

## ***Reproach as a core value: the analysis of the communicative potential of the routine formulae *qué broma es esta* and *de qué vas****

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**REPROACH AS A CORE VALUE: THE ANALYSIS OF THE COMMUNICATIVE POTENTIAL OF THE ROUTINE FORMULAE *QUÉ BROMA ES ESTA* AND *DE QUÉ VAS***

**ABSTRACT:** Despite the fact that routine formulae are idiomatic expressions “whose occurrence is closely bound to specific social situations” (Coulmas, 1979: 240), there is a scarcity of studies analysing Spanish phraseologisms from a pragmalinguistic perspective, let alone within the framework of Speech Act Theory. For this reason, we believe that lexicographic information on their functions is incomplete and lacking in precision. Therefore, this paper aims to explore the communicative potential of two routine formulae —*qué broma es esta* and *de qué vas*— and to establish the boundaries between three possible Face Threatening Acts (FTA) that these formulae may convey. To do so, we analysed 141 examples extracted from the corpus *esTenTen18*, among other methods, by examining the illocutionary force of the acts performed when these expressions are used. The results show that both expressions primarily convey reproach, in contrast to the information provided in various Spanish dictionaries.

**KEYWORDS:** routine formulae; reproach; speech acts; FTA; communicative functions.

**SUMMARY:** 1. Introduction. 2. FTA: reprimand, complaint and reproach. 3. Methodology. 4. The analysis of RF. 5. Conclusions. 6. References.

**REPROCHE COMO VALOR NUCLEAR: EL ANÁLISIS DEL POTENCIAL COMUNICATIVO DE LAS FÓRMULAS RUTINARIAS *QUÉ BROMA ES ESTA* Y *DE QUÉ VAS***

**RESUMEN:** Pese a que las fórmulas rutinarias son expresiones idiomáticas “whose occurrence is closely bound to specific social situations” (Coulmas, 1979: 240), en español son muy pocos los estudios que se centran en el análisis de estos fraseologismos desde una perspectiva pragmalingüística, y mucho menos desde la Teoría de los Actos de Habla. Por esta razón, creemos que la información lexicográfica sobre sus funciones no es del todo precisa y completa. Así pues, este trabajo pretende examinar el potencial comunicativo de dos fórmulas rutinarias —*qué broma es esta* y *de qué vas*— y establecer los límites entre tres FTA que estas fórmulas pueden vehicular. Para ello, hemos analizado 141 ejemplos extraídos del corpus *esTenTen18* examinando, entre otros, la fuerza ilocucionaria de los actos que se realizan cuando se emplean estas expresiones. Los resultados demuestran que el valor nuclear de ambas expresiones es el reproche, contrario a la información que ofrecen distintos diccionarios de español.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** fórmulas rutinarias; reproche; actos de habla; FTA; funciones comunicativas.

**SUMARIO:** 1. Introducción. 2. FTA: reprimenda, queja y reproche. 3. Metodología. 4. Análisis de las FR. 5. Conclusiones. 6. Referencias.

**LE REPROCHE COMME VALEUR FONDAMENTALE: L'ANALYSE DU POTENTIEL COMMUNICATIF DES FORMULES DE ROUTINE *QUÉ BROMA ES ESTA* ET *DE QUÉ VAS***

**RÉSUMÉ:** Bien que les formules de routine soient des expressions idiomatiques “whose occurrence is closely bound to specific social situations” (Coulmas, 1979 : 240), il existe en espagnol très peu d'études consacrées à l'analyse de ces phraseologismes dans une perspective pragmalinguistique, et encore moins dans le cadre de la théorie des actes de langage. C'est pourquoi nous pensons que l'information lexicographique sur leurs fonctions n'est pas totalement précise et complète. Par conséquent, cet article a pour but d'examiner le potentiel communicatif de deux formules de routine —*qué broma es esta* et *de qué vas*— et d'établir les limites entre trois FTA que ces formules peuvent véhiculer. Pour ce faire, nous avons analysé 141 exemples extraits du corpus *esTenTen18* en examinant, entre autres, la force illocutoire des actes accomplis lors de l'utilisation de ces expressions. Les résultats montrent que la valeur centrale des deux expressions est le reproche, contrairement à l'information fournie dans différents dictionnaires espagnols.

**MOTS-CLÉS:** des formules de routine; reproche; acte de parole; FTA; fonctions communicatives.

**SOMMAIRE:** 1. Introduction. 2. FTA: réprimande, plainte et reproche. 3. Méthodologie. 4. Analyse des FR. 5. Conclusions. 6. Références.

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## 1. Introduction

Routine formulae (RF, from this point on) are phraseological units “whose occurrence is closely bound to specific social situations and which are [...] highly predictable in a communicative course of events” (Coulmas, 1979: 240). Typically, they are pluriverbal units with a certain degree of idiomaticity and fixedness (although not always) and their definition is explained through the loss of their primary denotative meaning (Corpas Pastor, 1996). Consequently, their real meaning is always associated with the functional values they convey in specific communicative situations.

With regard to Spanish, RF have always been loosely defined and categorised into different groups, usually without any clear boundaries between them (Alvarado Ortega, 2010). Moreover, they have received scant attention, especially compared to other phraseological units such as collocations, locutions or even proverbs (when considering phraseology in a wider sense). Their treatment in Spanish has been deemed “testimonial and superficial” (Corpas Pastor, 1996), leading to them being regarded as a “pending task in phraseology and didactic lexicographic praxis” (Wotjak, 2005: 331). Additionally, their theoretical development has been gradual and, although there have been some advances throughout the last two decades (*cfr.* Alvarado Ortega, 2010; Amigot Castillo, 2014; Núñez Bayo, 2016 or Tulumirović, 2021), we believe that many unanswered questions remain, especially regarding the communicative values of these phraseologisms.

The lack of information on the functionality of RF in both theoretical and practical terms forms the basis for the main hypothesis of our study: we contend that the information provided in Spanish phraseological dictionaries in Spain is not entirely accurate, which may be the result of the lack of in-depth theoretical analysis of the speech acts that RF convey. What is more, apart from the work of Alvarado Ortega (2010), which focuses on the functionality of RF with regards to their modality and formal characteristics, there are no studies in Spanish that investigate their functioning principles, let alone the relationship between these types of phraseologisms and the speech acts they convey in different communicative situations. Thus, there is a clear need for a more precise analytical model that allows for a pragmatic approach emphasizing the functionality of these units rather than their structure, levels of fixedness and idiomaticity, which is still a common praxis in the analysis of phraseologisms.

In order to address this issue, we analyse one specific communicative function and two RF whose core value can be described as *reproach*. Our rationale for choosing this particular function stems from the fact that, generally speaking, this act has been widely neglected and often mistaken for other functions like reprimand or complaint.

Thus, the first aim of the study is to define reproach based on Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) and to examine possible differences between this act and other acts which have been mistakenly treated as equivalents for reproach<sup>1</sup>, as previously explained.

The second goal of this paper is to closely examine two RF: *qué broma es esta* and *de qué vas*. We have selected these two RF in particular because of their vague phraseographic definitions in the Spanish language: both have commonly been attributed expressive functions, which, in our view, is not totally accurate, because we believe they possess a wider range of communicative values. Moreover, we argue that, despite their functional versatility, their core value is reproach not only due to the double component this act conveys —expressive and directive—, but also because they fully satisfy the conditions of reproach —in line with Searle’s theoretical approach.

