

DIALECTS AND BORDERS: FACE-TO-FACE AND BACK-TO-BACK IN LATIN AMERICAN SPANISH*

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ABSTRACT. This essay explores a relatively underrepresented facet of Latin American Spanish, namely dialect contact along national borders. It is well known that Spanish American dialect zones rarely coincide with national boundaries, but also that prevailing dialectal traits often evoke nationalistic sentiments. The extent to which these tendencies interact is explored through a series of vignettes involving speech communities along the borders between nations whose principal (e.g. capital city) dialect traits differ substantially. Among the proposed factors that influence linguistic behavior in border communities are physical and political ease of border crossing, inter-nation economic imbalances, proximity of major urban areas, trans-border indigenous communities, relative proportion of locally-born residents, and historical rivalries and conflicts. In each of the scenarios, variations in the relative importance of these factors yields a different sociolinguistic configuration.

INTRODUCTION. Latin American Spanish can be broadly divided into partially overlapping but geographically defined dialect zones, based on combinations of phonetic/phonological, morphosyntactic, and lexical criteria. In the court of public opinion and in many monographic studies, Latin American Spanish dialects are defined by national boundaries, thus Mexican Spanish, Argentine Spanish, Peruvian Spanish, etc. Objectively, such a scheme cannot be seriously maintained; Latin American Spanish is roughly divided into geographical dialect zones based on patterns of settlement and colonial administration, contact with

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indigenous and immigrant languages, and relative proportions of rural and urban speech communities (Lipski 1994, 2002). The prevailing nation-centered approach to Spanish American dialectology is augmented by the focus on the speech of the nations' capital cities, which often exert a demographically disproportionate linguistic influence on the remainder of the country (Lipski 2002). As a result, the research bibliography on far-flung regional varieties is woefully incomplete, and given the fact that few capitals or major urban centers are situated along national borders, there is relatively little information on microdialectal variation in border regions. This contrasts sharply with studies focusing on border areas involving separate languages, for example Spanish-Portuguese along the border with Brazil or along the Spain-Portugal border,¹ Spanish-Kreyòl along the Dominican-Haitian border (Dfiaz 2002, Ortiz 2010), or Spanish-English near the United States-Mexican border (Hidalgo 1983, 1993, 1995, 2001).

For reasons of brevity, the following overview will focus on contact among Spanish dialects along international borders separating Spanish-speaking nations. This configuration has rarely been explored within the study of Spanish dialect variation, as opposed to the extensive bibliography on intra-national regional and social dialect variation. The latter differences are often quite striking, e.g. between coastal and Highland Colombia, northern, southern, and southeastern Mexico, Buenos Aires/Montevideo and far-flung provinces such as Misiones in Argentina and Rivera in northern Uruguay. These differences often stem from colonial settlement patterns, e.g. dates of founding, specific maritime trade routes and proximity to ports, and contact with indigenous populations and voluntary and involuntary immigrants. Vertical (social) dialect differentiation frequently results from internal migrations, as well as relative access to formal education and socioeconomic mobility. Border areas, on the other hand, rarely coincide entirely with linguistic isoglosses; some national borders have shifted as the result of colonial and post-colonial territorial disputes, others are still poorly delineated, and many reflect no natural geographical or ethnic boundary. At the same time border crossing points are frequently the scene of both legal and unauthorized migration from both sides of the border, are subject to the whims and political aspirations of national governments, and are often festooned with nationalistic symbols and displays of military presence. As a consequence, linguistic behavior along the borders between Spanish-speaking

¹For example Behares 2005; Carvalho 2003a, 2003b, 2004a, 2004b, 2006; Douglas 2004; Elizaincfn 1973, 1976, 1979, 1992; Elizaincfn and Behares 1981; Elizaincfn et al 1987; Hensey 1966, 1972, 1975, 1982a, 1982b; Lipski 2006, 2008b, 2009, 2010, 2011a, 2011b; Meirelles and Garrido 2007; Rona 1965; Waltermire 2006, 2008.

nations may depart from more usual dialect transitions, which despite metaphorical isogloss lines appearing on maps, can rarely be discretely delimited (Lipski 2008a).

