"Cuando gustes, me envías un DM": Experiential gustar in tweets in the capital cities of Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America and in Spain
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Prescriptively, the syntactic subject of the Spanish psychological verb gustar is the cause of the emotion while the person who experiences that emotion is encoded as a dative argument, as seen in examples (1) and (2) taken from tweets, short messages sent on the social networking site Twitter (names, including usernames, have been anonymized and explicatory comments are included between brackets):

(1) "No me gustan las jevas [mujeres] que se maquillan mucho." 'I don't like women who wear a lot of makeup.' (Male, Caracas, Venezuela 2011-11-10)

(2) "@Username jajaja [risas] te gusta farrear a vos parece xD [por Dios] yo me voy a dormir feliz." '@Username [laughter] it appears that you like to go out partying, my god, I'm going to sleep well.' (Male, Asunción, Paraguay 2011-11-10)

Despite the highly frequent occurrence of this canonical usage, there exists an innovative use of gustar in which the person who experiences the emotion is the syntactic subject rather than a dative argument, as seen in examples (3) and (4):

(3) "Vi a Nombre Apellido en Ezeiza pero no le pedí nada. Sólo lo mire [miré] intensamente. Creo que gusto de él." 'I saw Name Last in Ezeiza but I didn't ask him for anything. I just stared at him. I think I like him.' (Female, Buenos Aires, Argentina 2011-11-12)

(4) "@Usuario cuando gustes, me envías un DM [Direct Message] y te doy los datos del chamán, es de los buenos, incluso Nombre lo entrevistó y es conocido." '@Username when you'd like, send me a DM and I'll give you the information about the shaman, he's a good one, even Name interviewed him and he's well-known.' (Male, Lima, Peru 2011-11-19)

Little is said in the literature about this innovative, or experiential, gustar, including in what countries in the Spanish-speaking world it is most common. In order to address this deficiency in the literature, this paper analyzes gustar in 6,825 tweets sent by 5,826 different Twitter users in Latin America and Spain, who, at the time their message was sent, were located within a 100-kilometer radius of the capital city of their country. The messages were sent on six different days in November and December 2011. The tweets were retrieved using the programming language and environment R (R Development Core Team 2011) and specifically the R package twitter (Gentry 2011), which interfaces with Twitter's API (Application Programming Interface).

In addition to detailing where experiential gustar occurs in the Spanish-speaking world and how much it occurs in comparison to the canonical gustar, this paper also analyzes the conditioning effect of the mood of gustar, whether indicative or subjunctive, and the person and number of gustar. Further, lexicalized strings that favor the use of the experiential gustar are identified. The results show that among the capital cities in the Spanish-speaking world, Twitter users in Mexico City use the experiential gustar the most, at 21% of the time. Interestingly, experiential gustar is used more with the subjunctive mood than with the indicative. This paper contributes to the almost non-existent literature on experiential gustar in Spanish. Further, the methodology of this paper demonstrates the usefulness of employing the hugely popular social networking site Twitter when studying dialectal variation in Spanish.