

## Comparative study of 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular address in Spanish: A translation task study

Due to challenges with analysis of second person singular (2PS) variation in extemporaneous corpora, quantitative studies commonly rely on elicitation. Self-report questionnaires (e.g., Brown & Gilman 1960) are the most frequent method, but discourse completion tasks (Newall 2016), role plays (Lamanna 2012), and subjective reaction tests (Moyna & Loureiro-Rodríguez 2018) are also used. Studies usually explore single local sites, so cross-linguistic and cross-dialectal comparisons (Carricaburo 2015) are necessarily speculative. Artificiality, in particular participants' focus on form, are also concerns.

We present early results of a cross-dialectal study of Spanish 2PS in Colombia, Mexico, Spain, Chile, and New York City using an innovative translation task designed to mitigate those challenges. Participants (n=472) identified as having sufficient bilingual proficiency received 50 items consisting of a picture of one person talking to another, accompanied by an introduction and English quote, which they were instructed to translate, containing *you*. They were not told of the purpose of the task.

Raw data are exponents of the Spanish 2PS variants—pronouns or verbal agreement morphemes—they produced translating *you* classified as:

- *ustedeo* (formal),
- *tuteo* (informal)
- voseo (informal)
- *sumercedeo* (varies)

Analysis constructed one Lmer model for participant effects, and one model per region of scene effects.

Participant Model: Fixed factors included Region, Gender, Social Class, Age, Speech Act Type, and Setting. Participant was a random factor.

Scene Models: Fixed factors included Gender, Relative Ages, Affect, Relationship Distance, Status, Setting (e.g., home) and Relationship Types (e.g., granddaughter to grandmother); Scene was a random factor.

Overall, *tuteo* dominated responses, and *voseo* and *sumercedeo* were rare even in Chile and Colombia where they are used. Participant analysis identified Region and Age as significant. Regional percentages of *ustedeo* follow:

Colombia	Chile	Mexico	NYC	Spain
38.1%	25.4%	18.7%	14.0%	9.8%

Age showed slow monotonic decline in *ustedeo*. Both tendencies conform to prior research.

Scene factors showed expected co-linearity of Relative Ages, Social Distance, and Relative Status. The question was which would be picked for the best-fit model. These varied as shown below; either speaking lower to higher in Status or with greater Social Distance predicted more *ustedeo*.

Colombia  
Status

Chile  
Status

Mexico  
Distance

NYC  
Distance

Spain  
Distance

We conclude that the instrument successfully compares trends across these Spanish varieties in 2PS variation regarding *ustedeo* versus informal variants. It confirms prior speculations regarding regional tendencies in *ustedeo* rates and its apparent time decline. However, *voseo*, which is stigmatized particularly in Chile, is clearly underrepresented. Apparently, the mental models used by participants in their translations do not reflect actual usage despite our efforts to capture informality in scenes. We were not entirely able to overcome the artificiality problem.

Nevertheless, the tasks successfully tease out factors—Relative Age, Status, and Social Distance—that have often been lumped together under notions of politeness or power and solidarity. These results show differences in priority for those factors cross-regionally. As such, our research invites further explorations for the determinants of those factors as we expand coverage to other Spanish varieties and different languages.

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