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“La Familia Burrón”:
Emblem of the Mexican Culture and
Language

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Language

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ABSTRACT

This thesis reports a descriptive study of the informal language used by the Mexican comic named “*La Familia Burrón*”. This study was carried out in Puebla City. The main purpose of my project was to analyze the informal expressions used by this comic and how this language changed or evolved in order to be adapted to the different ages in which “*La Familia Burrón*” was published.

The research data were collected via analysis of some of the different texts published from 1948 to 2009.

The research found “*La Familia Burrón*” has many and different informal synonyms for things and expressions for happenings. This is because the family needed to be portrayed as belonging to and representing a certain Mexican social class who feel more comfortable using non-standard expressions than standard expressions.

Findings also revealed some expressions are more popular and common than some others. Also, in the same way there are several non-standard synonyms for a single thing, which makes it impossible the use of all of them.

While one aim of the study was to trace the changes in the informal expressions, I could not analyze the evolution of the expressions because of the limitations presented which are described in Chapter 5. However, many interesting things regarding informal language emerged through the study which are described within this thesis.

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In this section I would like to thank all the people who encouraged me to start, continue and conclude this journey. I want to thank my parents and siblings whose love and support gave me a reason to be here and surpass myself. I also want to thank people, teachers and schoolmates, who I knew along this journey, inside and outside the school, and offered me their friendship, love and support. Besides their willingness to be better in life encouraged me to never give up and do my best. I would like to say names, but for the fear of forgetting some or several names and offend someone, I do prefer to just say thank you all. I also want to say thanks my Thesis Director, Dr. Nancy S. Keranen, whose light and wisdom guided me through this long research process because her support and advice were key to begin and conclude this project. I also want to thank my thesis readers Mtra. María Guadalupe Salazar and Mtra. Tania Martínez for their time to read this work.

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DEDICATIONS

I want to dedicate this thesis to my family and friends, who always believed in me, and life itself because of the challenges it made me face.

PERSONAL THOUGHT

“Reality is but a daily fantasy created by ourselves...”

LBDL

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“LA FAMILIA BURRÓN”: EMBLEM OF THE MEXICAN CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

1.0 Chapter Introduction

All the languages of the world use slang. Slang is the use of non-standard expressions, either phrases or just words, which are not considered as formal language. These expressions are informal. They are accepted by the society regardless of the economic, political, and religious or any other social situation.

It is important to mention that each society has its own non-standard expressions. It does not matter how many countries share the same language either first or second language or how far or near they are one from each other. Every country lives different situations taking as examples all those that have been mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Taking as a reference for this situation, the case of Latin America could be used. From North America, in which Mexico is located, to South America, where Chile and Uruguay share the end of the continent, people use a Latin family language. Although all these countries are neighbors and belong to the same language family, the non-standard expressions are not the same.

Mexican culture is known by its sense of humor. Whether Mexican people use an already existing non-standard expression or create a new one for many situations, they are always using them. On one hand, there are many expressions that are known in the whole country, such as the most emblematic Mexican expression “*wey*” or “*güey*” whose meaning varies from *buddy* to *silly* and also it is known beyond the American continent. On the other

hand, there are many other expressions that are not known in the whole country. This is because each Mexican state has its own non-standard expressions.

Non-standard expressions are constantly changing. These expressions cannot be static because they are part of a big communicative system known as *language*. As it is known, languages are always changing because all of them face several challenges in order to satisfy the new needs of communication of the societies.

This work tries to analyze how the Mexican comic known as “*La Familia Burrón*”, by Gabriel Vargas, made use of these expressions in their dialogues and how their language had to be adapted to the different ages in which they were published.

1.1 Study Justification

There are a number of reasons for this research. The first one is based on my personal experience because I grew up reading these kinds of comics. I used to enjoy the stories that this family used to go through and how they solved their problems. Another reason for this research is that this family is one of the biggest emblems of Mexican culture because they used to mirror the political and economic crises that Mexican people have gone through since for many years, but from a humorous perspective. A proof of their importance in Mexican society is that this comic was published for over 70 years. When I read the dialogues, I did not know that they were using non-standard expressions neither how they work. However, now I know and understand what informal language is and how it works. Another reason for this research is that I consider it as a great chance to analyze what the non-standard language used by “*La Familia Burrón*” was because that means that this

informal language was the same language used by Mexican people during the last almost 7 decades. Also, it could be a kind of tribute to this little bit of Mexican culture.

1.2 Study Significance

This study is important because it shows how informal language has been used and how it has changed through time. As it was said in the last paragraph of the previous section, by analyzing the comics of “*La Familia Burrón*” we can know what expressions were used by the Mexican people, regardless the social status, and how they have changed. This research could also be useful for future studies about Mexican culture and language.

1.3 Research Context

This study fits into the extensive context of linguistics and culture in diverse areas. The first theoretical area is the use of *informal language* in societies. There are many studies about how informal language is used by societies. Informal language has been part of the history of any language that has existed. Even though many societies share the same mother language, the informal language has been different in all of them and also through time. The second theoretical area is *language change*. There are many studies about why and how languages change through time. Those studies explain what have been the factors that influence the language change. This study is also focused on the *Mexican culture* and on its mother language: Spanish.

1.4 Background of the Researcher

By the time this study was carried out, I was a Mexican young person who regularly used a number of informal expressions when I was wasting time with friends. My curiosity in this

topic popped up because I wanted to do a research of my own culture and language more than another topic, such as: teaching techniques, learning skills, classroom problems, and so on. As a young person, I used many informal expressions to communicate. During my childhood I learnt many expressions from this comic and I used them during my youth. One day my friends and I heard a new and strange expression which came from another friend. That unknown expression was so weird that provoked us a sense of confusion. When he explained what he wanted to mean, the new expression was unwelcome because we did not like it. Because of this happening, I wondered what was the different slang used by people and the meanings. I wanted to collect expressions from people and analyze their meaning, but my director of thesis advised me that this kind of research was very difficult and it would be better if I studied printed records such as comics. After much thinking and looking up, I made the decision to study the informal language of “*La Familia Burrón*”.

1.5 Research Location

The research was not carried out in any specific place. The methodological approach for this study was based on the collection and analysis of texts in which Mexican informal expressions were used, such as: comics and any kind of magazine that used informal language. At the time of the analysis, Comics did not follow any kind of rules for the use of formal language. They were directed to people who used informal expressions to communicate and who also had an easy access to them. The analysis involved the identification and categorization of informal expressions according to the year in which they were used.

1.6 Study Aims

This study had several aims. The first one was to analyze the informal expressions used by “*La Familia Burrón*” taking as sample only some of their publications. The second one was to analyze how they had to adapt their informal expressions to the different ages in which they were published.

1.7 Research Questions

The study had two research questions which guided the data collection and analysis.

RQ1. What was the slang used by the Mexican comic “*La Familia Burrón*” throughout its publications?

RQ2. How did their informal expressions evolve or change according to the different ages that they went through since their first publication?

1.8 Chapter Summary and Overview of Thesis Document

This chapter introduced the thesis study. The justification, the significance and the context of the study were described. I provided some information about me as the researcher. Thereafter the samples of text analyzed were mentioned. The overall topic of the thesis was to argue about the importance of knowing how “*La Familia Burrón*” used informal expressions to copy the utterances of a group of people and how the informal expressions had changed through time.

The following chapter presents the review of the literature and the theoretical framework of the study, specifically the use of informal language and the Mexican culture. This chapter is followed by the study methodology chapter, Chapter Three. In Chapter Four

the results are presented which are followed by the conclusions of the study which are shown in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER TWO. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Chapter Introduction

Informal language has probably been part of human kind since the emergence of the first languages. It does not matter what culture or language we could talk about, all of them have created informal expressions through time. Despite the fact there are several cultures that share the same language or belong to the same family language, all those cultures have created, and will continue creating, different informal expressions because they have gone, and will continue going, through different situations that affect the expressions. However, this fact does not mean that all these cultures could not share and match with some expressions. To explore this area further, this study was mainly focused on the Mexican culture and the informal expressions used in a Mexican comic named “*La Familia Burrón*”.

For the purpose of making the study more understandable, this chapter is divided into three sections: firstly, it presents a review of background about linguistics and the branches with which this research is related; the second section includes background about what Mexican culture is and its official language: Spanish; the last section includes information about “*La Familia Burrón*” and its author. Finally the conclusion is presented.

2.1 Linguistics

There has existed the necessity to communicate since the first humans formed groups. Time passed and humans evolved. This led to the development of new ways of communicating their new thoughts, ideas, and feelings among others necessities, such as: gestures, signs or sounds. When the human being, *Homo sapiens* in Africa to be more specific, discovered that he could articulate sounds, he developed a new and useful way to communicate; this

new tool was called language. But it was not until 550 BCE when Panini did the first study of the language when he tried to analyze the components of the Sanskrit language. After this happened, there was an interest in analyzing the use of language. This is how Linguistics was born.

The *Oxford Dictionary Online* defines Linguistics as “the scientific study of language and its structure, including the study of grammar, syntax, and phonetics. Specific branches of linguistics include sociolinguistics, dialectology, psycholinguistics, computational linguistics, comparative linguistics, and structural linguistics”. This definition gives us a wide idea about what linguistics is and the areas which are included in it. However, Doctor Raja T. Nasr (1984) provides a simpler idea which says that linguistics is related to human language as a universal and recognizable part of human behavior and of the human skills.

Taking these two ideas into consideration it can be said that linguistics is the science that studies the language not just as a communicative act, but as a system that is integrated by several and sundry components established by the users. Furthermore, all those components are studied by the three big branches of linguistics that which in turn are divided into sub-branches, some of which were mentioned in the definition provided above. All these branches will be mentioned and explained in a broad manner in the following sections.

2.1.1 General Linguistics

General linguistics studies the language in general. This branch only studies the characteristics of the language in a broad manner. It is to say, it focuses on the theoretical bases and methods of investigating linguistics rather than applied linguistics.

