

The Lexicographic Treatment of Neuter Indefinite Quantifiers in Spanish: the Case of *algo*

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Abstract

It is known that indefinite quantifiers constitute a major component in the current Spanish language, mainly DUE to its special uses and colloquial expressions of which they are a part. It is about studying in detail the case of the quantifier algo in two Spanish dictionaries, focusing on the semantic and grammatical aspects. We have consulted the corpora: Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects to complete the study and check each use and expression mentioned in the dictionaries and to search for other current uses that are not included in both dictionaries. Therefore, we have observed a good number of missing uses and expressions, which implies that the study serves to cover these deficiencies and to solve the difficulties that may arise in the field of language teaching when dealing with the quantifier algo.

Keywords: *indefinite quantifiers, lexicography, semantics, syntax, corpora, and pronouns.*

Introduction

Indefinite quantifiers occupy a very important part in the Spanish language, we have decided to study them DUE to their peculiar values and their broad functions in the current language.

The idea of analyzing the neuter quantifier *algo* has arisen when we have observed that many learners of Spanish as a second language find it very difficult to use this word in discourse. In addition, many translators translate this quantifier into English and Arabic in an inappropriate manner for various reasons, especially DUE to the influence of the mother tongue and because they do not fully understand its grammatical and semantic nature.

Therefore, it is important to have two dictionaries that include most of the values of *algo*, its special uses and the colloquial expressions formed by the same quantifier in order to solve the errors and problems that may arise when translating it into other languages.

The objectives of this research work:

- 1- To analyse in detail the origin, syntactic and semantic meanings of the neuter existential quantifier *algo*.
- 2- To study in depth the treatment of this quantifier in the most relevant Spanish monolingual dictionaries.
- 3- To look for the special meanings and uses of *algo* not included in the monolingual dictionaries designated for this analysis.
- 4- To try to study the diatopic framework of the neuter quantifier *algo* in Spain and in Latin American countries.

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5- To highlight the colloquial and popular uses of *algo* marked in contexts of the corpora designated for our analysis.

6- To find the greatest possible number of frequent expressions that include the quantifier *algo* through the cases offered by our corpora.

7- To provide our Spanish language libraries with another study that works as a model to avoid errors in the use of the mentioned quantifier and to improve its translation into other languages.

To meet the objectives of this research work, we have consulted the Dictionary of the Spanish Language (Royal Spanish Academy - electronic version 23.5)⁶ which includes the frequent Spanish lexicon both in Spain and in other Hispanic countries as well. In addition, we have the Dictionary of Spanish Usage by María Moliner (2016)⁷ which addresses many expressions and living terms in daily use, and offers etymological information, synonyms, anonymous terms and Americanisms as well.

In order to check the uses and expressions of the neuter quantifier *algo*, we have also consulted the Corpora of Spanish: Web/dialects, which offers a huge amount of texts, press reports, conversations, speeches and current expressions. From this we have also extracted many uses and expressions not included in the dictionaries designated for the analysis.

To carry out this research, we analysed each meaning of *algo* included in the *DLE* and *DUE* dictionaries, starting with shared semantic uses and then with the meanings that each one mentions on its own. We checked each of the uses through one or two cases from the Corpora of Spanish: Web/dialects to find out to what extent each meaning is considered widespread. Later, we searched in the same corpora for meanings of *algo* that are absent in the lexicographic sources of the analysis and showed their diatopic and diaphasic nature.

We also highlight the contrasts and similarities between both dictionaries, and then analyse the expressions that each dictionary offers that include the neuter existential quantifier *algo* with a case from the Corpora of Spanish: Web/dialects. Afterwards, we search in the same corpora for other expressions of *algo* that are frequently used in current Spanish and are absent in both dictionaries.

Finally, we summarise the lexicographic treatment of this quantifier in both repertoires, highlighting the contrasts and similarities detected and trying to offer a study that serves as a guide for the use of *algo* in the field of language teaching and translation.

Theoretical framework

Indefinite pronouns form a large part of our discourse, and their meanings and uses vary greatly in each context. It is important to study these words between Spanish and Arabic in order to try to improve the translation process of these units and the teaching methods of both languages.

We have noticed that there are not enough studies that have treated the quantifier *algo*, although we observe that language learners often make mistakes when translating this quantifier, and sometimes they translate it incorrectly.

