituent of the British National Corpus. Finally, the UNO (Ungdomsspråk i Oslo)⁸ corpus of teenage language contains samples drawn from young Norwegian speakers during the years 1997-1998.

These three corpora, all built at the University of Bergen, are considered to be sufficiently large to enable a comparative account of the use of a range of PUs in the expression of disagreement/negation among teenagers across these languages. The comparability of the computer corpora COLT, UNO and COLA might be questioned, since there are some lapses of time between the recollection of them, but we consider that this time is shorter than the time changes usually take to crystallize in language. Moreover, the PUs studied here are not recent adolescent creations but have been around for some time (Mura 2012, Olza 2011). Of greater importance is the fact that the speakers' ages are the same and the interactions take place in identical environments in the three corpora, allowing for a common ground to emerge. On the other hand, adolescent language is especially ephemeral when it comes to *some lexical creations*, but not to the PUs they adopt from the standard language. In this sense, we must point out that the use of these UP is not specific for adolescents: we have analysed these UP *not because they are exclusive adolescent creations*, but because the three oral corpora available and valid for our contrastive analysis were focused – for other analytical purposes – on teenage language.

1.3. Teenage talk

Teenage talk is fascinating, though it has not so far received the attention that it deserves in linguistic research. The dearth of investigations into teenage language is partly due to its under-representation in language corpora. With the Bergen corpora mentioned above, teenage language has become available for research.

The defining features of adolescent interaction comprise signs of identity whose function is to create bonds and group cohesion, a key concern among teenagers. Teenage language is defined by frequent use of markers (Jørgensen and Martínez 2007), the use of vocatives (Jørgensen 2011), new lexical inventions, loanwords, anglicisms, taboo words and expressive PUs – in other words, multi-verbal, fixed and idiomatic expressions that may also, in the case of teenagers, play a metapragmatic role (Olza 2011a; see Section 5).

Teenage language is a specific code which draws on standard language but is different from it: "The evidence that young people's speech, in some modes of communication, is markedly different to that of older people, cannot be denied" (Lázaro Carreter 2005: 233). Indeed, the fact that language development among young people aged between 13 and 19 takes place in informal contexts gives rise to a series of specific characteristics that have prompted the interest of a number of researchers (Stenström et al. 1998; Rodríguez 2002; Zimmermann 2002; Stenström and Jørgensen 2009). Such interest may also stem from the fact that young people are active agents of linguistic change and innovation (cf. Andersen 2000; Zimmermann 2002; Stenström et al. (1998); Svennevig 2004; Jørgensen 2008, 2012; Martínez 2009), as Eckert (1989: 52) avers: "Adolescents are the linguistic movers and shakers [...] and as such, a prime source of information about linguistic change and the role of language in social practice". Moreover, an analysis of creativity and innovation in teenagers' speech – for the purposes of this paper, in relation to the expression of disagreement (see, in particular, Section 3.3) –

⁸ Accessible at <http://www.uib.no/uno/>. Corpus (200,000 words) compiled by Anna-Brita Stenström, Eli-Marie Drange, University of Bergen (Norway) and Ulla-Britt Kotsinas, University of Stockholm (Sweden).

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may enable some prediction of further changes that are likely to occur within the language in the future, since adolescents tend to act as "filters" of linguistic trends (Briz 2003: 148-150).

Thus, specific approaches to the study of teenage language are now well-established in languages such as English and Norwegian (Stenström 2006; Stenström and Jørgensen 2008; Jørgensen and Stenström 2009; Hasund 2003; Andersen 2000). More recently, due to the availability of systematic data in this regard – above all, the COLAm corpus (see footnote 5) – studies of teenage speech in Spanish have also begun to appear (see Rodríguez 2002; Briz 2003; Sánchez Corrales 2006; Jørgensen and Martínez 2007; Jørgensen 2008; Stenström and Jørgensen 2008; Jørgensen and Aarli 2011; Jørgensen and Drange 2012, Jørgensen and Eguía 2015).

2. PUs of disagreement

As stated in Section 1, the purpose of this article is to provide a comparative overview of a set of PUs that express disagreement in Spanish, English and Norwegian teenage language.

The concept of *disagreement* covers a range of speech acts at the antipode of agreement. For the purposes of this paper, disagreement will be defined as any episode in talk-in-interaction where opposition and refusal is expressed. The PU could be substituted by the negation adverb *no*, and the message would not have been significantly altered. Moreover, the oral context and informal style of our corpora explains that these kinds of PUs are used for reinforcement of disagreement among teenagers in these three languages.

