

**Antonio Pamies & Roza Ayupova (eds.)**  
**STRUCTURAL FIXEDNESS AND CONCEPTUAL IDIOMATICITY**  
*Elena Arsentieva In Memoriam*

**Idiom variation in the comment's sections of Spanish digital newspapers**

Lucía Luque Nadal  
Universidad de Málaga

**1.Introduction**

Although computer-mediated communication (CMC) began in the US around the late 1960's, it flourished in the 1990's with the public and massive access to the Internet. This form of human-to-human communication through a computer involves not only a change in the communication channel, but also the setting up of a specific kind of communication. Indeed, CMC can be considered as the spark of linguistic change (Baron, 1984).

Moreover, Herring (2001:612) states that social and cultural contexts embedded in the use of the language create variations in text-based computer-mediated communication. Therefore, readers need specific types of cultural knowledge in order to understand the idioms used in the different forms of text-based CMC.

In this work, we focus on a specific type of text-based CMC, i.e. the comment sections of digital newspapers. This type of text has had significant growth in the past decade and, somehow, is evolving into a new discourse genre (Moya Muñoz, 2015). We can trace back the origin of this latest discourse genre to the 18th century in Europe, where new social practices and spaces for socializing emerged. These social meetings had both a private and public character, besides a strong cultural and social relevance. As an example, in France, these meetings were known by the term *salon* and had a significant intellectual and political role where women, called *salonnières*, were the organizers of these types of social gatherings. Among these *salonnières* we can find Madame de Staël that ran a salon and a cultural newspaper. Political debates were held in her *salon* in which, among other political issues of the time, she made a robust defence of the English constitution (García Martínez, 2015: 228). In Spain, these gatherings took the name *tertulias literarias* during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, where poets and writers joined in different *cafés* along the main cities of the country to discuss literary and political issues.

These Spanish *tertulias* have evolved during the 21st century into the comment's sections of digital newspapers. They represent a comprehensive corpus for linguists where we can study the most up-to-date aspects of colloquial Spanish. Another characteristic of the language used in this digital forums is that a high percentage of idioms are not registered in any dictionary, thus showing a high degree of innovation.

Nevertheless, this type of language also presents some negative characteristics, i.e. the use of profane and aggressive language (Mancera Rueda, 2009). This profane language is paired with an abundant use of metaphors, proverbial comparisons, similes, and allusions, along with a series of traditional rhetorical resources. This collection of expressive resources has a twofold linguistic function. Firstly, it is the commentator's way of drawing attention to his message since, unlike in television discourse, he cannot rely on his voice, excessive gestures, laughter, etc., as a communicative element. Secondly, these expressive resources support and sustain different arguments presented in the different comments.

**Antonio Pamies & Roza Ayupova (eds.)**  
**STRUCTURAL FIXEDNESS AND CONCEPTUAL IDIOMATICITY**

*Elena Arsentieva In Memoriam*

On top of that, among the many causes of idiomatic variation, special attention paid to two specific issues. Firstly, the predominance of the semantic structure over the formal structure of the idiom used by commentators. We explain this predominance based on the fact that the speaker gives priority to the underlying semantic basis of the idiom, rather than to its fixed structure. Secondly, the deliberate use of idioms used by commentators aims at conveying the message with the highest pragmatic force and expressiveness. In this way, idioms will be configured as a sort of constructive models (Goldberg, 1995, 2006) that can be used and adapted to convey any situation in present-day Spanish society by simply substituting some elements of the idiom's structure.

## 2. Corpus description

To study and establish a typology of the different variations of idioms in the language used in the comment' sections of digital newspapers, we have established a corpus of 20 commentators' interactions. The examples were obtained from two Spanish digital newspapers, *El Mundo* and *OKDiario*, from July to December 2022. We have selected this period of time to provide a better description and further understanding of the most recent uses of idiomatic variation in current Spanish. The research was not limited to a specific section of the selected newspapers, as we wanted to obtain a holistic view of the use of different types of idiomatic variation in the language used by commentators.

