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Jesús Isaías Gómez López,
Universidad de Almería

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This is the latest study to be published on Spanish light verb constructions (LVCs) in recent years. It follows earlier works by Alonso Ramos (2004), who investigated LVCs using Mel'čuk's theoretical framework, and Bustos Plaza (2005), who analysed the varying degrees of lexicalisation of LVCs. This work, product of Buckingham's doctoral thesis, is a study of LVCs within a specialised corpus of scholarly texts totalling around 21 million words, compiled by the author. The aim of the study is to identify which LVCs are commonly used in this genre and to develop a corpus-driven description of selected morphosyntactic, semantic and textual features of these constructions. (Most previous descriptions of these constructions have taken an introspective approach.) The corpus of academic texts, comprising both doctoral theses and academic journal articles, is divided into three sub-corpora of seven million words each: a general corpus (containing texts from all disciplines from the hard sciences through to the fine arts), and two specialised academic domains (the social sciences and the humanities).

Unfortunately, the corpus does not permit a differentiation of dialectal variants. As the author notes, student mobility and the international nature of journals make this a difficult task.

A multilingual approach is taken in this work and the literature review and theoretical description of LVCs is informed by previous research on LVCs in other European languages, in particular German (*Funktionsverbgefüge*). Examples are given in Spanish, German and English.

A detailed definition of LVCs, as is used in this study, is provided, with a discussion of how it differs from approaches taken by other authors. The author includes constructions consisting of a light verb and prepositional phrase (such as *poner en movimiento* or *tomar en cuenta*), which Bustos Plaza (2005) omits. She does not, however, include constructions with the verb *to be* (*estar en movimiento*) or other examples of verb-noun phrases where the verb has not undergone a process of delexicalisation (*seguir a la espera*). The author selected four light verbs with varying degrees of productivity (*dar*, *poner*, *tener* and *tomar*) as her subject of analysis, and undertook an electronic text search with the corpus analysis software Wordsmith Tools 4.

The results of the corpus search and the analysis of findings are presented in chapter four. The author provides lists of the most frequent LVCs in each of the three corpora for each of the four light verbs. The frequency of occurrence differs markedly; for instance, *tener en cuenta* appears over 2500 times in the corpus as a whole, while the most common LVCs with the verbs *dar* and *tomar* and *poner* appear much less frequently (*tomar una decisión* appears around 1600 times, *poner de manifiesto* around 900 times, and *dar cuenta*, around 700 times). The chapter describes morphosyntactic aspects such as article use, verb form, order of components and distance between verb and noun. The sections on adjectival modification and on complex, or co-ordinated, LVCs are arguably the most interesting in terms of the new information they bring to light. The wide variety of modification possible contributes to explaining why LVCs may be preferred to the single verb equivalent, where adverbial modification may only sometimes be possible. Likewise, complex LVCs, most common with two nouns (*dar sentido y significación*) but also occurring occasionally with multiple verbs (*buscar, dar y recibir ayuda*), not only provide greater flexibility of

expression (particularly when each noun carries an adjectival modifier), but also contributes to the text's cohesion.

The book ends with a chapter dedicated to the utilisation of corpus findings for didactic purposes. Loosely following Heine (2006), the author develops lexicographic entries for the most common LCVs, using data relating to morphosyntactic characteristics gleaned from the corpus. Each entry concludes with a brief discussion on equivalent LVCs in English and German (where these exist), and how these may differ morphosyntactically from the Spanish construction.

This book is of considerable interest for a number of reasons. Firstly, few studies or descriptions of LVCs are informed by corpus data, and this is one of only a small number of investigations using a specialised corpus. The size of the corpus inevitably lends weight to the findings, which are illustrated by numerous examples throughout. The approach to compiling the corpus and the procedure used to identify LVCs are aspects of immediate interest to other scholars involved in corpus linguistic studies. Finally, and unusually, the work offers a potential application for data of a theoretical nature.

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M^a del Pilar Mesa Arroyo
Universidad de Granada