Disagreement is considered to be a face-threatening 'socially disruptive' act in politeness theory (Brown and Levinson 1987; Georgakopoulou and Patrona 2000: 323). Within politeness theory (Brown and Levinson 1978, 1987), mitigation is conceptualised as suitable politeness strategies to address the potential threat to the hearer's positive face (i.e. the wish to be approved of, liked, ratified, etc. by others). This would not be the case this paper's PUs, rather the contrary, where strong reinforced disagreements take place.

However, we also have to take into account that disagreements might even be evaluated as an inherent feature of the speech activity. The findings of Angouri and Bargiela-Chiappini (2011), Gray (2001) or Sharma (2012) suggest that disagreement turns cannot be seen as 'a priori negative acts' (Angouri and Locher 2012: 1551). In fact, in order to arrive at an informed understanding of disagreement speech acts, an analysis of their positioning within 'wider discourses' (Angouri and Locher 2012: 1550) is vital, as Hüttner (2014) also stresses. This is the kind of approach that we propose here, and this is why fully contextualised examples will be provided in Sections 3 to 5.

Disagreement among teenagers functions as a special sign of an intimate relationship: as members of a group of peers who know each other well, their expressions of disagreement do not work as face-threatening acts (impolite) but as signs of in-group membership (Brown and Levinson 1987; Navdal 2007; Carter and McCarthy 2006). In informal conversations, unmitigated disagreements, like the ones performed by the PUs analysed in this paper, appear to be evidence of easy and trusting relationships within family or friends and signs of intimacy without face-aggravating effects (Georgakopoulou 2001; Goodwin 1983, 1990; Schiffrin 1984).

3. The phraseological perspective

This survey rests for the most part on observing parallels that may be traced across the three languages. While certain common trends in the formal structure and discursive function of such PUs of disagreement have been discerned and are presented below, the discursive productivity of such phraseological units would appear to be especially prevalent in Spanish (for further explanation of this point, see Section 3.3)

The PUs analysed in the sections below are as follows:

- a) Spanish: *(y) (unas/las) narices* [(and) (some/the) nostrils], *(y) una leche/mierda/polla* [(and) a slap/shit/prick], *los cojones* [the balls], *(qué + [...] + ni) qué narices/cojones/coño/mierda/leche(s)/pollas* [(what + [...] + not even) what noses/balls/cunt/shit/slap(s)/pricks], *ni + [...] + ni narices/cojones/leche(s)/pollas* [neither + [...] + nor noses/balls/slap(s)/pricks] (see also Olza 2011b; González Ruiz and Olza 2011);
- b) English: *(like) hell, my eye, my foot, no way* (see Olza 2017);
- c) Norway: *ikke faen* ('no devil'), *ikke i helvete* [no in hell], *ikke snakk om* [no talk about], *ikke en dritt* [not one shit].⁹

The cited PUs do not represent all the possible forms of disagreement found in the corpora. Instead, they were selected because of the significant parallelisms detected between them at different levels: basically, their semantic motivation is similar (see Section 3.1), and they show the same kind of syntactic and discursive behavior (see Sections 4 and 5).

3.1. Motivation and idiomaticity

From a phraseological perspective, that the PUs listed above are idiomatic in semantic and pragmatic terms is noteworthy, given that their pragmatic-discursive functions as expressions of disagreement are based on the idiomatic-figurative content of their component parts (Olza 2011a: Section 3.1.4).

Thus, a number of common threads may be discerned in the motivation and semantic-figurative grounds of the grammaticalization/pragmaticization process such PUs undergo (Heine et al. 1991: esp. chapters 2 and 3; Hopper and Traugott 1993: Section 4.3): in most cases, the component elements of these expressions are associated with negative connotations of various kinds, which enunciate (in a more or less obvious way) the pragmatic function of disagreement or negation. Hence, the constituent parts of such PUs tend to comprise a) lexemes that connote the sexual, physical and/or scatological (*cojones, coño, polla(s), narices*); or b) lexemes whose semantic content is in itself markedly negative (*mierda, leche(s), nonsense, hell, faen, helvete, dritt*).

3.2. Categorization

As regards the category to which they pertain (that is, the definition of the type of pragmatic-discursive PUs to which the expressions analysed in this article may be assigned), most may be said to function as routine formulae, as fixed expressions used independently in everyday, standard forms of social-linguistic interaction (Corpas Pastor 1996: 171; Alvarado Ortega 2010).¹⁰ In the examples (4)-(6), one

⁹ To facilitate understanding of the PUs in Norwegian, literal translations of the terms are given here.