The methodology followed consists of a descriptive analysis of the variations in the idioms used in the comment's sections. After analysing the corpus, we will establish a typology of the most frequently used variations.

The corpus with which we work is as follows:

Number	Example	Newspaper and date
1.	<i>A chupar de la ubre</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 08/07/2022
2.	<i>Como en una montaña putinesca</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 12/07/2022
3.	<i>Si los perros ladran es que te mueves Olona</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 16/09/2022
4.	<i>Estás bien del tejao</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 21/09/2022
5.	<i>Seguir echando gasolina al fuego</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 23/09/2022
6.	<i>Los Cerros de Yupi</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 23/09/2022
7.	<i>Perdiendo el traserillo</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 23/09/2022
8.	<i>Quien con comunistas se acuesta, pioletizado se levanta</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 26/09/2022
9.	<i>Dicen de buena tinta</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 26/09/2022
10.	<i>Que se lleve la paz que deja</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 26/09/2022
11.	<i>Consejos doy que para mí no quiero</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 28/09/2022
12.	<i>La coz y el porrillo</i>	<i>OKDiario</i> , 1/10/2022
13.	<i>España, país de panderetas y morcillas</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 03/10/2022
14.	<i>Alguno estáis para que os cuelgen un cencerro</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 03/10/2022
15.	<i>No ve la piedra en el ojo ajeno</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 03/11/2022
16.	<i>Defiende a buitres y te sacarán los ojos</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 03/11/2022
17.	<i>En la procesión y repicando las campanas</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 03/12/2022
18.	<i>Entre miserables anda el juego</i>	<i>OKDiario</i> , 5/12/2022
19.	<i>Les importa todo tres pepinos</i>	<i>El Mundo</i> , 15/12/2022
20.	<i>El burro más grande siempre por delante</i>	<i>OKDiario</i> , 16/12/2022

Table 1. Corpus of examples of idiomatic variation sorted by date of publication

To establish a formal typology of variations we will consider, in the first place, the classification of idioms established by García Page (2008: 227-246):

**Antonio Pamies & Roza Ayupova (eds.)**  
**STRUCTURAL FIXEDNESS AND CONCEPTUAL IDIOMATICITY**

*Elena Arsentieva In Memoriam*

1. Variantes fónicas (a volapié/a vuelapié)
2. Variantes gráficas (a quema ropa/a quemarropa)
3. Variantes morfológicas (de mentira/de mentirilla)
4. Variantes gramaticales (a través/al través),
5. Variantes sintácticas (¡Dios me libre!/¡Libreme Dios!)
6. Variantes léxicas (ahorcar los hábitos/colgar los hábitos)

Although García Page (2008: 219) does not consider ludic variations as a real type of variation, we will consider them in this study since most of the variations created by commentators are based on puns and wordplays. Penadés Martínez (2022) extends his approach to the study of idioms and proposes the following classification:

1. La variación formal.
  - 1.1. Variación formal ortográfica.
  - 1.2. Variación formal fonética.
  - 1.3. Variación formal morfológica.
  - 1.4. Variación formal léxica.
  - 1.5. Variación formal en la combinación de elementos que constituyen la locución.
2. La variación no marcada y la variación marcada.
  - 2.1. Variación diacrónicamente marcada.
  - 2.2. Variación diatópicamente marcada.
  - 2.3. Variación diastráticamente marcada.
  - 2.4. Variación diafásicamente marcada.
3. El cambio semántico.
4. La desautomatización y el error.

The classification of idioms given by Penadés Martínez considers semantic aspects of its use in real interactions. Contextual factors such as variations based on age, social level, etc., plus those idioms' variations consciously produced by the speaker with a specific stylistic, argumentative or ludic intention must be considered as factors that cause the idiom variation. Regardless of Penadés' proposal, she admits that idiom variations based on semantic changes or on both de-automatization processes and on errors to which they may be subjected consciously or unconsciously by the speakers, cannot be considered genuine types of formal variation because:

Las modificaciones presentadas en este apartado tienen una particularidad, son individuales, no pertenecen al acervo común de la lengua, no están codificadas y no son registradas, por tanto, en los diccionarios; en consecuencia, no pueden interpretarse como ejemplos de variación formal de las locuciones, aunque se trate de una única invariante de contenido asociada a formas distintas. (Penadés Martínez, 2022).

