

A comparison of Spanish indefinite « uno » in Spain, Chile and Mexico

We will present a comparison of the Spanish indefinite pronoun *uno* in three varieties of Spanish: peninsular, Mexican and Chilean Spanish. General research on impersonals shows a difference in the frequency of *uno* across the Spanish-speaking world (DeMello, 2000) but does not offer a qualitative analysis of the use of *uno*. We therefore compare *uno* from three different angles.

First, a general frequency comparison enables us to verify the hypothesis, based on general comparison studies (DeMello, 2000), that *uno* is most frequent in Chilean Spanish and least frequent in Peninsular Spanish, with an intermediate position in Mexican Spanish. Second, we compare different interpretation types based on a typology that covers a continuum from the completely generic readings to the completely specific readings, which refer to a single person e.g. the speaker (1). Our third research question concerns the different pragmatic functions fulfilled by the pronoun in each variety, e.g. attenuation, generalization, etc., that we analyse and compare thoroughly. These last two questions allow us to verify a second hypothesis, that the pronoun *uno* is more used in the “distance culture”, namely in Mexico and Chile, as a mitigating strategy, with more frequent addressee-centered interpretation, than in Spain, which is considered a “proximity culture” (Briz Gómez and Albelda Marco, 2010).

(1) *¿Que cómo sé tanto al respecto? **Uno** se enteró de esas cosas.* (CLAE)

‘What how I know so much about it? One notices these things.’

This study is based on corpora available for each variety. We have equivalent corpora of academic texts, and partially equivalent corpora for spontaneous informal conversations in Peninsular and Chilean Spanish. Available Mexican Spanish spoken language corpora are not entirely equivalent; an equivalent corpus will be collected in view of this analysis. Thus, through a corpus-based quantitative and qualitative analysis, we will offer an in-depth study of the regional variety concerning the use of the indefinite pronoun *uno*.

Corpora

CCEEC-I. *Corpus de Conversaciones Espontáneas del Español de Chile, Iquique*. 2012. Kris Helincks, Ghent University.

CLAE. *Corpus de lenguaje académico en español*. 2009. <http://www.lenguajeacademico.info>. UCMexus-Conacyt.

CORLEC. *Corpus del Español centro-peninsular*, directed by Francisco Marcos Marín at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid with the support of the Agencia Nacional para el Desarrollo de Programas del V Centenario (1990-1993).

Corpus 92. Universitat Pompeu Fabra.

Errázuriz Cruz, María Constanza, “Análisis del uso de los marcadores discursivos en argumentaciones escritas por estudiantes universitarios” *Perfiles Educativos*, vol.34, 136, 2012, IISUE, México, 98-117.

References

Briz Gómez, Antonio & Albelda Marco, Marta, 2010. “Aspectos pragmáticos. Cortesía y atenuantes verbales en las dos orillas a través de muestras orales” in: Aleza Izquierdo, Milagros & Enguita Utrilla, José Maria (eds.) *La lengua española en América: normas y usos actuales*, Universitat de Valencia, 237-260.

DeMello, George, 2000. "Tú impersonal en el habla culta", *Nueva revista de Filología Hispánica*, 48, num. 2, 359-372.