¹⁰ However, it should be noted that the PUs analysed here do not wholly correspond to any of the categories of Spanish-language routine formulae defined from the perspective of speech acts (Corpas Pastor 1996: Section 5.5) or statement modality (Alvarado Ortega 2010: chapter 4), a distinction that confirms the distinction functioning that has emerged in such phraseological units. In relation to the Corpas Pastor (1996) classification, these PUs may be described as expressive (1996:

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from each language, we perceive disagreement stated in independent conversational turns through the Spanish *ni trabajo todo el día ni pollas* (4), the English *no way* (5) and the Norwegian *ikke en dritt* (6):

(4)¹¹

- Carlos: [está perdido porque necesita pues eso si está con xxx sábado y domingo]
he is lost because he needs well I then that yes if he is with xxx Saturday and Sunday
- Borja: [chicos y] eh eh vamos yo tú hay si tuviera yo dieciséis años
boys and erm erm let's go I you if had I sixteen years
vamos iba a estar aquí esto es ganando mazo de talegos
come on I would have been here that is earning lots of money
- Ana: [lo que quiere hacer es hacer el]
what he wants to do is to do the
- Ana: [taller. **coño ni trabajo todo el día ni pollas** que haga el taller tío que lo termine
the workshop. cunt nor I work every day nor dicks let him do the workshop uncle that it finish
y después trabaje tío que eh eh para algo estará el taller coño]
and afterwards work uncle that eh eh for something the workshop is there cunt
- Carlos: a julio ...el taller está acabado ya] (MALCC2)
in July ... the workshop is finished already

(5)

Pizza Boy snapped his gum. "I'm done painting the trailer, Steven. Wanna see? It's hella cool." *</p><p>* Steven glanced at all the paint colors on Pizza Boy's clothes. "I thought I told you to buy canary yellow paint, Pizza Boy." *</p><p>* Pizza Boy shrugged. "**No way.** That's hella lame." *</p><p>* Steven chewed his nail nervously. "Then... the trailer is not painted canary yellow as I requested?"

(Internet, <http://www.unknownhighway.com/trailerpark.php?id= P6492>, 12/2/2008, enTenTen)

(6)

- Daniel: synes jeg også. ja
think I so too. yes
- Kristian: det er ingenting som skjer.
there is nothing that happens
- Daniel: jeg vet det.
I know that
- Kristian: **ikke en dritt.** har jeg sitert Espen Bredesen på olympisk dagbok
not a shit. I have quoted Espen Bredesen in olympic diary
- Kristian: forrige dagen.
the other day
- Daniel: men
but
- Kristian: ja. ja jeg prater litt høyt vet du sitter litt langt borte.
yes yes I speak a little loud you know you sit a little far away
- Daniel: det gjør du ikke (OSVGGUJE)
that you do not

Indeed, as the extracts quoted in (4)-(6) disclose, a number of the PUs (*ni + [...]* + *ni pollas, una mierda, no way, ikke en dritt*) may be used as independent statements in normal conversational practice. Such syntactic and conversational independence is even more obvious in phrases whose

Section 5.5.2.1) or assertive (1996: Section 5.5.2.4) psychosocial formulae; and according to the Alvarado Ortega (2010) system, they may be said to express modal contents (disagreement/rejection and, secondarily, disbelief, protest, surprise, etc.), straddling the deontic (2010: Section 4.1.1.2), epistemic (2010: Section 4.1.1.1), and affective dimensions (2010: Section 4.1.2.1).

¹¹ In citing from samples compiled in the COLAm, COLT and UNO corpora, the respective transcription conventions followed in each case are retained here.

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formal structure includes a blank to be filled contextually with the segment of previous discourse that is subject to dispute or denial: this is the case of the Spanish phraseological units *qué + [...] + ni qué narices/ cojones/coño/mierda/leche(s)/pollas* y *ni + [...] + ni narices/cojones/leche(s)/pollas*, which generally function as independent statements.

However, many of the PUs analysed in this article tend to be combined with conversational turns involving explicit repetition – echoic repetition (see Section 3.2) – of the discourse segment being disputed or denied, and thus lose the phrasal and discursive independence described above.