A priori there are no clear predictors of the type of linguistic behavior that might be found along border regions of neighboring Spanish-speaking nations whose capital-centered dialectal parameters differ substantially. Given that modern political boundaries often correspond to divisions established in colonial times, when Spanish rule centralized contacts with Spain and discouraged contacts among individual colonies, remnants of these centripetal influences may still characterize border regions. On the other hand the normally unrestricted inter-territorial movement and the absence of impenetrable natural boundaries in many border regions might facilitate dialect mixing and the consequent smoothing over of nominally discrete dialect boundaries. In an effort to direct greater attention to Hispanic dialectology in border regions, the following sections will suggest some possible criteria, using vignettes that draw on the author's own field research as well as on other sources of documentation. Of necessity only a small subset of cross-border dialect contact zones is included, as any glance at a map of Latin American will confirm. The present essay is not a catalogue of all or even most cross-border dialect contacts, nor is it a detailed analysis of a specific contact zone. Rather, it is an illustration of the types of phenomena that can be observed, together with a call to arms for more border-specific research using all the resources of contemporary linguistic analysis.

2. LINGERING NATIONALISM BASED ON FORMER TERRITORIAL CONQUESTS: PERU-CHILE AND BOLIVIA-CHILE AT THE BORDER. One of the most significant shifts in the national borders of Spanish-speaking Latin American occurred as a result of the War of the Pacific (1879-1883), when Chile absorbed the Bolivian coastal corridor of Antofagasta, leaving Bolivia land-locked, as well as the Peruvian provinces of Arica and Iquique. Today Arica (Chile) and Tacna (southern Peru) are approximately 50 kilometers apart, linked by a major highway across the Atacama Desert; the border is roughly halfway between the two cities. There are no natural obstacles between the two countries, but border controls on the highway are prominent and project very different political images. Vehicles and passengers entering and leaving Peru need simply present the appropriate documents (national identity cards for Peruvians, Chileans, and Bolivians, and passports for citizens of other countries). To enter or leave Chile, however, requires a more lengthy process, involving long lines and luggage inspections. The asymmetry of border policies is not lost on Peruvians, who resent what they regard as a constant reminder of Chilean historical aggression. When Chile first definitively took over its northernmost city of Arica after a plebiscite in 1929 many Peruvians fled into

southern Peru, especially the then significant Afro-descendent population, some of which was forced into hiding or even massacred (Canto Larios 2003; Wormald Cruz 1968:76-79, 1970, 1972). During the ensuing CHILENIZACIÓN the local population was increasingly outnumbered by settlers from more central regions of Chile, but even today there are many family ties between Arica and Tacna. Despite the permeability of the border (police controls notwithstanding) and the fact that both Arica and Tacna belonged to Peru until less than a century ago, the speech patterns of the two communities differ sharply; Arica Spanish bears a noteworthy resemblance to the speech of Santiago, some 1650 kms. to the south, while Tacna Spanish echoes Lima, 1300 kilometers to the north. The local dialect of Arica shares all major Chilean features, together with some regional innovations.

(1) Syllable-final /s/ is strongly aspirated and word-final /s/ is weakly aspirated or elided; elision is particularly frequent in phrase-final contexts.

(2) The combination /tr/ is affricated, approaching [tʃ].

(3) Some instances of the trill /r/ are realized as a groove fricative [ʒ], although not to the extent found in highland Bolivia.

(4) The affricate /tʃ/ receives a prepalatal articulation that at times closely approaches the alveolar region [ts].

(5) The posterior fricative /x/ is strongly velar [x] except before front vowels, when a more palatal fricative [ç] is heard (*gente, general*).

(6) Word-final atonic vowels are devoiced and at times barely audible, as in *Chile*.

(7) The northern Chile dialect shares with the remainder of the country the frequent use of historical *voseo* verbal endings containing a diphthong in the first conjugation, but with the subject pronoun *tú*: *andai(s), tení(s), decí(s)*. The combination *tú soi(s)* is frequently heard. Imperative and subjunctive forms generally follow the *tuteo* pattern.

(8) The northern Chile lexicon does not depart substantially from the vocabulary found elsewhere in the country, example *pololo/polola* for 'boyfriend/girlfriend.' In colloquial speech *¿cuánto se llama?* is used instead of *¿cómo se llama?* as a pause-filler, although not when the literal meaning is 'what is it called, what is the name?' Spanish *pues* 'well' used to punctuate discourse is replaced by [puh] in Arica.

