

Inflectional fixation in verbal idioms: a lexicographical proposal for a Spanish–Italian digital repository

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the concept of *inflectional fixation* (Montoro del Arco 2020a, 2020b) and presents a methodological proposal for the lemmatisation of verbal idioms within a Spanish–Italian/Italian–Spanish digital repository. Despite the significant impact that varying degrees of inflectional variability in verbal idioms can have on the acquisition of foreign language phraseology, current Spanish–Italian lexicographical resources lack a systematic approach to providing clear and concise instructions for language production. To address this gap, this article describes a pilot study conducted as part of the *Dizionario Fraseologico Multilingue Digitale (DFMD)* research project at Ca' Foscari University of Venice. After introducing the theoretical framework of inflectional fixation, the paper explores the inflectional preferences of the verbal nucleus of the idiom *quitar de la boca* (lit. ‘to take from the mouth’) and proposes lexicographical entries for the project’s bilingual repository.

Keywords: inflectional fixation; phraseology; digital lexicography; Spanish; Italian.

1. Introduction

In recent decades, various scholars (Campos Souto and Pérez Pascual 2003; Castillo Carballo 2003; Nomdedeu-Rull and Tarp 2018; Peñín Fernández 2021, among others) have highlighted the essential contribution of dictionaries to the teaching of foreign languages and the consequent necessity of transforming these resources into not just reference tools, but also effective learning instruments that foster both comprehension and production in the target language. Whilst this perspective is widely accepted at the theoretical level, there is a noticeable gap in lexicographical practice where the evolution of dictionaries from primarily passive works to active resources is concerned.

From this perspective, the deficiencies in the current lexicographical landscape become even more apparent when one delves into phraseology, which

is often associated with information that, in many cases, proves to be both qualitatively and quantitatively insufficient for the development of phraseological competence in non-native speakers. A relatively unexplored aspect, both theoretically and lexicographically, is *inflectional fixation* (IF), a form of fixation identified by Montoro del Arco (2020a, 44) and defined by the author as «la suspensión de una o varias oposiciones paradigmáticas inscritas en la variabilidad flexiva potencial de un componente que puede considerarse nuclear dentro de un fraseologismo, o bien la existencia de marcadas preferencias en dicha variación potencial»¹. As Montoro del Arco (2020b, 205–206) highlights, in the case of verbal idioms the degree of inflectional variability in the verb gives rise to a continuum: at one end, there are sequences with maximum IF, displaying an almost fixed form in speech, and, at the other end, idioms with little or no IF, with no a priori restrictions or preferences in the selection of the inflectional form of the verb. Between these extremes there are phraseological units that often favour specific inflectional variants, while still allowing for the use of other forms. As regards Spanish and Italian lexicography, the neglect of this aspect is glaringly apparent. An illustrative example is provided by the expression *llover sobre mojado* (lit. ‘to rain on the wet’): although predominantly used with the conjugated verb in present indicative (*llueve sobre mojado*)², most monolingual and bilingual dictionaries fail to provide any usage instructions regarding this preference³.

With the aim of contributing to lexicographical discourse on the IF of the nucleus of verbal idioms, this paper presents a pilot study conducted within the framework of the research project *Dizionario Fraseologico Multilingue Digitale* (‘Digital Multilingual Phraseological Dictionary’, henceforth *DFMD*)⁴. This study seeks to incorporate examples and usage instructions that consistently represent the degree of IF exhibited by verbal idioms. Focusing on *quitar de la boca* (lit. ‘to take from the mouth’), the research is divided into two phases: the first, pre-lexicographical, involves the extraction and analysis of data from selected dictionaries and textual corpora (Section 2). The second, lexicographical,

1 ‘The suspension of one or more paradigmatic oppositions inherent in the potential inflectional variability of a component that can be considered nuclear within a phraseological unit, or the existence of marked preferences in such potential variation.’ (Author’s translation).

2 According to the data at our disposal, *llueve sobre mojado* is documented in 62.7% of the items which contain this idiom in CORPES XXI (RAE 2013, v. 1.0), 82.4% in the Corpus del español NOW (Davies 2018), and 75% in the Spanish Web 2018 (Sketch Engine 2018).