2.1.2 Micro-Linguistics

As it was explained in the last section, *General Linguistics* is one of the braches of linguistics that sees linguistics broadly. However, there are another two branches that focus their attention on linguistics but more specifically. The first one is *Micro-linguistics* and the second one is *Macro-linguistics* which will be explained in the next section.

Micro-linguistics is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989) as one of the linguistic branches that studies language systems in the abstract, without regard to the meaning or notional content of linguistic expressions. It was first used by Trager in 1949. After this definition it can be said that Micro-linguistics is only focused on the structure of the language systems. Thus it does not pay attention to how language is used in daily life nor the relation with other sciences. Some sub-branches of the Micro-linguistics are listed here:

- *Phonetics*. Fromkin *et al.* (2000) established that Phonetics is the study of physical aspects of speech events, including: speech production ..., speech acoustics ... and speech perception.

- *Phonology*. Richards, Platt and Platt (1985) defined Phonology as the establishment and description of the distinctive sound units of a language (Phonemes) by means of Distinctive Features.
- *Morphology*. This sub-branch studies the word formation.
- *Syntax*. This science studies how words are combined in order to form grammatical and well-formed sentences.
- *Semantics*. This theory is the study of the linguistic aspects of the meanings of expressions. This sub-branch will be explained in more detail later.
- *Pragmatics*. Pragmatics studies how the language is used in context and the influence of situation on meaning. As Semantics, this sub-branch will be explained in more detail later.
- *Discourse analysis*. In words of Richards (1985), Discourse Analysis is explained as the study of how sentences in spoken and written language form larger meaningful - units such as paragraphs, conversations, interviews, and so on.
- *Applied linguistics*. This sub-branch studies the practical problems that have relation with the language and linguistics. This area is related to other areas different from linguistics, such as: sociology and psychology, among others.

The following two sections explain in more detail the sub-branches of Micro-Linguistics that are important for this study.

2.1.2.1 Semantics

As it was mentioned before, Semantic theory is the study of the linguistic aspects of the meanings of expressions (Fromkin, 2000). We can consider as *expressions* all the words, the sentences and the texts because the main purpose of all of them is to express, or at least they try to, a meaning. The informal expressions also try to express a meaning. I say that they *try* because when the meaning of an informal expression is not clear as the meaning of a formal expression is, the informal meaning has failed. It is important to remember that, on one hand, a meaning expressed with formal language is easy for everybody to understand. On the other hand, when people try to transmit a meaning using informal language, this may not be successful if the receptor of the message does not know the slang used by the transmitter of the message. The purpose of slang is to be created and used by a limited group of people. In this sense, it can be said that not all the people who could have a contact with the expressions could understand the meaning of them if they do not have any background of the meanings. From this point it can be attached the term *truth value*. When an expression has no sense or a clear meaning, it has no value. However, it has a *truth value* when the sense or the meaning is clear. Context also has an important influence on the meaning, but this point will be treated in the next section, *pragmatics*.

It is clear that analyzing semantics is a little complex because it includes several fields of study. Crystal (1971) established some aspects to take into consideration which are: first, the problem of how to analyze words which have more than one meaning; second, the problem of defining idioms accurately; third, the problem of how much detail to allow into the definition of a word; fourth, the problem of styles of usage affecting meanings of words. This situation gets more complicated when we are talking about informal language

because informal expressions could mean anything when it is not clear what they express. This is because informal expressions are *synonyms* of formal expressions. Synonyms are another subfield of semantics to take into consideration. O'Grady, Dobrovolsky and Katamba (1987) define synonyms as words or expressions that have the same meanings in some or all contexts. This is what happens with informal language, it expresses the same meaning that formal language could mean but using non-standard synonyms. *Homophony* is another subfield that is related with informal Mexican expressions. O'Gray *et al.* (1987) define homophony as a single form which has two or more entirely distinct meanings. A clear example of this phenomenon is the Mexican word *wey* or *güey*. This informal word can have at least two different meaning: firstly, it is a very informal expression that Mexican people use when they talk to a friend; secondly, it also can be used as a derogatory word. These two meanings can be identified because of the context they are used.

2.1.2.2 Pragmatics

In the last section it was explained that *Semantics* studies the meaning of expressions. However, those meaning are strongly related to the context on which they are expressed. Giving a simple definition of *Pragmatics* it can be said that it is the sub-branch that studies how language is used in context. Pragmatics is strongly related to Semantics. This idea is born from the original idea that Pragmatics is simply the study of meaning in interaction. The University of Sheffield, in its web page allaboutlinguistics.com, gives two simple definitions which are: first, the study of the practical aspects of human action and thought; and second, the study of the use of linguistic signs, words and sentences, in actual situations. O'Grady *et al.* (1987) say that Pragmatics includes the background attitudes and beliefs of the speaker and the addressee, their understanding of the context in which a

sentence is uttered, and their knowledge of how language can be used to inform, to persuade, to mislead, and so forth.

As it was said before, context has a strong influence on the meaning of the expressions. Context is a relevant factor of Pragmatics to sentence interpretation. According to O'Grady *et al.* (1987) there are two types of contextual information:

- *Setting*. It has to do with the physical environment in which a sentence is uttered.
- *Discourse*. It has to do with the other utterances in the speech event.

2.1.3 Macro-Linguistics

The last branch of Linguistics is called Macro-linguistics. Unlike Micro-Linguistics, Macro-Linguistics studies the language in a broadest way. This area analyzes how a language is related to other sciences and how it could be applied in daily life. This term was first used by Trager in 1949, as well as Micro-Linguistics. As it can be seen, meanwhile Micro-Linguistics studies the structure of the language system, Macro-Linguistics studies language as part of some other scientific disciplines. Some of those disciplines are:

- *Stylistics*. This sub-branch studies and interprets the linguistic factors that place a discourse in context.
- *Developmental Linguistics*. This sub-branch studies how people develop the linguistic abilities. Mainly the acquisition of language during childhood.

- *Historical Linguistics*. This area studies the history of languages. It is to say, why and how languages develop. This sub-branch will be explained with more detail in the next section.
- *Language Geography*. It is the branch that studies the geographic distribution of language or its constituent elements. It has two principal fields of study: the "geography of languages", which deals with the distribution through history and space of languages, and "linguistic geography", which deals with regional linguistic variations within languages (*Language Geography – Wikipedia, para. 1, n.d.*).
- *Evolutionary linguistics*. This sub-branch studies both the origin and development of language.
- *Psycholinguistics*. This scientific area studies how the mind computes the word, sentence and discourse meaning. This area is linked to *language acquisition*.
- *Sociolinguistics*. This sub-discipline treats the social aspects of language. It is to say, language in the society. This area will be treated with more detail later.
- *Clinical linguistics*. This area is a branch of applied linguistics, it is the use of linguistics to describe, analyze, and treat language disabilities. The study of linguistic aspect of communication disorders is of relevance to a broader understanding of language and linguistic theory (*Clinical Linguistics – Wikipedia, para. 1, n.d.*).
- *Neurolinguistics*. It is concerned with the biological basis of language acquisition and development and the brain/mind/language interface (Fromkin *et al.*, 2000).

- *Biolinguistics*. The biolinguistic perspective views a person's language in all of its aspects – sound, meaning, structure -- as a state of some component of the mind (Chomsky 2004). It is a highly interdisciplinary field, including linguists, biologists, neuroscientists, psychologists, mathematicians, and others (*Biolinguistics* – Wikipedia, para. 1, n.d.).
- *Computational Linguistics*. [It is] an approach of linguistics which uses mathematical techniques, often with the aid of a computer. Computational linguistics includes the analysis of language data It also includes research on automatic translation, electronic production of artificial speech (Richard *et al.* 1985).

2.1.3.1 Historical Linguistics

As it was said in the previous section, this sub-branch of linguistics studies the history of languages. That is to say, how languages change or evolve through time. It is now known that all languages that exist nowadays and their ancestors have gone through changes, either in their structures, vocabulary, sounds, and so on. As it was said in Chapter I, this study is about how Mexican informal expressions have changed through time since the decades of 1940 to present days. This study aims to analyze the history of those Mexican expressions.

As it is known, Historical Linguistics has five issues, which are: 1) the description and accounting of observed changes in particular languages; 2) the reconstruction of the pre-history of languages and determination of their relatedness grouping them into language families; 3) the developing of general theories about how and why language changes; 4) the description of the history of speech communities and; 5) the study of

history in words. This field of linguistics has five subfields which are: a) *Comparative Philology or Comparative Linguistics*; b) *Etymology*; c) *Dialectology*; d) *Phonology* and; e) *Morphology and Syntax*.

However, this study only fits with the subfields of *Etymology* and *Dialectology* because of the following reasons:

Etymology. This subfield studies the history of words. It belongs to another field which is *Diachronic view*. This field studies how language changes through time, it traces a word back to its origins and reconstructs language that are no longer spoken by comparing several languages that descend from them. The other field is *Synchronic view*, it studies how language works for people today or at any given moment of time, it does not study the origin of words or languages (Brown & Attardo, 2000). For this reason it is important to explain these subfields because this study attempted to study the history of informal Mexican words or expression since 1948 to present days.

Dialectology. This subfield studies the dialects. [It is] ... the study of linguistic variation in terms of the geographical distribution of speakers (O'Grady *et al.*, 1987, p. 712). All the variations are characteristics that belong to each particular people. This is because of the geographical distribution and the associated features. In this sense, although Mexico has as official language Spanish, people from the northern part of the country do not express themselves as the southern people do. Neither western people express themselves similar to eastern people do. An example of this phenomenon is the northern word *güerco* or *güerquillo* which are used when adult people refer to children. In contrast, people from Michoacán, which is in the middle of Mexico, use the word *guache* or *guachitos* when they

make reference to the children. However, there are some expressions that are shared by people throughout the country. The clearest example of this phenomenon is the already mentioned word *wey*, which is used by all people who are native from Mexico. This is what experts call *Isogloss*. An *isogloss* ... is the locative boundary of a certain linguistic feature, such as the pronunciation of a vowel, the meaning of a word, or use of some syntactic feature (*Isogloss – Wikipedia, para. 1 n.d.*). Brown and Attardo (2004, p. 89) define *Isogloss* as an internal imaginary line that marks the boundaries of areas where a particular form is used by speakers. The next section explains the other sub-branch which is important for this study.