Finally, achieving these objectives will provide us with new insights into the methodological issues concerning RF and address lingering doubts surrounding them in the Spanish language, at least regarding multifunctional RF such as the ones analysed in this study.

## 2. FTA: reprimand, complaint and reproach

As previously explained, reproach is often inaccurately considered an equivalent of seemingly similar acts such as reprimand, complaint, criticism, etc. This misconception possibly derives from the fact that they all belong to the same group of speech acts that *threaten* the hearer’s face or, more specifically, the hearer’s positive face, according to the speech act classification by Brown and Levinson (1987), as shown in the following figure (Figure 1):

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<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly, the precise delimitation of these acts is required before going on to analyse these acts’ concrete realisations contained in specific utterances like the phraseologisms in question.

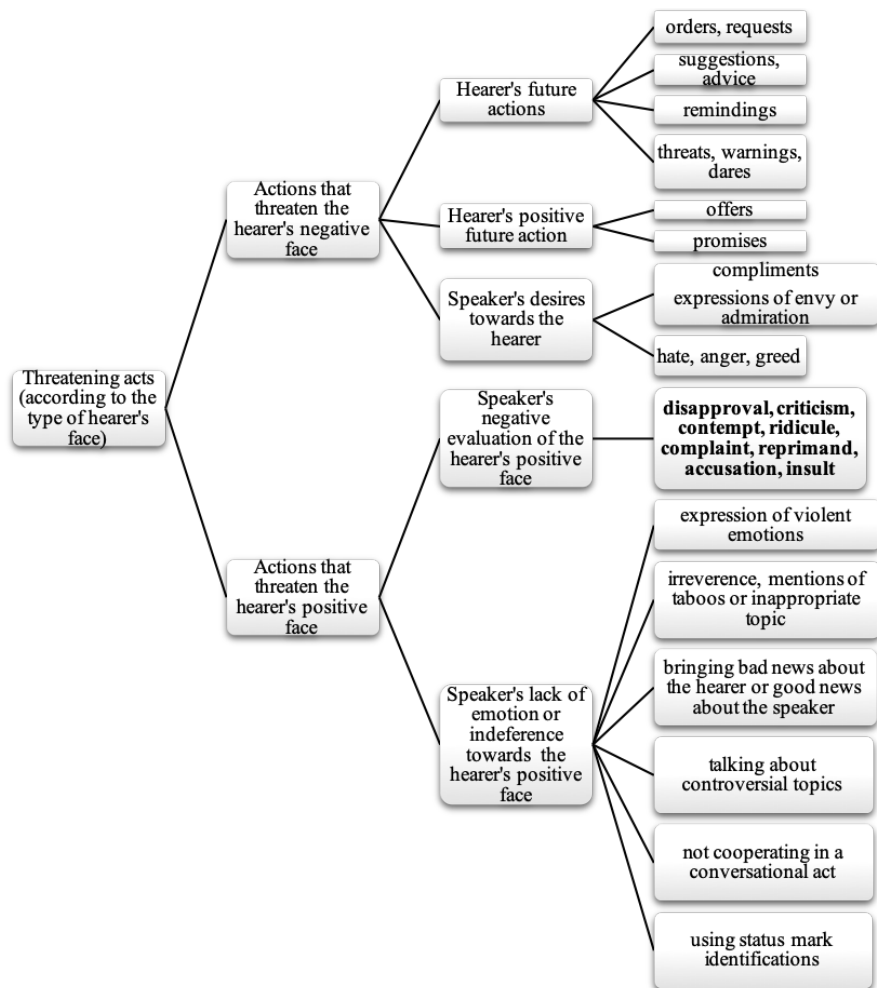


Figure 1. Speech acts classification (Brown and Levinson, 1987)

As can be seen, reproach is not mentioned explicitly, but we can assume that it belongs to the group of acts which allow the speaker to negatively evaluate the hearer's positive face. These acts indicate that the speaker does not "like or want one or more hearer's wants, acts, personal characteristics, goods, beliefs or values" (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 66). While they may look similar in terms of their basic functioning principle, we believe that there are important differences among them which need to be addressed bearing in mind the specific conditions of each act. In this paper, we will examine two of these acts — complaint and reprimand—, in addition to the primary focus of our

study, reproach. The rest of the *FTA* from this group will be omitted from further analysis because their illocutionary force is much more easily distinguished.

## 2.1. THE SPEECH ACT OF REPRIMAND

Haverkate (1988) describes reprimand as an “inherently impolite act” since it is “performed by the speakers with the intrinsic purpose of attacking or undermining the hearer’s face” (Haverkate, 1988 *apud* Ahmadian and Eslami-Rasekh, 2011: 1). In other words, reprimand induces “the interlocutor to refrain from acting in a certain way as it opposes the interlocutor’s interests and thwarts his/her intentions” (Ahmadian and Eslami-Rasekh, 2011: 2). Additionally, the speaker expresses dissatisfaction with the hearer’s actions and at the same time accuses the hearer of wrong actions (Vanderveken, 1990). Therefore, when reprimanding, the speaker threatens the hearer’s face in two ways: (a) there is a direct imposition on the hearer’s will and (b) the speaker implies that the hearer’s past actions are wrong.

Reprimand is an impositive act because the speaker imposes behaviour rules upon the hearer (Solís Casco, 2006). However, it has a certain regressive effect: instead of indicating merely how the hearer should behave in the future (as in advising or suggesting), the speaker expresses how the hearer should have behaved in a specific past situation, thus also indicating how she/he should behave in the future, in order to avoid repeating the unacceptable behaviour. According to Solís Casco (2006), the ultimate objective of reprimand is to re-establish a conduct that aligns with current social norms, with the speaker acting as the *spokesperson* of a community or a group within which the infractions took place (Solís Casco, 2006: 611-612).

For this to happen, the spokesperson needs to have some form of authority over the hearer. That is, he/she needs to be in a higher position in a society/specific group, or to feel that he/she has the right to address or correct the hearer’s behaviour. This pattern can occur, for instance, in parent-child relationships, teacher-student relationships and employer-employee relationships<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> García (1996) claims that there are different strategies applied in this act by both the ones who reprimand and the ones who are reprimanded, and that there are also some important sociocultural differences between them. For example, the author states that the men who participated in the study were much more authoritarian than the women since they preferred the use of strategies emphasising their authority over the ones they reprimand (their employees in this case) such as direct threat, punishment and warnings. The author also found that the men took the role “I am your boss” much more commonly than the women, who preferred to act as “I am your friend” with their subordinates. Moreover, the study found that participants between 46 and 75 years of age were “more forceful in asserting their authoritative role” than their younger peers (García, 1996: 694).

In terms of structure, Solís Casco (2003: 612) suggests that there are three basic subcomponents of the act of reprimand:

1. The element of attention: an introductory expression that the speaker uses to call the hearer's attention. In Spanish it could be *oiga* or *eh* or even an insult;
2. The nucleus: the reprimand itself; the justification of the reprimand;
3. The comment: the complaint about the improper behaviour, threats, curses, opinions, etc.