First of all, as is known and according to the NGLÉ (2009-2011), indefinite quantifiers in the Spanish language have three different types depending on their semantic nature: existential, indistinct and evaluative. The first ones include various quantifiers that reflect the existence of a thing or a person, such as *alguno*, *nadie*, *ninguno*, *nada*, *alguno* and *algo*. Indistinct quantifiers are used when indicating an element chosen from among several, such as *cualquiera*. Finally, evaluative quantifiers are used to refer to a quantity of an estimate

⁶ Hereinafter *DLE*.

⁷ Hereinafter *DUE*.

obtained by a comparison with another different measurement. The first ones (which are of more interest to us in this study) show two groups: positive existential quantifiers that include *alguien*, *algo* and *alguno*, and negative existential quantifiers that contain the following: *nadie*, *nada* and *ninguno*.

In this analysis, we deal with the positive existential indefinite quantifier *algo*, which often causes confusion when it comes to translating, analyzing and teaching it. According to Sánchez de Castro (2017, p. 109), *algo* comes from the Latin indefinite *aliquid*, it is used in the Spanish language to indicate an indeterminate quantity of an object or magnitude, and it could also reflect an unspecific fact of an unknown identity:

1- Quedan dos metros para llegar al destino. (cantidad indeterminada de un objeto o magnitud). There are two meters left to reach the destination. (undetermined quantity of an object or magnitude).

2- Dime *algo* bonito. (refleja una realidad inespecífica de una identidad desconocida). Tell me something nice. (reflects an unspecific reality of an unknown identity).

The same author observes that *algo* is also used to form pseudopartitive sequences, it has a pronominal value and an adverbial meaning as well. Let's look at the following cases:

3- Dame *algo* de carne. Give me some meat.

4- Nevó *algo*. It snowed something.

Likewise, Alarcos Llorach (2000) points out that *algo* is an indefinite that functions as a noun, he also indicates that it cannot admit an article unless it has a figurative sense, in which case it is no longer considered indefinite; furthermore, it is only used to refer to objects, and it can be combined with an adjacent masculine singular adjectival. Let's look at the following examples of the linguistic features of *algo*:

5- Dame *algo*. (funciona como el sustantivo *cosa*). Give me something. (it works like the noun *cosa*).

6- *El *algo* está mal. (no admite artículos). *El *algo* está mal. (it does not admit articles).

7- Es divertido compartir *los algos* con los seres queridos. (admite el artículo en sentido figurado). It is fun to share *algos* with loved ones. (it admits the article in a figurative sense).

8- Esto es *algo* horrible. (Adyacente adjetival masculino singular). Esto es *algo* horrible. (Adjacent masculine singular adjectival).

Based on the study by San Julián Solana (2018), the adjacent of *algo* does not express phrases with the prepositional particle *de* placed before a plural noun:

9- Dame *algo* de comida. Give me some food.

10- *Dame *algo* de móviles. *Give me some mobiles.

It should be observed that many studies explained indefinite quantifiers in general, and the pronoun *algo* in particular. The study by Leonetti (2007) focuses on all kinds of quantifiers with special attention to indefinite ones, including *algo*, their uses and meanings. Likewise, the research work by Sánchez Lancis and Espinosa Elorza (2006) deals with the syntactic and semantic behavior of quantifiers (both universal and weak ones that include *alguien* and *algo*). In addition, Mora García (2013) presented an article about the methods of teaching indefinite quantifiers to non-Spanish-speaking students with special attention to the quantifiers *algo* and *alguien* about which students often make grammatical and syntactic errors.

Likewise, the analysis by Pérez Vázquez (2007) focuses on the treatment of indefinite quantifiers in bilingual dictionaries (Italian-Spanish). Among the indefinite quantifiers he explains are the neuters *nada* and *algo*. This study presents an example of how a repertoire can treat the values and uses of *algo* and to what extent

it loses one of its meanings when it is translated into another language. Finally, the research by Gutierrez-Rexach (2003) and that of Moreno Cabrera (1987) study in detail the semantic-syntactic aspects of indefinite quantifiers that help to understand the values and uses collected by monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. As can be seen, there are very few studies that analyze only the neuter pronoun *algo*, and there are even fewer research works that analyze its lexicographic behavior, which makes this work novel and very important for solving the errors that are normally made by language learners when using this quantifier, and also for finding solutions to the translation problems that translators and interpreters encounter when dealing with the pronoun *algo*.