Therefore we can establish the following typology of variations from a formal point of view based on both the proposal of García Page (2008) and Penadés Martínez (2022):

Type of formal variation	Example	Correct version of the idiom
A. Phonic variation	La coz y el porrillo	La hoz y el martillo
B. Morphological variation	Perdiendo el traserillo	Perder el culo
C. Syntactic variation	Que se lleve la paz que deja	Tanta paz lleve como paz deja
D. Lexical variation	A chupar de la ubre	A chupar de la teta
	Como en una montaña putinesca	Como en una montaña rusa
	Si los perros ladran es que te mueves	Si los perros ladran es señal de que avanzamos
	Estás bien del tejao	Estar bien de la cabeza

**Antonio Pamies & Roza Ayupova (eds.)**  
**STRUCTURAL FIXEDNESS AND CONCEPTUAL IDIOMATICITY**

*Elena Arsentieva In Memoriam*

	Los Cerros de Yupi <sup>1</sup>	Los mundos de Yupi + Los cerros de Úbeda
	Quien con comunistas se acuesta, pioletizado se levanta	Quien con niños se acuesta, meado amanece
	Dicen de buena tinta	Saber de buena tinta
	Consejos doy que para mí no quiero	Consejos vendo que para mí no tengo
	España, país de panderetas y morcillas	La España de charanga y pandereta
	Defiende a buitres y te sacarán los ojos	Cría cuervos y te sacarán los ojos
	Entre miserables anda el juego	Entre bobos anda el juego
	Les importa todo tres pepinos	Me importa un pepino
E. Formal variation in the combination of the constitutive elements of the idiom		
E1. Addition of the constitutive elements of the idiom	El burro más grande siempre por delante	El burro delante, para que no se espante
	En la procesión y repicando las campanas	En misa y repicando
	Alguno estais para que os cuelgen un cencerro	Estar como un cencerro
E2. Reduction of the constitutive elements of the idiom	No ve la piedra en el ojo ajeno	Ver la paja en el ojo ajeno, y no la viga en el propio

Table 2. Types of idiom variation from a formal point of view

### 3. Corpus analysis

Nevertheless, since a formal classification should be considered a good starting point, a deep analysis of each example must be carried out to understand the cognitive mechanisms that underlay the variations created by the commentators. Therefore, after a deep analysis of the context regarding the use of each idiom, we can establish the following type of idioms' variation from a pragmatic point of view. Firstly, we must distinguish between intentional and unintentional variation, a difference based on the knowledge or lack thereof of a given Spanish idiom. A proficient and native user of Spanish is assumed to know the correct formal expression of idiomatic expressions and their proper contextual use. Thus, based on this deep knowledge of idiom usage, the speaker can intentionally create a variation for several pragmatic reasons. Therefore, within the group of intentional variation and after the analysis of the corpus, we can establish the following subtypes:

**A. Intentional variation.** This type of variation is based on a deep knowledge of the use of idioms in Spanish and therefore its structure is changed to fulfil several aims:

A1. Provoke a humorous reaction in the reader as seen in the following examples of our corpus:

---

<sup>1</sup> This type of formal lexical variation is the result of merging the formal structure of two previous Spanish idioms, creating a somehow *portmanteau idiom*. However, although in a formal sense it contains parts of two previous idiomatic expressions, from a semantic point of view, it only bears the meaning of one of them.