Furthermore, for this act to take place, the following conditions need to be met:

REPRIMAND	
Propositional condition	<i>H</i> 's past action (s) <sup>3</sup> .
Preparatory condition	1. <i>S</i> has the authority and the right to react to <i>A</i> done by <i>H</i> . 2. <i>S</i> believes that <i>H</i> does not follow the behaviour rules established within a community/group. 3. <i>S</i> believes that <i>A</i> is not good for <i>H</i> . 4. <i>S</i> wants <i>H</i> to stop doing <i>A</i> .
Sincerity condition	<i>S</i> wants <i>H</i> to stop doing/correct <i>A</i> .
Essential condition	The utterance of <i>S</i> counts as a direct attempt to make <i>H</i> (not) do <i>A</i> .
Comment:	<i>S</i> needs to have authority over <i>H</i> and it is <i>S</i> who decides which <i>H</i> 's actions should be suppressed and improved by <i>H</i> .

Table 1. Conditions for the speech act of reprimand

## 2.2. THE SPEECH ACT OF COMPLAINT

The second *FTA* analysed in this study is complaint, defined as a speech act that expresses the speaker's negative feelings towards the hearer's prior actions or comments (or the actions that the hearer was expected to have taken) that deviated from the expected behaviour within a particular culture (Toledo Azócar, 2016: 91). In other words, complaint is an expression of annoyance or discomfort (censorship) as a reaction to past or present actions whose consequences are regarded as unfavourable by the speaker (Olshtain and Weinbach, 1993).

Additionally, complaint is an act that threatens both the hearer's and the speaker's public face:

<sup>3</sup> *H*: hearer, *S*: speaker, *A*: act/action.

Se trata de un acto amenazante a la imagen tanto del que la recibe como también del que la emite. Respecto del primero, invade el espacio del interlocutor y atenta contra su libertad de acción del que recibe la queja puesto que esta expresión de disgusto, no es inocente, persigue que el interlocutor solucione el problema y repare el daño ocasionado. En efecto el hablante demanda una acción compensatoria. La imagen del hablante, por su parte, queda también expuesta porque puede verse en este contexto como impositivo e intransigente. (Toledo Azócar, 2016: 98)

In contrast with the speech act of reprimand—which requires a vertical difference in authority—, complaint allows for a more flexible range of interpersonal relationships, both on a vertical and a horizontal scale. In other words, the occurrence of complaint is not constrained by any hierarchical differences that may exist between interlocutors: a complaint can be made by anyone and about anyone, irrespective of their position in the social hierarchy. Instead of authority, it seems more appropriate to talk about *social distance*<sup>4</sup> with special regard to the affective factor between interlocutors. According to Boxer (1993), we tend to express complaint or disagreement more frequently and more categorically with the people with whom we have a close (intimate) relationship<sup>5</sup>, as opposed to strangers, acquaintances or even friends. In other words, the closer the relationship between the speaker and the hearer, the more frequent and the more explicit complaints become.

Another aspect about complaints worth bearing in mind is that they can be carried out both directly and indirectly. A *direct complaint* (DC) can be distinguished from an *indirect complaint* (IC) based on four criteria (Decock and Depraetere, 2018: 34):

1. P (= action which speaker judges to be bad for him/her) is mentioned implicitly or explicitly;
2. X's (= the complainer's) negative evaluation of P is expressed explicitly;
3. Y's (= the complaine'e's) agentive involvement is implicitly or explicitly expressed, and
4. the negative evaluation of both Y's action and Y himself are implicitly or explicitly expressed.

In accordance with these criteria, eight different points can be identified on the *indirectness-directness* continuum, with the first being

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<sup>4</sup> Boxer (1993) explains that social distance is “an important sociolinguistic variable in the analysis of speech behaviour” that is used to measure the degree of friendship or intimacy between the interlocutors and its effect on the communication in general, but also on the courtesy and the deference they show to each other (Boxer, 1993: 103).

<sup>5</sup> An intimate relationship would be placed at one end of the *social distance continuum* and the relationship with a complete stranger would be placed at the opposite side of the continuum. In contrast, friendships and the relationships with acquaintances would fall in the middle (Boxer, 1993: 104).



the most indirect (for example, “by performing the utterance U in the presence of Y, X implies that he knows that P has happened and he implies that Y did P”) and the last being the most direct (for example, “X explicitly asserts that Y is bad”, openly stating that the hearer is wrong). Consequently, the difference between a DC and an IC depends on the speaker’s behaviour regarding the propositional content and the degree of responsibility attributed to the hearer by the speaker: “ICs differ from instances of DCs in that the addressee is not held responsible for a perceived offense” (Boxer, 1993: 106).

Finally, complaint is considered to have taken place when the following conditions are met (Deveci, 2015; Toledo Azócar, 2016):

COMPLAINT	
Propositional condition	<i>H</i> 's past action (s) or actions that <i>H</i> was expected to have done, but did not.
Preparatory condition	1. <i>H</i> performs an action which <i>S</i> finds unacceptable or <i>H</i> fails to perform an action that <i>S</i> believes should have been performed. 2. <i>S</i> believes that <i>A</i> does not benefit <i>H</i> . 3. <i>S</i> wants <i>H</i> to rectify <i>A</i> or to compensate for the harm that <i>H</i> may have caused.
Sincerity condition	1. <i>S</i> wants <i>H</i> to admit that <i>H</i> has performed <i>A</i> and to rectify <i>A</i> . 2. <i>S</i> believes that he/she deserves compensation.
Essential condition	1. The utterance of <i>S</i> counts as an expression of discomfort/resentment towards <i>A/H</i> . 2. The utterance of <i>S</i> counts as a direct attempt to make <i>H</i> do or modify <i>A</i> .
Comment:	By expressing his/her discomfort/resentment, <i>S</i> attempts to make <i>H</i> modify <i>A</i> because if it is not modified, <i>A</i> may reoccur in the future, potentially intensifying <i>S</i> 's discomfort/resentment.

Table 2. Conditions for the speech act of complaint

As we can see, there are certain similarities between the speech acts of complaint and reprimand. Nevertheless, there are two key differences: (a) complaint allows for a wider range of social relationships on both vertical and horizontal scales and (b) the ultimate intention of the speaker is not the same. Specifically, in the case of complaint, the speaker aims to stop the hearer’s actions and, therefore, to alleviate the negative feelings experienced as a result of those actions. In contrast, the act of reprimand is performed in order to re-establish civic rules within a group/community, regardless of the affective implications the hearer’s actions may have had on the speaker.