2.1.3.2 Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is the study of language in society. It focuses on the society; this includes language, culture, social class, ethnicity and gender (Fromkin *et al.*, 2000, p. 4). As it has been seen in the definition provided by Fromkin *et al.* (2000), *Sociolinguistics* is a complex sub-branch because it includes several aspects of what a society is and how that is manifested or indicated in the language. This sub-branch helps to explain why people speak differently in different social contexts and also to identify the social functions of language and the ways it is used to convey social meaning (Holmes, 1992).

In order to start this section, it is important to know how people arrive at common understandings. This fact starts out from the concept of what is *communication*. The conduit metaphor sees communication as “the passage of thoughts ... through a conduit (say, speech), from a sender to a receiver ...” (Brown & Attardo, 2000, p.73). If the message is clear for the receiver, then the communication has been achieved. However, the

achieving of the communication also depends on the context in which the message is being carried out. Interaction also has an important role because it may create and change the message depending on who we are talking to.

The following subfields are areas which are in the interest of Sociolinguistics, but mainly in the interest of this study:

- *Linguistic variation* is another type in which Sociolinguistics is interested in because “variation” reflects the social factors. According to Holmes (1992) Linguistic Variation occurs in the choice of vocabulary or words, sounds, words-structure (or morphology), and grammar (or syntax). This choice happens when people are talking to people who are very close to them. Even when one is wasting time or having fun with other persons, depending on how close the relationship is, he or she takes care of the word that he or she uses in order to do not offend or attack the other person because even within slang there are categories of expressions. In other words, people use slang under specific circumstances.
- *Speech community* or *Linguistic community* is used by sociolinguists to refer to a community based on language (Hudson, 1980). The simplest definition of a *Speech community* belongs to Lyons (1970, p. 326) who says: “Speech community: all the people who use a given language (or dialect)”. As it can be seen in the definitions, Speech community does not distinguish between how big or small a community is nor the language that could be the point of reference. They just say that a Speech community shares a set of norms and expectations. “A speech community comes to share a specific set of norms for language use through living and interacting

together, and speech communities may therefore emerge among all groups that interact frequently and share certain norms and ideologies” (*Speech Community – Wikipedia, para. 4, n.d.*). When people create and use slang, they do it through their “small” *Speech community* which could be: family, relatives, job friends, neighborhood friends. This is because these communities cover the requirements established in the last sentence - they have a daily interaction and share certain norms and ideologies.

2.2 Culture

Culture is a complex word to be defined. The “Real Academia Española” (Spanish Royal Academy) defines *Culture* as “set lifestyles and customs, knowledge and degree of artistic, industrial, in an age, social group, etcetera” (*Cultura, def. 3, n.d.*). Besides this definition, The *Oxford Dictionary* defines *Culture* as “the ideas, customs, and social behavior of a particular people or society” (*Culture, def. 2, n.d.*). As it can be seen, it is not easy to give a specific definition or concept of what *Culture* is. *Culture* is a word that tries to include all those aspects that characterize a group of people regardless what people you are talking about. However, there is a factor which complicates the definition. This factor is *Globalization* which is the influence that a culture has over another culture. This phenomenon causes the mixing of cultures, creating a new one. This kind of phenomenon happens with the conquests. When a folk conquers another folk, the victorious one introduces and imposes its own customs and beliefs over the conquered one. However, the modern takeovers are neither through the use of violence nor weapons. Modern conquests are achieved through *Marketing*, which is the study and introduction of products in the people. That is the reason why giving a specific definition of *Culture* is complicated.

2.2.1 Mexican Culture

It has been seen in the previous section that it is a complex task to give a definition of what culture is because it includes several characteristics that identify a folk. For that reason, this section just treats the main characteristics of *Mexican Culture* that have a strong influence on its people who use informal expressions. *Mexican Culture* is part of a folk enriched with traditions, customs and languages, among other things. “Mexican culture is perhaps one of the most fascinating cultures worldwide. The mixture of strong native legends, artistic expressions and Spanish culture elements make the Mexican culture unique” (Prats, 2012, para. 1). Modern Mexican people are a mixture of indigenous and Spanish cultures that happened after the submission of the Aztec people which was achieved by Hernán Cortés in the name of the Spanish King Carlos I between 1519 and 1521. The following sections explain the main characteristics of the Mexican culture.

2.2.1.1 Religion

Religion is one of the aspects that have a strong influence on Mexican culture. The main religion practiced in Mexico is Roman Catholicism, which is a branch of Christianity. Roman Catholicism was brought by Spanish conquerors during the conquest displacing the already existing polytheistic religion which worshiped Tezcatlipoca (God of the night and the warriors), Quetzalcoatl (creator of the man and protector of life and fertility) Huitzilopochtli (God of the Sun and War) and Tláloc (God of the rain and thunder) among other Gods (MariAleja, 2012). After the conquest, the Mexican people adopted Catholicism. Despite the fact Mexico does not have an official religion, Mexican people

worship Virgin Guadalupe, who is considered as the mother of Mexican people by Mexican people.

However, despite the fact Mexican people are firm believers of Christianity, they are not completely divorced from their indigenous origins. A clear example of this fact is the celebration of the *Día de Muertos* which is celebrated each November 2 of every year. In this holy day Mexicans remember their dead loved ones giving them an offering which consists of all the things people liked and enjoyed when they were alive. In the strict sense of what Christianity is, this celebration should be considered as *paganism* because it is part of a belief completely different from what Christianity represents.

Besides Christianity and all the other religions which are derived from it, there are other different religions and beliefs in Mexico which are not as popular as this one. Those religions are: Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Satanism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Hare Krishna, Unitarian Universalism, Rastafarianism and atheism, which is not a religious practice because it goes against all that religious means; however it is allowed and accepted, and so on.

Although there are several and different religions, the Mexican government has a strict rule of not letting religion interferes in the affairs of government itself.

The next section, which is *Family Values*, also has an important role in this study.

2.2.1.2 Family Values

Family is another aspect that has a stronger influence on Mexican people than Religion because the people have a high regard for the family. Family is one of the things that

Mexicans value the most. They consider it as the core of the society. Such is the value of the family for Mexicans that they have given it a special day; it is celebrated the first Sunday of every March. This celebration was established by the president Vicente Fox. The aim of the institution of this celebration is to transmit Family securities, involving the greatest possible number of sectors (government, schools, universities, unions, businesses, media cameras, social organizations) and promoting family values as the core of society and the best place for personal development (*Consejo de la Comunicación A.C.*, n.d.).

In 2006 the Institute for Integral Family Development (D.I.F. for its Spanish acronym) presented the outcomes of its study which collected data from 1990 to 2000. This study expressed that family is a basic cell and center of the Mexican social coexistence, inasmuch as more that 80% of homes are still formed by the traditional family (Abascal & Sánchez, 2010). However family is important for Mexican people, there are some problems that still need to be treated. The main problem is the *machismo* (maleness). Zea (n.d., p. 25) speaks about the “macho” in his paper when he expresses that:

It is not just about a racial relationship, since this situation applies to all born in the region, whether he is Indigenous, Creole or Mestizo. All born in the region, by different ethnicity he is, he will try to identify himself with the conqueror and colonizer father. Repeat it familiarly, giving rise to that figure so typical from Mexico, Latin America and Spain: machismo. The male shadowing the conqueror and colonizer, absolute authority of the family.

As Zea (n.d.) expressed, the father is the power center of the family. It comes from the origins of Mexican culture. This behavior has existed in the Mexican society for a long time ago although there have been recent efforts in order to get rid this behavior. It is a

quality, or defect, that characterizes the Mexican culture. This idea does not mean that it is neither good nor acceptable this kind of behavior, but it is still accepted by many people.

The following segment is as important as the previous two sections because it helps to explain how formal and informal expressions can be acquired.

2.2.1.3 Formal and Informal Education

After the explanation of the important role of Religion and Family in the Mexican culture in the previous sections, this section treats the important role of education, both formal and informal, on these people. It is important to answer the following question to explain its relevance: What is education?

The *Cambridge Dictionary Online* (n.d.) defines education as the process of teaching or learning in a school, or the knowledge that you get from this. It is also the study of methods and theories of teaching. As it can be seen, both these definitions, which belong to the same source, just take into consideration institutional education. This definition leads to think that there is just institutional education. However, the *Spanish Royal Academy Online* (n.d.) provides a wider definition which says that *Education* is: 1) the action and effect of educating; 2) parenting, teaching and instruction given to children and young people; 3) instruction through teaching action and; 4) courtesy, politeness. As it can be seen, *Education* implies several things.

For Mexican people it is important to have a good education because it is the mirror of their family. The importance of the family for Mexicans has already been explained in the previous section. The family is the first society with which a person is in contact. It is where people receive the first education. It means how to speak in a proper manner in front

of people, how to behave indoors and outdoors, how to ask and how to thank for things, among many other things. It can be considered this education as *Formal* Education. Nevertheless, people also acquire their informal education from family. An example of this fact is when children listen to their parents using some informal expressions, such as nasty words and some slang. Then, they share those new words with their friends without awareness about what those expressions mean until an adult hears them and bans those words because they are considered as inappropriate. This is the moment when adult people scold kids asking them if they did not receive a good education in their house.