Analysis

When reviewing the neuter indefinite pronouns *nada* and *algo* in the dictionaries of this research, we have observed shared meanings and many contrasts. First, we have studied the word *algo* in the *DLE* and the *DUE* and we have found that both lexicographic sources indicate that it could function as a neuter indefinite pronoun that indicates an indeterminate thing:

In the *DLE*

1. pron. indef. n. Designa una realidad indeterminada cuya identidad no se conoce o no se especifica. ¿Hay *algo* para mí? Ha hecho *algo* que no le perdono.
1. pron. indef. n. It designates an indeterminate reality whose identity is not known or is not specified. Is there anything for me? He has done something that I cannot forgive him for.

In the *DUE*

- 1 pron. indef. Representa, en contraposición a nada, una cosa cualquiera: ‘Aquí hay *algo* que no entiendo. Eso me suena de *algo*’.
- 1 pron. indef. It represents, in contrast to nada, a random thing: ‘There is something here that I do not understand. That sounds familiar to me.’

We could observe that the *DLE* explains the meaning in more detail, showing that it represents a non-specific reality of an unknown fact. However, the *DUE* repertoire only indicates that it has the meaning of ‘any random thing’ and presents an opposition of meaning with the pronoun *nada*. Let's look at the following examples of this use:

- 1- Hoy la gente va de un lado al otro para conseguir medio kilo de *algo*, ya sea queso, carne o pollo. (Vulcano, Arcangel: ¡Qué mala leche Chávez!. Venezuela, 2008, Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).
- 1- Today people go from one place to another to get half a kilo of something, be it cheese, meat or chicken. (Vulcano, Arcangel: ¡Qué mala leche Chávez!. Venezuela, 2008, Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).
- 2- Estoy en medio de *algo* complicado. Espérame, le dijo a la cronista y salió. (Devanna, Cecilia; Pérez Vizzón, Tomás: *Algo* más que humo. Argentina, 2012, Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).
- 2- I'm in the middle of something complicated. Wait for me, he said to the reporter and left. (Devanna, Cecilia; Pérez Vizzón, Tomás: *Algo* más que humo. Argentina, 2012, Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

Another use shared by both dictionaries is to refer to a limited quantity of a thing or magnitude:

In the *DLE*:

2. pron. indef. n. Denota una cantidad pequeña e indeterminada de alguna magnitud. Apostemos *algo*. Falta *algo* para llegar a la ciudad. U. a menudo con un complemento con la preposición de, normalmente seguida de nombres no contables. Aportó *algo* de cordura a la discusión.

2. pron. indef. n. It denotes a small and indeterminate quantity of some magnitude. Let's bet on something. There's something missing to get to the city. U. often with a complement with the preposition de, normally followed by non-countable nouns. It brought some sanity to the discussion.

In the *DUE*:

2. Una cantidad pequeña de cierta cosa: 'Falta *algo* para dos metros'. 2 Asomo, atisbo, barrunto, brizna, chispa, destello, grisma, indicios, miaja, muestra, *pizca, puntas y ribetes, repunta, señal, sombra, sospecha, vislumbre; cierto, un poco, algún [o un] tantico, algún [o un] tanto. 4 *Nada. *Poco.

2. A small amount of something: 'Something is missing for two meters.' 2 Peek, glimpse, inkling, wisp, spark, flash, grisa, indications, crumb, sample, *pinch, points and edges, spike, signal, shadow, suspicion, glimpse; certain, a little, some [or a] little bit, some [or a] bit. 4 *Nothing. *Little.

First of all, the *DLE* indicates that we are dealing with magnitudes, not just anything as the *DUE* indicates. However, the case that the *DUE* shows is a magnitude (meters). Let us look at the following case about this value:

3- ¿Cómo le vas a decir a un autor que le falta *algo* para llegar al nivel de otros? Si contesto que no me falta nada, quedo como un vanidoso. Si contesto que me falta *algo*, soy un infeliz. (Guebel, Daniel: "No me gusta tomar lo real en estado crudo". Argentina, 2010 Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

3- How are you going to tell an author that he is missing something to reach the level of others? If I answer that I am not missing anything, I am seen as vain. If I answer that I am missing something, I am unhappy. (Guebel, Daniel: "I don't like to take the real in its raw state." Argentina, 2010 Corpora of Spanish: Web/ dialects).

The *DLE* adds that it is usually placed with an object with the particle of prefixed to non-countable nouns, as in the following example:

4- But if one has been comprehensible, if one has managed to cultivate some intelligence or sensitivity, the ears will come to hear from afar some precise words or perhaps a green water cry fading slowly. (Cicloescenico: Que no se note, dudas. Estados Unidos, 2010, Corpora of Spanish: Web/ dialects).

It should be added that the *DUE* also mentions this meaning, but with the expressions of which something is a part (*algo de*).

