

## **Phatic markers and their mitigating value. A cross-generic study in Spanish from Spain and Spanish from Mexico**

The main objective of this study is to compare the differences regarding the distribution of Spanish phatic markers (PM) and especially between their mitigating value across varieties of this language and also across different genres. The varieties of Spanish taken into account for the analysis are Spanish from Spain and Spanish from Mexico and the genres that will be studied are interview and colloquial conversation. In order to carry out this analysis, corpora of spontaneous conversations recorded secretly, corpora of planned interviews and reality TV shows that combine colloquial conversations and interviews have been chosen as the working material. Specifically Val.Es.Co. corpus for Spanish from Spain colloquial conversations, Monterrey conversations corpus for Spanish from Mexico colloquial conversations, PRESEEA Valencia for Spanish from Spain interviews, PRESEEA México D. F. for Spanish from Mexico interviews and the reality TV shows *Gandía Shore* (Spanish from Spain) and *Acapulco Shore*, as a hybrid genre containing both colloquial conversations and interviews, are the corpora used for the study.

The selected corpora enable the possibility to do a series of comparative studies in order to reach conclusions regarding the distribution of PMs and their mitigating value not only between two varieties of Spanish, but also between different genres in these varieties. The corpora used for this study include different degrees of spontaneity. The secret recordings of colloquial conversations are the most spontaneous linguistic samples, whereas the planned interviews are the least spontaneous ones and the reality TV shows provide with a middle point between these two ends, since reality TV interview is more spontaneous than a planned interview but reality TV colloquial conversation is expected to be less spontaneous than a default colloquial conversation. Being PMs a highly interactive linguistic resource closely linked to spontaneous discourse, a variation in the distribution of these linguistic devices as well as in their mitigating value is established as the research hypothesis. Across varieties of Spanish differences are also to be expected. As a matter of fact, preliminary data reveal that:

- a) PMs are more frequent in conversation than in interview.
- b) PMs are in general more frequent Spanish from Spain than in Spanish from Mexico.
- c) PMs appear to be elements with a high mitigating value in both varieties. However, there are differences between their distribution in discourse genres, which also tend to follow the same trend across varieties of Spanish: mitigation is more frequent

colloquial conversation and in reality tv interviews whereas it has a lower rate in planned interviews.

- d) There seems to be a tendency for some PMs to appear in one genre, while other PMs select the other. These preferences might point to a difference in the kind of 'phatic' meaning conveyed by each PM.