3 Examples are provided in Seco, Andrés and Ramos (2004) and Penadés (2019). In these works, the idiom appears in the present indicative (Seco, Andrés and Ramos 2004; Penadés 2019) and the imperfect indicative (Penadés 2019).

4 This research project is being conducted at Ca’ Foscari University of Venice in collaboration with the University of Zadar (Croatia). It was launched in 2020, following the ministerial designation of the Department of Linguistics and Comparative Cultural Studies as a ‘Department of Excellence’ for the 2018–2022 period. For further details on the project’s development, see Valero, Dal Maso and Lončar (2021) and Dal Maso (2020, 2021, 2022, 2024).

entails the development of a methodological proposal for the creation of entries for the bilingual Spanish–Italian/Italian–Spanish repository of the *DFMD* project (Section 3).

2. *Quitar de la boca* in dictionaries and textual corpora

2.1. Methodology

The analysis conducted considers the current usage of *quitar de la boca* in standard Peninsular Spanish. To extract data regarding this idiom, six lexicographical reference works were consulted: three general dictionaries – the *Diccionario de uso del español* (Moliner 2007, 3rd ed.), the *Diccionario de la lengua española* (RAE 2014, 23rd ed., v. 23.7), and the *Diccionario del español actual* (Seco, Andrés and Ramos 2023, 2nd ed.) – and three phraseological resources – the *Diccionario fraseológico del español moderno* (Varela and Kubarth 1994), the *Diccionario fraseológico documentado del español actual* (Seco, Andrés and Ramos 2004), and the *Diccionario de locuciones idiomáticas del español actual* (Penadés 2019). Particular attention was paid to the lemma, the form of the verbal nucleus in the examples provided, and the possible presence of any instructions concerning the IF.

The lexicographical information obtained was subsequently compared with data from three primary textual corpora: the Corpus de referencia del español del siglo XXI (RAE 2013, version 1.0; henceforth CORPES XXI), the Corpus del español – News On the Web (2012–2019) (Davies 2018; henceforth CE NOW), and the Spanish Web 2018 (Sketch Engine 2018, henceforth esTenT-en18). This process enabled us to ascertain the degree of IF exhibited by the verbal nucleus in written and spoken texts of various genres. Additionally, it sheds light on the meaning of the idiom, as well as on the correlation between specific inflectional variants and the pragmatic value attributed to the idiom in discourse.

2.2. Results

In all the monolingual works consulted, the idiom under examination is recorded with the lemma *quitar de la boca* and is defined as «anticiparse a decir lo que iba a decir otra persona» ('to preemptively say what another person was about to say') (*DLE*)⁵. In phraseological dictionaries, alongside the definition and the diaphasic marker (informal or colloquial), the following examples are presented:

1. Cuando dijo que ya era hora de comer, parece que **me quitó de la boca** esta frase, porque yo tenía un hambre terrible y no deseaba otra cosa.

5 In Seco, Andrés and Ramos (2023, 2nd ed.) and Moliner (2007, 3rd ed.), the following definitions are provided: «adelantarse[le] a decir[lo]» ('to forestall [someone] in saying [it]') and «anticiparse a decirlo» ('to anticipate saying it'), respectively.