### 2.3. THE SPEECH ACT OF REPROACH

Like complaint and reprimand, reproach is considered an *FTA*, since it represents a direct threat to the hearer's public face. In this case, the speaker explicitly expresses disappointment or discomfort regarding the hearer's past actions:

[...] actions such as reproaching, admonishing or reprimanding are rather familiar to any competent member of our society. All these terms normally refer to a set of practices whereby speaker *A* addresses *B* to display a certain disappointment regarding something *B* has done, and which *A* treats as inappropriate in a specific situation and, as such, reproachable. (Margutti, 2011: 310)

Therefore, a *reproachable* situation occurs when the hearer's actions are considered inappropriate and unacceptable by the speaker and seen as a transgression and infraction of the *social expectations*, thus "invoking moral rules and appropriate behaviour" (Günthner, 1996, *apud* Margutti, 2011: 310). Apart from the inappropriateness of the hearer's actions, the emotional weight of reproach is increased due to the explicit or implicit expression of disappointment and discomfort. For these reasons, a reproach can be defined as (Margutti, 2011: 310-311):

1. A direct action, because it appears as a direct response to the hearer (as opposed to complaint, which can be expressed either directly —to the hearer— or indirectly —to another person about the hearer's previous actions);
2. An immediate linkage to the action that is being reproached through numerous verbal and non-verbal means;
3. An explicit manifestation of how relevant it is for the speaker that the hearer's inappropriate actions cease.

In line with these ideas, we can say that reproach is *unidirectional* —it always goes from the speaker to the hearer—, *direct* —the speaker refers to the hearer directly and openly— and *directive* —the speaker's ultimate objective is to make the hearer remedy his/her actions which have caused the negative feelings in the first place. Thus, two components —expressive and directive—converge in the realisation of reproach, highlighting its communicative complexity. In other words, reproach cannot be described as merely expressive (as some may believe) since there is a clear perlocutionary effect exerted (or intended) once reproach has taken place. Likewise, reproach cannot be described as merely directive because the speaker's motivation for urging the hearer to take action to remedy the situation stems from the negative feelings caused by the hearer's prior actions, which is clearly manifested.

The same principle can also be seen in the Figure 2:

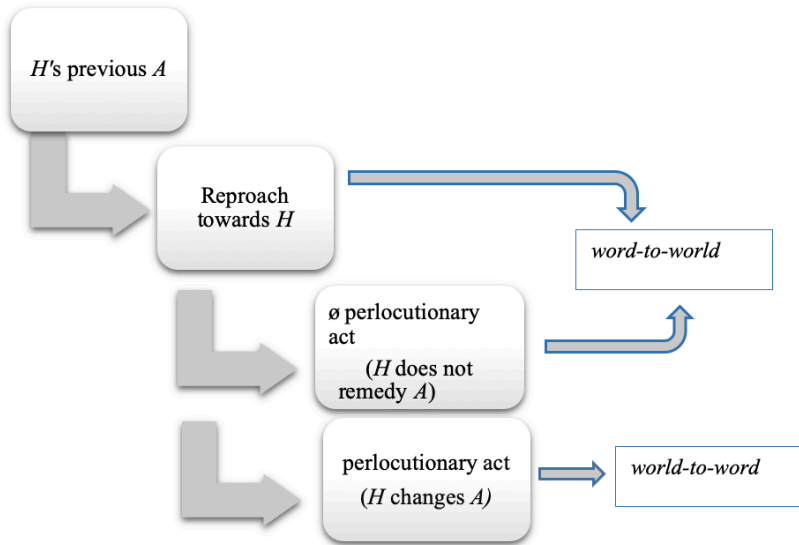


Figure 2. Direction of fit (reproach) (1)

As we see it, reproach is contingent on a past action carried out by the hearer which does not satisfy the speaker (for all the above-mentioned reasons). Initially, the act of reproach emerges as a response to that action, that is, the speaker's actions adjust to the current state of affairs caused by the hearer (*word-to-world*). If the hearer does not rectify his/her actions after being reproached, the act has not fulfilled its directive function and it becomes a mere expression of discomfort/disagreement, which, once again, adjusts to the given situation (*word-to-world*). If, on the contrary, the hearer acknowledges the speaker's reproach, and modifies his/her actions, then a new state of affairs is achieved (a direct result of the act of reproaching), consequently changing the direction of fit to *world-to-word*. Despite Searle's assertion that expressive acts do not possess any direction of fit—since the truth of the expressed proposition is presupposed—we contend that reproach is an expressive act with a direction of fit.

As explained, when reproaching, the speaker has two aims, one of which is to express the feelings caused by the hearer's previous actions. However, the speaker does so because, ultimately, he/she does not share the hearer's truth or the truth of the expressed proposition, which also makes it an assertive act. Conversely, when the hearer performs the actions that does not satisfy the speaker, he/she does so out of a belief that that is how the things should be or are, hence, the hearer's truth and the speaker's truth do not coincide.

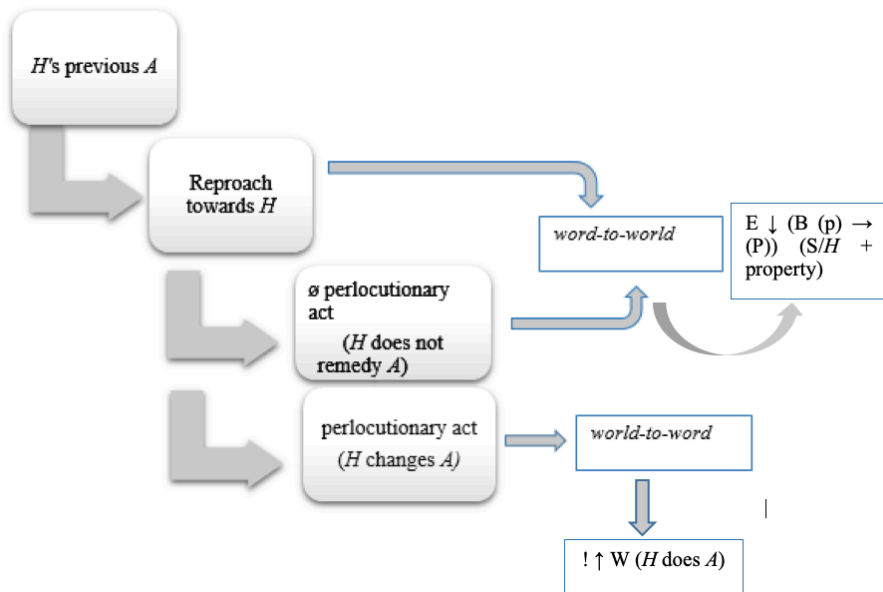


Figure 3. Direction of fit (reproach) (2)

On the one hand, when we emphasise the affective factor contained in reproach, it can be represented as:  $E \downarrow (B(p) \rightarrow (P)) (S/H + \text{property})$ , where  $E$  stands for *expressive*,  $\downarrow$  indicates direction of fit *word-to-world* and  $B$  stands for *belief* about the proposition  $p$ , which is also the cause of the psychological state related to the content  $P$  for both the speaker and the hearer (initially the speaker's, but later also the hearer's —after being reproached). On the other hand, when we highlight the directive factor contained in the reproach, it is represented as:  $! \uparrow W (H \text{ does } A)$ , where  $!$  stands for *directiveness*,  $\uparrow$  refers to direction of fit *world-to-word* and  $W$  refers to *want* (the speaker wants the hearer to do  $A$ ).