Another way to receive formal education is from school. In Mexico, the main institution responsible for the administration and control of the educational institutes is called Secretariat of Public Education (S.E.P. because of their acronym in Spanish). Despite the fact S.E.P. designs and implements educational programs in order to increase the people who could get higher studies, and as a consequence a better formal education, there have not been good results at all. The web page of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (I.N.E.G.I. because of its acronym in Spanish) published on March, 2013, polls made by S.E.P. that demonstrate that the higher education becomes, the fewer people continue their studies. The year of study includes 2011-2012. The next chart (figure 2.1) demonstrates the study:

Table 2.1 *Enrolment by education level by gender, scholar year 2011/2012*

Nivel educativo	2011/2012		
	Total	Hombres	Mujeres
Educación básica	25 782 388	13 106 964	12 675 424
Preescolar	4 705 545	2 377 059	2 328 486
Primaria	14 909 419	7 611 520	7 297 899
Secundaria	6 167 424	3 118 385	3 049 039
Educación media superior	4 333 589	2 147 167	2 186 422
Profesional técnico	383 463	203 678	179 785
Bachillerato	3 950 126	1 943 489	2 006 637
Educación superior	3 161 195	1 594 753	1 566 442
Técnico superior	121 641	73 325	48 316
Normal licenciatura	133 770	39 192	94 578
Licenciatura universitaria y tecnológica	2 676 843	1 373 350	1 303 493
Posgrado	228 941	108 886	120 055

As is can be seen, on one hand the largest concentration of students is in Primary schools with 44.80% of population. On the other hand, the lowest concentration of students is in the sector “Técnico Superior” and “Normal Licenciatura” with 0.37% and 0.40%, respectively. This study made by S.E.P. demonstrates that *Formal Education* is not as high as the government might want. Notwithstanding, this fact does not mean that all those people who have a higher education do not use informal expressions. The purpose of this section is just to demonstrate the formal educational level that exists in Mexico.

The next segment is vital because it is the characteristic of Mexican Culture, which is the object of this study, in which the previous ones support.

2.2.1.4 Language

As it is known, Spanish is the official language of Mexico. Although there are about sixty languages and 100 dialects in Mexico, which are grouped, according to into thirteen

linguistic families: *Yutoazteca, Otomangue, Maya, Otopame, Tarasca or Purhépecha, Totonaca, Mixe, Hojano-Coahuilteca, Huave, Chinanteca, Guaycura, Manguaña* and *Cuitlateca* (Prieto, 2005, p.251); the official language is Spanish. This language was brought by Spanish people when Hernán Cortés conquered Tenochtitlan city in the name of the Spanish King Carlos I. Besides being the official language of Mexico, it is the official language from Mexico to the south of the American continent because all of continent was conquered by the Spanish Crown, excluding Brazil whose official language is Portuguese because they were conquered by Portugal during the early XVI century.

The following segment goes deeply into Spanish language, its origins and influence over the world.

2.3 Spanish Language

The Spanish language belongs to the Latin language family, which in turn derives from the Italic family, which in turn follows the Indo-European language in accord with the genealogic tree of Indo-European language design by Schleicher (Obediente, 1997, p. 5). This language began many centuries ago when Indo-European migrants arrived to the Iberian Peninsula with the Italic languages. Nonetheless, Spanish language was not born, yet. The mother of Spanish language was the Latin language which gained popularity through the expansion of Roman Empire. This language was strongly influenced by other cultures through time, as many other languages worldwide, either phonologically or structurally, such as: Celtic languages, Arabic, French and Jewish culture. However, all these points will not be deepened because they are not the point of interest of this study. This is just a historic reference of the language.

2.3.1 Spanish Influence over the World

Nowadays the Spanish language is the second most spoken language in the world in accordance with an article of *Universia España* (2013). The *Cervantes Institute Yearbook* 2012 reveals that Spanish has established itself as the second most spoken language in the world with a total of 495 million speakers (*Universia España*, 2013, para. 2). It can be seen the importance that this language has acquired on the internet and as a means of international communication through time. It has such importance that nowadays it is taught in Asia.

2.3.2 Real Academia Española

The main purpose of this Institution is the linguistic regularization through the promulgation of regulations for the Spanish language. This principle can be seen in the first article of its statute:

The Academy is an institution with legal personality whose primary mission is to ensure that the changes that Spanish language experiences in its constant adaptation to the needs of its speakers do not break the essential unity that keeps all the Hispanics. It must also take care that this evolution preserves the genius of the language itself, as has been consolidated over the course of the centuries, and to establish and disseminate properly criteria and correction, and to contribute to its splendor (*Estatutos de la Real Academia Española*, 1993).

This important institution was founded in Madrid in 1713. However, it got its official approval in 1714 under the consent of the King Felipe V.

2.3.3 Sexism

Much of the informal language, as examined in this thesis, is based on underlying sexism in the language. Thus, this brief section looks at the question: *¿Es sexista la lengua española?* (Is Spanish language sexist?). This is the title of the work of García (1994) in which he gives enough reasons to think that there are certain discriminatory treatment against women even in the courtesy treatment. Those discriminatory treatments are not recent, but they have been part of the language itself since its creation, which has already mentioned at the beginning of this section.

If Spanish language is sexist, then this could explain how many informal expressions are born. Some clear examples of this situation are the vulgar expressions *Puto* and *Putá*. For Mexicans, *Puto* could be less discriminatory, but it continues to be, than *Putá* because *Puto* is the man who likes men, it is to say a homosexual, or a coward. On the other side, *Putá* is not the woman who likes women, but it is the girl who sells sexual pleasure or has had several couples. Although the word is the same, albeit gender distinction, there is a big difference. This is because Mexicans consider it worse being a prostitute than a homosexual.

If the Spanish language is a sexist language, thus probably its sisters (the Italic languages) could be sexist, too. However, the other languages are not the study object, but it is important to know this phenomenon.

Besides García (2004), there are many studies about this linguistic phenomenon as it is pointed by Bosque (2012) in his article *Sexismo Lingüístico y Visibilidad de la Mujer*

(Linguistic Sexism and Visibility of Women), such as the *Guía de Lenguaje no Sexista* (Non-Sexist Language Guide) by the University of Granada, and some others.

2.4 Mexican Comics

There have been several important Mexican comics. Mexico has had numerous for many years beginning mostly in the early 20th century. These comics have been printed in either newspapers or magazines. Some examples of famous Mexican comics are: *Los Capulinita*, *Chanoc*, *Memín Pinguin*, *Kaliman* and so on. However, according to many, the most famous comic of all times is “*La Familia Burrón*”. The following two sections give an explanation about who were the Burrons and their author.

2.4.1 La Familia Burrón

As it was expressed in the previous paragraph, “*La Familia Burrón*” is one of the most endearing and important comics of Mexican culture. The main reason to express this idea is because this comic was published for over 7 decades according to Editorial Porrúa (2008). The author of this family was Gabriel Vargas. Appendini (2000, p. V, para. 1) expressed “Gabriel Vargas has mirrored the everyday events of our city in ‘*La Familia Burrón*’, in which he presents the historical development of the middle class from the capital city, with its narrow circumstances, illusions, hopes...”; this assertion helps to explain why the comic had a strong approval by people. Vargas tried to exhibit the problems of Mexico, but he did it through a dash of humor. The comic presented the hard life of a poor Mexican family who lived in a little neighborhood, but they always had zest for life and desire to solve their problems. The main characters of this comic were:

- Mr. Regino Burrón who was the head of the family. His main quality was that he was a humble person. He made a living through honest work which was as a barber.
- Mrs. Borola Burrón who was the wife of Mr. Burrón. She was a born leader who used to move the poor masses of the neighborhood. Despite her advocacy for the rights of the poor people, her doings always brought her problems with both her husband and society because her ways of doing things were not the most appropriate.
- Regino Burrón Jr. was the oldest child of the family. This boy was an adolescent who rarely was in trouble because he always followed his dad, Mr. Burrón. However, sometimes he and his sister were victims of the doings of his mom.
- Macuca Burrón was the second child of the family. She was also an adolescent. Unlike her brother, she was always following her mom and taking part in the doings of her mom although she did not always agree with her.
- Foforo Cantarranas was a little kid adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Burrón. Although Foforito was not a biological son, “*La Familia Burrón*” loved him as if he were one of them. “*La Familia Burrón*” adopted him because his dad, Susano Cantarranas, mistreated him. He, like Regino Jr., was always following Mr. Burrón and loved him as if he were his real father.

There were many others supporting characters who, for this explanation, are not necessarily important to describe. The next section gives a brief biography of Gabriel Vargas.

2.4.2 Gabriel Vargas

“Gabriel Vargas, one of the greatest Mexican cartoonists...” (Appendini, 2000, p. V, para. 4). Not just Appendini, but many people, such as: historians and people who are dedicated to this literary genre, think that Vargas was the greatest Mexican cartoonist who had created through many years many important characters that have left an important mark on the cartoon world.

Vargas was born in Tulancingo City, Hidalgo (March 24, 1918). He was son of Victor Vargas and Josefina Bernal. He was the fifth of twelve children. When he was five, his father died and his family went to live in Mexico City. Since he was a child, people realized he had artistic talents. He got the second place in a Japanese competition in which children from the whole world took part.

At the age of 13 Vargas was given a student grant in order to study in any place he wanted, but he rejected it because of his young age. So, he got a job in the *Excélsior* newspaper. He created many different cartoons and soon his work was recognized everywhere. However his work gained popularity, his own work brought him problems with the authority to the degree of being in trouble with the law at a very young age. He created a cartoon called “*la Vida de Cristo*” (the Life of Christ). But during his adolescence it was forbidden to touch religious themes. This event brought as consequence the conclusion of this cartoon because of religious proselytizing. After he released from prison, he created more cartoons which also were popular.

Vargas created “*La Familia Burrón*” because of a challenge proposed by his friend Armando Ferrari. Before “*La Familia Burrón*” could see the light, Vargas was writing

“Jilemon Metralla y Bomba” which also was successful. This character was wretch but charismatic. His friend Ferrari told Vargas that he could not manage a woman who had those characteristics. Vargas accepted the challenge and created Borola Burrón, which gave way to the creation of “*La Familia Burrón*”. They became more successful than Jilemon Metralla y Bomba.

Vargas had worked with many people during the publication of The Burrons. Some of these people were: Alberto Cervantes, Miguel Mejía and Agustín Vargas (his nephew). He devoted himself to knowing the nightlife in the Mexico City, always surrounded and guarded by people of his confidence. He used to visit theaters, cafes, canteens, cabarets and other places in order to learn about Mexican people and create his stories. “...[I did it] in order to know about the movement, how to speak and how each person behaved. I needed to immerse myself in the true environment of our people” Vargas (n.d., volume 13, p. V, para. 3), He collected some informal expressions and some others were created by him. People used some of his expressions.