(7)

Enrique: [a de así no van a comprobar]

a from like that not they are going to check

Borja: [por supuesto que lo tienen que comprobar]

of course that they have to check it

Enrique: [eso no lo comprueban]

that they not check

Fernando: [ocho]

eight

Borja: [claro que lo comprueban]

clearly that it they check

Carlos: [claro que sí]

clearly that yes

Enrique: [qué coño van a ver el DNI]

what cunt are they going to check the identity cards

Carlos: [que síiii]

(MAESB2)

that yees

(8)

Jenny: Zoe, do you still fancy Steven?

Kathy: **No way!** fancy Steven.

Jenny: Eeeeh. That's what you said last.

(COLT)

(9)

Mikke: hun vil jeg skal flytte tilbake {dit.} siden jeg {blir} kasta ut av pa% pappa liksom

she wants me to move back there since I'm being thrown out by da% dad like

men jeg står over jeg:

but I stand over I

flytta derfra når jeg var seksten ikke faen om jeg gidder å pese med hu igjen asså.

I moved from there when I was sixteen not the devil I want to bother with her again right

Mari: mye pes med a (ikke-verbal info):

lots of bothers with her (non-verbal info):

Mikke: ja ha ha, jeg slutta å pese med en gang jeg, flytta da.{redd for å miste kontakten.}

yes ha ha I stopped bothering at once I just moved out then {afraid of losing contact}

Tom: lære deg å behandle morra di.

(OSVGGUJE)

learn you to treat mother your

3.2.1 Discursive echo

Examples (7), (8) and (9) comprise phrases that include the use of one of the PUs under discussion in this article along with a discursive echo of the previous conversation segment being disputed or negated: for example, in (7), by explicitly repeating the point and introducing the phraseological unit *qué coño*, Enrique rejects the notion that 'puedan ver/comprobar el DNI' [they can see/check your identity card]. At the same time, it should also be noted that the PU *qué coño* may also be used as an

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independent statement in the same context, with the same pragmatic value, implicitly referencing the discourse segment *claro que lo comprueban* [of course they check it]:

(7')

Enrique: [a de así no van a comprobar]

a from like that not they are going to check

Borja: [por supuesto que lo tienen que comprobar]

of course they have to check it

Enrique: [eso no lo comprueban]

that they not check

Fernando: [ocho]

eight

Borja: [claro que lo comprueban]

of course that they check it

Carlos: [claro que sí]

of course yes

Enrique: [qué coño van a ver el DNI]

what cunt are they going to check the identity cards

Carlos: [que síiii]

that yees!

(MAESB2)

(8')

Jenny: Zoe, do you still fancy Steven?

Kathy: **no way.**

Jenny eh eh eh eh. That's what you said last (COLT)

(10')

Mikke: = den jubelen = wow.

that rejoicing = wow

jubelen, jeg var (Ikke-verbal info (blaing i avis)

the rejoicing I was (non-verbal info (turning newspaper pages)

blitt dytta uti av Agnete, det var kaldt. == faen meg april asså.

was pushed into the water by Agnete, it was cold == the devil me April right

ikke faen bade da igjen.

not the devil bathe then again

Thomas: trur jeg

think I

Mikke: hm

hum

Thomas: var nå kaldere når jeg datt i vannet.

was now colder when I fell into the water

(OSVGGUJE1)

In light of these examples, the discursive flexibility that may be availed of in the use of these PUs is especially noteworthy; in some cases, they may function as independent conversational clichés, as routine spoken formulae do; and in other cases, they appear to act from the phrasal margins, casting a modal sense on certain segments of speech, as do some discourse markers (see Ruiz Gurillo 2001, 2005, 2010; and Montoro del Arco 2006) and/or, more generally, certain particles or operators in the expository mode of discourse. It is clear, therefore, that assigning any of the terms analysed here in an unqualified way to a single category of pragmatic PUs is problematic, although a description of the pragmatic value of disagreement or negation (see also Section 4) evinces no such complications.

3.3 Phraseological variability and expressive intensification

A final, crucial aspect of the imbrication between the form, semantic-figurative motivation and pragmatic value of PUs is the fact that many of the phraseological terms discussed here follow patterns of phraseological construction that show a significant degree of formal variation and creativity. This observation goes beyond the phenomenon described in Section 3.2, whereby some expressions contain a blank filled contextually with the disputed/negated discourse segment (for example, *qué + [...] + ni qué narices/ cojones /coño / mierda / leche(s) / pollas*). A set of phraseological formulae may be traced across the PUs discussed in this article,¹² comprising an additional space that may be filled out in accordance with other, more or less well-defined criteria: in general, and as indicated in Section 3.1, lexemes with negative connotations of different kinds (*mierda, leche(s), cojones, coño, polla(s), narices, hell, nonsense, faen, helvete*) are normally used, although formulations based on lexemes relating to the body (*cojones, coño, polla(s), narices, eye, foot*) might also be outlined.