**Antonio Pamies & Roza Ayupova (eds.)**  
**STRUCTURAL FIXEDNESS AND CONCEPTUAL IDIOMATICITY**  
*Elena Arsentieva In Memoriam*

*1. A chupar de la ubre*

In this example, the Spanish idiom *chupar de la teta* (Eng. to suck the lifeblood out of) suffers a change of the original term *teta* (Eng. tit) into the more specific term *ubre* (Eng. udder) to establish a humorous situation as seen in the example:

Otra que quiere seguir el ejemplo del Cheposo. **A chupar de la ubre** mientras lanzan consignas y palabrerías que suenen progres y ecológicas aunque le importen un huevo...

*2. Como en una montaña putinesca*

This example shows a whimsical game of words based on the association of two terms in Spanish: *Putin* and *rusa*. The term *rusa* (Eng. Russian) in the Spanish phrase *montaña rusa* (Eng. Roller coaster) is changed to *putinesca* (Eng. Putinesque):

El día que en Asturias se vaya a 87 km/h en tren, la gente irá **como en una montaña putinesca** braceando y gritando cual deporte de riesgo... qué envidia Vara, di que sí, para nosotros eso es Fast and furious, mientras, Pedrito en helicóptero o en Falcon con sus gafitas maverik.

*4. Estás bien del tejao*

This example shows a ludic variation since it changed the original Spanish idiom *estar bien de la cabeza* (Eng. Be off one's head) for a more colloquial expression *estar bien del tejao*, where *tejado* (Eng. Roof) is used as a jocular synonym of *head*.

**¿Estás bien del tejao?** Hay unos medicamentos fantásticos.

*7. Perdiendo el traserillo*

In this example we also find a modification of the original Spanish idiom *perder el culo* (Eng. Work your ass off) for a ludic but also euphemistic variation *perder el traserillo*. In Spanish the term *traseño* (Eng. Backside) is far more formal than the standard term *culo* (Eng. Butt, ass).

Jajajaja... y hasta hace unos días ... los votantes de Vox **perdiendo el traserillo** y riendole todas las gracias a esta tipa... Ahora que la culpa no la tienen ellos, sino quienes votan a PP/Vox o PSOE/UP, tal para cual, lo mismo son.

*12. La coz y el porrillo*

This example shows a re-formulation of the Spanish idiom *la hoz y el martillo* (Eng. The hammer and sickle) symbolizing the different Communist parties. This reformulation is based on a comical interpretation of the opinion that the commentator has over the people that follow this specific political ideology. Therefore *la hoz y el martillo* changes to *la coz y el porrillo* (The kick and the joint). This pun is based on the rhetorical technique of paronomasia.

Pues como los políticos de extrema izquierda. Se creen impunes e intocables porque lo son. Son la nueva aristocracia de **la coz y el porrillo**.

**Antonio Pamies & Roza Ayupova (eds.)**  
**STRUCTURAL FIXEDNESS AND CONCEPTUAL IDIOMATICITY**

*Elena Arsentieva In Memoriam*

*13. España, país de panderetas y morcillas*

This idiom alludes to a poem by the Spanish poet Antonio Machado who in his poem *El mañana efímero*, wrote the phrase *La España de charanga y pandereta* (Eng. Spain's brass band and tambourines). This expression is used to refer to those ordinary and mediocre values still persistent nowadays in a part of Spanish society:

Les interesa más a los políticos tenerlos contentos con un "bono cultural", que aprendan quien fue Góngora o a hacer una integral trigonométrica... **España, país de panderetas y morcillas.**

A2. Adapt the existent idiom to the specific situational context developed by commentators. This type of variation serves to settle and strengthen the argumentative character of the comment as seen in the following examples:

*3. Si los perros ladran es que te mueves*

This example is based on the Spanish idiom *Ladran Sancho, señal de que avanzamos*<sup>2</sup> (Eng. "The dogs may bark, but the caravan moves on"). In this example, the original Spanish idiom is changed to adapt it to the specific context of the comment written by the commentator. Since he is referring to a Spanish politician named Macarena Olona, he changed the idiom to "Si los perros ladran es que te mueves, Olona".

