

sabe china
 vez pensar aquella vas
 hombre siento catrera años mas van
 siempre voy mas flores dice feliz
 vez veces canción da
 pasá pecho bajo jamás
 nadie miedo mejor ver vieja
 tango alma arrabal amigos calle
 alma mejor corte hacer hago
 entones sos mujer ojos cotorro cielo
 tanta ta taita che malevo pasar
 corazon muñeca bacán boca
 querido fiel vos milonga después
 viejo cruei vi bien cabaret
 amor dos hacer amores
 hoy sueño buen milonga
 pobre mismo madre horas
 bien recuerdo mal fin ilusión
 vida vivo hacer
 ya Pobre sólo
 gran querer barrio vento
 puede así pues dulce vivo
 alegre pebeta bailar como
 noble cuerpo recuerdo
 pasó

Theo de Jager
 Tango
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The protagonist and antagonist in tango; *a chronological study on the evolution of themes, motifs and language.*

Abstract

This study provides a quantitative insight on the continuity and change in the content of the lyrics of tango, from the genre's earliest beginnings on record until the second half of the 20th Century.

Introduction

The focus of this investigation will be the chronological quantification of the changes and constants in content and language within lyrics throughout the development of tango. There have already been numerous studies done on the recurrent themes, poetic devices and use of *lunfardo* in the poetry of tango, but this will be the first to utilize quantitative analysis to provide a statistical overview on the linguistic content of the lyrics. The data obtained will be analyzed qualitatively in an attempt to shed light on the question:

Did the use of language change over time, and if so, in what ways could these changes be attributed to the evolution of the themes and protagonists within the lyrics of tango throughout time?

The hypothesis of this research is that as the genre developed, the vocabulary employed most frequently in the lyrics adjusted in such a statistically significant manner as to directly reflect the presence of certain overarching themes and characters at different stages in time in the history of the tango.

Method

A compilation of tango lyrics was made for each year between 1880 and 1950. The sample for each year was subjected to a word frequency analysis. The data obtained was then analyzed qualitatively.

Due to the current lack of a digital chronological anthology of tango lyrics, uncertain publication dates, and the overwhelming amount of music in existence, the method of research was restricted by a few parameters, explained below.

During the time span of the formative years of tango, ranging roughly from 1880 to 1915, all available tango lyrics were attempted to be included in the sample for the purpose of this research. This is due to the fact that the amount of lyrics registered during this time period is quite small in comparison to the output of later years, and thus manageable under the current available research methods. The resulting downside stemming from this fact is that the sample for individual years is often times too small to be of much statistical significance, or simply non-existent.

An additional grouping of lyrics by decade and its subsequent analysis was carried out in the hopes of providing word frequency data over a larger, more significant time span. This larger grouping was intended to assist in reducing the uncertainty in the data relating to the reported date of origin of some of these early pieces, as the absence of recordings made it particularly more difficult to ascertain a reliable and concrete date of publication.

Between 1915 to around 1950, the available source material becomes exponentially larger due to the rising popularity and development of the genre, and thus the yearly output of songs became far too large to handle within the current methodology; therefore, an arbitrary sample limit of approximately ten to fifteen distinct pieces per year was imposed. The pieces that composed that list, however, were meant to be selected as among the most well-known and thus most influential pieces of each year. This was based on factors such as the amount of versions and (re-)recordings of the pieces, the distinction of its authors, and the amount of information readily available for each piece in the sources consulted.

Sources

The databases of several recognized tango related websites were consulted to compile a chronological listing of lyrics. The two main websites used for this purpose were *Tangoletras.com.ar* and *Todotango.com*. The former reports having a listing of over 9000 tango related lyrics and, although precarious, the ability to search for lyrics by date. The latter is one of the largest tango databases online and is sponsored by *The Argentine Tango Society*, regularly maintained and updated by several contributors, and was thus primarily used to corroborate dates and spell-check the source material. If the sources were contradictory, but within a small margin, the first recording date was chosen as the year of publication. Various published compilations of lyrics cited in the bibliography were also employed occasionally, as were a few other websites when deemed relevant.

Quantitative analysis

Linguistic research employing quantitative analysis methods has been present for at least over 60 years (Kaplan & Blei, 2007). Since then a vast amount of research has been carried out by utilizing more powerful, computer-assisted methods of analysis to examine the grammatical, lexical and metrical content of literature. The application of this type of analysis has stretched over a wide range of topics, covering subjects as diverse as the themes in US Top-40 songs (Christenson, 2014) to the use of grammatical rhymes in Polish Poetry (Opara, 2014). Even within the realm of tango, at least two studies have been done tracking the occurrence of a particular word, namely the terms *corazón* (Romero, 2008) and *arrabal* (García, 2007).

Problems & limitations

Sample size

As mentioned earlier, due to the staggering amount of lyrics in existence and the lack of a digital chronological listing of these, it is at this moment virtually impossible to provide an analysis of all existing lyrics. To create such a listing would require considerable more additional research into the often times uncertain publication date of songs and the development of a convenient software infrastructure in which to input, sort and analyze the data.

Nonetheless, for the practical as opposed to potential theoretical goals of this research, the sample was compiled to be of a significant size; over 400 songs were included.

Analysis software

The quantitative analysis itself is also very restricted in its potential capabilities. It is carried out by means of utilizing the computer-assisted text analysis program Hamlet II 3.0. For the purpose of this research its output is strictly limited to word mention counts and their percentage of occurrence within a text. With greater resources, such as Spanish *and* lunfardo vocabulary lists, a subsequent analysis could provide additional data with regard to joint word and phrase frequencies, conjugations of verbs, and plural and synonym considerations.

In order to highlight more meaningful data, the analysis was programmed to omit purely grammatical terms, such as propositions, connectors, etc. A list of these terms is provided in the appendix. A number of primarily grammatical terms were preserved, such as mis, tus, sus (my, your, his/her/its). The reasoning for this stems from the fact that they are possessives which are embedded with and exhibit part of the narrative perspective of the text.

The personal pronoun yo (I) was likewise not excluded due to the fact that it is not strictly necessary in the Spanish language in order to establish a subject; this is indicated in the conjugation of the verbs without any ambiguity. For example, the Spanish to English translation of "Yo tengo" → "I have", is just as valid as the shorter "Tengo" → "I have". Therefore, the abundant use of 'Yo' consequently must have at least some intentional purposes related to narrative style and themes beyond its mere grammatical function.

Future possibilities

Given greater resources in terms of funding, software and time, the potential for this type of analysis in the realm of tango is extensive. It could be used to provide new and greater insight into several facets of the genre's existence; including its development and legacy in the fields of music and poetry; and even its impact on the Spanish language and culture itself outside of the immediate vicinity of its places of origin. Ideally, this would demand an all-inclusive sample analyzed continuously over time and would yield even more refined results.

Selection of works

To minimize the subjectivity of distinguishing between the at times ambiguous or overlapping genres, the following related musical, theatrical and dance forms were occasionally included: milonga, candombe, vals criollo, pasillo and sainete.

The following table shows the listing of lyrics chosen for this research.

1880 - Andáte a la Recoleta / Señora Casera / Soy Carrero de la Aduana / Entrada Prohibida / Señor Comisario / El Estado de un País o la Nueva Vía
1885 - El Queco
1886 - Tango de la Menegilda
1890 - La Multa / Los Sustos de Agosto
1892 - No me Tires con la Tapa de la Olla
1897 - Justicia Criolla / Milonga (de Justicia Criolla)
1898 - Milonga de Luzo
1900 - Bartolo / Batifondo a la Villa de Roi / La Bicicleta / Don Juan, el Taita del Barrio / Sos mi Tirador Plateado
1901 - Mis Flores Negras
1903 - El Choclo* / El Porteñito
1904 - Soy Tremendo
1905 - La Morocha
1906 - La Rubia / Pie Chico / Matufias o el Arte de Vivir / El Entrerriano / El Mulato Papilla / Cuidado con los Cincuenta / Bailando en lo de Vasca / Los Disfrazados
1907 - Música Criolla / Los Pesaos del Norte / Mi Morocha / El Taita
1908 - El Retrato del Pibe
1909 - La Manañita / La Basura / El Pechador
1910 - Cuerpo de Alambre / Don Enrique / Don Juan (El Taita del Barrio)
1911 - Minguito / Mozos Guapos
1912 - Yo Sé Hacer / Es en Vano / El Almohadón / La Viruta
1913 - Champagne Tango / El 13
1914 - De Vuelta al Bulín / Matasano / Pobre Páica / El 14
1915 - Una Más / Qué Querés con esa Cara / La Milonguera
1916 - Maldito Tango / Nueve de Julio* / Orillas del plata / El Flete
1917 - Flor de Fango / La Garconniere / Mi Noche Triste / Lorenzo / Amores viejos / La Payanca
1918 - Dale Perejil al Loro / El Chimango / El Cafiso / Don Brocoli / Muñeiquita