With regard to the conditions of this act, we believe that reproach occurs when the following conditions are met<sup>6</sup>:

<sup>6</sup> We should bear in mind that, despite the fact that we are dealing here with just two possible realisations of the act of reproaching —the selected RF—, there is a vast array of possible linguistic and non-linguistic manifestations of this act. However, the scope of this research does not allow us to focus on all of them. With that in mind, our goal is, on the one hand, to describe the working principle of this act and, on the other hand, to examine whether and how these two RF are used in everyday situations to fulfil this function.

REPROACH	
Propositional condition	<i>H</i> 's past actions ( <i>A</i> ) which can be the result of the reiteration of <i>A</i> or the accumulation of similar acts in the past.
Preparatory condition	1. <i>H</i> carries out <i>A</i> . 2. <i>S</i> believes that <i>A</i> is unacceptable and inappropriate. 3. <i>S</i> expresses his/her discomfort. 4. <i>S</i> indicates that <i>H</i> should modify or cease <i>A</i> .
Sincerity condition	<i>S</i> wants <i>H</i> to modify/cease <i>A</i> . <sup>7</sup>
Essential condition	1. The utterance of <i>S</i> counts as an expression of discomfort over <i>H</i> 's actions. 2. The utterance of <i>S</i> counts as a direct attempt to make <i>H</i> modify/cease <i>A</i> .
Comment:	It is important for <i>S</i> that <i>H</i> change his/her actions because, if not, <i>A</i> will reoccur, and <i>S</i> 's discomfort/resentment will be intensified.

Table 3. Conditions for the speech act of reproach

Lastly, the analysis of the speech act of reproach together with complaint and reprimand leads us to the following conclusions:

1. All three acts are *FTA* because they threaten the hearer's positive face.
2. All three acts can be described from a dual perspective. On the one hand, they are all expressive acts that express discomfort/disappointment regarding the hearer's actions, and, on the other hand, they are also directive acts, since their goal is to achieve a change in the hearer's actions/behaviour. Nevertheless, the expressive component plays a more important role in the case of complaint, whereas the directive factor is more important in the case of reprimand and reproach.
3. There is certain parallelism in the manner in which all three acts are carried out: the hearer performs an action → the action provokes a negative feeling in the speaker (for various reasons: because the speaker thinks that the action does not benefit the hearer, because he/she thinks that certain behavioural rules have been infringed, because the speaker believes his/her truth

<sup>7</sup> Vallejo Zapata (2021) offers a rather similar view: "S does not want *A* to occur" (Vallejo Zapata, 2021: 224). However, it is necessary to highlight two important aspects of this idea. On the one hand, by defining it in this manner, the author deliberately excludes the role of the hearer and his actions and intentions, which could give a wrong impression that he/she is not relevant to the succession of the communicative event. On the other hand, *A* has already occurred, so, when the speaker reproaches, he/she does so in order to *remedy* the situation (*A*) so that it does not happen again and not to prevent it from happening in the first place.

does not coincide with the hearer's truth, etc.) → the speaker expresses his/her emotions → the hearer decides to (a) modify his/her actions or (b) ignore the speaker.

4. Reprimand is the only act which requires a vertical difference in authority; complaint and reproach depend more on the social distance between the interlocutors.
5. Generally speaking, complaint and reproach are the most similar, but they differ in the way they are performed. While reproach is always carried out directly to the person who is responsible for the actions in question, complaint does not necessarily have to be directed to the person whose actions the speaker is complaining about. Moreover, when reproaching, the speaker indicates in a very transparent and direct way who the responsible person is (the hearer), which does not always happen with complaint, since it can be expressed in a more implicit and mitigating manner.

### 3. Methodology

Now that we have established the boundaries among the three speech acts and defined the conditions of the speech act of reproach, we now turn to a pragmalinguistic analysis of two RF that have, in our opinion, multifunctional values, among which reproach may be considered the most common, as we will attempt to demonstrate in the following analysis.

In order to determine the accuracy of lexicographic sources regarding these specific RF, we employed the following steps:

1. overview of the lexicographic information offered on *qué bromas esta* and *de qué vas*;
2. selection of real-life examples extracted from the corpus;
3. analysis of their core values in line with the theoretical framework.

In the initial part of the study, we consulted six of the most common phraseological dictionaries in Spanish—*Diccionario fraseológico documentado del español actual* (DFDEA), *Diccionario fraseológico del español moderno* (DFEM), *Diccionario de dichos y expresiones del español* (DDEE), *Gran diccionario de frases hechas* (GDFH), *Diccionario de español coloquial* (DEC), *Diccionario de dichos y frases hechas* (DDFH)—and one general dictionary—*Diccionario de Lengua Española* (DLE). Our focus was determining the communicative functions attributed to the expressions in question, as well as any other information on their functions and usage, such as their type/register, possible variants and illustrative examples.

In order to validate the lexicographic information we obtained, we extracted real-life examples from the corpus *esTenTen18* (*Spanish Web*

2018)<sup>8</sup> using the Sketch Engine® tool. The decision to use this corpus was based on two factors. For one, the corpus contains around 20 billion words and 57 million different types of text entries, making it the largest Spanish-language corpus available. Moreover, it encompasses multiple diatopic varieties and covers a diverse range of contexts and communicative situations. In addition, the Sketch Engine® tool provides a very detailed context for each one of the cases. We opted for the search option *KWIC* (*Key Word in Context*), more specifically *KWIC concordance*, because of the way it allows for a complete overview and analysis of the general context but also the cotext of the examples of how these two phraseologisms are used in Spanish.

In total, we found more than a thousand tokens for these two expressions, a substantial majority of which contain the RF *de qué vas*, as shown in the following table (Table 4):

	<i>qué broma es esta</i>	<i>de qué vas</i>
Number of hits	88	963
Number of hits per million tokens	0	0.05
Percent of whole corpus	4.287e-7%	0.000004915%
Corpus size (tokens)	19,593,089,777	19,593,089,777

Table 4. Search results, *Spanish Web 2018*

Bearing in mind the scope of this research, we analysed all instances of *qué broma es esta* and one hundred random instances of *de qué vas*. That way, we tried to avoid any bias or inclination towards occurrences that could be interpreted as reproach. However, in the first round of analysis, we noticed that not all the selected examples of *de qué vas* constituted institutionalised phraseological units, but free word combinations<sup>9</sup>. Consequently, we excluded them from further analysis. As a result, the final number of the examples of *de qué vas* included in the complete analysis is 53 (out of 100).

Finally, in order to facilitate the analysis, we created an index card for each one example incorporating various elements that serve as indicators of the illocutionary force of the speech acts performed when these expressions are used<sup>10</sup>. For instance, we analysed the general

<sup>8</sup> This corpus represents a collection of internet text and it belongs to the *TenTen* corpus family, which is a set of the same processed web corpora with the target size 10+ billion words (<https://www.sketchengine.eu/estenten-spanish-corpus/>).

<sup>9</sup> For example: [...] </s><s> Con más de 9.000 euros de tarifa, para llegar a ella, tienes que saber bien qué es lo que quieres, qué vas a tener y de qué vas a tener que olvidarte. </s></p><p><s> [...] (*esTenTen18*, n° token: 34092226).

