

QUANTIFICAZIONE VAGA:
UNO STUDIO CONTRASTIVO SUL PARLATO ITALIANO E TEDESCO

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Abstract

The present study analyses the use of vague quantifiers in spoken Italian and German. Vague quantifiers are linguistic expressions through which speakers approximately or imprecisely quantify, estimate and approximate numerical values.

Chapter I recalls the main contemporary studies on linguistic vagueness in spoken language, with a focus on the concept of Intentional Vagueness.

Chapter II deals with quantitative approximation and the studies that managed to observe the use of vague quantifiers in spoken language until now, in order to describe their functions, contexts of use and communicative effects.

Chapter III describes the methodological choices made to analyse vague quantifiers in spoken Italian and German, i.e. the corpora chosen for each language and the criteria beyond the choices of the conversations and the labelling of linguistic forms that arose during the analysis. The chapter proceeds with the first quantitative data about the use of vague quantifiers and the conversational contexts in which they are more frequent. Finally, this chapter describes the causes and the effects of vague quantifiers in spoken conversations as well as the experiential domains that we more frequently tend to quantify through vague or approximate words.

Chapter IV contains the analysis of the different types of quantification expressions that were grouped into seven different categories or types. The chapter describes the form and functions of vague quantifiers and gives quantitative information about the occurrences. This analysis also takes into account multiple expressions of vagueness and quantification, i.e. it describes those cases in which speakers use more than one strategy of quantification and vagueness in the same utterance, observing the type of relations among these different elements and whether or not they form clusters or behave like co-occurrences.

In Chapter V, the concluding remarks are shown, focussing on the more relevant aspects of my analysis for both languages.