

Gonzalo Francisco Sánchez: *El habla de la Sierra de Francia en su contexto histórico, geográfico y social*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed.,  
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Review

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*El habla de la Sierra de Francia en su contexto histórico, geográfico y social* is the book that Gonzalo Francisco Sánchez (UMONS) released to publish the results of the PhD he obtained in 2016 from the University of Mons. His research focuses on oral varieties of Spanish, especially on the language of the south of Salamanca.

In the introduction, Julián Barrera Prieta, Deputy for Culture of Salamanca, explains that language is part of the patrimony and, as such, the local varieties that exist in Salamanca must be subject to further investigation. However, the research of Gonzalo Francisco Sánchez is important to understand and value its linguistic resources and received, therefore, the support of the Province Deputation of Salamanca.

To begin with, the author presents the province in a geographical and demographic aspect, and then the dialectal zones of the Province of Salamanca. For each area (Francisco Sánchez reminds the readers that there is no official division of these counties), he briefly exposes the zone and broadly compares the main characteristics of the regional language with the Castilian norm (*la norma castellana*).

The second part of the work, composed of four subsections, is centered on the synchronic linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis. First of all, the author concentrates his attention on geography and the social and demographic changes that occurred over the past eighty years. He divides this chapter into various sub-items: the nomenclature of *sierra de Francia* –in which he deals with

the territory, the political organization and the nature—, the touristic interest of the region (as far as the landscape, monuments, folklore and gastronomy are concerned) and its influence on demography and language, and the demographic and social evolution of this place.

In the section “Constitución del corpus y constitución de sus datos estadísticos fonéticos” [Constitution of the corpus and constitution of its phonetic statistical data], Francisco Sánchez states his objective: creating a corpus in order to carry out a linguistic analysis of each area from a phonetic, morphosyntactic and lexical point of view. In this perspective, he details the methodology he employed for his investigation: the exact region he covered, the scientific and academic works that served as a model or comparison, the specific elements he paid attention to, the choice and classification of participants, the precision that was asked to them, the variables he took into account, examples of questions he asked, the material and the way he used to record the interviewees, and the transcription of the oral corpus. Then, he describes how he generated the phonetic statistics from the corpus, compared and presented them.

The third and most important part of the second chapter (132 pages) consists of the comment of the linguistic data. Gonzalo Francisco Sánchez separates it into three categories: phonetic, morphosyntax and lexicon.

For the study of phonetic, the results are split into three sections, according to phonetic specificities of speakers. On the basis of it, the author concludes that two separate groups can be defined: the villages located at the north of the mountains —where more Castilian (and considered as more prestigious) elements are used— and at the south —where people usually use elements that are more southern. Then, the researcher analyzes the phonetic with regard to age, sex and instruction level. In order for the study to be comprehensive, Francisco Sánchez also took into consideration the people who recently arrived in the region and the ones who occasionally live in it. Finally, to close the loop, he summarizes the historic evolution of phonetic of the dialectal languages in the *sierra de Francia*.

For the study of morphosyntax, the author divides the outcomes into six groups: gender (feminine nouns), diminutives, pronouns (direct and indirect objects), the verbal system, the stressed possessive preceded by an article, and other morphosyntactic phenomena. In the chapter about gender, Francisco Sánchez investigates the use of feminine in phytonomy, which is, according to Zamora Vicente, typical of the linguistic varieties of Asturias and León, and

other incorrect uses of feminine (such as *la aceite* and *la puente*). Next, he proves that the diminutives in *-ín(a)* or *-ino(a)* characterize the language of Extremadura and explains the particularities of the pronouns that are used as direct or indirect objects. In the part dedicated to the verbal system, the scientist explores four types of analogies, the forms *dir* and *diendo* that are derived from the hypercorrection of the form *d'ir* < *de ir*, and the personal uses of the verb *haber* comparing them to the evolution of the Latin verb *habeo*. Finally, he ends this part of the book with a dialectal construction that is important in the area of Salamanca (article + stressed possessive + noun, for example: “en el mí barrio” [in the my neighborhood]) and other morphosyntactic elements that were worth studying but did not enter any of the other categories.

For the study of the lexicon, Gonzalo Francisco Sánchez offers a brief glossary of terms extracted from his corpus. The professor indicates that this part must be seen as a glimpse of subsequent works that would exclusively be centered on the lexicon of the region. The expressions that serve as an example are organized by semantic fields that are related to the local life (urbanism, economy, botany, mycology, orography, edaphology, meteorology, hydrology, zoology, bread, agriculture, ranching, party, dances, traditional clothes, pseudonyms and others).

In conclusion, *El habla de la Sierra de Francia en su contexto histórico, geográfico y social* is a very valuable book because it offers the first in-depth analysis of the dialects of the *sierra de Francia*. Gonzalo Francisco Sánchez based his investigation on already existing works, but he submitted a research that is innovative in many respects: it covers a greater geographic area, takes into account the demographic and social evolution of the past years, gives every participant the same weight in data, and offers a diachronic linguistic evolution based on other works. Moreover, it is reliable and relevant, given the large number of sources and documents that compose the sound theoretical basis. Finally, the investigation is often illustrated by charts, diagrams, tables, maps, etc., which make the research more understandable for people who do not possess a thorough knowledge of linguistics.