- ‘When he said it was already time for lunch, it seems he took the words right out of my mouth, as I was starving and desired nothing else.’ (Varela and Kubarth 1994)
2. – Y si Amadeo es un tío fresco que se nos ha metido en casa. – **Me lo has quitado de la boca.** ‘—And what if Amadeo is a cheeky fellow who has forced his way into our home? —You’ve taken the words right out of my mouth.’ (Seco, Andrés and Ramos 2004)
 3. [...] Halcón pensó que **se lo había quitado de la boca**, porque él iba a decirle lo mismo. [...] Halcón thought he had taken the words out of his mouth, because he was going to say the same thing to him.’ (Penadés 2019)
 4. – Ya vendrán tiempos en que nos toque obsesionarnos con cómo limitar las pérdidas. – Jajaja, **me lo has quitado de la boca.** Es lo que iba a decir. ‘—The time will come when we’ll have to obsess over how to limit losses. —Hahaha, you’ve taken the words right out of my mouth. That’s exactly what I was going to say.’ (Penadés 2019)
 5. Lola Bennasar es escuela y centro en Barcelona. Me atendió ella misma, ventajas de un congreso profesional. Le iba a explicar lo que quería pero **me lo quitó de la boca:** «Ya veo, son cortas». Me explicó cómo se trabaja para alargar unas cejas cortas. ‘Lola Bennasar is the head and heart of the centre in Barcelona. She attended to me herself, one of the perks of a professional conference. I was about to explain what I wanted, but she took the words out of my mouth: «I see, they are short». She then explained how to work on lengthening short eyebrows.’ (Penadés 2019)

In four of these instances, *quitar de la boca* is employed in conjunction with the neuter pronoun *lo*, referencing what the interlocutor said. Moreover, in two cases (examples 2 and 4), the usage of this idiom with the verb in the second person singular of the present perfect (*has quitado*) and preceded by *lo* appears to convey – in addition to the meaning documented in dictionaries – a clear agreement on the part of the speaker with the idea expressed by the interlocutor. This illocutionary value does not seem to be associated with the use of *quitar de la boca* in other forms (e.g., example 3).

Within the three selected corpora, a total of 135 occurrences of *quitar de la boca* were identified: 7 in CORPES XXI, 40 in CE NOW, and 88 in esTenTen18. Beyond this quantitative disparity, the analysis revealed a varying distribution of non-literal uses: 2 examples in CORPES XXI, 37 in CE NOW, and 57 in esTenTen18⁶. The resulting 96 non-literal occurrences are associated with three distinct idiomatic meanings:

- a. To preemptively articulate what another person intended to say: «Hola RACHEL GREEN: Hoy **me lo has quitado de la boca**, estoy totalmente

6 As a result, in the three corpora 35 examples of literal use are registered (5 in the CORPES XXI, 3 in the CE NOW and 31 in esTenTen18).

de acuerdo contigo» ‘Hello RACHEL GREEN: You’ve taken the words right out of my mouth today; I completely agree with you’. (esTenTen2018, RTVE blog, accessed 22 March 2024)

- b. (Preceded by the adverb *no*) Not to refrain from using a word or phrase or talking about something or someone: «[...] aquellos que **no se quitan de la boca** el término *suelo ético* no han sido capaces de decir nada ante las vulneraciones de derechos de las últimas semanas» [...] those who never stop talking about the term *ethical floor* have been unable to say anything regarding the rights violations of recent weeks’. (CE NOW, *El País* 13/04/2013)
- c. To deprive someone of something (goods, money, etc.) to give it to someone else: «[...] y en definitiva, pensar todos en todos, y saber que lo que robo yo, **se lo quito de la boca** a otro» [...] and ultimately, to think of everyone, and to know that what I steal, I am taking out of someone else’s mouth’. (CE NOW, *El Economista*, accessed 25 March 2024)

The examples gathered from the corpora were analysed by distinguishing the three identified meanings and observing potential usage preferences with respect to verbal inflection. Concerning meaning A, in the majority of instances – 2/2 (100%) in CORPES XXI, 14/21 (70%) in CE NOW and 21/28 (75%) in esTenTen18 – *quitar de la boca* takes the form *Me lo has quitado de la boca*:

Table 1: IF of meaning A of *quitar de la boca*

Tense	Items		
	CORPES XXI	CE NOW	esTenTen18
<i>Me lo has quitado de la boca</i>	2	14	21
Other tenses	/	7	7
Total	2	21	28

In the remaining documents – 7/21 (30%) in CE NOW and 7/28 (25%) in esTenTen18 – verb tenses such as the simple past and the infinitive are used, as well as the present perfect with a different person–number inflection (e.g., *Me lo ha/han quitado de la boca*).