Later, both repertoires allude to the fact that something, in the speech of Burgos, could function as a masculine noun meaning 'estate' or 'fortune-making goods'. They also point out that this value is in disuse:

In the *DLE*:

3. m. desus. Hacienda, caudal. Era u. t. en pl. con el mismo significado que en sing. El magnífico debe ser muy sabio porque sepa cómo ha de partir sus algos. U. en Burg.

3. m. desus. Hacienda, wealth. It was u. t. in pl. with the same meaning as in sing. The magnificent must be very wise because he knows how to divide his *algos*. U. in Burg.

In the *DUE*:

5. m. (sing. o pl.) ant., usado en Burg. (Un, Su) *Bienes de fortuna.

5. m. (sing. or pl.) ant., used in Burg. (Un, Su) *Profit.

It is observed that the *DLE* includes this value in the third place, while the *DUE* mentions it in the fifth meaning. Let us look at the following context about this value:

5- En ocasiones nuestros algos son distintos y ambos podemos obtenerlo y entonces no hay conflicto, pero en otras ocasiones ese algo es lo mismo, o el algo del uno implica el agotamiento del algo del otro. Nuestros intereses entran en conflicto y los dos no podemos tener al mismo tiempo nuestros respectivos algos. (Carlos Th: Vientos de paz, Sobre el concepto de conflicto. Colombia, 2012, Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

5- Sometimes our *algos* are different and we can both obtain it and then there is no conflict, but on other occasions that *algo* is the same, or the *algo* of one implies the exhaustion of the *algo* of the other. Our interests come into conflict and we both cannot have our respective *algos* at the same time. (Carlos Th: Vientos de paz, Sobre el concepto de conflicto. Colombia, 2012, Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

It is worth mentioning that we have found examples in our Corpora where something(s) could function as the noun *casa* in literary contexts, such as the following:

6- Y ahí me gustó un poco más... y entonces les puedo contar no "algo" sino varios "algos" que me han hecho o me hacen sentir orgullosa. (Hoy compartimos... Algo que me hace sentir orgullosa: "Siéntete orgulloso de cuan lejos has llegado, ten fé en cuan lejos puedas llegar". El Salvador, 2012, Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

6- And there I liked it a little bit more... and then I can tell you not "something" but several "somethings" that have made me or make me feel proud. (Today we share... Something that makes me feel proud: "Feel proud of how far you have come, have faith in how far you can go." El Salvador, 2012, Corpora of Spanish: Web/ dialects).

Another use that shows coincidence is that of functioning as an adverb with the meaning of 'a little':

In the *DLE*:

4. adv. indef. Un poco, no del todo. Está algo sucio. Entiende algo el latín.

4. adv. indef. A little, not entirely. He is somewhat dirty. He understands some Latin.

In the *DUE*:

6 adv. Sirve para atribuir sólo en pequeña parte el adjetivo o adverbio a que se une: 'El enfermo está algo mejor. Está algo enterado'. 1 Algún tanto, un poco, un tanto. 2 Medio.

6 adv. It is used to attribute only a small part of the adjective or adverb to which it is attached: 'The patient is somewhat better. He is somewhat informed'. 1 Algún tanto, un poco, un tanto. 2 Medio.

When reviewing how each dictionary records this use, we note that the *DLE* indicates that it is equivalent to 'un poco' and 'no del todo', while the *DUE* explains its value better and records that it is used to give a quality only in a limited part of the adjective or adverb to which it is added, and refers to the fact that it could be replaced by *algo* tanto, un poco and un tanto. The following contexts show this value:

7- Quizá para Rossellini todo esto quedaba algo lejos, la II Guerra Mundial, ya había contado todo lo que tenía que contar y las inquietudes que impulsaron las dos obras maestras mencionadas ahora quizá no se tenían. (Rossellini, Roberto: Cinemelodic: Crítica: EL GENERAL DE LA ROVERE (1959) -Parte 1/2-. España, 2013. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

8- Yo conocía el lugar y lo había visto vestido de otras maneras - - con ruidos, con armatrostes sobre el techo y sobre el piso y con proyecciones de imágenes que se movían - - pero ahora el sitio no me parecía tan conocido, ahí no pasaba mucho, me sentía algo perdido. (Salazar, Carlos: A partir de ámbitos de Miguel Huertas | [esferapública]. Colombia, 2006. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

7- Perhaps for Rossellini all this was somewhat far away, World War II had already told everything it had to tell and the concerns that drove the two masterpieces mentioned now perhaps did not exist. (Rossellini, Roberto: Cinemelodic: Crítica: EL GENERAL DE LA ROVERE (1959) -Part 1/2-. Spain, 2013. Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

8- I knew the place and had seen it dressed in other ways - - with noises, with huge structures on the ceiling and on the floor and with projections of moving images - - but now the place did not seem so familiar to me, there was not much going on there, I felt somewhat lost. (Salazar, Carlos: Based on the areas of Miguel Huertas | [esferapública]. Colombia, 2006. Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

The last value shared in the repertoires of this study is that of having the meaning of the adverbs ‘much’ or ‘enough’:

In the *DLE*:

7. adv. indef. desus. Bastante, mucho.