The dialect of Tacna, Peru shares none of the aforementioned features except for aspiration of final /s/. There is no use of *vos* or *voseo* verb forms, and residents of Tacna use *pe* rather than *puh* instead of *pues*. The posterior fricative /x/ in Tacna is

²Fieldwork in Arica, Chile and Tacna, Peru was conducted in 2006-2007. In Arica and Azapa I am grateful to Marta Salgado, Sonia Salgado, Nelson Corvacho, and all members of the Fundación Oro Negro de Chile. In Tacna and Sama-Las Yaras I am grateful to Melissa Rodríguez Coayla for her assistance.

more often a simple aspiration [h] instead of the more palatal fricative found in Arica and Tacna Spanish often exhibits word-final velarized /n/, a trait not found in Arica.

As a consequence of the War of the Pacific Chile also wrested the former Pacific corridor of Bolivia, stretching from Antofagasta on the coast to the Andean highlands to the east. The rugged and mountainous contemporary border between Chile and Bolivia is sparsely populated and contains few border crossing points. The majority of the inhabitants on both sides of the border are Native Americans, principally speakers of Aymara who speak Spanish as a second language with varying degrees of proficiency. On the Bolivian side of the border the speech traits typify the entire Andean *altiplano* region, including a strongly sibilant coda /s/, fricative pronunciation [ʒ] of /r/, affrication of /tr/ to [tʃ], devoiced, shortened and often elided atonic vowels in contact with /s/, retention of the palatal lateral /ʎ/, unstable mid-high vowel oppositions /i/-/e/ and /u/-/o/, invariant direct object clitic doubling with *lo* (e.g. *cerrámelo la ventana* 'close the window for me') and use of the subject pronoun *vos* with verb forms corresponding to *tú*. With the exception of affrication of /tr/, the remaining highland Bolivian traits are not found in most of Chile, but near the Chile-Bolivia border there is some microdialectal convergence. Taking as an example the highway border crossing of Tambo Quemado (Bolivia)-Chungará (Chile) on the international highway between La Paz, Bolivia and Arica, Chile, Chilean Aymara-Spanish bilinguals present many of the Andean Spanish traits found in neighboring Bolivia, including fricative realization of /r/, occasional use of /ʎ/, clitic doubling, vocalic instability, and some atonic vowel reduction (Espinoso 2003, Lipski 1994). Chilean speakers near the border aspirate coda /s/, although not to the extent found in mainstream Chilean varieties, a feature not found on the Bolivian side of the border. Use of Chilean *voseo* verbs can also be found unlike in Bolivia. Although communities on both sides of the border are far from the respective urban dialect-defining zones, national linguistic tendencies from each country contribute to the small but perceptible differences in the Spanish spoken on both sides of the international border.

3. OTHER POTENTIAL LOCI OF LINGUISTIC NATIONALISM AT THE BORDER
Ongoing skirmishes by young untrained soldiers in border outposts are the legacy of territorial disputes along the border between Peru and Ecuador, where hyper-nationalist sentiments may be reflected in linguistic differences. Other potential microdialectal hot-spots include remote islands along the Beagle Channel between Argentina and Chile (and even more peaceful Argentina-Chile bordering communities), the troublesome San Juan River area separating eastern Nicaragua and Costa Rica (the scene of endless territorial squabbles and appeals to international tribunals), and much of the densely forested and poorly

delimited border between Honduras and El Salvador, where as late as 1992 international arbitration was required to settle seemingly endless disputes (a border-delimiting treaty was finally signed by the two nations in 1998).

Even more remote border areas between countries with a history of territorial disputes may bring to light additional microdialectal features. Paraguay and Bolivia share a common frontier in the hostile Chaco region, a jagged artificial land border resulting from adjudication following the Chaco War (1932-1935) and the region is dotted with tiny *fortines* or military outposts whose only purpose is to symbolically exhibit the countries' sovereignty. Eastern lowland Bolivian Spanish shares many features with Paraguay, although the use of Guaraní among non-indigenous Paraguayans as well as continuing strong nationalist sentiments probably result in linguistic differentiation in border regions. Given the remoteness of Chaco border communities as well as the harsh physical conditions, the linguistic nuances of this region remain unexplored.