During his life he received many honors and awards. Some of them were:

- 2003, José Vasconcelos Medal, given by the *Seminario de Cultura Mexicana*.
- 2003, *Premio Nacional de Ciencias y Arte*, given by the President Vicente Fox
- 2008, *Doctor Honoris Causa*, given by Universidad Autónoma de Hidalgo
- 2009, Pedro María Anaya Medal, given by *El Poder Legislativo del Congreso del Estado de Hidalgo*.

Vargas died in Mexico City (May 25, 2010) at the age of 95. His work prevails as one of the most important in Mexican literature.

2.5 Conclusion

As it was seen in this chapter, this study is related to the sub-branches of Micro-Linguistics: Semantics (2.1.2.1) and Pragmatics (2.1.2.2) which are the study of the meaning of expressions, comprising as expressions the words, sentences and texts; and the study of the meaning of language according to the context in which is used, respectively. It is also related to the sub-branches of Macro-Linguistics: Historical Linguistics (2.1.3.1) which studies how languages change and evolve through time and Sociolinguistics (2.1.3.2) that studies language in society, comprising society as language, culture, social class, ethnicity and gender.

The chapter also provided an explanation about what culture is and the complexity to provide a definition of it because it includes different and various aspects that could define a folk. As a consequence of this, and the interest of this study, the Mexican culture was described as well as some characteristics of these people that could have a strong influence on the expressions used by them in their language. The next segment was dedicated to the language spoken by Mexicans, Spanish language, its history, its influence over the world, the institution which is the responsible of its regularization, which is the *Real Academia Española*, and the existence of sexism in this language. The last section of this chapter gave an explanation of the Mexican comic, “*La Familia Burrón*”, and its author, Gabriel Vargas.

Now that the wider context of the study has been reviewed, the next chapter explains the methodology followed to carry out the study.

CHAPTER THREE. RESEARCH METHOD

3.0 Chapter Introduction

As explained in Chapter One, this research was about the evolution of the informal expressions used by the comic *La Familia Burrón* during its publication. In order to gather the necessary information to analyze this social phenomenon, a qualitative method was applied which consisted of the analysis of these texts. This chapter describes the study document used for the research, study instrument, and the description of the data handling procedures.

3.1 Study Documents

Comics are a popular and common means of entertainment reading. It does not matter what culture or language we talk about, there is no doubt that comics have been, are and will be very popular among people regardless age, gender or some others characteristics. The reason why they are so popular is because they are an entertainment media. They can represent from a fairy tale to a social critique. However, the main characteristic of these entertainment media is that all the stories are represented by images and dialogues.

Despite most of these products are not as cheap as one could think, people have easier access to these readings, without taking into consideration the preferences of the people to these products, than a book. That is a reason of why they are so popular and why they have a strong influence on the personality of the people. Another important reason of why they are so popular is because good literature in Mexico is expensive. This reason is due not to the story itself, but to all the processes and people who are involved in the

release of a book. The following paragraph describes the Mexican comic used as the study instrument.

As it was explained in Chapter II, Section 2.4, “*La Familia Burrón*” is one of the most famous comics in Mexico. This comic told the anecdotes of a poor Mexican family that lived in a little neighborhood. The members of this family were: Mr. Regino Burrón, Mrs. Borola Burrón, Regino Burrón Jr., Macuca Burrón and Foforo Cantarranas, the adopted child.

As presented in Section 2.4.2, the author of these characters was Gabriel Vargas. He created them in 1948, and they were published until 2009. He wanted to mirror the Mexican culture and make commentary on the government. Although the family’s adventures were funny and entertaining, one of the main characteristics of this comic, and the reason why this comic was selected for this research, was the informal language found throughout the text. They had several informal words for some things, such as: *bilinbiques* for money, *cuatiza* for friends, and *maloras* for gangs, people and so on.

The next section explains the study instrument used in order to analyze the texts.

3.2 Study Instrument

The study instrument used for this research was Text Analysis. Before starting exposing what text analysis is, it is important to know what a text is. The *Oxford Dictionary Online* (n.d.) gives several definitions of text, however, all of them agree with the idea that a text is “...a written or printed work, regarded in terms of its content rather than its physical form” (para.1). On the contrary, the *Real Academia Española* online (n.d.) says that a text is not just a written work, but it is also an oral statement. As it can be seen, despite the fact these

two institutions disagree with the meaning of what a text is, it can be said that a text can be both, an oral or written word, and it expresses coherent statements. Denzin and Lincoln (2003, p.n348) give another definition of what a text is which says “text [is] a heuristic device to identify data consisting of words and images that have become recorded without the intervention of a researcher”. Starting from this idea, a text is a tool used by the researcher in order to analyze and comprehend the main phenomenon of the study. It is useful to know the background of an environment, the experiences, situations and the daily function.

The use of this instrument for this kind of research brings a number of benefits for the researcher. One of the benefits is that the researcher can access to the sources at a time convenient for him or her. This means that the researcher can access them at the moment he or she needs them and as many times as he or she wants it. Another advantage is that it represents data which are thoughtful in that participants have given attention to compiling them. When the researcher analyzes documents, he or she selects the documents which are necessary for the study. One last advantage that this instrument offers is that as written evidence, it saves time and expense of transcribing. As Denzin and Lincoln (2003) expressed in their idea, the researcher has no intervention in the production of the documents.

On the other side, this instrument also brings some disadvantages. The documents, object of the study, may be protected information unavailable to public or private access. This situation complicates the work of the researcher because that means that his or her study depends on somebody else. Another disadvantage is that it requires the researcher to search out the information in hard-to-find places. Sometimes the documents needed by the

researcher are not easy to gather which forces the researcher to make a greater effort in order to gather the information. Another disadvantage is that some documents require transcribing or optically scanning for computer analyses. Some documents are too old that need to be digitalized in order to be studied. Another disadvantage is that some materials may be incomplete. As the previous disadvantage, this may be due to the age of the documents. One last disadvantage is that some documents may not be authentic or accurate. If the authenticity of the documents is not corroborated, then the work of the researcher could not have credibility.

3.2.1 Text Analysis

In order to gather data for the study, I looked for old comics that could show how this comic used informal expressions to communicate. This was not easy because “*la Familia Burrón*” comics were no longer published. In addition, I could only find a few. In order to acquire some copies for the study I had to buy some books which were collected work of the comics and contained some of the publications of “*la Familia Burrón*”. These books were published by Porrúa Editorial.

In order to analyze the text, I created categories for the informal expressions used in each volume, which are explained in the section 3.3.2 Data Analysis Procedure. The next sections contain the explanation of the Data Handling Procedure which in turn contains the Data Collection Procedure and the Data Analysis Procedure, as well.

3.3 Data Handling Procedure

This section presents the data collection procedure and the data analysis procedure, as well. As it was explained in the last section, there was just one research method used in this

study, text analysis. The next paragraphs explain the procedure followed for the management of the data.

3.3.1 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure consisted of looking for some comics of “*la Familia Burrón*”. Looking for these samples was not an easy task because there were only a few publications of the comics. Also, trying to find older samples of publications complicated the task of data collection, without taking into account that the old comics found were not cheap. Another factor that complicated the data collection was the insufficiency of old samples. Even samples on the internet were not easy to be found. After difficult time searching, the samples were found published in a new version. Porrúa Editorial gathered, at the moment of this research, in 14 volumes some numbers of “*la Familia Burrón*”, between the number 1 and the last one (1616), and published them. Each volume contained 12 numbers of the comics. This indicated that a total of 168 numbers there were published, at the moment of this research, just 11% of the total of publications. Although this facilitated the collection of the data, it was not possible to identify the number of the comic printed in each volume because they did not have that information included. Another complication that this search had was the lack of another kind of compilation similar to “*la Familia Burrón*” that could help this research.

The next paragraph exposes how the data collected was analyzed.

3.3.2 Data Analysis Procedure

As explained in the previous section, it was not possible to identify the number of the comic because it was not printed within it. This situation forced me to think that the

volumes 1 to 14 contained only some selected numbers of the comics published since 1948. For this reason and in order to obtain the words from the comics, four volumes were studied.

To facilitate the management of the data obtained, some categories were created. As it was explained in the Chapter II (section 2.1.3.1 Historical Linguistics), language changes. For this reason, to organize the data, two categories were created for every volume except the first one. The following table shows with marks the categories that were applied for each volume:

Table 3.1 *Instrument for categorizing words that change*

	Volume			
	1	2	3	4
Words or Expressions used in this volume.				
Words or Expressions born in this volume.				

The next paragraphs explain the purpose of each category for each volume:

- a) Words or Expressions used in this volume. For this category it did not matter the volume in which was applied nor what expressions were new nor which were not new.
- b) Words or Expressions born in this volume. This category was not possible to be used for the analysis of the first volume because there was not any point of comparison. Once there was a point of comparison, it was possible to apply this

category. This category made possible the comparison, between the volumes, of the words that were new in each volume.

Besides the categorization of the words, each word contains its meaning or use according to the context in which it was used.

3.4 Conclusion

As a conclusion of this chapter, two aspects can be mentioned. Firstly, this chapter described the research method used for this investigation. The data analysis is based on documents which are Mexican comics. The Mexican comics are titled as “*la Familia Burrón*” which are a mirror of the Mexican culture. These documents were studied through Text Analysis which is the study of texts, both written and oral, that in turn contains advantages and disadvantages. Lastly, the data handling procedure was explained which contains the data collection procedure and the data analysis procedure.

The following chapter presents the findings from the data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR. RESULTS

4.0 Chapter Introduction

In this chapter, the outcomes obtained from the analyses are presented. The last chapter presented the instruments and the documents used. This chapter provides the answers obtained for each research question. The results are presented in tables (see Appendixes A-H) as well as discussed in sections following the tables.