PHRASEOLOGICAL FORMULAE	PUs BASED ON THE FORMULA
Spanish	Spanish
<i>(y) + (det.) + somatic lexeme</i>	<i>(y) (unas/las) narices, (y) una polla, los cojones</i>
<i>(y) + (det.) + lexeme with negative connotations</i>	<i>(y) una leche/mierda, (y) un jamón (con chorreras)</i>
<i>(qué + [...] + ni) qué + somatic lexeme</i>	<i>(qué + [...] + ni) qué narices/cojones/coño/pollas</i>
<i>(qué + [...] + ni) qué + lexeme with negative connotations</i>	<i>(qué + [...] + ni) qué mierda/leche(s), qué + [...] + ni qué ocho cuartos/niño muerto</i>
<i>ni + [...] + ni + somatic lexeme</i>	<i>ni + [...] + ni narices/cojones/leche(s)/pollas</i>
Norwegian	Norwegian
<i>ikke + lexeme with negative connotations</i>	<i>ikke [...] en dritt, faen, helvete, i helvete</i>
English	English
<i>(det. posesivo) + somatic lexeme</i>	<i>my eye, my foot</i>

Figure 1. Phraseological formulae expressing disagreement in Spanish, English and Norwegian¹³

A number of Spanish PUs not analysed in detail here are included in Figure 1; they likewise enact the more creative form of phraseological structure (*(y) un jamón con chorreras* or *qué + [...] + ni qué ocho cuartos/niño muerto*). In this regard, it may be noted that:

- a) first, the most creative versions of phraseological structures used to express disagreement tend to do so in a progressively more intensified way (see Olza 2011b);
- b) and second, it is clear that Spanish has given rise to the greatest number – and, in formal terms, widest variety – of specialized PUs articulating disagreement or negation, marking a significant contrast with the other two languages under consideration here.

On a different note, in spite of the substantial range in formal and semantic-figurative variability, the examples listed in Figure 1 show that these patterns or conversational routines are

¹² See Zamora Muñoz (2004), García-Page (2008: Section 4.2.1.4.4) and, in particular, Mura (2012).

¹³ In line with the arguments advanced by a number of scholars (see Portela 1996 and Mura 2012: 227-228), it is worth noting that many of the PUs listed in Figure 1 are negative – insofar as they reject or negate something – although they not contain any negative particles in strictly semantic terms (for instance, the adverb *no* in Spanish). As argued in Section 3.1, the negative connotations of certain base terms (*coño, hell* or *dritt*) appear to be capable of crystallizing the modal meaning of disagreement/rejection.

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readily identifiable as such and, therefore, are open to appreciable levels of variation on the part of speakers – in this case, young people – so as to achieve their expressive goals.

4. Modality, acts of dissent and politeness

In Section 3.2, the PUs analysed for the purposes of this paper were said to function as routine formulae and/or phrases that articulate a particular attitude on the speaker's part: disagreement with regard to a previous discourse segment generally expressed by an interlocutor. Thus, insofar as they express an emotional response linked to epistemic disagreement or the denial/negation of a preceding speech act, these PUs perform an interactive-modal function. From an interactive perspective, the phraseological units considered here comprise typical forms in which so-called 'acts of dissent' are enunciated, which may be defined as a succeeding kind of intervention that, in a linked pair, articulates disagreement with or negation of the act of speech that took place in the preceding intervention (Herrero Moreno 2002). Given this reactive function, and because they may refer in more or less explicit ways to a previous discourse segment, these PUs have metapragmatic value, as outlined in greater detail in Section 5.

Furthermore, from another point of view, that this interactive function of disagreement may also be highly productive is unquestionable, especially as regards the range of variety that may arise in teenage speech, an age-group marked by constant negotiation and tension between agreement/affirmation and disagreement/rejection, between assertiveness and yielding, and ultimately between the reaffirmation of an individual speaker and social (and discursive) belonging to a group. In short, it may be argued that the expression of (dis)agreement is key to the relationships and politeness management among adolescent language users (see, for instance, Stenström and Jørgensen 2008).

