

# Phonological substitutions in the metropolitan area of Guadalajara, Mexico

Nicole Drees-Álvarez  
Bielefeld University

In the metropolitan area of Guadalajara a highly frequent and productive kind of wordplay is in existence. Speakers substitute a lexeme for another existing word which, however, is always longer; the meaning is transferred.

So far, the phenomenon has been assigned to morphology (cf. Rodríguez Herrera 1967, Moreno de Alba 1980, Lope Blanch 1989) and proven for several hispanophone countries. Only Beniers (1995: 647) voices doubts whether this categorization is appropriate. She labels the expressions as “bases prestadas a la propia lengua” (‘base constituents, borrowed from the same language’), but does not state counterproposal of her own for another classification.

During my investigations hitherto it has emerged that the assignment to morphology is incorrect. I have segmented and categorized 30 frequent nouns with regard to the morphological structure of the original word and the substituting expression. Because of presumptive non-existing roots or affixes, or impossible combinations of both of them, the words definitely cannot be derivations.

Thus, as the substitution takes place only because of the same initial sound of both words, I repartitioned them as *phonological substitutions* into phonology. Within the category of “wordplay”, they belong to the sub-category of “Klangspiel” (‘sound-play’) (cf. Seibel 1963: 54, Crystal 1996).

Although the phenomenon is not specific to any class, generation or gender, it appertains to the concept of *konzeptionelle Nahesprache* (‘conceptual orality’) (cf. Koch/Oesterreicher 1985).

Some of these verbalisms have become rooted in conceptual orality:

(1) *simón* (first name)

replaces *sí* (‘yes’). Other variants used for *sí* are:

- (2) a. *sillón* (‘armchair’)
- b. *sincho* (type of belt)

The latter is currently less frequent; however, in 2012 I could verify the existence of a new substitution:

(3) *simios* (‘apes’)

Despite being constantly changed, the formation process of these, in most cases monomial expressions, is always the same.

## References

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