7. adv. indef. desus. Enough, much.

In the *DUE*:

3 ant. Mucho.

3 ant. Much.

It should also be noted that both repertoires indicate that this meaning is in disuse; so the order of uses adopted in the *DLE* is more accurate, since it mentions it in the last position.

It can be observed that the *DLE*, in this meaning, considers that something functions as an indefinite adverb, while the *DUE* introduces it among the uses in which it has a pronominal value.

When reviewing the contexts of something in the Corpora designated for this analysis, we have not found any case that expresses the previous use.

The *DUE*, in turn, records that something can ironically indicate something of great importance or the adverb much as well, as in:

9- Si puedes hablar con comodidad, te falta algo para llegar a la zona de ritmo controlado. (Runners, Acicas: Sabes que son realmente los ¿Fartlek, ritmo controlado o intervalos?. México, 2020. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

9- If you can speak comfortably, you are missing something to reach the controlled rhythm zone. (Runners, Acicas: Do you know what are really the ¿Fartlek, rhythm controlled or intervals?. Mexico, 2020. Corpora of Spanish: Web/ dialects).

Later, the *DLE* includes two adverbial uses of *algo* not registered in the *DUE*:

5. adv. indef. Con poca intensidad. Llovía algo cuando salí.

6. adv. indef. Un período de tiempo corto. Durmió algo.

5. adv. indef. With little intensity. It was raining a little when I left.

6. adv. indef. A short period of time. He slept a little.

It can be observed that they are similar to the previous use, but in context it does not modify either adjectives or other adverbs. In this case, *algo* is used to express that an action is carried out with little intensity or during a very short period of time. Let's see an example of each of the previous values respectively:

10- Pero llueve algo y los ríos tienen agua, se nos olvida otra vez el gravísimo problema del agua para Cúcuta y su Área Metropolitana. "Así como vamos, vamos bien, dijo el loco, y lo llevaban a palo", reza un adagio popular. (Gómez Ardila, Gustavo: Crónicas de Cucuta: 142.- cuando Cucuta tenía agua. Colombia, 2018. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

11- De repente, surgió a un costado un hombre. Es decir..., nos pareció un hombre. Empezó haciendo manotones, como señas, y parecía que hablaba algo. (Escobar, Roque, Contacto Ovni Chile: yo estuve en un plato volador. Chile, 2011. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

10- But it is raining a little and the rivers have water, we forget again the very serious problem of water for Cúcuta and its Metropolitan Area. "As we are going, we are going well, said the madman, and they beat him with a stick," says a popular saying. (Gómez Ardila, Gustavo: Crónicas de Cucuta: 142.- cuando Cucuta había agua. Colombia, 2018. Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

11- Suddenly, a man appeared at the side. That is to say..., it seemed like a man. He started making gestures, like signs, and it seemed like he was saying something. (Escobar, Roque, Contacto Ovni Chile: yo estuve en un plato volador. Chile, 2011. Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

We have observed that there are five shared between both repertoires; however, the *DLE* mentions two uses on its part, and the *DUE* only one.

In reviewing the cases in the Corpora designated for this analysis, we have found that *algo* could also be used to denote a thing that we do not know or do not want to name, as in the following case:

12- Comienza con mi ansiedad típica antes de los parciales, me da mucha hambre, todo el tiempo quiero hacer algo, pero no sé qué y hablo pavadas. (Karivit: Los parciales y sus points. Perú, 2008. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

12- It starts with my typical anxiety before midterms, I get very hungry, I want to do something all the time, but I don't know what and I talk nonsense. (Karivit: Los parciales y sus points. Peru, 2008. Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

We have also found cases in which *algo* could refer to 'a thing of consideration', such as the following:

13- Durante los últimos cuatro años [desde su aparición ante un comité del Congreso de Estados Unidos], McGwire debió haber dicho algo. (Este grupo de tramposos van al salón de la fama si lo hacen en su casa; dice Clark. República Dominicana, 2010. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