1919 - Margot / Como Quiere la Madre a sus Hijos / Milonguita / A la Gran Muñeca
1920 - Carnet de Cabaret / De Estirpe Porteña / Zorro Gris / El Panuelito / Chiqué / La Catedrática / Ivette
1921 - El Huracán / Cielito Mio / La Copa del Olvido
1922 - La Brisa / Melenita de Oro / El Taita del Arrabal / Pobre Corazoncito / Porotita / La Maleva / Pobre Vieja / El Tango de la Muerte**/ Camarada / Loca** / Sobre el Puchó / Patotero Sentimental
1923 - La Mariposa / Hacete Tonadillera / Mano a Mano / Sentencia / El Bulín de la Calle Ayacucho / Mi Refugio / Lo que Fuiste / China Hereje / Una Pena / Tierra del Fuego / Silbando / Desengaño / El Curdela / El Rey del Cabaret / Pobres Flores / Como los Nardos en Flor / Pobre Milonga / Desdichas / Buenos Aires
1924 - La Mina del Ford / Corto de Genio / Bronca Rea / Talán Talán / Argentina / Todo Corazón / No le Digas que la Quiero / La Cumparsita / Griseta / Tranco a Tranco / Desolación /
1925 - Muchachita de Montmartre / A Media Luz / Que Calamidad / Yo te Bendigo / Cicatrices / Buen Amigo / Viejo Rincón / Organito de la Tarde / Tango Porteño / Déjá el Conventillo / Tiempos Viejos
1926 – Viejo Ciego / Tus Besos Fueron Mios / El Ciruja / Caminito / Puente Alsina / Sonsa / Justicia Criolla / Aquella Cantina de la Rivera / Bandoneón Arrabalero / Pan Comido / Oro Muerto / Viejo Tango
1927 - La Gayola / Carnaval / A la Luz del Candil / Adiós Muchachos / Che, Papusa, Oí / Arrabalero / Chorra / Noche de Reyes / Un Tropezón / Boedo / Se Acabaron los Otarios / Gloria / Barrio Reo
1928 - Florida de Arrabal / Manos Brujas / Esta Noche me Emborracho / Tengo Miedo / Haragán / Que Vachaché / Che Bartolo / Garufa / Mala Junta / Muñeca Brava / Seguí mi Consejo / Senda Florida / Te Fuiste? Ja Ja / No me Escribas
1929 - Yira, Yira / La Casita de mis Viejos / Misa de Once / Che Bacana / Soy un Arlequín / Atorrante / Tango Argentino / Vieja Calesita / Te Odio / Dicen que Dicen / Palermo / Porque soy Reo / Cuando me Entres a Fallar / Atenti Pebeta
1930 - Viejo Smoking / Vieja Recova / Anclao en Paris / A mi no me den Consejos / Adiós Argentina / El Penado 14 / Almagro / Araca París / Enfundá la Mandolina / Madreselva / Por Seguidora y por Fiel/ Justo el 31
1931 - El Carrillón de la Merced / Taconeando / Tomo y Obligo / Mi Dolor / Preparáte pa'l Domingo / Sueño de Juventud / Chirusa / Flor de Valle / Mentira / Ojos Maulas / El Aguacero
1932 - Cuando Tú No Estás / Ventarrón / Me da Pena Confesarlo / Sueño querido / Pan / Al Mundo le Falta un Tornillo / Vagabundo / Rencor / La Canción de Buenos Aires / Milonga Sentimental
1933 - Cobardía / Si Soy Así / Madame Ivonne / Dónde Hay un Mango? / Apología Tanguera / El que Atrasó el Reloj / Andate (No te Vayas) / Araca la Cana / Si se Salva el Pibe / Milonga del 900 / Consejo de Oro
1934 - Cambalache / Soledad / No Aflojés / El Pescante / Yo no sé por qué te Quiero / Si Volviera Jesús / Golondrinas / Mi Buenos Aires Querido / Vida Mia / Cuesta Abajo / Corrientes y Esmeralda / Remembranza
1935 - Sus Ojos se Cerraron / Suerte Negra / Alma de Bandoneón / Noches de Buenos Aires / Volver / El Día que me Quieras / De Puro Guapo / Casas Viejas / Por Una Cabeza / Volvió una Noche
1936 - Nostalgias / Levanta la Frente / Milonga Querida / Qué Importa / Mañana es Mentira / Ave de Paso / Oiga Compadre / Que Nadie se Entere / Milagro / Ayudame a Vivir
1937 - La Puñalada / Mi Camino / El Cornetín del Tranvía / Niebla del Riachuelo / El Adiós / No Cantes ese Tango / Paciencia / En Blanco y Negro / Esperar / Esclavo / El Llorón
1938 - La Bruja / Muchachita del Campo / Por la Vuelta / Pensalo Bien / Mala Suerte / Desvelo / Cuando el Corazón / Tormenta / Carnaval de mi Barrio / Indiferencia
1939 - Cuartito Azul / Todo te Nombra / Corazón / Abandonada / Por Vos Yo Me Rompo Todo / El Vino Triste / Lunes / A Quién le Puede Importar? / Todo te Nombra / Mano Blanca
1940 - Como Dos Extraños / Alas Rotas / Pajaro Ciego / Mariposita / Yo También / Claudinette / Tan Sólo Tú /

Total pa' qué Sirvo / Pena Mulata / Martirio
1941 - Tres Esquinas / Tinta Roja / El Cuarteador / Negra María / Toda mi Vida / En Esta Tarde Gris / Malena / Pocas Palabras / Otra Vez Carnaval / Bien Frappé
1942 - Si de Mí te Has Olvidado / Pa' que Bailen los Muchachos / Ninguna / Mañana Zarpa un Barco / Los Mareados / Caserón de Tejas / Barrio de Tango / Así se Baila el Tango / Pedacito de Cielo / Barrio Viejo del Ochenta
1943 - Tal Vez Será su Voz / Por las Calles de la Vida / Se Dice de Mí / Mañana Iré Temprano / Cada Vez que me Recuerdes / Uno / Percal / Farol / Tranquilo Viejo Tranquilo / Pena de Amor
1944 - Naranjo en Flor / De Igual a Igual / La Abandoné y No Sabía / Cristal / Copas, Amigas y Besos / Yuyo Verde / Nada / La Ví Llegar / Malvón / El Tango es una Historia
1945 - Sin Palabras / Rondando tu Esquina / Garras / Esta Noche al Pasar / El Sueño del Pibe / Canción Desesperada / Fuimos / Adiós Pampa Mía / Café de los Angelitos / A Pan y Agua
1946 - Se Lustra, Señor / En Carne Propia / Camino del Tucumán / Así es Ninón / El Milagro / Malva / Rosicler / Mis Amigos de Ayer / Que Cosas Tiene la Vida / Tiempo
1947 - Cafetín / Y Dicen que no te Quiero / Qué Habrá sido de Lucía? / Amiga / Los Despojos / Dinero, Dinero / El Choclo*** / Romance de Barrio / Óyeme / Flor de Lino
1948 - Sur / Pampero / Cafetín de Buenos Aires / Como tú / Mil Novecientos Diez / Color de Barro / Che Bandoneón / Desde el Alma / Una Carta para Italia / Una y Mil Noches
1949 - El Último Organito / La Casa Vacía / Un Placer / Anoche / Una Lágrima Tuya / Claveles Blancos / Tú / Testamento de Arrabal / Triste Comedia / Adiós Arolas
1950 - Un Baile a Beneficio (La Podrida) / Tu Piel de Jazmín / La Intriga / Arrabalera / Bien Pulenta / El Cielo en las Manos / Tan Solo por Verte / Estás en mi Corazón / Por qué Doblan las Campanas / Precio

*first version

**from the sainete “El Tango de la Muerte”

***third version

A note on lunfardo and translation

“La palabra *lunfardo*, que en su origen significó “ladrón”, define un extenso vocabulario que nació en las ciudades rioplatenses y se extendió luego al resto del país y a las naciones limítrofes hasta instalarse definitivamente en nuestra habla cotidiana.”

Oscar Conde, Diccionario etimológico del lunfardo.

Lunfardo is the term used to denote specific parts of the vernacular of the cities of Buenos Aires and Montevideo, having originated there and coalescing with Spanish to form what is known as Rioplatense Spanish.

It was employed extensively in the lyrics of tango music (whenever governmental censorship was not prevalent, as it was on occasion deemed vulgar or immoral) and although in present times many terms attributed to lunfardo have fallen out of everyday use, they still remain

preserved in the poetry of tango.

In the interests of brevity, conciseness and maintaining a focus on the results and their analysis, lyrics are quoted in their original Spanish. When appropriate and necessary, approximate English translations and explanations are provided. Due to the abundant use of lunfardo and the poetic nature of the material being treated, any translations would be better considered an approximation to (rather than a replacement for) the source material.

Any definitions and translations of words appearing in the main body of work are either taken or adapted from the *Diccionario etimológico del lunfardo* (Taurus, 2004), the *Breve diccionario etimológico de la lengua castellana*. (Gredos, 1996) and the *Oxford Spanish Dictionary* (OUP, 2008)

Results

As mentioned earlier, given the relatively small amount of lyrics compiled in the samples of the first decades (1880~1920), less gravity is attributed to these individually. However, by examining the percentages of word appearance rather than the total number of mentions, certain parallels arise that suggest continuity between these findings and those of the years that follow, hence warranting their inclusion.

In order to increase readability and yet still provide a visual representation of the results to accompany their qualitative analysis, they are displayed in an abbreviated form within the main body of text. If needed, findings deemed relevant but not appearing in this shortened version will be recalled individually.

By decade

1880-1889

Frequency	%	Word

7	1.27	soy
6	1.09	yo
5	0.91	queco
4	0.73	barrio
4	0.73	china
4	0.73	poco
4	0.73	tengo
4	0.73	voy
3	0.54	aprende
3	0.54	café
3	0.54	gustan
3	0.54	sisar
3	0.54	tomando
2	0.36	ama

2	0.36	andáte
2	0.36	aquí
2	0.36	bajo
2	0.36	cola
2	0.36	comisario
2	0.36	cuchillo
2	0.36	después
2	0.36	falta
2	0.36	fue
2	0.36	gaudencio
2	0.36	hombre
2	0.36	pasar
2	0.36	pobre
2	0.36	punto
2	0.36	señor
2	0.36	señora
2	0.36	serví
2	0.36	tí
2	0.36	vine
2	0.36	vuelvo
2	0.36	ya

The first five most frequent terms are:

yo, soy, queco, barrio, china. → *I, am, brothel, neighborhood, beloved woman*

The prevalence of *yo* and *soy* in these lyrics foreshadows a trend that (in hindsight) can be observed in many of the earliest lyrics of tango or tango-related genres. Many of these establish a protagonist or antagonist which is very often almost a caricature. For example, in *El Estado de un País o la Nueva Vía*:

*yo soy del barrio del alto,
 soy del barrio del retiro,
 soy aquel que nunca miro
 con quién tengo que pelear,
 y al que en tren de milonguear
 ninguno se puso al tiro.*

...