4.1 Research Questions

The research questions of this study were:

RQ1. What was the slang used by the Mexican comic *La Familia Burrón* throughout its publications?

RQ2. How did their informal expressions evolve or change according to the different ages that they went through since their first publication?

Section 4.2 presents the results obtained after the analysis of the texts.

4.2 Results

As it was presented in the previous chapter, in order to answer these questions, only one method was used: Text Analysis. This method was used for the two research questions and consisted of analyzing the dialogs of comics of “*La Familia Burrón*” in order to identify the informal words and expressions used by these characters and how these expressions had changed through time. The analysis of the texts was divided into two parts: firstly, gathering of the informal words and expressions and, secondly, comparison of those expressions.

4.2.1 Results from the Gathering of the Informal Expressions

In this first part, all the informal words and expressions were collected from four of the fourteen volumes. The volumes selected were from the number one to the number four. These volumes were in a consecutive order, but the comics contained within each volume were not consecutive. In other words, the order of the volumes was not related to the year of publication of the comics. The total number of stories analyzed was forty-eight. An average of 1800 informal words and expressions were obtained.

The tables presented in Appendixes A through H contain the categories in which the most common words and expressions, found in each volume, were accommodated. Eight categories were created: i) *Body Parts*, ii) *Expressions That Use Body Parts*, iii) *Synonyms for Family*, iv) *Quantifiers* v) *Qualifiers*, vi) *General Expressions*, vii) *English Borrowings*, and viii) *General Synonyms*. Besides the expressions, a brief explanation of the meaning is provided. It should be noted that not all of the expressions have a concrete meaning. Also each volume contained more than one thousand informal expressions because many of these expressions were used more than one time and some others were used only one time. Although some expressions were repeated, the meanings of them were different depending on the context. For the purpose of this research, only the most common expressions were taken into consideration because trying to categorize all of the expressions would have been a huge task, and it would not have satisfied the purpose of this work.

The following discussion summarizes the results shown in the Appendixes regarding Table 4.1 *Body parts*, 4.2 *Expressions That Used Body Parts*, 4.3 *Synonyms for*

Family, 4.4 Quantifiers, 4.5 Qualifiers, 4.6 General Expressions, 4.7 English Borrowings, and 4.8 General Synonyms.

The most popular informal expressions were: Head (*la de hueso*), Eyes (*los de apipizca*), Legs (*las patas, las de galopar*), Blood (*Mole*), Dying (*Irse/Mandar a calacas*), Husband (*Viejo / Mi Viejo*), Child (*Bodoque, Chamaco, Pirrimplin*), Quantifier (*Un chorro de*), Qualifier (*...de a feo*), Credibility (*A lo macho*), Surprise (*¡Ay, mamá Carlota!*), Seducing (*Echar los perros*), House (*Jaus*), Friend (*Cuate*), Drinking alcohol (*Chupar*), Kissing (*Picoretear*), Jail (*Bote*), Short person (*Zotaco*), Money (*Fierros*), Ugly or Despicable (*Furris*), Fisticuffs (*Trompones*), Woman (*Vieja*), the World (*La canica*), Commerce (*Changarro*), Police (*Teco, Tecolotiza*).

The expressions which had more synonyms were: Head (*Coco, Cholla, La de hueso, La pelona, La bola de los pipis*), Hand (*La de cobrar, La manopla, Las de rascarse, Las de sonarse*), Buttocks (*Las macizas, Las pompis, Las tambochas, Las tortas, Las traseras, Salva sea la parte*), Dying (*Alzar los tenis, Dar la patada final, Dar mate, Entregar el equipo, Estirar la pata, Irse a calacas, Venir la calaca, Mandar a calacas, Poner el alma en descanso, Quedarse tieso*), Bleeding (*Babear mole, Bañado en mole, Correr mole, Lavar con mole, Llover mole*), Child (*Bodoque, Chamaco, Chiquilistrín, Chiquillería, Escuintle, Mocosos, Mono, Pirrimplín*), Quickly (*A mil por hora, Como bala, Como cuete, Como de rayo, Como flecha, Como tiro, En menos de lo que se dice ¡cuas!*), Seducing (*Amarrarse a alguien, Andar tras los huesos de alguien, Echar los perros, Echarle ojitos a alguien*), Drinking alcohol (*Marranilla, Caldo de oso, Copetonas, Crema de maguey, Chupar, Empinar el codo, Entrarle al pulmón, Inflar, Remojar el gaznate, Tlachicotón*), Money (*Bilimbiques, Bolas, Chipirones, Chuchos, Del águila, Fierros, Lana, Morlacos,*

Pelucones, Plata, Tepacates, Toletes, Una feria), Fisticuff (*Mamporros, Moquetes, Sopapo, Trompones*), Fighting (*Aventarse una sopita, Desgreñarse, Echar brava, Enchuecar las narices, Fajarse a los moquetes, Pleito, Sonarse a alguien, Tirar los dientes/muelas*), Police (*Acólitos del diablo, Cuico, Chota, La poli, Teco, Tecolote, Tecolotiza*).

In this section, the different categories and the diversity of synonyms that “*La Familia Burrón*” used was presented as part of their lexicon as well as the frequency with which they were used. Besides the Spanish vocabulary, they used to use some words which were borrowed from English language. These borrowings demonstrate the influence that the English language already had on the Mexican Spanish language. The next section presents the results obtained from the comparison of the expressions.

4.2.2 Results from the Comparison of the Informal Expressions

As it was presented in the previous section, “*La Familia Burrón*” had a wide variety of informal expressions and synonyms for people, things, and verbs. Some of those expressions were taken from the daily language of common people, and some others were created by the author of this peculiar family, and some others were borrowed from the English lexicon.

After the expressions were gathered, the second part of the analysis took place. The comparison of the expressions was made by volume. The comparison was to analyze which expressions were new and how the already existing ones changed their meaning or use. However, the second part of the analysis was hindered by the lack of the year of publication and the serial number of the stories which were contained in each of them. It was not possible to distinguish the age in which the expressions were used. For this reason, it was

assumed that the comics contained in each volume belonged to different years of publication.

The results obtained from the analysis are explained below:

- a. The few times an expression was used in the four volumes did not guarantee that the expression was new or stopped being used by people because probably the different contexts that took place in the stories did not lead to the use of the expression.
- b. The variety of non-standard expressions used for the same standard expression gives way to use those different expressions in similar contexts. So, it cannot be considered that all of the expressions stopped being used because they were not consistent in the four volumes. An example of this situation is four of the nine synonyms for fighting which were only used one time.
- c. The use of English words demonstrated the long influence that this language has had on Mexican Spanish language.
- d. Some expressions had different meanings depending on the context in which they were used. An example of this point is the expression *¿Quihubo?* which is used as a greeting and as an exclamation of surprise.

The following section presents the summary of this chapter.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter presented the sections in which the analysis was divided. Each section presented the results obtained in each one. The first section presented the categories created for the informal language used by “*La Familia Burrón*” which demonstrated the great diversity of expressions that they had. The second section presented the results obtained from the comparison between the informal expressions of the four volumes analyzed. In the following chapter, I will draw the general conclusion for this study. I will discuss the significance and the limitations of this study and recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER FIVE. CONCLUSION

5.0 Chapter Overview

As it was established in the first chapter, this work is an analysis of Mexican informal language. This analysis was based on the comic titled “*La Familia Burrón*” because of their enriched informal vocabulary. As shown in Chapter III, this fictional family is a Mexican cultural icon which has existed for over 70 years. The author of this poor and popular family was Gabriel Vargas who used the fictional family as a way of criticizing the most common problems of Mexican people for example: neediness, famine, alcoholism, politics, and so on.

The study method used for this analysis was Text Analysis. The whole analysis gave interesting and important findings which are summarized in the next sections and their significance. Besides the findings, I present the answers of the two research questions which served as the base of this study. The next section recounts the aims of the study as well as the accomplishments. After this section, I give a description of the experiences that I obtained after this project, which are divided into four parts. And last, but not less important, I provide some recommendations for further research and the limitations that I experienced during this project.

5.1 Findings and Significance

As I presented in the previous chapter, the results were classified into eight categories. After the analysis, I could gather more than one thousand expressions for each volume. These findings caught my attention and helped me to understand that Mexican people have many different synonyms and expressions for things and events.

The findings and significance of the first part of the analysis are explained below:

Firstly, there are some expressions which are more popular than some others. When I was reading and analyzing the words and how they worked, I realized that many standard words have many non-standard synonyms, such as synonymous expressions for: hands, buttocks, police, alcohol, and so on. However, some synonyms were more popular than others. This could mean two things: a) because of the diversity of synonyms, some of them are not known by all the people, and b) they are not liked by all the people.

Secondly, there are several *unnecessary* synonyms. The existence of several and different non-standard expressions for the same thing help in understanding that Mexican people have a great skill in creating names for things. However, the existence of several informal synonyms means that not all of them are useful which in turn means that some of them could disappear because they are not used. In addition, for a person who is learning the Mexican Spanish language, either as a second or foreign language, it could be tedious trying to understand the meaning of the different expressions according to the context in which they are used.

The second part of the analysis was not easy to carry out because of a problem which is explained in section 5.6 Research Limitations. However, I could find that many expressions were used several times in the four volumes. This situation may indicate that those informal expressions did not change their meaning or usage through time.

Overall, this work could help to motivate new studies about Spanish language evolution, both standard and non-standard expressions.

5.2 Answers for Research Questions

As it was presented in Chapter I, the research questions which serve as an engine for this research were:

RQ1. What was the slang used by the Mexican comic “*La Familia Burrón*” throughout its publications?

In order to answer this question, I analyzed a total number of forty-eight different stories using the Text Analysis method. The expressions and words discovered were organized into tables by quantity and later they were organized into eight topic categories. I found that Mexicans as portrayed in the comics have different synonyms for the same word and some of these informal words need the context to have sense.

RQ2. How did their informal expressions evolve or change according to the different ages that they went through since their first publication?