4. MANY RIVERS TO CROSS: PERU-COLOMBIA AND PERU-BOLIVIA. Peru's border with neighboring Colombia is entirely contained in the eastern Amazon basin. The Putumayo River forms most of the boundary in this sparsely populated region where Spanish is a minority language in contact with several indigenous languages. At the southernmost point of Colombia, the city of Leticia has an open land border with the neighboring Brazilian city of Tabatinga, and faces the tiny Peruvian village of Santa Rita, located on a small island across the Amazon River, which is quite narrow at this point and can be crossed by outboard motor-powered launches in less than fifteen minutes.³ Although Leticia has a small population of locally-born Spanish-speaking residents, most Spanish speakers have immigrated from other areas of Colombia in search of economic opportunities. There is as yet no cohesive local dialect of Spanish (Alvar 1977), although central Colombian dialect features prevail, including resistance of coda consonants to erosion and alveolar pronunciation of word-final /n/. Some residents of Leticia exhibit aspiration of final /s/, but this is not widespread. Several Amazonian languages are present in the Leticia area, including Ticuna and Huitoto; given the proximity to the larger Brazilian city of Tabatinga, for many residents no more than a few blocks away, most residents of Leticia speak at least some Portuguese. The Peruvian village of Santa Rita consists of one main street approximately three blocks long and a few scattered houses across the island. The main source of income is from the numerous restaurants that line the main street, catering to Brazilian and Colombian visitors who cross in the frequent motor launches. Most of the

³Field work in Leticia, Santa Rita, and Tabatinga was conducted in 2010.

Peruvians are from the region, whose linguistic hinterland is the major Amazon port city of Iquitos to the west. Despite the fact that many residents of indigenous origin have family members in all three countries, the Spanish varieties of Leticia and Santa Rita lean towards the patterns representing major cities in each country: Iquitos in the case of Santa Rita, and Medellín, Cali, and Bogotá for Leticia. The proximity of the border communities is outweighed by each town's reliance on their respective national infrastructure. The significant presence of a Peruvian naval detachment reinforces Peruvian varieties of Spanish in Santa Rita, while economic dependence on commerce with Brazil means that Colombians and Peruvians in this triple-border region spend more time interacting linguistically with Brazilians (usually in some approximation to Portuguese) than to each other. Rojas Molina (2008) provides a sociolinguistic overview of this triple-border region and Oliveira (2006) provides supplementary demographic information.

The eastern Amazonian sector of Peru contains another triple border: Iñapari (Peru), Assis (Brazil), and Bolpebra (Bolivia). Iñapari is a compact village of some 1500 residents in Peru's Madre de Dios department. Like many communities in the Amazon basin, Iñapari was founded in the 20th century, first as a consequence of the rubber-tapping industry and later to support logging operations, now mostly outlawed but continuing unabated. The nearest Peruvian city is Puerto Maldonado (some three hours by automobile), and a blacktop highway links Iñapari with Peruvian ports on the Pacific Ocean. A heavy-duty bridge over the narrow and shallow Acre River joins Iñapari with the much larger Brazilian city of Assis. The highway was largely financed by Brazil in order to provide efficient access to Pacific ports for Brazilian products, and the central zone of Iñapari consists entirely of shops that cater to Brazilian customers. Most residents of Iñapari are immigrants from highland regions such as Cuzco and Puno, and many speak Quechua or Aymara.⁴ Although a stable local dialect of Spanish is only now emerging, the general traits are those of highland Peru, including strongly sibilant syllable- and word-final /s/, groove fricative realization of /r/, some retention of the palatal lateral phoneme /ʎ/, and partial neutralization of mid-high vocalic oppositions (/i/-e/ and /u/-o/) among speakers of the three-vowel languages Quechua and Aymara. Also adjacent to Iñapari and Assis is the tiny Bolivian community of Bolpebra, with fewer than 300 inhabitants, a small army detachment and an elementary school. Bolpebra is separated from Iñapari by the narrow Yaberija River, not more than a small creek about 15 meters wide; across the somewhat wider Acre River lies Assis, Brazil. The confluence of the two rivers

⁴Field work in Iñapari and Bolpebra was conducted in 2011, with the assistance of Celso Curi Paucarmaita, Alberto Cardozo, César Ochoa, Jorge Quispe, and Narciso Paricahua.

is marked by sandy beaches and sand bars; in the dry season the rivers are so low that residents cross freely among the three countries simply by wading across the rivers (the water rarely reaches beyond the knees of most adults). During the rainy season small canoes ferry passengers to and from Bolpebra, although given the miniscule population of this village, not many residents make the 1-2 minute crossing. As in Iñapari, most residents of the recently founded Bolpebra are immigrants from other regions of Bolivia, principally the nearby city of Cobija, whence some have immigrated from central Bolivian highlands. Found in Bolpebra Spanish is the Amazonian Bolivian aspiration or elision of /s/ in coda position, retention of /k/, trill pronunciation of /r/, and use of *vos* instead of *tú* and *voseo* verb forms similar to those used in the Río de la Plata. Despite the fact that geographically Bolpebra and Iñapari could be regarded as a single community, Bolivians and Peruvians have little linguistic contact on a daily basis, and each population retains the traits of the respective national/regional varieties of Spanish. Just as along Peru's other triple border, residents of Bolpebra and Iñapari have more contact with Assis, Brazil than with one another (Cardia 2009, Valcuende del Río and Cardia 2009).