The protagonist here manifests qualities of territorial dominance, (self-appointed) superiority and seductiveness, and arrogance; character attributes which will reemerge in the following decades.

The appearance of the words *queco, barrio, china*, is interesting to note given that these will resurface often later on albeit in different iterations. Worth calling attention to is the fact that two future important locations are already established in this decade: the brothel and the neighborhood.

1890-1899

Frequency	%	Word

6	0.98	dicen
4	0.65	amor
4	0.65	sus
4	0.65	yo
3	0.49	abolla
3	0.49	bailar
3	0.49	están
3	0.49	revolución
2	0.33	aqui
2	0.33	canto
2	0.33	ella
2	0.33	enamorarla
2	0.33	hable
2	0.33	haciendo
2	0.33	liga
2	0.33	llorar
2	0.33	mano
2	0.33	mil
2	0.33	mismo
2	0.33	mujer
2	0.33	noche
2	0.33	nuestros
2	0.33	primero
2	0.33	pum
2	0.33	raja
2	0.33	rompo
2	0.33	saben
2	0.33	tango
2	0.33	tanto
2	0.33	tapa
2	0.33	tango
2	0.33	tranquilas
2	0.33	valor

Examining the data, the most frequent mentions include:

dicen, amor, sus, yo, abolla → they say, love, his/her/its, I, dents(verb)

Correlating this with the lyrics, *dicen* occurs only in *Los Sustos de Agosto*, which lends it little statistical significance. However, it is worth noting that it is employed in part as a comedic narrative device in what is essentially a humorous social commentary:

*Dicen que dicen que dicen
lo que les voy a decir*

...

Adding to that, the results for *yo* and *abolla*, scoring high in the percentages, also belong to two other humorous songs, *La Multa*:

...
*yo pude ser prudente y le dije: adiós ricura,
si tuviera a mano un cura, pum, pum,
yo te haría mi mujer.*

...

and *No me Tires con la Tapa de la Olla*:

...
*si se abolla yo te abollo.
si se raja yo te rajo.
si se rompe, yo te rompo
de un trompazo la nariz.*

...

What can be observed from this small sample, especially when taking songs from the previous decade such as *Entrada Prohibida* and *Señor Comisario* into consideration, is a tendency for either the characters or the narrator (or both) to be humorous and/or of questionable morals. Moreover, protagonists tend to also exhibit the trait of being proud or self-entitled in their actions, even (or especially) when these are generally considered negative in society. For instance in *La Multa*, where the protagonist flirts with a “pretty blonde” on the street and she threatens to call the police on him, and whose lyrics seem to reference and ridicule a law issued in 1889 against indecent flirting (also the topic of the 1906 song *Cuidado con los Cincuenta*). Although certainly tongue-in-cheek to an extent, as seems to be a trend in several of these ur-tangos, the concept of the male protagonist as being helpless, unaccountable and yet glorified for his disputable actions is a common reoccurrence.

To expand upon this further, this quality is similarly found in the narrator of a segment of the 1897 sainete *Justicia Criolla*. Here the protagonist is admittedly and shamelessly courting a woman by bragging about his courage, money, superiority, seductiveness etc.

...

*hablé a la mina de mi valor
y que soy hombre de largo espor;
cuando el estrilo quiera agarrar,
vos, mi Juanita, me has de calmar.*

*y ella callaba y entonces yo
hice prodigios de ilustración;
luego, en un tango, che, me pasé
y a puro corte la conquisté.*

The self-entitled nature of the character's point of view is evident in the lines "cuando el estrilo quiera agarrar/ vos, mi Juanita, me has de calmar", translating to "when the rage comes/ you, my Juanita, must calm me down". The deceptiveness of the speaker and complicity imposed on the listener is also exemplified in how he refers to the woman in question: the detached "mina" (woman/chick) to us, and the affective "mi Juanita" to her.

The use of the word *tango* as a reference to a dance or musical style is interesting to note given that it is mentioned alongside the *chotis* and *carnaval*; related genres which virtually disappeared later on from the city of Buenos Aires, displaced northwards and to the countryside perhaps in part due to the growing popularity of the tango.

1900-1909

Frequency	%	Word

53	1.46	soy
30	0.83	yo
16	0.44	basura
14	0.39	sos
13	0.36	amor
13	0.36	sus
12	0.33	mis
9	0.25	corte
9	0.25	tengo
9	0.25	vida
8	0.22	morocha
8	0.22	taita
8	0.22	todo
7	0.19	aires
7	0.19	hago
7	0.19	noble
7	0.19	pasa
7	0.19	señores
7	0.19	siempre
7	0.19	sin
6	0.17	baile
6	0.17	bajo
6	0.17	barrio
6	0.17	che
6	0.17	hace
6	0.17	mujer
6	0.17	otro

6	0.17	queda
6	0.17	todos
6	0.17	tus
5	0.14	aire
5	0.14	alegre
5	0.14	alma
5	0.14	barre
5	0.14	calá
5	0.14	calle
5	0.14	conserva
5	0.14	dueño
5	0.14	ellas
5	0.14	flor
5	0.14	gaucho
5	0.14	gentil
5	0.14	hasta
5	0.14	ojos
5	0.14	paso
5	0.14	pesares
5	0.14	quien
5	0.14	ser
5	0.14	suba
5	0.14	tango

Taking this larger sample into account, there are several terms worth expanding upon.

Once more there is a high scoring *soy, yo* → *I am, I*

This “yo soy” template, apparent in *Don Juan el Taita del Barrio* (1900), *La Morocha* (1905), *La Rubia* (1906)--a parody of the former, *El Entrerriano* (1906), *El Porteñito* (1903) and several others, is used most frequently during this time span as a means to describe a character with a specific eccentricity or extravagant way of life.

The characters in many of these lyrics are exaggerated to the point of becoming caricatures, drawn from both a continuation on some of the earlier trends in humorous or picaresque motifs, as well as the elevation of the male protagonist as the temperamental ultramasculine thug, pimp, e.g: the protagonist in *Soy Tremendo* (ca.1904) bragging about having two women:

...
tengo una morocha
en calle Suipacha

...
y en calle Esmeralda
afilo a una chica

This is corroborated further by the frequent use of the term *taita* → *big shot, boss, thug*.

At the same time, however, considering the data in the analysis and comparing it to the source material, there appear to be numerous references to aspects of daily life; such as work, love, neighborhoods, technology and the countryside, as reflected in such terms as:

amor, vida, barrio, mujer, calle, flor, gaucho → love, life, neighborhood, woman, street, flower, cowboy.

While all of these terms remain or become more relevant in subsequent years, references to the countryside and the figure of the *gaucho* become less frequent. This could perhaps be interpreted as a consequence of the urbanization of the surroundings and the general movement of people towards the city.

The high mention of *basura* → *trash*, stems from a single song, *La Basura*, and is perhaps not as valuable to this research in terms of contributing to an overarching trend in the use of language. It does however contain humorous aspects conforming to its time; and perhaps most importantly ventures towards another theme that is an often-explored subject of the lyrics of tango throughout time; the social commentary.

1910-1919

Frequency	%	Word

59	0.97	yo
33	0.54	amor
32	0.52	tango
32	0.52	ya
27	0.44	soy
26	0.43	corazón
23	0.38	sin
23	0.38	todo
22	0.36	vida
20	0.33	alma
19	0.31	siempre
17	0.28	fue
16	0.26	mis
14	0.23	noche
14	0.23	tengo
13	0.21	pobre
12	0.20	donde
12	0.20	hoy
11	0.18	bailar
11	0.18	has
11	0.18	quiero
11	0.18	solo
11	0.18	triste
10	0.16	toda

One of the most commonly cited examples as a defining turning point in the history of the tango is the 1917 recording of *Mi Noche Triste*, sung by Carlos Gardel with lyrics from Pascual Contursi. The popularity of this recording seems to have spear-headed a new trend in the composition of subsequent tango songs, both musically and lyrically.

It is perhaps not surprising to see a shift in the results pertaining to this decade. Looking at the data, it appears that the “yo soy” formula is less prominent, having been displaced by such terms as *amor, tango, ya → love, tango, now* and closely followed by *corazón, sin, todo, vida, alma → heart, without, everything, life, soul*.

By placing the terms into related categories, this shift in theme can be appreciated more easily. Grouping the high scoring terms such as *amor, corazón, vida* and *alma*, it is evident from the data alone that the content of the lyrics has taken a more romantic turn. Supporting this argument, by examining the lyrics for such terms in context, numerous examples of this being the case can be found, such as in

Don Enrique (ca. 1910):

...
*sentado en la orilla del río Luján
cruzan mi mente las penas de amor.*

...
*que triste es vivir
sin poder amar*

...
*por mis pasiones amorosas
me encuentro triste y abatido*

...
*soy fuerte de alma y pasión
de amores desgraciados, ay!*

in *Es en Vano* (1912):

...
*en vano, en vano
mis secretos, horas secretas
de amor perdi.*

or in *De Vuelta al Bulín* (ca.1914):

...
*yo no sé, vida mía,
como has podido
engrupirme así*

It is also worth pointing out that the introduction of these themes can be appreciated in numerous songs before the release of *Mi Noche Triste*. It was due to the popularity of the latter however that these themes became synonymous with tango.