In this regard, the analysis carried out in this article also shows that this set of PUs lends itself in especially rich and creative ways to the intensified expression of disagreement, which reflects the trends frequently traced in relation to teenage language (the pursuit of expressive impact and the expression of the unprecedented in discursive formulae). In other, more graphic words: adolescent and teenage language are acknowledged as being inextricably bound up with the use of hyperbole; everything is black or white to young people, there is no grey, so they draw on more intense registers to express themselves. Moreover, as noted in other studies (Stenström and Jørgensen 2008), it may be concluded that what may appear impolite to adults is interpreted as polite by teenagers because the use of certain terms, although they may be taboo words, builds closer ties between them; thus, the use of expressions such as the ones studied in this article may become part of their group identity as such.

5. Metapragmatic value and discursive echoes

The phraseological units explored in this article tend to function reactively, citing a preceding segment of discourse with which disagreement is expressed (often in an intensified way). Clearly, therefore, the conversational function effected by such PUs has a markedly metalinguistic value; in light of the fact that they have pragmatic-discursive value, these terms function metapragmatically (see Olza 2011a and 2011b). That the use of such phrases is so prevalent in teenage language should come as no surprise, given the distinctive relationships of empathy/antipathy and (im)politeness, as well as the 'linguistic games' (allusion, repetition and twisting of another's words, for instance) that arise among young speakers (see Sections 1 and 2).

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That the speaker in disagreement tends to repeat explicitly the disputed discourse segment has also been noted, using the PUs analysed here in conjunction with discursive echoes that follow a range of formal and syntactic patterns (see also Olza 2017):

a) in most instances, the PU comes before the discursive echo:

(11)¹⁴

Carlos: [claro y tenemos que comprar. hay revistas\]
of course and we will have to buy. are there magazines?

Diego: [tía revistas qué dices]
aunt magazines what you say

Carlos: [que sí sí sí]
that yes yes yes

Diego: comida je je je
food ha ha ha ha

Ana: [eso]
that

Carlos: [revistas tía]
magazines aunt

Ana: **qué leches** revistas. comida a a ja ja (MALCCE)
what the milk magazines. food ah ah ha ha

(12)

BlogTelecom (17/2/2006): Fon no te va a solucionar tus averías con Telefónica, ni con Jazztel,
BlogTelecom (17/2/2006): Fon is not you going to solve your damages with Telefonica, nor Jazztel

ni con Ya.com, pero si te organizas con tus vecinos
nor with Ya.com, but if you organise yourself with your neighbours

y os hacéis foneros no sólo vais a tener wifi por todo el
you make yourself fonics you not only will have wifi in the whole
barrio (y el mundo donde haya foneros), sino que además vais a tener un sistema de back up, meshing
suburb (and in the World where there are fonics), but you are going to get a backup system, meshing
y con suerte de download accelerator.

and if you are lucky from the download accelerator

Pepeleches (18/3/2006): siiii, lo ke el kiera... y **unas narices** voy a compartir mi wifi!

Pepeleches (18/3/2006): yeees, whatever he wants... and some noses I will share my wifi!!

(Internet, <<http://www.blogtelecom.com/mas-ventajas-de-hacerte-fonero/>>, España, 03/2006)

(13)

Mar: naturales o sociales
natural or social

Ana: tía¹⁵ que dirán lo que dirán (xxx) lo que se tragaba el Paco
aunt they they'll say what they'll say that what swallowed the Paco

Mar: que no se tragaba ninguna novia **ni narices** de esas naturales o sociales
that he didn't swallow any girlfriend nor noses of those natural o scientific

Ana: ven pa acá
come to here

Mar: se va a traer a un amigo suyo y a la novia de ese amigo
he's going to bring a friend of his and the girlfriend of that friend (MALCE3)

¹⁴ Section 3.2 outlined that PU usage like that contained in (9) is similar (if not identical) to the use of modal phrases and particles. Future studies might fruitfully explore the distinctive prosody such expressions enact in those contexts; at times, it is markedly different to the prosody of modal particles.

¹⁵ *Tía/o*, which means aunt/uncle, is used as a vocative in Spanish (Jørgensen and Martínez 2011).

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(14)

Enviado por Pribas:

Sent by Pribas:

Asunto: Ahora toca escribir con el codo

Subject: Now we have to write with the elbow

Bueno gente, con que veo que cada vez se es mas original en el Off Topic,

Well, people, with that I see that each time one is more original at the Off Topic

propongo para acabar el año que escribamos el nick del post anterior con el codo, si si, con el codo.