**Si los perros ladran es que te mueves, Olona.** No hay movimiento mas totalitario y represor que la nueva izquierda española

*8. Quien con comunistas se acuesta, pioletizado se levanta*

This example shows a full variation of the Spanish idiom *Quien con niños se acuesta, meado amanece* (Eng. If you lie down with dogs, you'll wake up with fleas). In the newly created idiom, a new allusion is created between the term *comunista* (Eng. Communist) and *pioletizado*<sup>3</sup> (Eng. Ice-axed):

**Quien con comunistas se acuesta, pioletizado se levanta.**

*16. Defiende a buitres y te sacarán los ojos*

This example presents a variation of the Spanish idiom *Cría cuervos y te sacarán los ojos* (Eng. How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child). The variation is consciously made to adapt the idiomatic expression to the individual context created by the commentator:

---

<sup>2</sup> Although in the Spanish collective consciousness this idiom is related to the novel *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (hence the addition of the proper noun *Sancho* in the idiom), in fact there is not a single page of the novel in which you can find this expression. Alternative origins are Goethe's poem entitled *Kläffer* (1808). In this poem appears the sentence *Und seines Bellens lauter Schall/ Beweist nur, daß wir reiten* (Eng. And the sound of his bark/ Only proves that we ride). The English version of the idiom *The dogs may bark, but the caravan moves on* traces its origin to an Arabic proverb.

<sup>3</sup> The word *pioletizado* is based on a direct and clear allusion to Trotsky's death after he suffered an attack with an ice-axe.

**Antonio Pamies & Roza Ayupova (eds.)**  
**STRUCTURAL FIXEDNESS AND CONCEPTUAL IDIOMATICITY**

*Elena Arsentieva In Memoriam*

**Defiende a buitres y te sacarán los ojos:** en el próximo progromo anticlerical de la izquierda española, que no piense ningún cura o monja que alguien les vaya a defender.

*18. Entre miserables anda el juego*

This example is a variation of the Spanish idiom *Entre bobos anda el juego* (Eng. One's as bad as the other) that has been changed in order to fulfil the context expressed in the comment. The origin of the Spanish idiom is based on a homonymous play written by the Spanish playwright Francisco de Rojas Zorrilla in 1638:

Es que el actual usurpador del trono de San Pedro también es comunista, o sea que tampoco es católico. **Entre miserables anda el juego.**

A.2.1. Numerical based idiom<sup>4</sup>. This subtype of intentional idioms shows a high degree of creativity since all the variations maintain the same syntactic structure while only changing the numerical adjective:

*19. Les importa todo tres pepinos*

In this special type of numerical based idioms, the use of higher or lower numbers in the idiom conveys the meaning of amplification or diminution of the action showed by the verb. The Spanish idiom *Me importa un pepino* (Eng. I don't care two hoots) is changed to *Les importa todo tres pepinos* to show the magnitude of the indifference showed, in this comment, by the Spanish labour unions:

Que poca vergüenza tienen, dejan claro que a ellos **les importa todo tres pepinos**, que se movilizan por interés propio y que lo que les pase a los trabajadores y al país les trae al paio. Estos no son sindicatos, son mafias.

**B. Unintentional variation (i.e. based on lack of knowledge).**

A second type of variation is based on a positive and undeniable lack of knowledge of the formal structure of a given idiom in Spanish. However, it does not reflect, by any means, a lack of knowledge of its meaning and function. Thus, these types of idiomatic expressions are pragmatically correct, although not morphologically:

B1. Lack of knowledge of the correct structure of the idiom:

*17. En la procesión y repicando las campanas*

This example is a variation of the Spanish idiom *En misa y repicando* (Eng. To have one's cake and eat it). The term *misa* (Eng. Mass) has been changed by the term *procesión* (Eng. Procession) but the meaning of the newly created idiom is the same as the original one (i.e. one cannot be in two different places at the very same time or one cannot do two different things at the same time):

---

<sup>4</sup> Other examples of numerical based idioms that show a high degree of creativity in Spanish are: *Pasarse tres/cinco/cien pueblos*; *A este le quedan un/dos/tres telediarios*; *Más falso que un billete de siete/veinticinco euros*; *Ni mil/cien palabras más*, etc.