<sup>10</sup> Here we have taken into consideration the ideas proposed by Searle and Vanderveken (1985) on how to carry out a semantic analysis of the illocutionary force of the acts that are performed.

communicative situation (number of interlocutors, place and time —if available), the fulfilment of the conditions of the speech acts performed, the communicative values of the utterances that precede and follow the RF and the secondary illocutionary force indicating devices —for instance, direct expressions of discomfort/disappointment, the use of insults, word order alterations and their possible influence on the semantic charge of the utterance, etc.— which helped us to identify the true functional meaning of the RF in question.

## 4. The analysis of RF

### 4.1. QUÉ BROMA ES ESTA

According to *DFDEA* (see Table 5), the only dictionary that includes an entry for *qué broma es esta*, this RF is used to express confusion or annoyance towards someone's past actions. This (limited) piece of information suggests that the phraseologism conveys an expressive act whose function is to express a feeling/emotion, thus disregarding any directive/assertive functions. However, we argue that the expressive component is just one aspect of the speech acts conveyed by *qué broma es esta* and that in many cases this RF fulfils more complex communicative functions, as will be shown in the following examples extracted from the corpus.

Dictionary	Entry	Type (reg.)	Definition	EXAMPLE
DFDEA	¿qué broma es esta?	fórm or (col)	Se usa para manifestar molestia o desconcierto ante un hecho.	“¿Qué broma es esta? -Ni broma, ni la madre del cordero. Llamará inmediatamente a Roma.”
DFEM	[ø entry]			
DDEE	[ø entry]			
DLE	[ø entry]			
GDFH	[ø entry]			
DEC	[ø entry]			
DDFH	[ø entry]			

Table 5. Lexicographic information on *qué broma es esta*

When examining the functioning conditions of the acts conveyed by *qué broma es esta*, the first thing we ought to acknowledge is that there is a clear correspondence between the linguistic sign and the utterance expressed through that sign. In this case, the use of the de-



monstrative pronoun *esta* in combination with the noun *broma* clearly indicates that there is a past action (A) that the speaker wants/needs to address, a specific *broma* that has already taken place. For this reason, we can state that the propositional condition is “*H*’s past action(s)”, which partially overlaps with the proposition in the case of reprimand, complaint and reproach. That being said, further analysis shows that the proposition can be either an action that has occurred for the first time (example 1) or a reiteration of the same action(s) (example 2), in which case it may be the reiteration itself that led to speaker’s reaction and the use of the RF.

- (1) [...] </s></p><p><s> JAVIER ¡Pero qué mierda es esta! </s></p><p><s> JAVIER se levanta enfadado y se dirige hacia la mesa. </s><s> Empieza a quitar toda la ropa que tiene encima para poder encontrar el teléfono. </s></p><p><s> JAVIER (Enfadado.) Jorge, tío ¿Qué broma es esta? </s></p><p><s> JAVIER Lo sabes perfectamente. </s><s> Y me da igual quien haya sido pero vais a venir a limpiarlo y recogerlo vosotros. </s><s> Además, ¿cómo coño habéis entrado en mi cuarto? </s></p><p><s> [...] (esTenTen18, n° token: 10059213340)11
- (2) [...] preguntaba incesantemente: ¿qué pasa aquí? </s><s> ¿por qué estos bancos dan hipotecas a mansalva? </s><s> Si el Banco tiene por objetivo ganar dinero y no perderlo, ¿por qué da préstamos a gente que sabe que no le va a poder devolver el dinero? </s><s> ¿qué broma es esta de las carencias por las que solo se amortiza el interés? </s><s> ¿por qué estas carencias se reflejan en hipotecas de gente que difícilmente va a poder abonar una cuota superior a la inicial? [...] (esTenTen18, n° token: 17881700814)

Whereas example 1 suggests that the action (not cleaning the room) has happened only once, in example 2, the action has occurred more than once, as is clearly indicated by (a) the general context and (b) the use of the adverbial locution *a mansalva* (in abundance) or the use of plurals (*hipotecas*), among others.

In addition to being a past action, the proposition is also an action which displeases the speaker as suggested by the use of commands (“vais a venir a limpiarlo y recogerlo vosotros”), vulgarisms (“qué mierda”), the repetition of syntactic structures, the focus on the incongruence of the arguments expressed by the hearer and the general tone of discomfort that is present in both examples. The same feeling can be perceived in examples 3 and 4:

- (3) [...] parece que anticipan acontecimientos en futuras películas resultan ser relevantes en la trama, concretamente las visiones de Thor, está claro que esas visiones van a desembocar en Thor: Ragnarok y

<sup>11</sup> All the examples have been transcribed without any corrections.

posiblemente en Infinity War, pero esa subtrama es clave en la creación de Vision. </s></p><p><s> Pero qué broma es esta??!!?!?!? </s><s> Quitan una hora de película porque se pasaban de las dos horas y nos ponen esta MI ER DA (porque no tiene otro nombre) de escenas eliminadas??? </s></p><p><s> [...] (esTenTen18, n° token: 5569509807)

- (4) [...] ¡Vos! </s><s> ¡VOS! dice señalando a Lord Cromwell. </s><s> ¡Vos y los vuestros sois la lacra! </s><s> ¡Lástima que no os hayan dirigido aún una pedrada certera! </s><s> ¡Y vosotros obispos, estáis podridos! </s><s> ¡Todos vosotros estáis podridos! </s><s> ¡Aduladores! </s><s> ¡Farsantes! </s><s> ¡Ladrones! </s><s> Y vos, Majestad, vos lo consentis. </s><s> ¿Qué broma es esta ahora? </s><s> ¡Lo que queréis no es acabar con la diversidad de opiniones! </s><s> ¡Os separáis de Roma únicamente para tener vos el poder! </s><s> ¡Esto es una mentira! </s><s> ¡Una farsa! </s><s> ¡Y estoy harto! </s><s> ¡HARTO! [...] (esTenTen18, n° token: 1327720434)

The speakers in 3 and 4 are obviously bothered by the hearers' actions and they express it through the use of vulgarisms (*mierda*), offences (*podridos*, *farsantes*), accusations (*ladrones*), negative value judgments about the whole situation, the explicit expression of emotions (*estoy harto*), etc.

Thanks to these two factors, we can verify the first preparatory condition: *H* carries out *A*, which immediately provokes a feeling of discomfort/anger/disappointment in the speaker. In addition, the speaker reacts precisely in order to indicate that the hearer's actions are not right and that he/she does not accept or understand such behaviour, which, corroborates the definition provided in *DFDEA*.

However, we contend that the speaker's intention goes beyond the mere expression of his/her feelings; his/her message aims to bring a change in the hearer's behaviour, thereby altering the current state of affairs and consequently the speaker's emotional state. Moreover, in all these examples, the speaker addresses the hearer in a transparent and direct way, stating that the hearer is the one to blame for the current situation, hence, that he/she is the one who should remedy it. For instance, *S*<sub>1</sub>'s words are directed at *H*<sub>1</sub> with a specific command, *S*<sub>2</sub> points at the *banco* as an *H*<sub>2</sub> and its dishonest practice with its clients, *S*<sub>3</sub> openly suggests that the changes should have never been made by *H*<sub>3</sub> and, finally, *S*<sub>4</sub> holds *H*<sub>4</sub> accountable for allowing the past actions to occur. Summarising, we can see that the message goes *unidirectionally* from the speaker to the hearer; it is expressed *directly* in a clear manner; and it constitutes a *directive*, thus fulfilling all the conditions for the speech act of reproach as previously defined.