Because of the problems presented, in order to answer this RQ, I had to consider that each volume belonged to a different year of publication. Unfortunately this RQ could not be answered as I would have liked because of the lack of date reference in the materials I was able to obtain. However, I realized that most of the words found are still being used in present days by people. This indicates that these informal expressions are not as different as those used fifty years ago.

5.3 Research Aims

As I established in Chapter I, the aims of this research were: a) the analysis of the informal expressions used by “*La Familia Burrón*” and b) the analysis of how they had to adapt their informal expressions to the different ages in which they were published.

5.3.1 Accomplishment of the Research Aims

As it was mentioned previously, I had two research aims. In order to accomplish the first aim, analysis of the informal expressions, I used the research method Text Analysis. Through the analysis I could gather the different expressions used by this family and their meaning, as well. The accomplishment of the second aim was not possible at all because, as it has been mentioned before, the lack of the reference of time of publication represented a big problem. Nevertheless, after analyzing and comparing the different expressions found in each volume, I could tell many expressions did not change and some others were not used in all the volumes. Maybe this happened because the situation of the different stories did not need the use of the expression.

5.4 Reflective Account

As it was presented in the first paragraph of this chapter, in this section I present my personal experiences that I had during the progress of this work. Such progress is divided into four sections: a) the beginning of the research project, b) the project development period, c) the ending/write up project period, and c) personal changes experienced as a result of the process. Each paragraph below explains each progress.

Firstly, the idea of thinking about writing a thesis is terrifying when it is the first time you do it. But it is more terrifying to choose a topic which could catch the attention and, more important, that you could like. In spite of this uncomfortable feeling, I was excited to start and achieve this goal. The first topic I choose was not very different from this one; it was focused on the evolution of informal expressions. However, I changed my mind and focused my investigation on the language of the Mexican comic “*La Familia*

Burrón” because I grew up reading their stories and I thought this could be a good chance to analyze our language and culture.

During the development of this project, I experienced different things. Besides the difficult task of choosing a good topic, the most difficult part of this work was Chapter II. The first chapter was not difficult because I had to write about my own experiences and decisions about this project. The second part of this task, Chapter II, was complicated and boring sometimes because I had to read different texts, such as: articles, and books, and slides. During this period of time I had to read, criticize, discard and organize my information according to what I needed. Also, I discovered new things and new topics which I liked to investigate and this situation made me have doubts about my topic and sometimes I wanted to change it. Chapter III was easier than the previous one because I had to know and investigate about the method I was going to use for this project. The period of the development of Chapter IV was tedious and sometimes boring because I had to read more texts, analyze, gather and organize my data. Even when the purpose of the comics is to be funny and entertaining, they stopped being funny because I had to set aside the entertainment part in order to analyze deeply the texts. Once I finished the analysis, the rest of this writing was easier because I only had to write the results and significance.

When I was writing up this project, I realized how much I could do when I challenge myself, when I have an objective and purpose. There is a sense of unspeakable personal satisfaction which I hope will be repeated in new projects.

The personal changes that I experienced during this process are diverse. The first change I noticed was the increased knowledge. Every time I read a new text, both books

and articles, I knew new things and I could confirm some knowledge. I could learn how to carry out a real academic project from the very beginning to the closure of it. Another experience I had was the interest in investigation. I acquired the concern to know new things and continue increasing my knowledge.

I have to say that all this process was less difficult thanks to the guidance and support of my director, who always gave me feedback and advice.

5.5 Recommendations

When I chose the topic of this research, I wanted to do something for my mother language, something that could be different from the studies of my friends and schoolmates who were more interested in topics such as: teaching and learning process of ELS or EFL, materials and so on. Doing this project I could learn more from my own language and appreciate it more. Something I could say to future generation is that in the same way we are interested in learning and appreciating a second language, it would be good to learn more about the function and usage of our own language in the same way we do it with the second language. Maybe new research about Spanish language could create the interest in teaching it as a second or foreign language.

5.6 Research Limitations

During the development of this project I faced some limitations. These limitations were: a) the lack of old texts, b) the lack of reference of year of publication and the serial, as well, and c) the limitation of the texts analyzed.

- a) When I was gathering my texts, I looked for old samples that could help me with this project. Unfortunately, the few samples I found were expensive. For this reason I had to look for new means to achieve this part of the task. I could solve this problem by buying the editions made by Porrúa Editorial.

- b) A second limitation, detached from the first one, was the lack of the year of publication and the serial of the original comics. The editions obtained helped for the purpose of this study; however they did not have any reference of the year they were published or the number of the serial. This situation complicated the project because I could not achieve the second part of the study, which was how language evolved or was adapted to the new tendencies.

- c) The number of stories analyzed was limited. Due to the short period of time I had to do this research, I only could analyze a total of forty-eight different stories. This is a very small sample considering that there were 1616 publications. For this reason, the second part of the analysis could be achieved by analyzing more samples.

5.7 Suggestions for Further Research

As I mentioned in section 5.5, when I chose this topic I wanted to do something for my language. However, this kind of research can be applied to other types of Spanish language studies. Even this project could be continued by anyone if the time needed is dedicated. The analysis of how our informal language has evolved through time is interesting because it demonstrates how our society has also developed.

This kind of project could help inculcate the interest for further studies of this mother language.

5.8 Final Thoughts

The entire purpose of this project was to analyze how our informal language has evolved through time through the analysis of the stories of “*La Familia Burrón*”, which was a representation of a poor Mexican family who suffered the hard situation that Mexican people live. This analysis helped show the most common expressions used and how they work. It demonstrated that Mexicans have a great skill to give several synonyms to things and create phrases. This also demonstrates that the existence of several informal synonyms for a thing makes the use of all of them impossible. A further study of this linguistic phenomenon would be interesting.

I hope this small project encourages future generations to research about Spanish language, such as: learning, teaching, evolution and so on.

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APPENDIX A - Table 4.1 Body Parts

<i>Standard</i>	<i>English meaning</i>	<i>Non-Standard</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Vol. I</i>	<i>Vol. II</i>	<i>Vol. III</i>	<i>Vol. IV</i>
				<i>Times</i>			
Cara	Face	Caratula	Caratula is a synonym for cara (face).	1	2	1	1
		Coco		2	1		
Cabeza	Head	Cholla	Synonyms for the head.	3	5	1	
		La de hueso		7	6	10	14
		La pelona			2		
		La plena bola de los pipis					1
Caderas	Hips	La zona del aguayón/lonjas	Synonym for the hips.	3	2	1	3
Mano	Hand	La de cobrar	This synonym was used because when a person collects money, he/she has to raise his/her hand in order to get it.		1		1
		La Manopla	Comparison with a baseball mitt.	3	1	1	
		Las de rascarse	This expression is used because of one of the several functions of the hands, which is scratching.	3		2	1
		Las de sonarse	This synonym was used because when a child misbehaves, he/she is punished by hitting his/her the hands.				1

Ojos	Eyes	Los chinguñosos	<i>Chinguña</i> is a popular synonym for <i>vitreou</i> , which is a lacrimal segregation that dries on the eyes. <i>Chinguñosos</i> is an adjective for the dirty eyes.	2
		Los de apizca	<i>Apizca</i> is a migratory waterfowl that is slightly larger than a dove, white plumage, black head and small eyes.	8 6 2 6
Piernas	Legs	La pata	The word <i>patas</i> is the Spanish name for the animal legs, but it is used as a synonym for the human legs because of its function, which is to walk.	6 4 4 5
		Las de galopar	This expression is a comparison between one of the functions of the horse legs, which is gallop, and the function of the feet, which is run to refer to the limbs of both livings.	6 7 4 8
Sangre	Blood	Mole	<i>Mole</i> is a typical Mexican food which consists of a mixture of several ingredients.	1 6 14 21
		Agua de Jamaica	<i>Agua de Jamaica</i> is a typical Mexican drink obtained after boiling a hibiscus flower which color is red.	9
Trasero	Buttocks	Las Macizas		4 3 1 1
		Las Pompis		1 1 1 1
		Las Tambochas		3 2 3
		Las Tortas	<i>Las tortas</i> is a comparison with bread.	1
		Las Traseras		3 1
		Salva sea la parte		1

APPENDIX B - Table 4.2 Expressions that Use Body Parts

<i>Standard</i>	<i>English meaning</i>	<i>Non-Standard</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Vol. I</i>	<i>Vol. II</i>	<i>Vol. III</i>	<i>Vol. IV</i>
				<i>Times</i>			
Arreglarse la imagen	Polish Oneself's image	Darse una manita de gato	Darse una manita de gato means to get a good look.			1	
		Jalar las patas a alguien	Expression used to scare people taking as a possibility the coming of a ghost.	1		1	1
Asustarse	Get Scared	Alzar los tenis	Alzar los tenis refers to how a person is taken to the cemetery, feed ahead.		2	1	
		Dar la patada final	Expression used to indicate the last breath of a person.	1			
Morir	Dying	Dar mate	Dar mate is a synonym for killing someone.	1			
		Estregar el equipo	El equipo is a synonym for the body. Entregar el equipo is an allusion to when the soul leaves the physical world.				1
Morir	Dying	Estirar la pata	Synonyms for dying.	1		1	
		Irse a calacas		5		9	10
Morir	Dying	La calaca puede venir por...	La calaca is a synonym for the death.			2	
		Mandar a calacas	Synonyms for killing someone.	7		10	
		Poner el alma en descanso			3		

						1
		Quedarse tieso	Quedarse tieso refer to the physical condition that takes a body after it dies.			1
		Babear mole	Synonym for bleeding through the mouth.		1	3
		Bañado en mole	Synonym for bleeding heavily.		1	2
		Correr mole			3	3
		Lavar con mole	Synonyms for a fight.		1	1
		Llover mole			2	1
						2
Sangrar	Bleeding					