5. JUNTOS PERO NO REVUELTOS: ARGENTINA-PARAGUAY. Argentina and Paraguay share a long border, entirely formed by rivers. The Paraná River separates Paraguay from the Argentine provinces of Misiones and Corrientes. A bridge joins the twin cities of Encarnación (Paraguay) and Posadas (Argentina), while at the triple border Paraguay-Brazil-Argentina a bridge connects Ciudad del Este (Paraguay) with Foz do Iguazú (Brazil) and another bridge connects Foz and Puerto Iguazú (Argentina).⁵ The Pilcomayo River and the Paraguay River separate Paraguay from the Argentine provinces of Chaco and Formosa, respectively. Clorinda (Argentina) faces Asunción (Paraguay) across the Pilcomayo but the bridge linking the two cities is some distance away from Asunción and, although many Paraguayans pass through Clorinda en route to other destinations in Argentina, the level of daily visits between the two cities is relatively low. The Argentine city of Formosa also faces Paraguay across the Paraguay River but the lack of a nearby bridge limits travel between the two countries. The cities of Corrientes and Resistencia in Argentina are also near the river border, but there is little ongoing contact with Paraguay except as way-stations for longer voyages.

Despite sharing an extensive border and much colonial history, the Spanish varieties of Paraguay differ significantly from those of the neighboring provinces of Argentina. The most striking differences involve the admixture with

⁵Field work along the Argentina-Paraguay border was conducted between 2009 and 2011.

Guaraní, in terms of borrowings into Spanish, Spanish-Guaraní code-mixing, and Spanish-influenced Guaraní registers such as Paraguayan *jopará*. The full range of bilingual contact phenomena is present in de facto bilingual Paraguay.⁶ In neighboring Argentine provinces, use of Guaraní is largely restricted to indigenous communities, some of which are geographically and socially removed from major population centers, although some Guaraní influence can be found in a few local vernacular Spanish varieties.⁷ The contiguous Argentine and Paraguayan varieties share basic phonological features such as retention of the palatal lateral phoneme /k/, aspiration or deletion of syllable- and word-final /s/, affrication of /tr/ clusters, some fricative realization of /r/, and hiatus-breaking glottal stops, especially accompanying deletion of word-final prevocalic /s/ (e.g. *los otros* [lo 'ʔo.tro]). Absent in all varieties of Paraguayan Spanish is the encroaching Buenos Aires-based realization of /j/ as [ç] or [ʃ], as is increasingly common in northeastern Argentina (Colantoni 2005, 2006; Lipski 2012). In morphosyntax both Argentine and Paraguayan Spanish dialects use the subject pronoun *vos* and corresponding *voseo* verb forms, but Paraguayans tend to use *lles* as direct object pronouns whereas *llos* are found in neighboring Argentina. Although many residents of peripheral Argentine provinces do not identify with the strongly Buenos Aires-derived national imagery and in fact may feel underrepresented, the combination of substantially divergent post-colonial histories and contemporary sports rivalries preclude any emulation of neighboring speech varieties by either Argentines or Paraguayans in border regions.

6. SOCIOLINGUISTIC MIRROR-IMAGES: COLOMBIA AND VENEZUELA. A somewhat similar situation obtains along much of the Andean highland border between Colombia and Venezuela. Traditionally the Andean region of Venezuela (Mérida, Táchira, San Cristóbal) shared many traits with highland Colombia rather than with the epicenters of Venezuelan Spanish, Caracas and Maracaibo (Álvarez et al 1992, Geckler and Ocampo Marín 1973, Márquez Carrero 1985, Ocampo Marín 1968). These traits included retention of sibilant /s/ in coda position as opposed to the massive aspiration or elision in coastal Venezuela, and retention of alveolar word-final /n/ as opposed to the velarization found in the rest of Venezuela. Speech traits considered normal in most of Colombia were

⁶For example Corvalán 1977, 1983; Corvalán and Granda 1982; Gynan 2007a, 2007b, 2011; Krivoshein de Canese and Corvalán 1987; Meliá 1974; Palacios 2008; Rubin 1968; Solé 2001; Usher de Herreros 1976; Welti 1979.