The mentioned terms reemerge in several other lyrics of a similar theme in this decade, such as in *El Almohadón*, *Una Más* and *Qué Querés con esa Cara*, to name but a few. They also appear in connection with another important shift in theme that seems to stem from this period: the increase of nostalgic overtones and references to the past.

The terms *ya, siempre, fue, hoy → now, always/forever, (he/she/it) was/went/left, today/now* are heavily used to compare the past to the present, very often with a romanticized vision of the past and a more negative outlook on the present.

In *Pobre Páica* (1914):

...
*mina que fue en otro tiempo
la más papa milonguera
y en esas noches tangueras
fue la reina del festín.
hoy no tiene pa' ponerse,
ni zapatos ni vestidos,
anda enferma y el amigo
no ha aportao para el bulín*

or in *Milonguita* (1919)

...
*milonguita,
los hombres te han hecho mal
y hoy darías toda tu alma
por vestirte de percal.*

Worth noting are also the topics relating to the nightlife; cabaret and clubs, prostitution and pimps. While the presence of hustler protagonists or narrators is still significant, as in

Minguito:

...
*porque a una chinita que es de mi flor,
que vive en la calle constitución,
le digo que es dueña de mi pasión,
y me larga cobrera que es un primor.
y así vivo, y así vivo de los diarios*

*y los nales de mi china,
que me sirven pa' farriar
con la rubia Josefina*

...

(or Mozos Guapos, Matasano, and a number of others) there is an ongoing change in their perspective and motivations-- a shift towards a character of a more vulnerable, emotional and sympathetic nature.

This change is even acknowledged occasionally within the lyrics themselves, as in the case of

El Flete (1916):

...

*esos taitas que tenían
la mujer de prepotencia,
la van de pura decencia
y no ganan pa' el bullón.*

...

Curiously but perhaps not surprising, these are Pascual Contursi lyrics, author of *De Vuelta al Bulín* and *Mi Noche Triste*; songs which define an almost tangible line in the subsequent subject matter of tango.

Lastly, the high volume of mentions of the word *tango* at this point in time is not only indicative of the growing consolidation of tango as a clearly defined musical and dance form, but also of a quality that is rampant throughout its existence: being self-referential.

At this point in time, however, references to it are strongly linked (if not exclusive) to its relationship with dance – which is congruent with the high mention of the term *bailar* → *to dance*:

In *El 13*

...

*es el tango para bailar
una danza muy singular
que el alma nos enajena
y de emociones nos llena.*

...

in *La Milonguera*

...

*soy milonguera, me gusta el tango,
y en los bailongos me sé lucir.*

...

in *Maldito Tango*

...
*del cabaret soy una triste mueca,
ya nadie el tango conmigo más bailó*

1920-1929

Frequency % Word

151	0.73	yo
108	0.52	amor
97	0.47	sin
89	0.43	corazón
86	0.41	ya
81	0.39	vida
68	0.33	tus
63	0.30	vos
59	0.28	pobre
52	0.25	tango
51	0.25	fue
50	0.24	alma
46	0.22	soy
45	0.22	mis
43	0.21	dolor
43	0.21	hoy
43	0.21	tengo
43	0.21	viejo
42	0.20	era
42	0.20	mujer
41	0.20	sos
40	0.19	aquel
39	0.19	bien
39	0.19	siempre
38	0.18	noche
38	0.18	quiero
38	0.18	todo
36	0.17	has
36	0.17	ilusión
33	0.16	donde
33	0.16	estoy
33	0.16	nunca
33	0.16	triste
32	0.15	milonga
31	0.15	pena
29	0.14	ella

29	0.14	hombre
29	0.14	sus
28	0.14	cariño
28	0.14	día
28	0.14	llorar
28	0.14	mal
27	0.13	entre
27	0.13	ver
26	0.13	arrabal
26	0.13	ojos
26	0.13	ser
26	0.13	solo
25	0.12	ayer
25	0.12	hasta
24	0.12	querer
24	0.12	tanto
23	0.11	recuerdo
22	0.11	luz
21	0.10	barrio

There appears to be a continuation on the amorous, mournful and nostalgic themes most commonly observed in the later half of the previous decade, as evidenced by the ongoing high frequency of such terms as *amor, alma, corazón, vida, cariño* → *love, soul, heart, life, sweetheart/love*). Adding to this, there is a rise in usage of the words *sin, pobre, triste, dolor, pena, llorar, mal, ilusión* → *without, poor, sad, pain, sorrow/misery/shame, to cry, hurt/wrong/ill/bad..., hope/illusion/delusion*.

As well as the melancholic and romantic themes mentioned earlier, the element of tragedy in the lyrics of this period appears to assume a focal point. This shift is critical not only in terms of content but also in the narrative techniques that became popular during this period.

In terms of tragedy, it can be recognized as occurring either to the narrator (as an active participant or outsider), the protagonist(s) in the story, or both. Lyrics written in the first person without a major secondary character become fewer and far between. This marks an important distinction to the the earlier trend of predominantly one-dimensional character driven lyrics.

For example, the narrator is sympathetic though uninvolved in the story:

in *Carnet de Cabaret*

...
*y que pasando su vida amargada
 llora en silencio su pena sin fin.*

in *Porotita*

*de un mal muy grave se murió ayer
la porotita, pobre mujer...
y al apagarse su corazón,
murió besando aquel medallón.*

...

or in *Patotero Sentimental*

...

*patotero, rey del bailongo
siempre de ella te acordarás
hoy reís, pero en tu risa,
solo hay ganas de llorar.*

...

Narrator participates but is not the central character:

in *Mano a Mano*

...

*y mañana cuando seas
descolado mueble viejo

acordate de este amigo
que ha de jugarse el pellejo
pa' ayudarte en lo que pueda,
cuando llegue la ocasión.*

...

or in *Tus Besos Fueron Míos*:

*hoy pasas a mi lado con fría indiferencia,
tus ojos ni siquiera detienes sobre mí*

...

Narrator is the main protagonist, participating alongside well-developed secondary characters:

In *Noche de Reyes*

...

*Por eso compañero, como hoy es día de Reyes,
los zapatitos el nene afuera los dejó.
Espera un regalito y no sabe que a la madre
por falsa y por canalla, ¡su padre la mató!*

...

The word *mujer* → *woman* is used very frequently (significantly more than the word *hombre* → *man*). Additionally, the feminine pronoun *ella* → *she/her* also appears frequently, and equals *hombre* in its total number of mentions. This is quite possibly indicative of the large volume of texts dealing with sentimental topics such as the abandonment of a woman; yet it is interesting to note the detached connotations of the term *mujer*. It is more impersonal than the related terms *cariño*, *ella* and its use can at times be said to allude to an abstract image of the character of 'woman' rather than crafting or relating to an individual protagonist/antagonist.

As in *El Huracán*:

...
*vendaval que arrasó mi querer,
huracán transformao en mujer.*

...
*una mala mujer que lleva
el veneno escondido
en su negro corazón.*

or in *La Copa del Olvido*:

...
*en vano busco en otras mujeres
dulces caricias para olvidar
y recordando que no me quiere
el sentimiento me hace llorar.*

In *La Copa del Olvido* the previous point is illustrated quite clearly; the protagonist looks for pleasure "in other women" to forget *her*, who in his eyes is not "just another woman". Perhaps more extremely, in the lesser known *Camarada*:

...
*es un bicho la mujer
muy malo para querer;*

or in *Una Pena*

...
*pero mujer, al fin, voluble y fría,
entre las flores, su coquetería
disimulaba el arma que me hirió;*

or in *Desengaño*

...
me has hecho sufrir ingrata mujer

Examples of the opposite can also be found, which could indicate that the abundant use *mujer* is not always associated with negative themes but could also be a part of the old-fashioned style and vestiges of the tough male culture of the previous decades. As seen in:

Se Acabó la Farra

...
*donde está el alma bella, blanca y buena,
de esa mujer que es pura como el sol.*

... or in *Sentimiento Gaucho*

...
*sabe que es condición de varón el sufrir...
la mujer que yo quería con todo mi corazón
se me ha ido con un hombre que la supo seducir*

In regard to or as a consequence of the rise in sentimental themes, we also see mentions of the disappearance of the figure of the *taita*: the bold and violent man whose actions, leaning on the criminal or immoral, are simultaneously admired, feared and condemned.

In *De Estirpe Portena*:

*ya se acabó el taita aquel
que en mi barrio se imponía*
...
*y en el arrabal su fama fue,
de aquel matón
un don juan
que en eso de querer
no se dejó vencer
el corazón.*

In *El Taita del Arrabal* (1922):

*y así, una noche oscura,
tuvo un triste final
aquel a quien le llamaban
el taita del arrabal.*

Terms related to the idea of time and its passage, such as *ya, fue, hoy, era, día* are more abundant than ever before. Besides the nostalgic, romantic and tragic connotations previously explored, another connection to these terms is worth mentioning. The increase in frequency of the terms *arrabal* and *barrio*.

The words *arrabal* and *barrio* → (*marginal*) *neighborhood*, capture the image of the outskirts of the city, bordering on the rural and often associated with the lower classes. Allusions to the *barrio* or *arrabal* are usually strongly correlated to a new motif native to this period; the anthropomorphization of the surroundings-- the street, the neighborhood, the city.

A few examples include:

Viejo Rincón

...
*hoy vuelvo al barrio que dejé
y al campanearlo me da pena*

in *Organito de la Tarde*

...
*que el barrio parece
impregnarse todo de emoción.*

in *Puente Alsina*

...
dónde está mi barrio, mi cuna querida?

