

## Abstract

Ph. D. Dissertation at Göteborg University

**Title:** *en todo caso, en cualquier caso, de todos modos, de todas maneras, de todas formas.* Un estudio de las características y funciones de estas locuciones en el español contemporáneo.

**English title:** *en todo caso, en cualquier caso, de todos modos, de todas maneras, de todas formas.* A study of the characteristics and functions of these expressions in contemporary Spanish.

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The aims of this dissertation is to explore the function of the five Spanish expressions: *en todo caso, en cualquier caso, de todos modos, de todas maneras, de todas formas* in the different corpora included in CREA, the Contemporary Spanish database of the Spanish Academy, from a pragmatic interactional theoretical point of view. The CREA database contains over 125 million words from different genres, from both spoken and written texts and from both Spain and Latin America.

In this study these expressions are considered as *connectors*. Their function being that of connection, the question posed was to know which elements or segments of discourse they connect. The analysis showed that the connection does not only occur between segments of discourse but also with other components of interaction, i.e. the utterance and something the teller has in mind. It even demonstrates that the connection takes place between the different levels of discourse and that *connectors* are not part of the contents of discourse, but they are in the periphery, here named *frame discourse*. The levels which were explored were the communicative level in the spoken language and the external and internal levels of discourse organization in written texts. At the communicative level, these expressions are used specially in turn-taking structures: to start moves and new exchanges, or to return to a previous exchange. In public complex interactions, as radio or television programs, they are also used to turn from local interaction to global interaction or vice versa. These expressions can also be used as hedges or softeners when new matters are introduced, or when Face Threatening Acts are produced. In written texts, the expressions were used to organize the discourse (i.e. initiate a new theme or topic, switch topics or introduce the closing sequence), to mark a change between different sequences (narration, description, dialog, etc.) and different voices (in order to contribute to the text's polyphony). In these aspects the five expressions were to be considered as synonymous in equivalent contexts. For the expressions *en todo caso, en cualquier caso*, however, there is also another function, that is, to introduce a limit, a condition or an exigency.

**Keywords:** discourse connectors, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, interaction, ethnolinguistics, face threatening acts, Politeness Theory, Verbal Interactions Theory.