Still, our analysis of all the examples of *qué broma es esta* found that the affective component need not be qualified as negative, thus,

the preparatory conditions and essential conditions change (see example 5):

- (5) [...] </s><s> Tenía más ropa en casa, pero si iba a quedarse en Londres para hablar con Jim... Quizá pudiera contactar con su familia paterna para quedarse con ellos o coger un traslado luego a Liverpool... </s></p><p><s> -¿Qué broma es esta? </s></p><p><s> No había carta, no había nada aparentemente. </s><s> Gwen rasgó el sobre y fue entonces cuando cayó de él un muy pequeño sobrecito cuadrado con una nota pegada que ponía “Agrándame”. </s><s> Aquello cada,vez la confundía más. </s><s> [...] (esTenTen18, n° token: 17041057571)

In this particular situation, there is a past action that caused the speaker’s reaction (i.e., surprise), but it is unclear who the responsible person is and why the actions occurred. Therefore, the speaker uses the RF to express his/her surprise at the propositional content, rather than to seek any perlocutionary effect from it, at least at this stage of the communicative event.

With this in mind (and taking into account other illocutionary force indicating devices together with the conditions of different speech acts), we were able to identify the illocutionary force, and thus the speech acts performed in the 88 instances of *qué broma es esta*.

Illocutionary force	Spanish Web 2018 (esTenTen18)	
	n	%
reproach	65	73,9
surprise	14	15,9
NA <sup>12</sup>	9	10,2
Total	88	100

Table 6. Illocutionary force of *qué broma es esta*

While it is true that a general feeling of surprise may be considered an indicating device for reproach on a larger scale, especially when the speaker receives some unexpected and unpleasant news, in the examples drawn from the corpus surprise is not always qualified as negative, allowing us to distinguish between these two illocutionary forces. Thus, each instance (each token) corresponds to only one com-

<sup>12</sup> We have considered *not applicable* the examples in which the RF is used indirectly/narratively, as in the following example: [...] </s><s> El vidente miró compungido, me cogió las manos y, con voz lastimera, dijo: </s></p><p><s> Miré a mi amigo con cara de *qué broma es esta*. </s><s> Guillermo casi se cae de la silla. </s><s> [...] (esTenTen18, n° token: 18143013206).

municative function, at least in the examples that we have encountered in the corpus.

Additionally, the results show that the functional values of the expression *qué broma es esta* range from purely expressive to expressive-directive and that the central meaning is related to the illocutionary force of reproach. This verifies one of our hypotheses: the definition of this RF provided in the phraseological dictionaries is incomplete since it excludes the directive component of the act in question.

#### 4.2. RF DE QUÉ VAS

Like *qué broma es esta*, *de qué vas* appears in only one Spanish phraseological dictionary, the *DFDEA*.

Dictionary	Entry	Type (reg.)	Definition	Example
DFDEA	¿de qué vas?	fôrm or (col)	¿Qué dices? Se usa para manifestar la protesta o rechazo ante lo que se acaba de oír.	“No deberías pasarte tanto con Fierro y con Raúl ... -Pero si no les he dicho nada, ¿de qué vas?”
DFEM	[ø entry]			
DDEE	[ø entry]			
DLE	[ø entry]			
GDFH	[ø entry]			
DEC	[ø entry]			
DDFH	[ø entry]			

Table 7. Lexicographic information on *de qué vas*

According to the *DFDEA*, *de qué vas* is a colloquial formula whose function is to express protest/rejection towards some past action(s) witnessed by the speaker. This implies that the propositional content is the same as in the case of RF *qué broma es esta*, that is, involving past actions, possibly carried out by the hearer, which can be inferred due to the use of a second person singular of the verb *ir* (*vas*) and the direct suggestion that the interlocutor is the one who has performed the actions.

More specifically, the propositional content can take the form of an offence committed by the hearer (example 6), a difference in opinion between the hearer and the speaker (example 7) or even a non-verbal act of aggression towards the speaker (example 8).

- (6) [...] ¿Tú no serás por cierto el mismo que escribes con los nombres de jorgecan o socialista. </s><s> Porque parecéis clones. </s><s> Entre las pajas y los porros adulterados estáis como una puta regadera. </s><s> Cabrones. </s></p><p><s> @Yanilo Espero ¿Qué es mentira que no tienen calefacción? </s><s> Tú de qué vas imbecil? </s><s> Como tienes valor para decir semejante gilipollez, cuando hay cientos de estudiantes en barracones, que se assan en verano y se congelan en invierno, y ahora encima en los institutos no tienen calefacción [...] (*esTenTen18*, nº token 3604501205)
- (7) [...] </s></p><p><s> Ante este hecho, el sindicato UGT califica la intención del Govern como “cacicada inmoral”. </s></p><p><s> PERO TU DE QUE VAS CHAVAL!! </s><s> TU VES SEMBRANDO.. </s><s> QUE YA RECOGERAS...ELCAMINO SERA CORTO.. </s><s> VETE PREPARANDO.. </s><s> Estas donde estas gracias al pueblo balear. </s><s> [...] (*esTenTen18*, nº token: 391083009)
- (8) [...] obligues a hacerte daño!- el chico pasó por el lado de Kim empujándola con fuerza y tirándola al suelo, cosa que la enojó mucho y se puso a gritar también, se levantó y salió corriendo detrás del joven que le había empujado. -¡Pero de qué vas! </s><s> ¿A quién crees que empujaste? </s><s> Ya verás.- Kim siguió corriendo tratando de alcanzarle. </s></p><p><s> (*esTenTen18*, nº token: 1565384874)

In some cases, the past actions occurred on just one occasion (examples 6, 7 and 8), while in others, they occurred on numerous occasions (example 9), in which case the speaker's intention is to emphasize the recurrence of these actions as a trigger for his/her reaction and the use of this specific RF:

- (9) [...] pmAsunto: una chica ha escrito enfadada </s></p><p><s> Tial </s><s> Estoy hasta los cojones de tus tonterías y acusaciones. </s><s> ¿De qué vas? </s><s> Hablas por hablar, y lo peor de todo es que lo haces con mala intención. </s><s> No entiendo como puedes decir falsos testimonios de vdevivienda y ser tan mala cuando todos todas las asambleas y platamorfis de vivienda tenemos el mismo objetivo, que es el derecho a [...] (*esTenTen18*, nº token: 2063439064)

These four examples also illustrate that the propositional content typically has a negative emotional effect on the speaker, as the speaker shows signs of discomfort, disappointment and even anger and indignation at his/her interlocutor's actions. Consequently, we can see that, when employing this RF, the speaker intends to express how he/she is feeling as a result of the hearer's actions. However, some of the examples also suggest a slightly less emotionally loaded reaction from the speaker, which could indicate a different *FTA*, rather than reproach:

- (10) [...] pero esto no son trucos de ilusionita, se supone que estamos hablando de cuestiones científicas. </s><s> Por un lado no aceptas que la Tierra tenga millones de años y la humanidad más de cien\_mil, y

por otro no aceptas la cronología bíblica ¿pero entonces de qué vas?  
 </s><s> ¿se puede saber según tú cuántos años tiene la humanidad?..  
 </s><s> La cuestión es que ahora tenemos siete\_mil\_millones de personas y toda esa gente no sale de tres parejas que vivieron en Mesopotamia hace 4.000 años Es I-M-P-O-S-I-B-LE. </s></p><p><s> [...]