13- During the last four years [since his appearance before a committee of the United States Congress], McGwire must have said something. (This group of cheaters will go to the hall of fame if they do it at home; says Clark. Dominican Republic, 2010. Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

Also, as a noun, *algo* could refer to a meal between lunch and dinner in Colombia:

14- Es una costumbre arraigada de cientos de años atrás en el hogar de los antioqueños. Tomar el "algo" hace parte de ese rosario de comidas que son siete en total y que hacían parte... ya no tanto, no hay mucho tiempo y la silueta no lo permite, de cada familia que con orgullo se llamara paisa. El "algo" de las

cinco de la tarde, tan religioso como el té de la reina Isabel. (Vásquez, Carmen: Algo de 5 de la tarde - El Mundo. Colombia, 2013, Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

14- It is a custom rooted hundreds of years ago in the homes of the Antioquians. Eating “*algo*” is part of that rosary of meals, seven in total, that were part... not so much anymore, there is not much time and the silhouette does not allow it, of each family that proudly called itself *paisa*. The “*algo*” at five in the afternoon, as religious as Queen Isabel's tea. (Vásquez, Carmen: *Algo de 5 de la tarde* - El Mundo. Colombia, 2013, Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

Now we will mention the expressions collected in the dictionaries used in this study of which *algo* is a part. We start with the shared constructions and then we analyze those that each repertoire records on its part.

First, both lexicographic sources mention the expression *algo es algo* and indicate that it is used to express agreement:

In the *DLE*:

1. expr. U. para mostrar conformidad con lo poco que se tiene o consigue.

1. expr. U. to show conformity with the little that one has or achieves.

In the *DUE*:

Expresión de *conformidad, de sentido claro.

Expression of *conformity, with a clear meaning.

It can be observed that the two dictionaries record the expression in a very similar way. Let's look at the following context about this construction:

15- No será el viajecito en el tiempo con el que habíamos soñado, pero algo es algo. Al menos por ahora, mientras esperamos algún tiempo más. (Páucar, Rolando: ¿Podemos viajar a través del tiempo? - Eppur si Muove | Blogs. Perú, 2012. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

15- It won't be the little trip back in time that we had dreamed of, but something is something. At least for now, while we wait a little longer. (Páucar, Rolando: Can we travel through time? - Eppur si Muove | Blogs. Peru, 2012. Corpora of Spanish: Web/ dialects).

Likewise, the *DLE* records the colloquial verbal phrase *dar algo a alguien* which indicates that someone will faint or have an accident. The *DUE*, on the other hand, records the phrase *ir a dar algo a alguien* with the meaning of 'Going to have an attack'. Both expressions provided by the dictionaries are very similar and refer to practically the same semantic meaning. Let's look at the following case:

16- No vaya a morder se la lengua porque le puede dar algo. (Salteños por el mundo se comunican a través del - Diario El Pueblo. Uruguay, 2022. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

16- Don't bite your tongue because you might get something. (Salteños por el mundo se comunican a través del - Diario El Pueblo. Uruguay, 2022. Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

As for the expressions collected only in the *DLE*, this records the disused pronominal phrase *algo qué* with two meanings:

1. loc. pronom. desus. Cosa o cantidad de consideración.

2. loc. pronom. desus. Algún tanto.

1. loc. pronom. desus. Thing or amount of consideration.

2. loc. pronom. desus. More of something.

As we can see, it shows that it could have the meaning of 'thing' or 'More of something'. When reviewing the cases in the Corpora designated for this analysis, we have not found any context for the mentioned pronominal phrase, which shows that it is in disuse in the current Spanish language.

The following expression mentioned in the *DLE* is the colloquial adverbial phrase *por algo*. This, according to the dictionary, refers to an action that is carried out for some reason or motive, as can be seen in the following context:

17- Todo en esta vida sucede por algo, por duro, incomprensible e injusto que parezca. (Kapelmuur: Los Dos días de Mireya. España, 2013. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

17- Everything in this life happens for a reason, no matter how hard, incomprehensible and unfair it may seem. (Kapelmuur: Los Dos días de Mireya. Spain, 2013. Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

Finally, the *DLE* registers the pronominal phrase *un algo*. This dictionary indicates that it could be used colloquially to refer to a concept or idea that is difficult to understand or define, as in:

18- Este estudio peluquería de masajes, ofrece una gama completa de opciones, desde alguien con quien hablar a la salida del trabajo, hasta alguien con quien tener un “algo” más. (Zerpa, Carlos: Si usted por primera vez escucha la palabra. Venezuela, 2007. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