⁷For example Biazzi 1985, Cardoso 2011, Fernández 2007-8, Kaul 1977, Martínez 2006, Molina 1971, Quant 1996, Quant and Irigoyen 1980, Sileoni de Biazzi 1977.

the butt of jokes and social stigmatization in Venezuela, where the most admired dialects are those of the Caribbean lowlands. Beginning several decades ago the speech of Venezuela's Andean zone has moved away from its traditional patterns to more closely approximate the prevailing Caracas-centered national patterns (Longmire 1976, Obediente 1998). Venezuela's current leftist government has engaged in several skirmishes with Colombia, ostensibly stemming from Colombia's pursuit of anti-government FARC rebels into Venezuelan territory and Venezuela's presumed support of the rebels. As a consequence, nationalist sentiments have been exacerbated on both sides of the border, a fact that may lead to further divergence of dialects near the border.

7. GRADUAL TRANSITIONS: HONDURAS-GUATEMALA, HONDURAS-NICARAGUA, NICARAGUA-COSTA RICA. An example of a border area with little or no linguistic differentiation is found in western Honduras and southeastern Guatemala. Guatemalan and Honduran Spanish share several pan-Central American linguistic features, including use of *vos* and accompanying verb forms, velarization of word-final /n/, weak /j/ with elision in contact with front vowels, and weakly aspirated posterior fricative /x/. The realization of /s/ in coda position is strongly sibilant in nearly all of Guatemala, where there is also some affrication of the onset cluster /tr/ and fricative realization [ʒ] of /r/. The latter two features are not found in Honduran dialects, while coda /s/ is aspirated or deleted in nearly all of Honduras. An additional trait found in much of Honduras is frequent aspiration of word-initial postvocalic /s/, as in *no [h]e puede* and *parque [h]entral*. The isoglosses representing /s/-reduction fall within the national borders of Honduras, while fricative /r/ and affricated /tr/ rarely occur in eastern Guatemala near the Honduran border. Taking as an example the Honduran department of Copán, in traveling from La Entrada (on the main highway linking San Pedro Sula near the Caribbean coast to Ocotopèque near the border with El Salvador) to Copán Ruinas, near the border with Guatemala, realization of coda /s/ exhibits a cline of variation, from a moderate level of aspiration at La Entrada and points further east to retention of sibilant [s] at the Guatemalan border, where there are no notable differences with respect to speech patterns on the Guatemalan side. The absence of any natural boundaries and the historically peaceful relations between the two nations have resulted in an extended speech community spanning the international border (Lipski 1986, 1987).

Similarly gradual microdialectal transitions are found along the land border between Honduras and Nicaragua and between Nicaragua and Costa Rica's northwestern province of Guanacaste (which once belonged to Nicaragua). The border between Costa Rica and Panama also separates two nations whose principal dialect traits are very different; in colonial times Costa Rica was the

southernmost part of the Capitanía General de Guatemala, in the Virreinato de Nueva España, with capital in Mexico City, while Panama (still part of Colombia) belonged to the Virreinato de Nueva Granada, with capital in Santa Fe de Bogotá. Western Panama once had speech traits more similar to those of rural Costa Rica (Robe 1960), including a more resistant /s/ in coda position, but today the Panama City-based dialect has penetrated nearly all parts of the country. On the Costa Rican side of the border Native American languages predominate along the northern (Caribbean) border, while along the southern (Pacific) border there is some convergence with Panamanian Spanish, although this region has received considerable immigration from the central highlands.

8. THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM: THE U. S.-MEXICO BORDER. Although the United States is nominally an English-speaking nation, Spanish is the predominant language along the border with Mexico, thus making the U. S.-Mexican frontier one of the most extensive cross-border Spanish contact zones in the world. In general the Spanish speakers residing along the Mexican border in the United States represent the same dialect zone as immediately adjacent Mexican communities, with concomitant linguistic and cultural identification with Mexico rather than the United States, at least as regards the use of Spanish. At the same time there is arguably a greater influence from English on the U. S. side of the border, particularly in the case of individuals educated in the United States, while in Mexico there have traditionally been less than charitable attitudes towards *Chicanos* and their language. There is an extensive bibliography on U. S. Spanish varieties along the Mexican border, and numerous studies on sociolinguistic attitudes on both sides of the border. Most linguistic studies—nearly all of which deal with the U. S. side of the border—have been descriptions of local varieties of Spanish, or sociolinguistic surveys of attitudes towards the use of Spanish vs. English, foremost among which are the pioneering studies of Hidalgo (1983, 1986, 1987, 1993, 1995, 2001); also Galindo (1995), Urciuoli (1995), Mejías and Anderson (1988), Mejías et al (2003). The tacit assumption seems to be that the varieties of Spanish spoken immediately adjacent to the border are the same on both sides, except perhaps for the sociolinguistic nuancing reflecting formal education in Spanish or the lack thereof. Arguably the principal linguistic feature separating (bilingual) Mexican-Americans from their (largely monolingual) Mexican neighbors is the ability—and inclination—to engage in fluent Spanish-English code-switching. Hidalgo (1986, 1988) has examined Mexicans' and Mexican-Americans' attitudes towards code-switching in border regions; this line of research is the most feasible approach to teasing out subtle cross-border differences in what at first glance appear to be largely homogeneous speech communities.