I suggest to finish the year that we write the nick from the earlier post with the elbow, yes yes, with the elbow

Enviado por Airon:

Sent by Airon:

Asunto: RE: Ahora toca escribir con el codo

Subject: RE: Now we have to write with the elbow

iii **Los cojones voy yo a escribir con el codo el nick de apriliano!!!** Un mes aquí hasta conseguirlo.

the balls going I am to write with the elbow the nick of apriliano!!! One month here till succeed that

(Internet, <<http://debates.motos.coches.net/showthread.php?t=227542>>, 31/12/2009)

(15)

'Get out!' she yelled while she still had breath, but, even as she started backing rapidly, she knew he had no intention whatsoever of obeying her orders. 'Leave me alone!' she screamed [...]. 'Like hell I will, sweetheart!' he snarled savagely. (Jessica Steele, *His woman*, 1985, BNC)

(16)

Mari: ser du har lyst jeg bare okei da så tok jeg bilnøkklene og satt meg inn så bare satt der
see you want to and I only OK then so then I took the car keys and got in and just sat there
nei nei jeg tør ikke du begynner å le av meg
no no I don't dare to. you start to laugh at me
sier **jeg ikke faen om jeg skal kjøre** han jo jo du har lyst,
say I not the devil if I drive he yes yes you want to
ja jeg har lyst men jeg tør ikke det er dritflaut ikke sant
yes I want to but I don't dare to it is shit embarrassing right?
det er første gang jeg kjører uten kjørelærer skjerp deg da.
it is the first time I drive without a driving teacher come on then.
han bare:= herregud jeg skal ikke le av at han lo ikke (OSVGGUJE1)
he only:= Lord God I am not going to laugh at it he didn't laugh

b) on other occasions, the discursive echo comes before the PU, punctuated by a (short or long) pause:

(17)

yo_jess_18 dijo en 14/04/08 9:10

[I_Jess_18 said on 14/04/08 9:10](#)

[GuaPooooOO**](#)

[BeauTiiiiFuuul](#)muaAA/LL

(Kissing sounds?)

tQ* =)

I love you =)

flamenkito_18 dijo en 14/04/08 12:08

[flamenkito_18 said on 14/04/08 12:08](#)

guapo una mierda eres más feo q la mierda pallaso ..

beautiful a shit you are uglier tan shit clown

tú siges hablando con la jesika k ya t lo encontras gilipollas

you continue speaking with the Jessica because you'll find it stupid

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si kieres t pones en mi fotolo i me dices algo sumnormal...

if you want to you can put yourself into my foto and say something you retarded

(Internet, <<http://www.fotolog.com.br/tokeh/33738473>>, 14/4/2008)

(18)

"Here is a man who will be honest with the American public." Who are you trying to kid? Over the last year he's has been very busy transforming the Straight Talk Express into the Forked Tongue Special. **Honest, my eye!**

(Internet, <http://blog.washingtonpost.com/earlywarning/2008/01/mccain_is_national_security_bu.html>, 7/3/2008, enTenTen)

(19)

'Agatha Christie wouldn't get away with that title these days, would she, Mrs Fear?' Olive said, addressing me: 'it 's not politically correct . Anyone saying that these days would end up in front of the Race Relations people.' [...] Everyone nodded. 'Stupid bloody nonsense, it is,' George then opined ponderously in between munchings: 'Race Relations my foot! A bit over two per cent of the population of this country belongs to an ethnic minority. They have far too much to say for themselves [...]'.

(Internet, <<http://www.onlineoriginals.com/showitem.asp?itemID=257>>, 13/272008, enTenTen)

(20)

Eva: skal vi det,
shall we it

Karo: så vi må nesten gjøre det nå.
we must almost do it now

Eva: nei hvis vi ikke vil for **helvete** da.
not if we don't want to for hell then

Karo: slem lite hyggelig Tor
bad little nice Tor

Eva: lissom hvordan det med slem lite (VEVGJU2)
like how this with bad little

(21)

Borja: a qué hora puedes quedar tú (MALCE2)
at what time can you meet you

Ana: tú a que hora puedes quedar/
you at what time can you meet?