In this sequence, the propositional content is the same ( $H$ 's past actions), but with a significant difference: the speaker's reaction is not intended to express his/her feelings towards the hearer's actions, but rather to assert that he/she does not share the hearer's truth ( $p$  ( $S$ )  $\neq$   $p$  ( $H$ )). In other words, both the speaker and the hearer believe that  $p$ , which means that the speech act conveyed through the use of the RF *de qué vas* can also be disagreement.

In addition to the emotional weight of these acts, the speaker's ultimate objective can help us distinguish reproach from disagreement. As we have said on various occasions, when reproaching, the speaker intends to make the hearer change his/her behaviour and consequently alter the general paradigm (directive act). In contrast, when disagreeing, the speaker's intention is to (a) state that his/her opinion is different from the hearer's and (b) to give reasons that would justify his/her actions (assertive act). In the examples examined, when the emotional factor is more acute, there is usually a need for modification of the actions that have caused the negative feeling. Conversely, when the emotional factor plays a secondary role in the communicative event, the speaker seeks to assert his/her truth ( $p$ ), but not necessarily to change the hearer's behaviour.

For instance, in example 6,  $S_6$  is clearly displeased with the actions previously carried out by  $H_6$ , but his/her aim is not just to express what he/she thinks and to make his/her interlocutor change his/her opinion (which could be regarded as disagreement).  $S_6$  also provides a series of arguments in order to influence  $H_6$  and make him/her rectify his/her actions. Similarly,  $S_7$ 's use of a threat in combination with *de qué vas* unequivocally indicates that  $H_7$  should modify his/her behaviour or else there will be consequences. The same happens in example 8 where  $S_8$  objects to  $H_8$ 's actions by threatening him and simultaneously demanding a change in his behaviour. For her part,  $S_9$ 's words ("estoy hasta los cojones de tus tonterías y acusaciones") directly express that she cannot take it anymore and demands an immediate change in the way  $H_9$  treats her. Finally, in example 11 (see below),  $S_{11}$  uses a direct prohibition in combination with the RF to oblige  $H_{11}$  to modify his/her behaviour and stop causing friction between the interlocutors.

- (11) [...] ¿Es que nos quieres tomar el pelo? </s><s> ¿Pero no has visto que las últimas pruebas han sido realizadas en el 2012 y que aún

hoy, 2016 siguen estudiando la sábana y el sudario de Oviedo porque es todo un misterio, bufón? </s><s> ¿de qué vas? </s></p><p><s> Mira, vas a tomar el pelo a otros que este blog te queda grande..... burlas las justas.....¡¡ya está bien!! </s></p><p><s> ¡¡¡¡Todas refutadas por otras muchas que hemos expuesto nosotros, payaso!!! </s><s> [...] (esTenTen18, n° token: 2781731975)

Now that we have established the typology of the acts that are performed, let us turn to the sincerity condition, which can be fulfilled in two ways: (a) *S* wants *H* to modify/stop doing *A* (examples 6, 7, 8, 9 or 11), or (b) *S* does not believe in *H*'s *p* (example 10). Consequently, the essential conditions met when using the RF *de qué vas* are as follows: (a) The utterance of *S* counts as an expression of discomfort over *H*'s actions, (b) the utterance of *S* counts as a direct attempt to make *H* modify *A*/stop doing *A*, but also (c) the utterance of *S* counts as a way to show that *H*'s *p* is not an effective state of affairs, that is, *S* expresses his/her disagreement with the assumptions previously made by *H*.

Analysis of the illocutionary force of the remaining tokens verifies this, as shown in Table 8:

Illocutionary force	Spanish Web 2018 (esTenTen18)	
	n	%
reproach	34	64,2
disagreement	12	22,6
NA <sup>13</sup>	7	13,2
Total	53	100

Table 8. Illocutionary force of *de qué vas*

The results show that speech acts using the RF *de qué vas* encompass two main illocutionary forces: reproach and disagreement. Once again, the key factors that differentiate these two forces are the much greater emotional weight in the case of reproach and the lack of a directive component in case of disagreement. While there may be some situations in which these two communicative values overlap, in the analysed examples they are clearly delimited. For this reason, the ratio “number of tokens : communicative functions” is 1:1, as was also the case for *qué broma es esta*.

<sup>13</sup> We have considered *not applicable* the examples in which the RF is used indirectly/narratively, as in the following example: [...] </s><s> Auserón, Vinyals y Amargant coinciden en poner cara de “¿Pero tú de qué vas, tío?” ante nuestro juicio contundente. </s><s> [...] (esTenTen18, n° token: 2641124853).



These findings confirm one of our main hypotheses, since there is a clear difference between what our analysis suggests and the definition of this phraseologism given in the dictionary.

## 5. Conclusions

The present study was carried out with two main objectives in mind. First, we aimed to establish the theoretical framework for the speech act of reproach by examining its conditions and comparing its core functions with those of other *FTA* that are often mistakenly considered equivalent: reprimand and complaint. Secondly, we sought to apply the results of this theoretical inquiry to the analysis of two phraseological units —the RF *qué broma es esta* and *de qué vas*— in order to determine their functional values and assess the accuracy of existing lexicographic information about them.

Regarding the first objective, we have demonstrated that the boundaries between reproach, complaint and reprimand have not been clearly defined, which may explain why the Spanish phraseological units that are used to convey these specific functions have not been accurately defined. Moreover, we have shown that reproach is an *FTA* —it is used by the speaker to deliver a negative evaluation of the hearer's positive face—, even though it is not explicitly mentioned in the classification of *FTA* proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). However, what distinguishes reproach from the other two acts (i.e., complaint and reprimand) is that it is an expressive-directive act which does not require any vertical disposition of social roles and which is used in accordance with three functioning principles: directly, directly and unidirectionally.

With regard to the second objective, we conducted a pragmalinguistic analysis of the RF *qué broma es esta* and *de qué vas* to evaluate the definitions provided in Spanish phraseological dictionaries. The analysis of the conditions of different acts conveyed through the use of these expressions as well as their illocutionary force indicating devices and the general context of the communicative situation in which these formulae have been used confirmed our main hypothesis. Specifically, we have shown that the definitions of these units in the existing dictionaries are not entirely accurate and that their core value is indeed reproach, although they may also convey other communicative values in certain conditions, such as disagreement or surprise. Additionally, we have seen that dictionaries usually account for just one component and disregard any multifunctional values that these expressions may possess.

In conclusion, we believe that this study highlights the need to improve existing analytic models of phraseologisms in Spanish. Despite only examining two RF, this paper demonstrates the utility of a new

pragmalinguistic approach with a special focus on Speech Act Theory. Such an approach to RF would provide the lexicographers with more precise information on their functions and their operational meaning, facilitate the revision of existing classifications and, ultimately, enhance our understanding of the entire body of RF in Spanish.

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