...
la vieja barriada que me vio nacer...

in *Boedo*

...
*sos barrio del gotán y la pebeta,
el corazón del arrabal porteño,*

...
*la capital
del arrabal.*

1930-1939

Frequency	%	Word
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126	0.73	yo
105	0.61	amor
88	0.51	ya
82	0.48	vida
71	0.41	sin
70	0.41	corazón
60	0.35	todo

52	0.30	fue
50	0.29	hoy
50	0.29	tus
48	0.28	quiero
47	0.27	mis
46	0.27	alma
46	0.27	vos
45	0.26	sus
44	0.26	dolor
36	0.21	soy
34	0.20	noche
34	0.20	ojos
34	0.20	triste
33	0.19	sos
30	0.17	viejo
29	0.17	día
29	0.17	siempre
29	0.17	sólo
29	0.17	vez
27	0.16	donde
27	0.16	pena
27	0.16	querer
27	0.16	tango
26	0.15	nunca
25	0.15	flor
25	0.15	llorar
23	0.13	barrio
23	0.13	bien
23	0.13	has
23	0.13	ilusión
23	0.13	mismo
23	0.13	todos
23	0.13	ver
22	0.13	entre
22	0.13	mundo
22	0.13	sol
22	0.13	vivir
21	0.12	dios
21	0.12	luz
21	0.12	nadie
20	0.12	cariño
20	0.12	ella
20	0.12	otro
20	0.12	tengo
19	0.11	aires
19	0.11	años
19	0.11	buenos
19	0.11	esperanza
19	0.11	ser
19	0.11	vieja
18	0.10	ayer

18	0.10	destino
18	0.10	fe
18	0.10	voy
17	0.10	canción
17	0.10	canto
17	0.10	han
17	0.10	hasta
17	0.10	mal
17	0.10	mientras
17	0.10	mujer
17	0.10	puede
17	0.10	sueño
16	0.09	era
16	0.09	lado
16	0.09	pasado
16	0.09	pasión
16	0.09	voz
15	0.09	adiós
15	0.09	dos
15	0.09	mejor
15	0.09	morir
15	0.09	olvido
15	0.09	puedo
15	0.09	recuerdo
15	0.09	sabe
15	0.09	van
15	0.09	ves
14	0.08	aquel
14	0.08	bajo
14	0.08	cielo
14	0.08	dónde
14	0.08	estás
14	0.08	mía
14	0.08	noches
14	0.08	quién
14	0.08	rencor
14	0.08	risa
14	0.08	suerte
14	0.08	tiempo
14	0.08	vas
14	0.08	volver
13	0.08	bandoneón
13	0.08	boca
13	0.08	cantar
13	0.08	entonces
13	0.08	hombre
13	0.08	igual
13	0.08	otros

Examining the data obtained from this decade, an increase in the vocabulary associated

with the sentimental and nostalgic themes previously explored can be appreciated. Furthermore, there is a substantial rise in the use of poetically charged language as evidenced by the high frequency of such terms as:

noche, (dia), flor, sol, luz, cielo → night, (day), flower, sun, light, sky/heaven

Correlating the analysis data with the source material, this change in vocabulary is perhaps at least partly indicative of an underlying element of sophistication in the lyrics. Namely, the increment in use of poetic devices such as figurative language and personification:

in *Adiós Argentina*

...
*para qué quiero una flor
que en manos de otro hombre
su perfume ya dejó?*

in *Almagro*

...
*ya se fue mi alegría
como un rayo de sol.*

in *Esclavo*

...
*y un sol brillante de amor temprano,
de cálidos rayos y besos de luz.*

Terms with romantic connotations related to specific features of the protagonists are also more abundant:

ojos, voz, risa, boca → eyes, voice, smile/laugh, mouth

as in *Niebla del Riachuelo*

...
*nunca más volvió,
nunca más la vi,
nunca más su voz nombró mi nombre junto a mí...*

in *A Quién le Puede Importar?*

...
*en otras bocas me aturdiré
aunque sus ojos y su risa
me persigan*

which is consistent with the expected continuation of amorous themes presented earlier.

However, another development is worthy of notice. While the theme of abandonment introduced in the late 1910s and established as a major component in the lyrics of the 1920's is still relevant in this decade, it could be said to take on a less individual perspective and generally lean towards a more universal and existential point of view.

Frequently used terms in connection to this change in theme include:
nunca, años, ayer, era, pasado, adiós, morir, olvido, recuerdo, tiempo, volver →
never, years, yesterday, was, past, farewell, to die, to forget/obscurity/oblivion, to remember/memory, time, (to) return

Considering for example *Remembranza*:

...
*Muerta la luz de mi esperanza
soy como un náufrago en el mar,
sé que me pierdo en lontananza
mas no me puedo resignar.*

...
*¡Qué triste es recordar
después de tanto amar!*

where the focus of the narrative is on expressing and symbolizing the emotions felt by the protagonist, rather than elaborating on the circumstances leading to these.

Or *Madreselva*:

...
*así aprendí
que hay que fingir
para vivir
decentemente;
que amor y fe
mentiras son
y del dolor
se ríe la gente.*

... which combines its romantic themes with some elements of social criticism; such as the deceptive nature of people, the inevitability of conformity and the validity of the constructs of love and faith.

The rise in prominence of the words *dios, cielo, fe, (todo el) mundo* → *God, heaven, faith, (everybody) / world*, is directly connected to the surge in lyrics that center on social critique and/or deal with existential matters. While this is certainly not the first treatment of these topics in the realm of tango-- going back at least as far as the ca. 1906 milonga/tango

Matufias o el Arte de Vivir-- the decade of the 1930s sees a significant rise in the amount songs dealing with such issues.

In *Al Mundo le Falta un Tornillo*

...
Todo el mundo está en la estufa,
triste, amargao y sin garufa

...
In *Cambalache*

...
*Que el mundo fue y será una porquería, ya lo sé
en el quinientos seis, y en el dos mil también*

in *Tormenta*

...
*¿lo que aprendí de tu mano
no sirve para vivir?
yo siento que mi fe se tambalea,
que la gente mala, vive
¡dios! mejor que yo...*

in *Cuesta Abajo*

*si arrastré por este mundo
la vergüenza de haber sido
y el dolor de ya no ser.*

The personification of locations such as streets, neighborhoods and cities is solidified as a central theme as is evidenced by the high frequency of occurrence of such terms as *barrio*, *arrabal* and *Buenos Aires*. This anthropomorphization transcends the role of the settings from merely stages in which events can occur to actual active participants; they become protagonists in the narrative and are often treated as confidants and beloved characters of the narrator. Some examples of this can be found in *Anclao en París*:

*Tirao por la vida de errante bohemio
estoy, Buenos Aires, anclao en París.*

...
lejano Buenos Aires ¡qué lindo que has de estar!

...
*¡Cómo habrá cambiado tu calle Corrientes!
¡Suipacha, Esmeralda, tu mismo arrabal!*

In *Mi Buenos Aires Querido*

*Mi Buenos Aires querido
cuando yo te vuelva a ver,
no habrás más pena ni olvido.*

...
in *Corrientes y Esmeralda*

*Esquina porteña, este milonguero
te ofrece su afecto más hondo y cordial.*

...
in *Noches de Buenos Aires*

*noches de Buenos Aires,
en mi canción
pone tu embrujo luminoso
el sello ardiente de la emoción.*

The element of self-reference encountered in the previous decade is more prominent than ever before. Often connected to the high number of mentions of the term *tango*, it is evident of the high volume of lyrics which allude to the idea or image of tango as a very present and solid entity relevant to the universe they create. It could be argued that it is in fact this element of self-reference that allows the lyrics to establish a certain mythology from which the genre can assert its own relevance.

Several examples of this can be found in *Corrientes y Esmeralda*, including:

...
*En tu esquina un día, Milonguita, aquella
papirousa criolla que Linnig mentó,*

...
*Te glosa en poemas Carlos de la Púa
y el pobre Contursi fue tu amigo fiel...*

...
*te prometo el verso más rante y canero
para hacer el tango que te haga inmortal.*

Some more general examples of self-reference can also be observed in *Milonga Sentimental*:

*Milonga pa' recordarte,
milonga sentimental.*

...
or in *La Canción de Buenos Aires*

...
*en las notas de un tango dulzón
que lloraba el bandoneón.*

1940-1950

Frequency	%	Word
-----------	---	------

Frequency	%	Word
122	0.69	yo
119	0.67	amor
102	0.57	sin
90	0.51	ya
82	0.46	corazón
80	0.45	vida
69	0.39	mis
68	0.38	hoy
63	0.35	noche
58	0.33	voz
57	0.32	dolor
57	0.32	tus
53	0.30	fue
48	0.27	tango
47	0.26	nunca
44	0.25	siempre
42	0.24	ojos
40	0.23	ayer
40	0.23	soy
40	0.23	vez
37	0.21	todo
36	0.20	sus
33	0.19	bandoneón
33	0.19	está
32	0.18	estoy
30	0.17	alma
30	0.17	canción
30	0.17	cielo
30	0.17	llorar
30	0.17	tanto
29	0.16	entre
29	0.16	pena
28	0.16	flor
28	0.16	querer
27	0.15	adiós
27	0.15	has
27	0.15	recuerdo
27	0.15	tí
27	0.15	triste
26	0.15	ella