Meaning B is expressed through the use of the idiom preceded by the adverb *no*. In a considerable number of cases – 11/12 (91%) in CE NOW and 6/11 (55%) in esTenTen18 – the verb is conjugated in the present indicative:

Table 2: IF of meaning B of *quitar de la boca*

Tense	Items		
	CORPES XXI	CE NOW	esTenTen18
No + present indicative	/	11	6
No + simple past indicative	/	1	2
No + other tenses	/	/	3
Total	/	12	11

In contrast to the observation for meaning A, in this case, the present indicative is employed with different inflectional variants in number and person (*quito, quita, quitamos, quitan*). In other documents, however, this meaning is conveyed with the verb in the simple past or, in three cases in esTenTen18, in the past perfect indicative (*había quitado*), imperfect subjunctive (*quitase*), and simple infinitive (*quitar*).

Finally, meaning C is present in CE NOW and esTenTen18 in 4 and 18 cases, respectively. The verbal nucleus does not appear to exhibit clearly oriented tendencies towards the selection of specific inflectional variants:

Table 3: IF of meaning C of *quitar de la boca*

Tense	Items		
	CORPES XXI	CE NOW	esTenTen18
Present indicative	/	1	5
Infinite	/	1	2
Gerund	/	2	7
Other tenses	/	/	4
Total	/	4	18

Considering these data, it is plausible to hypothesise a high degree of IF in the case of meaning A, which seems closely linked to the structure *lo* + 2nd pers. sing. of the present perfect. Meaning B exhibits a moderate degree of IF, tending to prefer the present indicative with variable inflection in number and person, while meaning C is associated with a minimal degree of IF.

3. Lemmatisation of *quitar de la boca* in the *DFMD*

Based on the findings from Section 2, specific strategies were employed in the development of lexicographical entries for the *DFMD* to promote the accurate usage of *quitar de la boca* and the selection of the appropriate Italian equivalent⁷. Due to the consistent presence of the adverb *no* when this idiom is used to convey meaning B, it was decided to incorporate the three identified idiomatic meanings into two distinct entries, one for *quitar de la boca* (meanings A and C) and another for *no quitarse de la boca* (meaning B). Both entries provide two examples for each meaning, extracted from the consulted corpora. Where a high degree of IF is present, the examples included in the entry are representative of the inflectional preferences exhibited by the idiom in actual discourse. Consequently, the entry for *quitar de la boca* is structured as follows:

Quitar de la boca

Locución verbal

1. Anticipar algo que otra persona iba a decir

– Para elegir esta selección / supongo / de los mejores temas de todo lo publicado / eh eh habréis tenido que sufrir mucho ¿no? / porque sois unos grandes aficionados al género / lo publicado es mucho y se habrán dejado muchos cuentos en el cajón supongo que para otros volúmenes.

– Pues / en efecto **me lo has quitado de la boca** realmente mmm somos mmm muy aficionados a edición // desde hace dieciséis años éramos / compradores y lectores compulsivos de este tipo de literatura y también de la literatura general. (CORPES XXI, *Telemadrid Radio*, 09/09/2003)

La verdad es que los 2 comentarios anteriores **me lo han quitado de la boca**. (CE NOW, *El Mundo*, consulta: 25/03/2024)

2. Privarle a una persona de algo (comida, bienes, etc.) para dárselo a otra persona

Sobre los “productos de temporada” habría que educar desde la más tierna infancia. Porque ahora ves en el mercado los mismos productos todo el año, lo que significa que vienen de lugares lejanos, muchas veces **quitándose los de la boca** a los consumidores locales. (CE NOW, *El Mundo*, Blog, comentario de un usuario del 06/04/2013)

En esas publicaciones menores gasta Rivero lo que les **quita de la boca** a los niños que van a clase sin haber desayunado. (*El Día. La Opinión de Tenerife*, 08/07/2013)

= 1. Togliere [una persona] le parole di bocca [a qualcuno]

– Valerio, **mi hai tolto le parole di bocca**, ma non volevo intromettermi..... vorrei comunque dire, che recentemente è apparsa una ricerca circa la propensione all’egoismo nell’infanzia. (itTenTen20, *La Repubblica*, Blog *OdiFreddi*, comentario de un usuario del 13/07/2011)