**Antonio Pamies & Roza Ayupova (eds.)**  
**STRUCTURAL FIXEDNESS AND CONCEPTUAL IDIOMATICITY**  
*Elena Arsentieva In Memoriam*

No se puede **estar en la procesión y repicando las campanas**.

20. *El burro más grande siempre por delante*

The original Spanish idiom *El burro por delante, para que no se espante* has been changed in its form, although not in its meaning. Both idioms remind someone that when speaking and enumerating several people, it is grammatically incorrect to put the speaker in the first place. This idiom has a clear metalinguistic character:

**El burro más grande siempre por delante.**

14. *Alguno estáis para que os cuelgen un cencerro*

In this case, the original idiom *Estar como un cencerro* (Eng. Be mad/bonkers) has changed into a more elaborated expression. This example will be classified, according Penadés (2022), as a type of formal variation in the combination of the constitutive elements of the idiom in which there is an addition of constitutive elements of the idiom:

Con Brasil aislado internacionalmente y con un crecimiento de la pobreza nunca visto desde los años 80. Eso si es el pobrismo. Alguno **estáis para que os cuelgen un cencerro**.

13. *Seguir echando gasolina al fuego*

The original Spanish idiom *Echar más leña al fuego* (Eng. Add fuel to the fire) has changed into a far more expressive idiom. By changing the term *leña* (Eng. Firewood) for *gasolina* (Eng. Fuel) the commentator shows a magnification of the action expressed in the comment<sup>5</sup>:

Lo que llevo meses diciendo es que hay que negociar y parar la guerra con un acuerdo, y no **seguir echando gasolina al fuego** como hacen los americanos y sus lacayos.

7. *Consejos doy que para mí no quiero*

This syntactic variation of the original Spanish idiom *Consejos vendo que para mí no tengo* (Eng. Do as I say and not as I do) has changed its morphological structure but not its meaning:

¿No era de maleducados lo de los motes? **Consejos doy que para mí no quiero**.

10. *Dicen de buena tinta:*

This is formal lexical variation of the original Spanish idiom *Saber de buen tinta* (Eng. Know for a fact) where the original verb *saber* (Eng. To know) has been changed into the verb *decir* (Eng. To say):

---

<sup>5</sup> Since the idiom *Echar gasolina al fuego* has been located in our corpus on many occasions we may think that this new variation is beginning to become more or less accepted in Spanish, following the opinion of García Page (2008:219) when he speaks of the fact that “su uso se generalice y sean sancionadas por la comunidad”.

**Antonio Pamies & Roza Ayupova (eds.)**  
**STRUCTURAL FIXEDNESS AND CONCEPTUAL IDIOMATICITY**

*Elena Arsentieva In Memoriam*

**Dicen de buena tinta** que van a volver a poner a la Mateo de administradora provisional. Solo cuatro o cinco añitos de na.

*11. Que se lleve la paz que deja*

This syntactic variation of the original Spanish idiom *Tanta paz lleves como descanso dejas* (Eng. *Good riddance!*) although showing a different syntactic structure retains its original meaning:

Este comisario político ha ahondado aún más en la propanganda progre. Así que por mí **que se lleve la paz que deja**.

*19. No ve la piedra en el ojo ajeno*

The original Spanish idiom *Ve la paja en el ojo ajeno pero no la viga en el propio* has changed into a simpler one as seen in *No ve la piedra en el ojo ajeno*. According Penadés (2022), this example will be classified as a type of formal variation in the combination of the constitutive elements of the idiom (showing, in this example, a decree of the constitutive elements). Furthermore, the new idiom shows a higher degree of expressivity since it has changed the term *paja* (Eng. Straw) by the term *piedra* (Eng. Stone).

