# *Listen* and *look* where nothing can be heard nor seen. The use of constructions derived from verbs of auditory and visual perception in French and Spanish

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This talk presents the results of a corpus-based investigation of constructions that was undertaken using Sketch Engine with the corpora French Web 2020 and Spanish Web 2018. The starting point for the search were the imperative forms *écoute / écoutez* (Fr.), *oye, oiga* (Sp.) 'listen' along with *regarde, regardez* (Fr.), *mira, mire, mirad* (Sp.) 'look', which in their original senses indicated active and conscious auditory or visual perception and imperative mode. The initial hypothesis motivating our investigation was that the use of these forms alongside the calling for active auditory and visual perception led to the development of further functions of the constructions. Uses were found in the corpora in which the construction called for the attention of the interlocutor without causing them to engage in perceptual activities. But these constructions can also be used to interrupt the conversation or introduce a new topic (1), to appeal to the goodwill of the interlocutor (2) or to mitigate the content of the proposition (3):

(1) *Oye* lo que traigo es una instalación que se construye a partir de distintas series de dibujos de tamaños diversos realizados en tinta sobra papel (http://musac.es/index.php?obr=534). 'Listen what I bring is an installation that is constructed from different series of drawings of different sizes made in ink on paper.'

(2) *Mira* que alegría tienen (http://las.cronicas.de.gorgue.es/2005_10_01_archive.html). 'Look how happy they are'

(3) *Écoute* donc, c'est une gageure (http://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/La_Gageure). 'Listen then, it's a joy.'

The constructions that were investigated are polysemous constructions that have taken on their different meanings at different times in the course of their development. This was demonstrated through further diachronic investigation using the corpora CORDE and Frantext In addition, the degree of independence of the constructions as discourse markers varies. While the Spanish constructions appear as independent polysemous discourse markers, the French equivalents were already common in the collocations *regarde donc* and *écoute donc* in the 16th century. The latter has been contracted in Canadian French to *coudon*. The use of *coudon* implies the introduction of reported speech, with which the responsibility for the content of the utterance is handed over to another person. Furthermore, *coudon* can introduce an utterance or mark change of speech, and within a complex sentence it can mark logical structures.

The aim of the contribution is to show and compare the development of meanings on the basis of verbs of perception in two languages and also to consider varieties with interesting features.

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