26	0.15	pasado
26	0.15	quiero
25	0.14	nada
25	0.14	sólo
24	0.14	día
24	0.14	luna
23	0.13	igual
23	0.13	sol
23	0.13	sueños
22	0.12	cosas
22	0.12	después
22	0.12	donde
22	0.12	han
22	0.12	mía
22	0.12	sobre
22	0.12	sol
21	0.12	aquel
21	0.12	arrabal
21	0.12	barrio
21	0.12	dónde
21	0.12	era
21	0.12	noches
21	0.12	ser
21	0.12	sueño
21	0.12	tengo
20	0.11	luz
20	0.11	vos
19	0.11	hace
19	0.11	hasta
19	0.11	olvido
19	0.11	ver
19	0.11	vi
19	0.11	viejo
18	0.10	aquí
18	0.10	dos
18	0.10	percal
18	0.10	sombra
18	0.10	tal
17	0.10	camino
17	0.10	casa
17	0.10	ilusión
17	0.10	maría
17	0.10	pobre
17	0.10	soledad
16	0.09	emoción
16	0.09	esquina
16	0.09	gris
16	0.09	llanto
16	0.09	manos
16	0.09	negra
16	0.09	sombras

16	0.09	vivir
15	0.08	lejos
15	0.08	mañana
15	0.08	nombre
15	0.08	perdido
15	0.08	quién
14	0.08	años
14	0.08	ausencia
14	0.08	bien
14	0.08	esperanza
14	0.08	están
14	0.08	estás
14	0.08	junto
14	0.08	lado
14	0.08	mismo
14	0.08	morir
14	0.08	recuerdos
14	0.08	saber
14	0.08	siento
14	0.08	tarde
14	0.08	tiempo
14	0.08	ven
14	0.08	volver
14	0.08	voy
13	0.07	cada
13	0.07	calles
13	0.07	esa
13	0.07	final
13	0.07	hecho
13	0.07	horas
13	0.07	labios
13	0.07	llegar
13	0.07	madre
13	0.07	mal
13	0.07	nuestro
13	0.07	penas

The 1940s follow through on several of the themes established in the previous decades in both a consistent and distilled manner.

Mentions of the words *amor*, *corazón*, *mis*, *tus*, *ella* → *love*, *heart*, *my*, *your*, *you*, *she/her* are higher than ever before. Terms with similar connotations such as *alma*, *querer*, *tí*, *vos* → *soul*, *to love/want*, *you*, *you* are also mentioned very frequently, attesting to the continuous preponderance of lyrics of a sentimental nature.

Moreover, the increment in usage of poetically charged language observable in the previous decade is even more pronounced. The imagery encountered earlier is further expanded with the addition of such terms as *luna*, *sombra*, *gris*, *negra*, *labios* → *moon*, *shadow/shade*, *gray*,

black, lips.

In *Tal Vez Será su Voz*:

...
*Y eran también sus labios al sol de la mañana
una triste flor de carmín.*

...

In *Malva*:

*Nunca fue feliz, jamás le habló de amor
su pobre vida gris sin luz ni flor.*

In *Cafetin*:

...
*bajo el gris
de la luna madura
se pierde la oscura
figura de un barco.*

...

In *Por las Calles de la Vida*:

...
*ella está en mis tristes días...
ella está en las negras noches de mi drama...
y ella está en mi vida oscura*

...

Terms associated with emotions are very frequently employed, with sorrow and solitude being the two main themes, as evidenced by the high occurrence of the words *dolor, llorar, pena, querer, triste, quiero, soledad, emoción, llanto, vivir, perdido, ausencia, esperanza, siento, mal* → to cry,

By relating the data with some examples from the selected material, such as *En Esta Tarde Gris*:

...
¡Qué ganas de llorar en esta tarde gris!

...

*ven
—triste me decías—,
que en esta soledad
no puede más el alma mía...*

...

in *Ninguna*

...
*en un álbum azul están los versos
que tu ausencia cubrió de soledad.
es la triste ceniza del recuerdo
nada más que ceniza, nada más...*

or in *Cristal*

...
*tengo el corazón hecho pedazos,
rota mi emoción en este día...
noches y más noches sin descanso
y esta desazón del alma mía...*

it is evident that the evolution in tone and theme observed earlier—one towards a more universal and abstract protagonist-- is still ongoing. The subject matter of the narrative could in general be said to prioritize the elaboration on the perspective and condition of the narrator, rather than being story-based. Adding to this, the philosophical and existential elements in the lyrics are still prevalent and expanding; whereby the personal entity of the protagonist or narrator tends to assume a more selfless role.

Such as in *Naranjo en Flor*

...
*Primero hay que saber sufrir,
después amar, después partir
y al fin andar sin pensamiento*

...
or in *Uno*

...
*Pero un frío cruel
que es peor que el odio
-punto muerto de las almas-
tumba horrenda de mi amor,
¡maldijo para siempre y me robó...
toda ilusión!*

This decade experiences a culminating rise in the use of terms related to locations, and the personification of the surroundings becomes solidified as a central theme in the lyrics.

Frequent mentions of the words *arrabal, barrio, aquí, camino, casa, esquina, lejos, calles* → *marginal neighborhood, neighborhood, here, way/path/road, house/home, corner/junction, far, streets* are indicative of the high volume of works wherein locations play a key part in the narrative, such as in *Tres Esquinas*:

...

*yo soy del barrio de tres esquinas,
viejo baluarte de un arrabal*

...
*soy de ese barrio de humilde rango,
yo soy el tango sentimental.*

*soy de ese barrio que toma mate
bajo la sombra que da el parral.*

...
*vieja barriada que fue estandarte
de mis arrojos de juventud...*
*yo soy del barrio que vive aparte
en este siglo de neo-lux.*

Interesting to note in this particular example is the throwback to the narrative style of early tangos--heavily employing the first-person *yo soy/soy yo* (*I am the...*) template. However, in contrast with the egocentric narrative of early lyrics, it could be argued that the protagonist here is actually the neighborhood itself (“*yo soy el barrio que vive aparte*”). Other numerous examples of the surroundings taking on character roles can be found, such as in *Tinta Roja*:

...
*tu emoción
de ladrillo feliz
sobre mi callejón
con un borrón
pintó la esquina*

...
*¿dónde estará mi arrabal?
¿quién se robó mi niñez?
¿en qué rincón, luna mía,
volcás como entonces
tu clara alegría?*

Or in *Caserón de Tejas*

...
*¡Barrio de Belgrano!
¡caserón de tejas!
¿dónde está el aljibe,
dónde están tus patios,
dónde están tus rejas?*

The anthropomorphization of the city and its suburbs is most frequently connected with their change or disappearance, which could be interpreted as an extension on the overarching theme of abandonment in the vast majority of lyrics. Perhaps most famously of all, the ambiguity between the roles of protagonist, antagonist and the surroundings is a major component in the narrative of *Sur*:

...
*Ya nunca alumbraré con las estrellas
nuestra marcha sin querellas
por las noches de Pompeya...*

*Las calles y las lunas suburbanas,
y mi amor y tu ventana
todo ha muerto, ya lo sé...*

...
*Nostalgias de las cosas que han pasado,
arena que la vida se llevó
pesadumbre de barrios que han cambiado
y amargura del sueño que murió.*

Terms related to the past and the present, memories and age are very frequently used:

hoy, fue, nunca, ayer, recuerdo/s, pasado, día, después, era, viejo, mañana, años, final →
today, was, never, yesterday, remember/memory, past, day, after/afterwards/later/next, was,
tomorrow, years, end/last

further attesting to the importance of the overarching theme of change and the passage of time.

Mentions of the word *tango* are very frequent, due to the large volume of songs with self-referential elements; either to themselves, to other songs or tango as a whole.

For example, in *Tal Vez Será su Voz*

...
*las sombras se arrinconan
evocando a Griseta, a Malena, a María Ester.*

... references are made to protagonists of other (famous) songs. Similar references are also encountered in for example *Así se Baila el Tango*, *Che Bandoneón*, and the lesser-known *Celedonio*, homage to prolific poet and lyricist Celedonio Flores.

In *Yo Soy el Tango*, the history and state of tango itself is treated; comparing its origins in the lower-class outskirts of the city to its rise in popularity in higher class circles, and musing on its demise.

...
*soy
el tango milongón
nacido en los suburbios
malevos y turbios.
hoy,
que estoy en el salón,*

*me saben amansado,
dulzón y cansado.
pa' qué creer,
pa' qué mentir
que estoy cambiado,
si soy el mismo de ayer.*

...
*yo soy el viejo tango
que nació en el arrabal.
hoy,
que tengo que callar,
que sufro el desengaño,
la moda y los años.
voy,
costumbre de gotán,
mordiendo en mis adentros
la rabia que siento.
pa' qué creer,
pa' qué mentir
que estoy muriendo,
si yo jamás moriré.*

...
Perhaps the most decisive self-referential element indicative of the overarching motif of recursivity can be found in *Yuyo Verde*:

*un farol... un portón...
-igual que en un tango-
y este llanto mío entre mis manos
y ese cielo de verano
que partió...*

...
where the simile “like in a tango” is used to describe the imagery. It is indicative of the solidification of certain imagery and symbolism as virtually belonging to tango at this point in time; so much so that it is called upon to reinforce itself in an endless loop.

All-time (1880-1950, see appendix)

Conclusion

Did the use of language change over time, and if so, in what ways could these changes be attributed to the evolution of the themes and protagonists within the lyrics of tango throughout time?

To provide an in-depth analysis of all the themes and all the qualities of the protagonists in seven decades worth of lyrics is a daunting task. It was never the objective of this research. The goal was to provide an insight into the linguistic content of the lyrics, and its development over time, paying particular attention to its connection to the evolution of the protagonists and their motivations.

Given the data gathered and its analysis, can the question be answered?

As evidenced by the data obtained by quantitative analysis, it is evident that the answer to the first part of question is yes, the use of language did experience consistent changes over time. Considering the findings, several developments can be observed that show a marked change in the use of language. To name but a few chronologically: the decrease in use of the first person '*yo soy*' template; the increase in frequency of romantic terms such as *amor*, *corazón*, *vida*; the increase in frequency of nostalgic, sorrowful terms and those related to time and its passage; the rise in usage of locations and geographic markers; the shift towards more poetically charged vocabulary; the adoption of a more universal narrative perspective.