APPENDIX C - Table 4.3 Synonyms for Family

<i>Standard</i>	<i>English meaning</i>	<i>Non-Standard</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Vol. I</i>	<i>Vol. II</i>	<i>Vol. III</i>	<i>Vol. IV</i>
				<i>Times</i>			
Esposa	Wife	Mi vieja	Affective synonym for wife. Although <i>viejo/a</i> is a synonym for antique, for this situation the age is not related to this word.	1	4	5	9
Esposo	Husband	Mi Viejo/Viejito	Affective synonym for husband. Although <i>viejo/a</i> is a synonym for antique, for this situation the age is not related to this word.	12	36	31	35
Madre	Mother	Jefa	<i>Jefa</i> is a synonym for a mother.	3	2	6	10
Niño/a	Child	Bodoque	Synonyms for a child.	20	18	12	15
		Chamaco/a		6	14	4	
		Chiquilistrin		2	1	3	
		Chiquilleria		1			
		Escuintle		1	15	3	
		Mocoso			1		
		Mono	12	1	2		
		Pirrimplín	6	8	2	10	
Padre	Father	Jefe	<i>Jefe</i> is a synonym for a father.	2	1		3

APPENDIX D - Table 4.4 Quantifiers

<i>Standard</i>	<i>English meaning</i>	<i>Non-Standard</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Times</i>			
				<i>Vol. I</i>	<i>Vol. II</i>	<i>Vol. III</i>	<i>Vol. IV</i>
Tiempo / Momento	Time/Moment	Al/Un ratón	<i>Ratón</i> is a quantifier for time. The word <i>ratón</i> (mouse) is used because of its similarity with the word <i>rato</i> (moment).	6	5	10	5
Una gran cantidad de	A large amount of	Un chorro de	<i>Un chorro</i> is an informal quantifier for large amounts of things or activities.	15	12	14	25

APPENDIX E - Table 4.5 Qualifiers

<i>Standard</i>	<i>English meaning</i>	<i>Non-Standard</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Vol. I</i>	<i>Vol. II</i>	<i>Vol. III</i>	<i>Vol. IV</i>
				<i>Times</i>			
Mucho	Much	... de a feo	Complement used in a sentence in order to emphasize the action, either good or bad.	4	5	6	9
Rápidamente	Quickly, Fast	A mil por hora	Expression used as an adverb for verbs of motion.	1	1	1	1
		Como bala		1		1	2
		Como cuete		4			5
		Como de rayo		2	3		2
		Como flecha		4	3	8	
		Como tiro		2		2	
		En menos de lo que se dice ¡cuas!	¡Cuas! is a meaningless word which was used as any other word for this phrase.		2	2	

APPENDIX F - Table 4.6 General Expressions

<i>Standard</i>	<i>English meaning</i>	<i>Non-Standard</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Times</i>			
				<i>Vol. I</i>	<i>Vol. II</i>	<i>Vol. III</i>	<i>Vol. IV</i>
Agrado por algo	Liking	¡Qué suave!	Expression used when a person likes the result of a happening.	6	4	3	7
Credibilidad	Credibility	A lo macho	Expression used when a person wants to be credible.	5	2	7	7
Deseo de hacer las cosas	Willing to act	¡Me canso!	Expression used to indicate agreement with somebody or something.	4		3	1
¡Dios mío!	Oh, my God!	¡Ay mamá! / ¡Ay, mamá Carlota!	Expression used by a person who gets surprised.	7	7	6	10
Incredulidad	Incredulity	¡A dío!	Expression used by a person who distrusts a new or situation.	3			1
Pedir dinero	Asking for Money	Dar un sablazo	<i>Dar un sablazo</i> is an expression used when a person asks for money to someone.		4		5
¿Qué paso?	What happened?	¿Quihubo?	Distortion of the Spanish expression <i>¿Qué hubo?</i> . The expression denotes from a greeting to bewilderment.	5	6	6	5

Seducir	Seducing	Amarrarse a alguien	1	1
		Andar tras los huesos de alguien	3	1 2 3
		Echar los perros	4	3 8 8
		Echarle ojitos a alguien		1

Expression used for seducing.

Phrase used when a girl seduces a man using her eyes as a tool.

APPENDIX G - Table 4.7 English Borrowings

<i>Standard</i>	<i>English meaning</i>	<i>Non-Standard</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Times</i>			
				<i>Vol. I</i>	<i>Vol. II</i>	<i>Vol. III</i>	<i>Vol. IV</i>
Cara	Face	Feis	Distortion of the English word <i>face</i> .	3	6	1	3
Casa	House	Jaus	Distortion of the English word <i>house</i> .	11	4	5	6
Dinero	Money	Money	Word borrowed from the English language.	2	8	3	5
Gracias	Thank you	Tenquiu	Distortion of the English word <i>Thank you</i> .	2	1	1	1
Muy bien	Very fine	Very fain	Distortion of the English words <i>very fine</i> .	2	2	2	2
Por favor	Please	Plis	Distortion of the English word <i>please</i> .	2	1	1	5
Tú	You	Yu	Distortion of the English word <i>you</i> .	1	1	2	3
Un momento	One moment	¡Guan momen!	Distortion of the English words <i>one moment!</i>	1			

APPENDIX H - Table 4.8 General Synonyms

<i>Standard</i>	<i>English meaning</i>	<i>Non-Standard</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Times</i>			
				<i>Vol. I</i>	<i>Vol. II</i>	<i>Vol. III</i>	<i>Vol. IV</i>
Amigo/a / Sujeto	Friend / Man	Cuate/a	Cuate is used as a synonym for a friend or as a synonym for an unknown man.	23	15	12	26
		La cuatiza	La cuatiza is a synonym for the friend gang.		2	2	4
Beber alcohol	Drinking alcohol	Botellas / Botellucas de beberecua / marranilla	Both, <i>Beberecua</i> and <i>Marranilla</i> , are synonyms for alcohol.	1	9	4	
		Caldo de oso		2	2		
		Cremas de maguey	Synonym for a <i>pulque</i> . <i>Pulque</i> is a Mexican drink made of a substance which is obtained from the maguey.	1	1	1	5
		Tlachicotón			1		2
		Chupar		6	19	9	7
		Empinar el codo			1	2	1
		Entrarle al pulmón	Synonyms for drinking alcohol.	1			
		Inflar		1	3	1	2
		Remojar el gaznate		1			

Besar	Kissing	Picoretear	Synonyms for kissing.	7	8	1	13
		Quicos		1			
Cabello	Hair	Greña/Greñero	Synonym for the hear.	1	7	3	3
La cárcel	The jail	El bote	Synonymf for the jail.	5	3	9	7
Compadre/ Comadre		Friend	Originally the words <i>Compadre</i> and <i>Comadre</i> were used to establish religious relationships between people. However, nowadays people use these words to establish a very good friendly relationship.	2	7		
Chaparro	Little	Zotaco	Derogative synonym for a little person.	7	19	9	7
Dinero	Money	Bilimbiques	Synonyms for Money and Pesos.		6	3	7
		Bolas		1		5	
		Chipirones		6	8	5	
		Chuchos		2	1	2	
		Del águila			2	2	2
		Fierros		2	6	7	7
Dinero	Money	Lana		3	2		
		Morlacos	1	1			
		Pelucón	1	4	2		

Table 4.8 General Synonyms (continuation)

<i>Standard</i>	<i>English meaning</i>	<i>Non-Standard</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Times</i>			
				<i>Vol. I</i>	<i>Vol. II</i>	<i>Vol. III</i>	<i>Vol. IV</i>
Dinero	Money	Plata	Synonyms for Money and Pesos.	3	4	1	
		Tepalcates		5	4	3	2
		Toletes		3	2	3	4
		Una feria		1			4
		Una baba	Synonym for cheaper, little amount.	1	2		2
Golpear / Golpe	Fisticuffs / Punching	Mamporros	Synonyms for Fisticuffs	5	2	3	
		Moquete		4	1	2	
		Sopapo				1	
		Trompones		7	12	17	7
Gustar	Likeing	Cuachalanguear	Cuachalanguear is a verb which means liking for something.	7		5	4
Mujer	Woman	Vieja	Despite <i>vieja</i> is an adjective that indicates the antique of something, for this case it does not matter the age of the woman because it is a derogative synonym for a woman.	8	30	14	21

El mundo	The world	La Canica	Synonym for the Word.	7	14	2	5
Negocio / Comercio	Commerce	Changarro	Derogative synonym for a small commerce.	3	14	6	13
		Aventarse una sopita		1	6	2	1
		Desgreñarse		1	3	4	2
		Echar brava		1	1	1	
		Enchuecar las narices		1			
		Fajarse a los moquetes	Synonyms for Fighting.	1			
Pelear	Fighting	Pleito		1			
		Sonarse a alguien		8	2	1	
		Tirar los dientes		1			
		Tirar las muelas		1			
		Acólitos del diablo			4	1	
		Cuico		2		1	
Policia	Police	Chota	Synonyms for the Police.			4	1
		Tecolotiza		4	8	17	7
		La poli	<i>La poli</i> is a reduction of the word <i>policia</i> (police).	1	1	1	2

Table 4.8 General Synonyms (continuation)

Standard	English meaning	Non-Standard	Meaning	Times			
				Vol. I	Vol. II	Vol. III	Vol. IV
Policia	Police	Teco	<i>Teco</i> and <i>Tecolote</i> are synonyms for Policeman. <i>Teco</i> is the reduction of the word <i>tecolote</i> , which means owl.	10	6	15	6
		Tecolote		3	2	1	
Sexo Femenino	Female Sex	Sexo bonito	Expression used to refer to the women.	4	4	1	2
Sexo Masculino	Male Sex	Sexo espantoso		1	1	2	1
		Sexo horrible	Expression used to refer to the men. It is a contrast of the beautiful sex which is the women.	1	4	3	6
		Sexo horroroso		6	2	2	1
Trabajar	Working	Chambear	Synonyms for working.	3	2	4	5
		Ganarse la frita/papa		2	2	3	1
Trabajo	Job	Chamba	Synonym for a job.	4	1	2	3
Vedette	Vedette	Encueratriz	Encueratriz is a blending of the words <i>encuerar</i> (nake) and <i>actriz</i> (actress). It is a synonym for a Vedette.	2	6	6	1