Borja: si mañana es huelga. **que tienes que estudiar ni pollas**
but tomorrow there's strike what do you have to study nor dicks

Ana: eso digo yo
that what say I

Carlos: es verdad
is true

Ana: mañana estudiamos todo el día y punto
tomorrow we study the whole day and full stop

Carlos: claro
of course

Ana: vale pues entonces te lo damos hoy a qué hora pues/. (MALCE2)
ok then we'll give it to you today at what time then

(22)

Johan: det er lite ord dere finner på nå.
there are few words you invent now

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- Jørgen: (latter) nei bomse og brillefint er ord vi bruker om prøven.
(laughter) no bomse og brillefint are words we use about the test
- Johan: nei ikke brill% jo brillefint. den prøven gikk **faen meg ikke** brillefint jeg bomsa.
no not great great. that test didn't go the devil me well well I messed it up
- Carl: men:= (utyd)
but
- Jørgen: #boms er det motsatte av brillefint. vi gjør noe festlig vi spaserer litt rundt.
boms is the opposite of brillefint let's do something fun we walk a little around
- Johan: kan vi ikke gå hjem til en av oss da (VEVGGU1)
Could we not go home to one of us then

Nevertheless, the speaker may not always explicitly cite the preceding discourse segment; rather, the reference to the disputed passage may be implicit in the phraseological unit. Such occasions favor the use of the PUs addressed here as independent statements – that is, as routine formulae (see Section 3.2) – which function as interventions in themselves or as discreet parts of speech within longer interventions, as in (23)-(25).

(23)

- Ana: che es que eso para que cuando porque que
hi there this is for when because that
a partir de hoy ya sacan los paquetes con la [con los dibujos de los]
from today on they they take out the packages with the drawings of
- Borja: [eso es el año que viene]
that's the year that comes
- Ana: pulmones en cáncer y todo eso sabes y pa no ver los dibujos tía
lungs with cancer and all that you know and in order to not see the drawings aunt
- Borja: [pues para no ver los dibujos]
but to not to see the drawings
- Ana: [es que lo han hecho] para eso pa no ver los dibujos sabeeees/
is that what they have done just for that in order not to see the drawings you know
- Borja: pues no compres tabaco tío
then don't buy tobacco uncle
- Ana: ya **una polla** (MABPE2)
yeah a dick

(24)

Pizza Boy snapped his gum. "I'm done painting the trailer, Steven. Wanna see? It's hella cool." </p><p> Steven glanced at all the paint colors on Pizza Boy's clothes. "I thought I told you to buy canary yellow paint, Pizza Boy." </p><p> Pizza Boy shrugged. "**No way**. That's hella lame." </p><p> Steven chewed his nail nervously. "Then... the trailer is not painted canary yellow as I requested?"

(Internet, <http://www.unknownhighway.com/trailerpark.php?id= P6492>, 12/2/2008, enTenTen)

(25)

- Mikke: blitt dytta uti a=v Agnete, = det var kaldt. == faen meg april asså.
was pushed into the water b=y Agnete, it was cold == the devil me April right
ikke faen bade da igjen
not the devil bathe then again
- Thomas: he he he trur jeg (OSVGGUJE1)
he he believe I

Examples (23)-(25) show once more the discursive versatility and variability of this set of PUs across all three languages: as particles expressing modality, they may be placed at different points in the phrase

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(before or after the discursive echo of the disputed segment); and as routine or fixed expressions, they may function at the highest level of syntactic and conversational independence.

6. Conclusions

This article has provided an overview of a set of PUs used to express disagreement in Spanish, English and Norwegian from a range of perspectives: phraseological characteristics, modal and interactive functions, conversational functioning, metalinguistic value. The line of argument here rests on real examples of the use of such expressions taken in the main from oral corpora of adolescent language (COLAm, COLT, UNO), which disclose a distinctive form of politeness and mode of (dis)agreement (see Section 4).

There are several significant points of comparison that may be traced across the three languages on the basis of this preliminary account in relation to:

- a) the formal and semantic-figurative structure of these PUs expressing disagreement; on the one hand, the same type of lexical bases – lexemes with negative connotations that codify the modal meaning of negation (see, in particular, Section 3.1) – are selected; and on the other hand, such expressions obey common patterns of formal variation, functioning as PUs containing blank spaces and/or phraseological formulae (see Section 3.3);
- b) and the pragmatic-discursive behavior of this set of phraseological units which, in addition to setting the same type of modal value (the expression of metapragmatic disagreement or negation), displays similarities as regards syntactic-discursive functioning – flexibility in their use as (in)dependent statements and in combination with the discursive echo of a previous, disputed segment of discourse.

Nevertheless, the most significant differences have been discerned at the level of productivity in each language as regards the formulation of phraseological units expressing disagreement. In this context, the Spanish language has been shown to stand out in terms of both the number of specific PUs articulating this modal function and the range of formal variation enacted by the creativity of Spanish speakers (see, in particular, Section 3.3).

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