– Bravo Alberto **mi ha tolto le parole di bocca** ma qui va di moda sempre e solo pensare e scrivere al negativo!! (itTenTen20, *Il Corriere della Sera*, *Forum*, comentario de un usuario del 01/03/2010)

7 Correspondences in Italian were identified through the consultation of monolingual works (Ireccani 2008; De Mauro 1999–2007; Quartu and Rossi 2012; Sorge 2011) and bilingual dictionaries (Tam 2004; Arqués and Padoan 2012; Sañé and Schepisi 2013), followed by a subsequent verification in the Italian Web 2020 corpus (Sketch Engine 2020; henceforth itTenTen20).

= 2. Togliere / levare [una persona] il pane di bocca [a qualcuno]

– Così il sindaco prende carta e penna e scrive da “italiano deluso” al presidente della Repubblica Giorgio Napolitano per salvare il suo paese, minacciando le dimissioni. «[...] io non ci sto ad essere usato contro la gente, contro i miei concittadini che tribolano per mettere insieme il pranzo con la cena, che lavorano onestamente per essere poi “derubati” da uno Stato onnivoro che arriva, ormai, a **togliere il pane di bocca** a chi lavora». (*Il Fatto Quotidiano*, 20/02/2013)

– Invito anche a gente comune ad aprire gli occhi e a pensare due volte prima di **togliersi il pane di bocca** per finanziare ricerche che non verranno mai effettuate e i viaggi-vacanza di molti “eminenti” scienziati italiani. (*La Repubblica*, commento de un usuario, consulta: 27/03/2024)

OBSERVACIONES

Acepción 1: *Quitar de la boca y toglidere le parole di bocca* se emplean con frecuencia en conversaciones orales, chats y foros para expresar el acuerdo del hablante con respecto a lo que acaba de afirmar su interlocutor. Como resultado, adquieren a menudo la forma *Me lo has quitado de la boca / Mi hai tolto le parole di bocca*.

→ **No quitarse de la boca**

Fig. 3.1. Entry for *quitar de la boca*

The final section of the entry offers instructions that elucidate the high degree of IF manifested by the Spanish idiom and its Italian equivalent *togliere le parole di bocca* when conveying the pragmatic value of attunement with the interlocutor. This results in the specific form *Me lo has quitado de la boca / Mi hai tolto le parole di bocca*. Moreover, it includes a cross-reference to the entry for *no quitarse de la boca*, where users will find the following data:

No quitarse [alguien] [algo] de la boca

Locución verbal

No dejar de usar una palabra o de hablar de un tema o una persona

– No ayuda en nada a la idea de país solvente que genera confianza que **no se quitan de la boca** muchos miembros del Gobierno, con su jefe a la cabeza. (esTenTen18, *ABC*, 30/12/2013)

– El Gobierno no **se quita de la boca** la palabra “justa”. Se trata de finiquitar un privilegio de unos pocos, vienen a decir. El alcalde de Pau y líder centrista aliado, François Bayrou, lo expuso así en la TV: «¿Por qué los conductores de los autobuses de Pau se jubilan diez años más tarde que los de París?». (*El Mundo*, 04/12/2019)

= Avere sempre in bocca [una parola, una frase, qualcuno o qualcosa]

– Cosa c’è di strano nel chiedere, senza far morale, che i “richiami” ai valori cristiani, abbiano più impegno e rigore, come esempio? Ho il diritto di pensare che Bergoglio è solo “strumentalizzato” da quelli che **hanno sempre in bocca** i moniti all’amore e all’accoglienza inviatici con regolarità? (itTenTen20, *Il Giornale*, commento de un usuario del 25/04/2016)

– Ma qualcuno ascolterà mai le idee sane che non sono mero mercato? Questo magari quando sarai assessore? Ci hai mai pensato veramente? – (ride) Ovvio, quello scherzo è servito per punire dei giornalisti che mi **avevano sempre in bocca** a sproposito e mi avevano inserito nel toto assessori. (itTenTen20, *Senza Soste*, consulta: 27/03/2024)