9. EXTRALINGUISTIC FACTORS THAT AFFECT DIALECT CONTACT IN BORDER AREAS. The preceding sections have presented representative vignettes in order to illustrate the range of linguistic possibilities found along the borders separating Spanish-speaking nations. In evaluating the microdialectology of border regions, the following factors are among the most decisive:

(a) The physical configuration of the border and facilities for crossing the border. Border crossings on main highways (including toll-free bridges) are usually the most permeable, while river boundaries with infrequent, expensive, or dangerous boat crossings disfavor linguistic intermingling (Lipski 2011a, 2011b). The same holds for land borders characterized by steep mountains, thick forest or jungle and the absence of viable roads, such as characterizes much of the Amazon basin, the triple frontier Guatemala-El Salvador-Honduras, much of the Bolivia-Chile, Bolivia-Paraguay, and Chile-Argentina borders.

(b) Border crossing formalities have an impact on contact between neighboring countries, and consequently on dialect contact and the possibility for dialect mixture. In most of Latin America residents of neighboring countries require no more than the (virtually universal) national identification document or *cédula* to cross into an adjacent country, but formalities for the entry of vehicles, merchandise and personal items vary widely, and may constitute a disincentive for some residents. The asymmetry of border formalities mentioned for Peru-Chile also occurs along the Chilean border with Bolivia: entering and leaving Bolivia requires only a momentary presentation of identity documents, while to enter or leave Chile travelers must submit to a full customs inspection. A similar asymmetry is seen between Argentina and Paraguay, including the Posadas (Argentina)-Encarnación (Paraguay) bridge crossing and the Puerto Iguazú (Argentina)-Foz do Iguazú (Brazil)-Ciudad del Este (Paraguay) route. Entry into and exit from Paraguay and Brazil normally occurs without the need to present documents (although immigration posts are placed at the border), while entering and leaving Argentina requires an immigration stop, with full customs inspection occurring upon entry. Amâncio (2004) gives a sociolinguistic overview of this triple-border region.

(c) Currency values on either side of a national border often result in asymmetrical demographic movements. Thus residents of Posadas and Puerto Iguazú, Argentina are more likely to cross respectively to Encarnación and Ciudad del Este, Paraguay than visitors in the opposite direction, due to the relatively stronger Argentine currency and the presence of an enormous duty-free zone in Ciudad del Este and large markets in Encarnación. Currency asymmetries are often indicative of economic disparities resulting in cross-border migration in search of work: Colombians in Venezuela, Bolivians in Argentina, Guatemalans in Mexico, Nicaraguans in Costa Rica. Such demographic cycles can also result

in dialect mixture as temporary workers return home, or when undocumented workers attempt to emulate the speech patterns of the area of their residence.

(d) Proximity of cities or large towns to the border. Large demographic concentrations exert linguistic influence on surrounding areas, since they include the sources for most supplies and services and often administer educational programs and social services. This influence may counteract possible dialect-leveling effects of open borders and may even draw in speakers from across the border when no correspondingly large nearby community acts as a counterbalance. Conversely, remote border areas near no large cities or towns are more favorable environments for dialect mixing. Border areas with large communities on either side and correspondingly marked cross-border dialect differences include the aforementioned cases of Tacna (Peru)-Arica (Chile), Posadas (Argentina)-Encarnación (Paraguay), and Clorinda (Argentina)-Asunción (Paraguay), as well as Tulcán (Ecuador)-Ipiiales (Colombia) and Salto (Uruguay)-Concordia (Argentina). A border area with only one nearby city or town is Iñapari (Peru)-Bolpebra (Bolivia), while most of the borders between Central American nations and between Bolivia and neighboring nations are marked by the absence of large communities on either side of the border.