In what ways can these changes be attributed to the evolution of themes and protagonists?

These linguistic changes are directly linked to the introduction and development of several themes, many of which explored previously, which became central ideas and topics in the lyrics of tango. Considering the analysis of the individual decades and comparing it to the all-time quantitative analysis, it is clear that the most prevalent of these themes include those associated with such terms as *amor*, *corazón*, *sin*, *ya*, *tango*, *dolor*, *alma*, *siempre*, *nunca*, *triste*, etc (→ *love*, *heart*, *without*, *already/now*, *tango*, *pain*, *soul*, *always*, *never*, *sad*, etc). To put it in perspective in a somewhat lenient chronological order, the data namely suggests these themes to develop as follows:

- The treatment of the peculiarities of one-dimensional protagonists, most notably that of the figure of the *taita*. Also characterized by an abundant use of humor and references to social gatherings and dancing.
- The rise of romantic and nostalgic topics, including the transformation of the roles of both man and woman into fully formed characters.
- The solidification of time, abandonment and nostalgia as central themes.

- The role of locations as stages for events and eventually as protagonists themselves.
- The movement of the narrative from an individual- centered perspective to a more universal and existential approach.
- The use of self-reference to establish and reinforce a universe that in many ways is created by the very act of referencing itself.

The use of language changes, and it does so greatly, due to the strength and overarching presence of several themes that over time developed to become unequivocally major components of the essence of the genre.

In a very broad sense, the results could indicate that the content of the lyrics of tango changes over time except for one continuity; the dwelling on the past. The lyrics could in general be said to speak about something that has already passed on. Beginning with the *milongas* and the *taita*. Then the woman, affection, aspirations and desire. Then the neighborhood, embodiment of youth. Then oneself.

...punto muerto de las almas, tumba horrenda de mi amor, maldijo para siempre y me robó toda ilusión...

And ending eventually with the very tango itself.

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Appendix

List of words omitted in the quantitative analysis:

que, de, y, la, el, en, a, un, mi, me, no, te, con, se, por, al, tu, del, una, los, las, su, es, son, si, lo, se, para, pa, pero, pues, e, mas, o, les, nos, si, sí, este, esta, porque, ni, ha, va, hay, como, cómo, aunque, muy, tan, eso, he, da, ha, hasta, le, no, ese, esa, esos , esas, qué, también, cuando, más, desde, así, así

All-time analysis (1880-1950)

Frequency	%	Word

499	0.75	yo
382	0.57	amor
297	0.45	sin
296	0.44	ya
273	0.41	vida
266	0.40	corazón
210	0.32	soy
190	0.29	tus
189	0.28	mis
175	0.26	fue
175	0.26	hoy
165	0.25	tango
162	0.24	todo
153	0.23	dolor
153	0.23	noche
151	0.23	alma
142	0.21	siempre
138	0.21	vos
134	0.20	sus
124	0.19	quiero
114	0.17	nunca
111	0.17	tengo
108	0.16	ojos
107	0.16	triste

105	0.16	pobre
99	0.15	donde
98	0.15	has
96	0.14	día
95	0.14	vez
95	0.14	viejo
90	0.14	entre
89	0.13	mujer
89	0.13	pena
89	0.13	sos
87	0.13	era
87	0.13	llorar
86	0.13	ayer
86	0.13	bien
85	0.13	voz
84	0.13	flor
84	0.13	querer
83	0.12	ella
82	0.12	aquel
79	0.12	ilusión
79	0.12	ser
79	0.12	ver
78	0.12	estoy
76	0.11	hasta
75	0.11	barrio
75	0.11	sólo
75	0.11	tanto
73	0.11	está
73	0.11	sol
70	0.11	luz
70	0.11	recuerdo
67	0.10	cariño
65	0.10	canción
64	0.10	todos
63	0.09	voy
61	0.09	dos
61	0.09	mal
61	0.09	sol
60	0.09	han
60	0.09	vivir
59	0.09	cielo
58	0.09	hace
57	0.09	arrabal
57	0.09	mismo
56	0.08	hombre
55	0.08	nada
55	0.08	otro
54	0.08	mundo
54	0.08	noches
53	0.08	mejor
53	0.08	milonga

53	0.08	tiempo
52	0.08	aunque
52	0.08	pasado
52	0.08	sueño
51	0.08	después
50	0.08	mía
49	0.07	años
49	0.07	bandoneón
49	0.07	entonces
49	0.07	tí
47	0.07	dios
47	0.07	dulce
47	0.07	madre
47	0.07	otra
46	0.07	mientras
46	0.07	quien
46	0.07	sobre
46	0.07	toda
45	0.07	bajo
45	0.07	fe
45	0.07	nadie
45	0.07	puedo
45	0.07	vi
44	0.07	emoción
44	0.07	esperanza
44	0.07	lado
43	0.06	igual
43	0.06	tarde
43	0.06	vas
42	0.06	aquí
42	0.06	fuiste
42	0.06	gran
42	0.06	mañana
41	0.06	adiós
41	0.06	fui
41	0.06	pecho
41	0.06	vieja
40	0.06	canto
39	0.06	amigos
39	0.06	cruel
39	0.06	destino
39	0.06	hecho
39	0.06	lejos
39	0.06	olvido
39	0.06	puede
39	0.06	tiene
39	0.06	van
38	0.06	camino
38	0.06	dónde
38	0.06	morir
38	0.06	querido

38	0.06	veces
38	0.06	volver
37	0.06	dicen
37	0.06	fin
37	0.06	pasión
37	0.06	quién
37	0.06	sabe
36	0.05	aquella
36	0.05	calle
35	0.05	aires
35	0.05	horas
35	0.05	labios
35	0.05	siento
35	0.05	traición
35	0.05	ves
34	0.05	amores
34	0.05	boca
34	0.05	buenos
34	0.05	hacer
34	0.05	luna
34	0.05	miedo
34	0.05	mucho
34	0.05	sombra
33	0.05	casa
33	0.05	estás
33	0.05	feliz
33	0.05	mano
33	0.05	pasar
33	0.05	sufrir
33	0.05	tal
33	0.05	todas
32	0.05	besos
32	0.05	jamás
32	0.05	manos
31	0.05	amigo
31	0.05	cantar
31	0.05	che
31	0.05	cosas
31	0.05	junto
31	0.05	llanto
31	0.05	olvidar
31	0.05	paso
31	0.05	penas
30	0.05	algún
30	0.05	bulin
30	0.05	loco
30	0.05	poco
30	0.05	risa
30	0.05	señor
30	0.05	suerte
29	0.04	alegría

29	0.04	buenas
29	0.04	otros
29	0.04	sueños
28	0.04	ahora
28	0.04	bailar
28	0.04	beso
28	0.04	bueno
28	0.04	cada
28	0.04	llevo
28	0.04	mil
28	0.04	nombre
28	0.04	pebeta
28	0.04	recuerdos
28	0.04	rencor
28	0.04	soledad
28	0.04	vivo
27	0.04	ausencia
27	0.04	esquina
27	0.04	están
27	0.04	perdido
26	0.04	allá
26	0.04	dio
26	0.04	final
26	0.04	flores
26	0.04	mirar
26	0.04	nuestro
26	0.04	pensar
26	0.04	quedan
26	0.04	será
26	0.04	sombras
26	0.04	tristeza
26	0.04	ven
25	0.04	aquellos
25	0.04	brazos
25	0.04	china
25	0.04	consuelo
25	0.04	estaba
25	0.04	gris
25	0.04	importa
25	0.04	juventud
25	0.04	muchachos
25	0.04	pronto
25	0.04	puerta
25	0.04	verte
24	0.04	color
24	0.04	cruz
24	0.04	días
24	0.04	dice
24	0.04	él
24	0.04	falta
24	0.04	farol

24	0.04	frente
24	0.04	muerto
24	0.04	saber
24	0.04	sido
24	0.04	uno
23	0.03	alegre
23	0.03	esas
23	0.03	herida
23	0.03	mina
23	0.03	percal
23	0.03	perdón
23	0.03	razón
23	0.03	tenés
23	0.03	vuelvo
22	0.03	buscando
22	0.03	corte
22	0.03	dan
22	0.03	dar
22	0.03	llora
22	0.03	nuevo
22	0.03	parece
22	0.03	quiera
22	0.03	silencio
22	0.03	tener
21	0.03	bacán
21	0.03	cabaret
21	0.03	cara
21	0.03	dentro
21	0.03	frio
21	0.03	loca
21	0.03	mozo
21	0.03	muerte
21	0.03	plata
21	0.03	querida
21	0.03	quisiera
21	0.03	sola
21	0.03	tienen
21	0.03	tuve
21	0.03	vino
20	0.03	amar
20	0.03	anoche
20	0.03	antes
20	0.03	aún
20	0.03	canta
20	0.03	gente
20	0.03	hacen
20	0.03	mío
20	0.03	negra
20	0.03	noble
20	0.03	quise
20	0.03	saben

20	0.03	taita
20	0.03	tiempos
20	0.03	tierra
20	0.03	vento
20	0.03	viejos
20	0.03	vuelve

1880-1889

A word cloud composed of Spanish words from the 1880s. The words are arranged around the center of the page, with some words in large bold letters and others in smaller gray text. The words include:

- que, chino, café, gaudencio, seño, toméndovoy, gustan, sé, vine, aprende, comisario, hombre, sí, barrio, año, dejáme, brujulear, real, cochero, tan, victoria, vasos, casera, amá, cante, hoy, sesenta, morir, aprendí, daban, saben, satén, cola, casa, tres, final pa' europa, menos, pelo, fué, hospital, ti, vuela, vuela, falta, viva, tí, decía, saldría, retiro, conciencia, sí, sirvo, paro, tropa, va...liera, paradero, espinazo, escalera, balvanera, figurao, tenia, seda, sola, dieron, boticario, gloria, consulté, discurran, dieron, cabos, muestran, recoleta, servir, dos, salí, quién, pa' no, calle, mañana, creen.