Hay que ver qué obsesión tiene este presidente por las tumbas parece que quiere cambiar la guerra a su bando tan canalla como el nacional y **no ve la piedra en el ojo ajeno** de su largo asesino caballero en el paseo de la castellana a ese no se le quita ese que produjo la guerra.

B1.2. Lack of knowledge of the correct idiom that leads to the combination of two different idioms in Spanish. The consequent idiom can be considered a sort of *portmanteau idiom*:

6. Los Cerros de Yupi

This *portmanteau idiom* is composed by two Spanish idioms. Firstly, *Los cerros de Úbeda* (Eng. Beating around the bush/ go off on a tangent). Secondly, *Los mundos de Yupi* (Eng. Make-believe world). This idiom traces its origin back to a popular Spanish kid's TV show from the 90's named "Los mundos de Yupi". The real meaning of the newly created *portmanteau idiom* is that of a fantasy world, a make-believe world. Therefore, it bears only the meaning of only one idiom but the structure of two:

Es un proyecto que los cortos de entendederas deberíais comprender fácilmente porque está diseñado exprefeso para vosotros y que os va a permitir existir en un mundo asimilado al de **los Cerros de Yupi**.

## Conclusions

Through the corpus analysis of idiom variation in the comment's sections of digital newspapers, we have established a typology of the idiom variations from a pragmatic point of view. Therefore, we have identified two main categories: intentional variation

**Antonio Pamies & Roza Ayupova (eds.)**  
**STRUCTURAL FIXEDNESS AND CONCEPTUAL IDIOMATICITY**

*Elena Arsentieva In Memoriam*

versus unintentional variation, based on a previous knowledge or lack of it on the form and the meaning of the Spanish idiom.

Additionally, after having analysed our corpus of idioms, we can conclude that both in intentional and unintentional variation, idioms shall be considered as a semantic notion and not as a fixed structure so that variation may be considered as the “normal” behaviour of idiomatic expressions. This creativity leads to our opinion that idioms need to be studied under the consideration of a constructionist approach, following the model proposed by Goldberg (1995, 2006) in her Construction Grammar. Under this perspective, idioms can be used and adapted to transmit any fact or situation of current Spanish journalism simply by replacing some elements of its structure.

Secondly, we have to consider errors as an element of variation genesis. Consequently, we need to consider unintentional variation based on errors as a valid type of variation.

Finally, idiom variation sets up a helpful mechanism to understand how idioms work in the speaker’s mind, that is, to try to apprehend the cognitive processes that underlay the creation and use of these language units.

## References

- Baron, N.C. (1984): Computer Mediated Communication as a Force in Language Change. *Visible Language*, 18 (2), 118–141.
- Herring, S. C. (2001): Computer-Mediated Discourse. En D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen & H.E. Hamilton (Eds). *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 612-634.
- García Martínez, F. (2015): Salonières: Mujeres que crearon sociedad en los salones ilustrados y románticos de los siglos XVIII y XIX. En Cabrera Espinosa, M. y López Cordero, J.A. (eds. lit.) *VII Congreso virtual sobre Historia de las Mujeres*, Jaén: Archivo Diocesano de Jaén, págs. 213-234.
- García-Page, M. (2008): *Introducción a la fraseología española*. Barcelona: Anthropos
- Goldberg, A. E. (1995). *Constructions: A Construction Grammar Approach to Argument Structure*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Goldberg, A. E. (2006). *Constructions at Work: the nature of generalization in language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mancera Rueda, A. (2009). Manifestaciones de descortesía y violencia verbal en los foros de opinión digitales de los diarios españoles. *Discurso & Sociedad*, 3(3): 437-466.
- Moya Muñoz, P. (2015). Los comentarios de los usuarios en la prensa digital: una propuesta para su estudio desde el discurso mediado por ordenador y los estudios periodísticos. *Caracteres. Estudios culturales y críticos de la esfera digital*, 4,1:178-199.
- Penadés Martínez, I. (2022). La variación en las unidades fraseológicas. *Revista Nebrija de Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza de Lenguas*, 16:32. [doi: 10.26378/mlae11632472]