Fig. 3.2. Entry for *no quitarse de la boca*

In the Italian–Spanish section of the repository, the Italian equivalents are lemmatised as three separate entries. Each contains the corresponding Spanish counterpart and examples that are representative of the IF detected in each case. The resulting entry for *togliere le parole di bocca* is structured as follows:

Togliere le parole di bocca [a qualcuno]

Locuzione verbale

Anticipare qualcosa che stava per dire un'altra persona

– Valerio, **mi hai tolto le parole di bocca**, ma non volevo intromettermi..... vorrei comunque dire, che recentemente è apparsa una ricerca circa la propensione all'egoismo nell'infanzia.

(itTenTen20, *La Repubblica*, *Blog Odifreddi*, commento di un utente del 13/07/2011)

– Bravo Alberto **mi ha tolto le parole di bocca** ma qui va di moda sempre e solo pensare e scrivere al negativo!! (itTenTen20, *Il Corriere della Sera*, *Forum*, commento di un utente del 01/03/2010)

= Quitar [algo] de la boca [a alguien]

– Para elegir esta selección / supongo / de los mejores temas de todo lo publicado / eh eh habréis tenido que sufrir mucho ¿no? / porque sois unos grandes aficionados al género / lo publicado es mucho y se habrán dejado muchos cuentos en el cajón supongo que para otros volúmenes

– Pues / en efecto **me lo has quitado de la boca** realmente mmm somos mmm muy aficionados a la literatura fantástica de terror / de hecho es un poco el leitmotiv que nos ha traído al mundo de la edición // desde hace dieciséis años éramos / compradores y lectores compulsivos de este tipo de literatura y también de la literatura general. (CORPES XXI, *Telemadrid Radio*, 09/09/2003)

La verdad es que los 2 comentarios anteriores **me lo han quitado de la boca**. (CE NOW, *El Mundo*, consultazione: 25/03/2024)

OSSERVAZIONI

Togliere le parole di bocca e *quitar de la boca* si usano con grande frequenza in conversazioni orali, chat o forum per esprimere accordo nei confronti di ciò che ha appena affermato l'interlocutore. Per questo motivo, acquisiscono spesso la forma *Mi hai tolto le parole di bocca* / *Me lo has quitado de la boca*.

→ **Quitar las palabras de la boca**

Fig. 3.3. Entry for *togliere le parole di bocca*

Similarly to the observations made for the entry for *quitar de la boca*, the final section of this entry also includes usage instructions regarding the frequent selection of the structure *Mi hai tolto le parole di bocca* / *Me lo has quitado de la boca* in association with the aforementioned illocutionary value. Furthermore, it includes a cross-reference to *quitar las palabras de la boca*, identified as a partial synonym of *quitar de la boca* and lemmatised as a distinct entry⁸.

8 For further information concerning the lexicographical treatment of synonymic idioms in the *DFMD*, see Dal Maso (2020).

The entry for *avere sempre in bocca* introduces the equivalent *no quitar de la boca*, as in both cases the conveyed meaning is ‘to talk incessantly about someone or something, or to repeatedly use a certain word or phrase’:

Avere sempre in bocca [una parola, una frase, qualcuno o qualcosa]

Locuzione verbale

Continuare a usare una parola, una frase o a parlare di qualcuno o qualcosa

– Cosa c’è di strano nel chiedere, senza far morale, che i “richiami” ai valori cristiani, abbiano più impegno e rigore, come esempio? Ho il diritto di pensare che Bergoglio è solo “strumentalizzato” da quelli che **hanno sempre in bocca** i moniti all’amore e all’accoglienza inviatici con regolarità? (itTenTen20, *Il Giornale*, commento di un utente del 25/04/2016)

– Ma qualcuno ascolterà mai le idee sane che non sono mero mercato? Questo magari quando sarai assessore? Ci hai mai pensato veramente?