1890-1899

mata suime usted
haciendo
cañón Paíermo paradas morir
rajar largo ilustración
prudente domingo estrillo
repente anoché
espor lamenté
primerá primera alarma
hablé valor
dijo **diceñ** Preparamos
valór dispuestos
mismo vigilante
trampazo multa
grito aquí
estalla quedan
abollo pronto
bailar formó fusiles
mismo quién
tranquilas Señor rubia
pum prima quehaceres
pum vieja prima
pum buenos Juanana decir
pum dulzura tropa
pum conquisté divertidas
mil talleres
hombro raja tierno
tango mil alegre calle
nariz abolla guitarra
comisario mina
hombre galanes
rumor quiera
decidí duermen
daban pos
farra calmar casio
calmar nocte
calmar vendrán
baile promesas
cintura tinaja
insolente eterno
encontrarse tres
pele prodigios
mujer amores
salvese valientes
reunión orompo
enfrente dije
ollá bordona
curioso
revolución revo
atras canto
olla iba
da adios
curioso
lamar
alem
rajo
iba
luego
lamar
da adios

1900-1909

Dasura flor pa'un
ser solo vea
dos orgullo
buen ojos
porteño
barregga
aceite
negras
sé
lindo
plateada
dios
yagüeli
siente
de soy
carmen
llama
mas
policial
taquero
rañcho
siente
compadrito
pampero
compadrito
pampero
conservar
algún
bravo
fama
bailando
valiente
cantares
familia
cuenta
cuenta
digo
canta
amor
vea
cualquier
canto
calle
gran
llama
mas
cariño
che
policial
negras
lindo
plateada
dios
yagüeli
siente
de soy
carmen
llama
mas
policial
taquero
rañcho
siente
compadrito
pampero
conservar
algún
bravo
fama
bailando
valiente
cantares
familia
cuenta
cuenta
digo
canta
aunque
ver
cpa
dar
llama
mas
cariño
che
policial
negras
lindo
plateada
dios
yagüeli
siente
de soy
carmen
llama
mas
policial
taquero
rañcho
siente
compadrito
pampero
conservar
algún
bravo
fama
bailando
valiente
cantares
familia
cuenta
cuenta
digo
canta
Sos
ver
gag
moral
llama
mas
cariño
che
policial
negras
lindo
plateada
dios
yagüeli
siente
de soy
carmen
llama
mas
policial
taquero
rañcho
siente
compadrito
pampero
conservar
algún
bravo
fama
bailando
valiente
cantares
familia
cuenta
cuenta
digo
canta
Pasa
diga
O
aires
hoy
mujer
ja
norte
pampero
noble
compadrito
conservar
algún
bravo
fama
bailando
valiente
cantares
familia
cuenta
cuenta
digo
canta
Si
dijo
taita
hoy
ja
norte
pampero
noble
compadrito
conservar
algún
bravo
fama
bailando
valiente
cantares
familia
cuenta
cuenta
digo
canta
Ipues
cantar
partes
llaman
partes
argentina
cantor
fama
partes
bailando
valiente
cantares
familia
cuenta
cuenta
digo
canta
Corte
dejo
polvo
llaman
partes
argentina
cantor
fama
partes
bailando
valiente
cantares
familia
cuenta
cuenta
digo
canta
Morocha
dueño
paisano
vivo
cuerpo
tiempos
pierna
vez
dan
Siempre
afilo
entreriano
cuenta
cuenta
digo
canta
Vida
vano
pobre
flores
Tan alma
piropo
van

1910-1919

dan dan
 llevo llevo
 compas compas
 mejor mejor
 tiempo tiempo
 quiera quiera
 vengan vengan
 flor flor
 bien bien
 aunque aunque
 dejaste dejaste
 solo solo
 madre madre
 hacer hacer
 farra farra
 recuerdo recuerdo
 cancha cancha
 champán champán
 querer querer
 cuantas cuantas
 pena pena
 vestidos vestidos
 pasear pasear
 ser ser
 hecho hecho
 cotorro cotorro
 lugollena lugollena
 bacan bacan
 campo campo
 dolor dolor
 tener tener
 che che
 va va
 mujer mujer
 vivo vivo
 corte corte
 voy voy
 da da
 noche noche
 cha cha
 payanca payanca
 atún atún
 casa casa
 nadie nadie
 vento vento
 corrida corrida
 champan champan
 conventillo conventillo
 pues pues
 paz paz
 quieren quieren
 nunca nunca
 morfar morfar
 ay ay
 milonga milonga
 placer placer
 aquella aquella
 consuelo consuelo
 vez vez
 alhajas alhajas
 aquellos aquellos
 pasión pasión
 acabaron acabaron
 sé sé
 alma alma
 mañana mañana
 hizo hizo
 fuerza fuerza
 maldito maldito
 calor calor
 veces veces
 dios dios
 minas minas
 pa'l pa'l
 juro juro
 aquel aquel
 pecho pecho
 amigos amigos
 gloria gloria
 querido querido
 paso paso
 cabaret cabaret
 vivir vivir
 china china
 pa pa
 si si
 amor amor
 siempre siempre
 tango tango
 vida vida
 corazón corazón
 cuerpos cuerpos
 hago hago
 mas mas
 tan tan
 verte verte
 hoy hoy
 bulin bulin
 feliz feliz
 catrera catrera
 marca marca
 amarillo amarillo
 ilusion ilusion
 pobre pobre
 pa pa
 toda toda
 asi asi
 flores flores

1920-1929

porotita da
dices vez
aunque años ay
cántar linda
emoción
amor ser vieja fin flor voy talán
cantar linda
emoción
vilga hoy hombre miedo dios senda
percanta traición pensar mañana fiel
bueno
sólo dolor ayer triste mal caricias comigo jamás amigo van
lejos amigos
tan dolor ayer triste mal caricias comigo jamás amigo van
dentro señor mozo
SI dulce mozo beso boca
nunca cotorro veces querer calor
llorar bajo lado cielo
después cruel pecho pasar canción
calle recuerdo mundo mismo
tiempo mas tenés bacán besos
mientras arrabal sufrir felíz
hecho ojos loca
arrabal sufrir felíz
corazón tango
pues cotorro veces querer calor
nunca cotorro veces querer calor
llorar bajo lado cielo
después cruel pecho pasar canción
calle recuerdo mundo mismo
tiempo mas tenés bacán besos
mientras arrabal sufrir felíz
noche milonga así hogar
cabaret madre pronto querida
tarde mina sueño vivir
luz rey gran plata
carino solo verte
barrio gran sé
siempre pa calor
hace nadie sos
vos alma como
pebeta fe quise amores
sol nido ves
entonces va
mano vas
dos patria ver
buena malevo mejor
puerta
bien pena
alegre
puerta

1930-1939

vida van
olvido milagro quién
así sueño vamos arrabal
viejo ilusión sola cantar
llorar nunca buenos
cómo pobre canción esperanza
voz vez mejor pasado barrio dos
toda años canto hombre
hace aquellos adiós pecho
parís risa besos después pasar lado
llevo cruel todas madre
sicorazón ves
bajo mal entonces ayer
fuerza
vos estrella consuelo
volver
arrabal
arrabal
tan querido tal dónde
dolor dan penas
amor dan pena alma
sé flor tango mismo
siempre dar penas
soshoy quisiera querer sólo
luz mientras mañana
boca mentira mirar aunque
triste pa suerte
noche vivir
vivir
alma morir nadie
amor mala
querer aquí dio
sólo veces
quiero mundo
día mañana
ojos juntos noches
bien loco
sabe
cruz
herida
estrellas
fe aquella color tiempo
sol cariño pasión
dios bandoneón
aires hacer
emoción
voyn importa
rencor igual
camino traición
cielo

1940-1950

vi
mejor
olvidar
destino
bajo horas
volver
luna
noches
bien
ver
canción
vos
luz
fin
hoy
adiós
siento
angustia
quién
sufrir
mano
pa
ahora
años
lejano
esperanza
nació
vivir
puedo
mundo
farol
compás
señor
querido
mujer
negra
pobre
igual
flor
morir
recuerdo
pena
feliz
aquel
nunca
bandoneón
perdi
calle
viento
tiempo
alma
ilusión
fe
triste
esquina
beso
sueño
nombre
esperanza
pa
ahora
años
lejano
cosas
balcón
toda
calles
mismo
ausencia
hecho
sol
dios
solo
amiga
quisiera
labios
cruel
jamás
madre
lado
tarde
final
barro
recuerdos
arrabal
mal
frío
llanto
sé
tan
vez
voy
dos
sol
día
rincón
amarga
viejo
tal
lejos
canto
allí
va
malvón
aquí
ven
junto
gris
manos
cómo
casa
olvido
soledad
cielo
sueños
mañana
camino
sombra
dónde

corazón
amor
vida
siempre
ojos
pasado
quiero
querer
Ilorar
cielo
sueños
mañana
camino
sombra
dónde

Si
noche
ayer
tango

dos
vez entonces
soledad calle sé sueño
después amigos
fuerza estrella perdido
corte mundo tarde
día canción bien ayer luz
va dolor mujer solo
siempre alma recuerdo pena
así fe ver cariño
puedo dulce tan ilusión
hoy quiero pa tango
amor ser
miedo SOS