(e) Existence of indigenous communities spanning both sides of the border. Indigenous communities situated near national borders often extend into neighboring countries, and may be granted special citizenship status that facilitates intercommunication and strengthens family ties. If the individuals are bilingual in Spanish and an indigenous language, their production in Spanish may exhibit more shared traits—e.g. those deriving from the influence of the indigenous language—than distinctively national dialect features, effectively smoothing over nation-centered traits that might be found among monolingual Spanish speakers. The Spanish of bilingual speakers may exhibit INTERLANGUAGE features based on the influence of the indigenous language. Such is the case for Quechua and Aymara speakers along the borders of Bolivia with Peru and Chile, for Ticuna and Huitoto speakers along the Peru-Colombian Amazonian border, for Guayú speakers along the Colombia-Venezuela border, and for speakers of several indigenous languages in the Amazonian border areas separating Ecuador and Peru.

(f) Significant patterns of intermarriage and extended families on both sides of the border. Related to the previous point is the prevalence of mixed marriages and extended families in remote border regions which favors dialect convergence over the retention of nation-grounded traits.

(g) Relative proportions of locally-born population and arrivals from elsewhere in the country. Relatively new border communities, such as Iñapari and Santa Rita (Peru), Leticia (Colombia), and Bolpebra (Bolivia) contain

high proportions of residents born elsewhere and fully cohesive local dialects have not yet congealed. Many small border communities are characterized by prominent military detachments, almost always staffed by personnel from outside of the immediate area. These demographic factors typically result in local dialectal profiles that differ from trans-border varieties, especially when the latter represent more firmly established regional dialects.

(h) Traditional rivalry or hostility deriving from wars and territorial disputes, sports competition, and national government policies. Several instances have been reviewed in the preceding sections, raging from boundary issues carried over from previous centuries to contemporary standoffs between nations.

10. SUMMARY: FACE TO FACE OR BACK TO BACK? The previous sections have outlined a number of linguistic and extralinguistic factors that characterize Latin American Spanish microdialectology in border regions. These criteria, and similar conditions that might be added, are purely qualitative in nature. Except for such crude and dubiously valid measures such as balance of trade and border-crossing counts, there is no ready way to quantify this combination of geographical, political, historical, and socio-demographic conditions that converge to shape speech patterns on either side of an international border. The factors interact qualitatively in a fashion not unlike the constraints in Optimality Theory: all constraints are assumed to be universal, but relative rankings vary with each specific configuration. The constraints in this metaphorical comparison are not based on linguistic systems but rather on a motley collection of factors that have an impact on human social behavior.⁸ In the case of the Tacna (Peru)-Arica (Chile) border, the lingering effects of historical events take precedence over an open and easily accessible border crossing, while along much of the Chile-Bolivia border the presence of trans-national indigenous communities as well as the remoteness of the border crossings from population centers partially counteract sentiments derived from historical conflict. The same presence of multi-national indigenous communities is not sufficient to affect dialect convergence along the Argentina-Paraguay border, where a combination of geographical factors (large stretches without easy river crossings) and the presence of large cities on

⁸Another possible metaphor would be the array of independent variables in multivariate logistic regression analysis (e.g. GOLDVARB as used in linguistics); some of the factors identified as relevant to dialect contact in border regions favor convergence while others disfavor dialect mixing. Since these factors cannot be divided into variables with discrete values, it is not possible to transcend the metaphorical comparison and produce a viable quantitative model.

both sides of border crossings enhance dialect differentiation. The U. S.-Mexico border appears to violate most constraints—including draconian border control measures by the United States, such as fences, walls, and aggressive pursuit of unauthorized crossing. However, linguistic contact is unimpeded, affected by the huge cross-border demographic flux, including thousands of virtually bi-national residents. In this case sheer numbers outweigh political, geographical, and economic factors.

Although it may not be possible to accurately quantify border permeability in extralinguistic terms, the quantitative analysis of linguistic variation in cross-border dialect interfaces may provide the most reliable measure. Variationist models widely applied in sociolinguistic research can reveal the individual contributions of a broad spectrum of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors, and their application to Spanish dialect variation in border regions is the logical sequel to the intra-national studies carried out to date.

As political and social dynamics among Latin American nations continue to evolve, together with infrastructure improvements that enhance and facilitate border crossing, the sociolinguistic profiles of border areas will keep pace. Within the realm of dialect contact research, the microdialectology of border regions provides an exceptionally rich arena for studying the interaction of nature, language, and people.

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