18- This hairdressing salon for massages, offers a complete range of options, from someone to talk to after work, to someone to have “something” more with. (Zerpa, Carlos: If you hear the word for the first time. Venezuela, 2007. Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

Likewise, the *DLE* indicates that this phrase could replace the pronoun *algo* when it has the meaning of ‘an indeterminate quantity’, as in the following case:

19- La persona no solamente se define como un sí mismo consciente, sino como un ser en permanente apertura de crecimiento, es decir, en lograr un plus –un algo más– permanente, dinámico (4). (Villalobos Vásquez, Bertha Stella: A la hora del medicamento. Colombia, 2006: Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

19- The person is not only defined as a conscious self, but as a being in permanent growth, that is, in achieving a plus –something more– permanent, dynamic (4). (Villalobos Vásquez, Bertha Stella: A la hora del remedio. Colombia, 2006: Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

It can be observed that both meanings are very similar, in many contexts, a case could refer to both meanings at the same time.

On the other hand, the *DUE* mentions the expression *algo así* (as) which is used to denote approximation, as in:

20- Para los que no lo conozcan, Dan Sullivan es actualmente y desde diciembre de 2010 el comisionado del departamento de Recursos Naturales del gobierno estatal de Alaska, lo cual es algo así como uno de nuestros consejeros autonómicos. (Moosecon, Bob: ¿Tendremos palin 2014? Yo creo que no. España, 2013. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

20- For those who don't know him, Dan Sullivan is currently and since December 2010 the commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources of the state government of Alaska, which is something like one of our autonomous councilors. (Moosecon, Bob: Will we have palin 2014? I think not. Spain, 2013. Corpora of Spanish: Web/ dialects).

Likewise, the *DUE* registers the expression *creerse [or ser] algo una persona*, which is used, according to the dictionary, when someone believes themselves to be important in a category. Let's see the following example about this sequence:

21- Y ¿Por qué no se lo comentas? o ¿Vas a vivir toda tu relación con el fingiendo? Así él se cree algo que no es, y tu no disfrutas. O ¿Es que tienes otro amiguito por ahí escondido para que te satisfaga? (Nizmo: ¡Asco de vida! / Hoy, y siempre. España, 2013. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

21- And why don't you tell him? or Are you going to live your whole relationship with him pretending? That way he believes himself to be something he isn't, and you don't enjoy it. Or Do you have another little friend hiding out there to satisfy you? (Nizmo: ¡Asco de vida! / Hoy, y siempre. Spain, 2013. Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

Later, the *DUE* includes the sequence *más vale algo que nada* (is better something than nothing) in which *algo* means 'anything'. In addition, it records the expression *ser algo aparte* (being something apart) which is used when the thing being talked about is very different from or superior to its species. The following two cases represent the two previous constructions respectively:

22- De todo esto podemos afirmar que lleva SPF, que efectivamente evitan los efectos dañinos del sol en nuestra piel y que es un factor 15, se queda un poco corto, pero más vale algo que nada. (El tocador de Khimma: BB cream de Etnia. España, 2013. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

23- Pero lo de los Toros es algo aparte, se ha convertido en el monigote al que se puede abofetear para sacar pecho. (Martín, Enrique: Ni ILP, ni maltrato animal. España, 2013. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

22- From all this we can affirm that it has SPF, which effectively prevents the harmful effects of the sun on our skin and that it is a factor 15, which is a bit short, but something is better than nothing. (Khimma's dressing table: BB cream by Etnia. Spain, 2013. Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

23- But the thing about the Bulls is something apart, it has become the puppet that can be slapped in the face to show off. (Martín, Enrique: Neither ILP, nor animal abuse. Spain, 2013. Corpora of Spanish: Web/ dialects).

We could conclude that each dictionary mentions different expressions, there are hardly any shared constructions. In addition, the *DUE* registers more colloquial expressions compared to the *DLE*.

Below, we mention the expressions in our Corpora not registered in the dictionaries of this study, of which *algo* is a part. First, we have found the construction *por algo se empieza* (something begins) which is used to express conformity with the satisfactory principles of an action, as in:

24- Yo también pienso, como algunos en este blog, que la pobreza no se desaparece por decreto, la pobreza solo desaparecerá cuando todos, por medio del trabajo, generemos la riqueza suficiente para sacar adelante al país, o por lo menos a cada quién, por algo se empieza. (Eureka: Una taxonomía del antiuribismo. Colombia, 2008. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

24- I also think, like some in this blog, that poverty does not disappear by decree, poverty will only disappear when we all, through work, generate enough wealth to bring the country forward, or at least each one, something begins. (Eureka: Una taxonomía del antiuribismo (Eureka: A taxonomy of anti-Urubeism). Colombia, 2008. Corpora of Spanish: Web/ dialects).