– (ride) Ovvio, quello scherzo è servito per punire dei giornalisti che mi **avevano sempre in bocca** a sproposito e mi avevano inserito nel toto assessori. (itTenTen20, *Senza Soste*, consultazione: 27/03/2024)

= No quitar [algo] de la boca [a alguien]

– No ayuda en nada a la idea de país solvente que genera confianza que **no se quitan de la boca** muchos miembros del Gobierno, con su jefe a la cabeza. (esTenTen18, *ABC*, 30/12/2013)

– El Gobierno no **se quita de la boca** la palabra “justa”. Se trata de finiquitar un privilegio de unos pocos, vienen a decir. El alcalde de Pau y líder centrista aliado, François Bayrou, lo expuso así en la TV: «¿Por qué los conductores de los autobuses de Pau se jubilan diez años más tarde que los de París?». (*El Mundo*, 04/12/2019)

OSSERVAZIONI

No quitar algo de la boca si usa molto spesso con il verbo al presente indicativo.

Fig. 3.4. Entry for *avere sempre in bocca*

The examples confirm this correspondence, and the instruction provided in the final section explicitly highlights the preference of this idiom for the present indicative.

Lastly, in the entry for *togliere il pane di bocca*, examples featuring different inflectional variants are provided. In the concluding section, no specific instructions are given regarding preferences in the selection of verb tense or person–number inflection, reflecting the low degree of IF associated with this meaning:

Togliere il pane di bocca [a qualcuno]

Locuzione verbale

Privare qualcuno di qualcosa (beni, denaro, ecc.) per darlo a un'altra persona

– Così il sindaco prende carta e penna e scrive da “italiano deluso” al presidente della Repubblica Giorgio Napolitano per salvare il suo paese, minacciando le dimissioni. «[...] io non ci sto ad essere usato contro la gente, contro i miei concittadini che tribolano per mettere insieme il pranzo con la cena, che lavorano onestamente per essere poi “derubati” da uno Stato onnivoro che arriva, ormai, a **togliere il pane di bocca** a chi lavora». (*Il Fatto Quotidiano*, 20/02/2013)

– Invito anche a gente comune ad aprire gli occhi e a pensare due volte prima di **togliersi il pane di bocca** per finanziare ricerche che non verranno mai effettuate e i viaggi-vacanza di molti “eminenti” scienziati italiani. (*La Repubblica*, commento di un utente, consultazione: 27/03/2024)

= Quitar [algo] de la boca [a alguien]

Sobre los “productos de temporada” habría que educar desde la más tierna infancia. Porque ahora ves en el mercado los mismos productos todo el año, lo que significa que vienen de lugares lejanos, muchas veces **quitándose los de la boca** a los consumidores locales. (CE NOW, *El Mundo*, Blog, commento di un utente datato 06/04/2013)

En esas publicaciones menores gasta Rivero lo que les **quita de la boca** a los niños que van a clase sin haber desayunado. (*El Día. La Opinión de Tenerife*, 08/07/2013)

Fig. 3.5. Entry for *togliere dalla bocca*

4. Conclusions

The pilot study conducted demonstrates the significance of inflectional fixation in the field of phraseography, by showing how the tendency of an idiom to select specific verbal forms is a crucial element to consider when compiling a dictionary aimed at active foreign language learning. With respect to verbal idioms, observing preferences or constraints in the selection of the nucleus form – and subsequently incorporating appropriate examples and usage instructions – can significantly enhance foreign language production and, more specifically, learners’ phraseological competence. For this reason, it is essential to delve deeper into the study of IF. This research should not be limited to the nucleus of verbal idioms but should also extend to other morphological manifestations. For instance, the gender and number inflection that nouns, adjectives and determiners exhibit in phraseological units should be considered: a non-native speaker might encounter challenges when using *sudar como un pollo* (lit. ‘to sweat like a chicken’) with a plural subject, potentially questioning whether the plural form should be *sudar como pollos* or *sudar como unos pollos*. In this regard, it is to be hoped that the application of new technologies to the lexicographical field will lead to the creation of resources more geared towards language production and capable of systematically integrating data and aspects that have hitherto been underrepresented in dictionaries.

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