Likewise, we have found contexts of the expression *cundo le da por algo* that is used to refer to someone having an idea or something, as in:

25- El mundillo de las manualidades es muy susceptible de modas y tendencias. Osea, que cuando a uno le da por algo y resulta chulo, allá que nos da a todos por hacer lo mismo. (La Prima: «Seño, que a mi padre no le va a gustar ésto». España, 2013. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

25- The world of crafts is very susceptible to fashions and trends. In other words, when someone thinks of something and it turns out cool, we all start doing the same thing. (La Prima: “Seño, que a mi padre no le va a gustar ésto” [“My father is not going to like this”]. Spain, 2013. Corpora del Español: Web/ dialects).

There is also the construction “*ya es algo*” [“it’s already something”], which is used in current Spanish to refer to someone not having finished doing an action, but at least having achieved part of it. Let’s look at the following context about this expression:

26- Yo venía usando el Webmaster tools (también de Google) y medio como que me acostumbré; además, es más potente para analizar el rendimiento del blog. Pero ahora que se pueden definir aunque sea los meta-descriptions, bueno, ya es algo. (Jessik: Nuevas opciones SEO en Blogger | Blog and Web. España, 2012. Corpus del Español: Web/ dialects).

26- I was using the Webmaster tools (also from Google) and I kind of got used to it; besides, it is more powerful for analyzing the performance of the blog. But now that you can define at least the meta-descriptions, well, that’s something. (Jessik: New SEO options in Blogger | Blog and Web. Spain, 2012. Corpora of Spanish: Web/ dialects).

Conclusions

After having analysed the treatment of the neuter indefinite quantifier *algo* in the monolingual dictionaries designated for this analysis, we have reached a series of conclusions that shed light on all the aspects that should be taken into account in the field of translation and teaching of Spanish as a second language.

Firstly, the *DLE* mentions more uses of *algo* compared to the *DUE*, since the former records seven semantic meanings and the latter only six. Although the order of meanings of this quantifier is not very different in the two dictionaries, there is a disagreement about the class of words to which the word belongs in some meanings, such as functioning as the adverb *mucho* in which *algo* is considered an indefinite pronoun in the *DUE* and an adverb in the *DLE*.

As for the expressions provided by the dictionaries of which *algo* is a part, there are only two shared: *algo por algo* and *dar algo a alguien*. On the other hand, the *DLE* records three constructions on its part, which are: *algo qué*, *por algo* and *un algo*, and the *DUE* records another five, which are: *más vale algo que nada*, *algo así (como)*, *ser algo aparte*, *algo de* and *creerse [o ser] algo una persona*. This reveals that the *DUE* focuses much more on popular expressions in current Spanish that contain the quantifier *algo*.

On the other hand, it should be observed that several uses of *algo* that are absent in the two lexicographic sources of this analysis have been recorded in this study, such as referring to something of consideration, denoting something that we do not know or do not want to name and the nominal meaning (used in Colombia) of referring to what is eaten between lunch and dinner. Furthermore, we have found in our Corpora a large number of expressions for *algo* that are not recorded in the two dictionaries, such as the construction *por algo se empieza*, *cuando le da por algo* and *ya es algo*, of which we have found many meanings in the Corpora of this analysis, which shows that they are frequently used in the current Spanish language.

Finally, it should be especially stressed that relevant and essential differences have been found in the treatment of the quantifier *algo* in the lexicographical sources of this research. Likewise, a number of meanings have been found that are absent in these dictionaries, which may cause an obstacle for the learner in the autonomous process of codification and interpretation. In this regard, one of the aims of this research is to serve as an expanded lexicographic guide for this quantifier in order to cover the deficiencies detected. Likewise, this work could be a source for translators and language learners to avoid mistakes

related to the neuter pronoun *algo*, as well as to avoid misunderstandings when using the same word in discourse.

This study opens the way for many future research projects. Various studies can be carried out on the treatment of other indefinite forms in Spanish dictionaries, since there are very few lexicographic studies that cover this class of words. Likewise, we could approach the syntactic aspect of the indefinite expressions in the Spanish language, which is undoubtedly very broad and controversial, which would lead us to new conclusions that would contribute to improving the translation and teaching methods of Spanish.

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