Spanish Dialect Contact in San Antonio, Texas: An Exploratory Study

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1. Introduction

Traditionally, studies of language contact in minority communities focused on the influence of the dominant language on the minority language or on the influence of the minority language on the variety of the dominant language used by minority speakers. However, in North America many minority communities are sites of contact not only between a minority language and English, but also between different varieties of the minority language. New York City, for example, is home to speakers of a wide variety of Spanish dialects, including Colombian, Cuban, Dominican, Ecuadorian, Mexican, and Puerto Rican Spanish. Moreover, speakers of different Spanish varieties often live in close proximity to one another. For example, East Harlem, a traditional area of Puerto Rican settlement, is now home to increasing numbers of Mexican immigrants. Los Angeles is home not only to large numbers of Mexican immigrants and their descendents, but also to numerous immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, and other Central American nations (Lavadenz 2005). Houston, Texas is now home to a substantial number of Salvadorans (Aaron and Hernández 2007; Hernández 2009), as is Toronto, Canada (Hoffman 2004). In the U.S. South, North Carolina has received immigrants from a variety of Latin American countries in addition to Mexico (Bayley 2007). Vancouver, British Columbia has a very diverse Latino community, where speakers of many varieties are in regular contact (Guardado 2008). Finally, as Potowski has shown in studies of children of mixed Mexican and Puerto Rican parentage, dialect contact exists even within families (Potowski 2008; Potowski and Matts 2008).

Despite the fact that there is a long tradition of studying dialect contact in many areas of the world (e.g. Auer, Hinksens, and Kerswill 2006; Kerswill and Williams 2005; Torgersen and Kerswill 2004), until fairly recently, the contact between minority dialects that characterizes many North American communities, particularly Latino communities,[1] has been understudied in sociolinguistic research (Bonnici and Bayley, 2010). To what extent, for example, are the various dialects of Spanish found in major U.S. cities converging? To what extent do speakers of a Spanish dialect that diverges from the variety spoken by a majority of Latinos in a particular community shift in the direction of the predominant variety in the area? Are cases of dialect convergence transitory phenomena that are likely to be eclipsed as subsequent generations shift to English or does the evidence suggest that more stable varieties are likely to develop? Although the literature on questions such as these is still relatively small compared with the number of studies that have examined the role of contact with English, a number of studies have addressed the issues. In an early study, Amastae and Satcher (1993) examined phonological changes in the Spanish of a group of Hondurans in the overwhelmingly Mexican-background city of El Paso, Texas and found evidence that speakers accommodated to prevailing

[*] A paper based on the Puerto Rican data was presented at the Conference on Language Variety in the South III at the University of Alabama in April, 2004 and is scheduled to be published in a volume of selected proceedings (Vélez et al. in press).

[1] In this paper, we use the term "Latino" to categorize a heterogeneous U.S. ethnic group. For more details on this term in U.S. media and academic discourses see Vélez and Collard (2009). We use the term "Chicano" for Mexican American speakers in California, where the term is widely accepted. For the San Antonio speakers, who generally reject the term "Chicano", we use "Mexican American" or "Mexican-background speaker."

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Mexican norms. More recently, Hoffman (2004) examined /s/-deletion and velarization of /n/ in the Spanish of Salvadorans in the diverse environment of Toronto, Ontario. She found that speakers were less likely to delete /s/, a socially stigmatized variant, in more formal styles. However, velarization of /n/, which is not socially marked, showed no stylistic conditioning. Hernández (2009) also examined velarization of /n/ by Salvadorans and studied the extent to which speakers of different lengths of residence in Houston, Texas, accommodated to the speech of Salvadoran or Mexican interviewers. Not surprisingly, Salvadorans with greater length of residence showed greater accommodation to Mexican norms. In an earlier study, Hernández (2002) examined the distribution of *voseo* and transitive *andar* by Salvadoran residents of Houston interacting with a Mexican interviewer. As in the case of velarization of /n/, Salvadorans with longer periods of residence in Houston used fewer Salvadoran features. Finally in the largest study of Spanish dialect contact to date, Otheguy, Zentella, and Livert (2007) investigated subject personal pronoun (SPP) variation in the Spanish of Colombians, Cubans, Dominicans, Ecuadorians, Mexicans, and Puerto Ricans in New York City. The results of the analysis of more than 65,000 tokens show that in New York City, varieties of Spanish can no longer be characterized solely according to the national backgrounds of their speakers. Rather, there exist substantial innovations and divergences in the language of NYC Spanish speakers compared to varieties elsewhere in the Spanish-speaking world.

This small-scale study is a contribution to this growing strand of research. We report on variable subject personal pronoun (SPP) use by Puerto Rican and Mexican-origin residents of San Antonio, Texas, a majority Mexican-background city in which Puerto Ricans constitute less than one percent of the Latino population. Given their relatively small numbers, we might expect to see Puerto Rican Spanish speakers converging with the Spanish of the Mexican-origin majority. Results of multivariate analysis, however, indicate that the majority of Puerto Rican speakers in our study are maintaining their linguistic distinctiveness, at least with respect to the use of overt SPPs. However, a small group of speakers whose social and professional networks consist primarily of Mexican-descent Spanish speakers use overt SPPs at a rate similar to that found in other studies of Mexican immigrant and Mexican American Spanish. We also compare rates of SPP use by the Puerto Rican Texans examined here with a sample of Mexican immigrant and Mexican American speakers from San Antonio. Results show that Puerto Rican Spanish speakers with Mexican social networks use SPPs at a rate that is much closer to the rate of use by Mexican-background speakers than it is to the rate of Puerto Ricans in San Juan or New York City. Finally, we use the data examined here to address the roles of social networks and individual agency in conditioning linguistic variation.

2. The linguistic variable

In Spanish, a subject may be expressed overtly or as null, as illustrated in (1)-(4), taken from the data for the present study:

(1) Entonces cuando yo/Ø llegué a Panamá**,** yo/Ø llegué a Panamá en el 87....
(2) Yo/Ø he vivido en muchas partes.... Y como adulto yo/Ø he trabajado mucho con mexicanos.
(3) Sí nosotros/Ø hemos platicado de eso y nosotros/Ø queremos que aquí en casa sea el español.
(4) ... ellas/Ø me lo leen también.

In recent decades, this alternation has received considerable attention in sociolinguistics. Studies of dialects in many areas, including northern and southern California, Madrid, New Jersey, New York, New Mexico, San Juan, and Puente Genil, Andalusia, have shown that subject personal pronoun (SPP) alternation is a classic sociolinguistic variable, subject to multiple constraints (see e.g. Avila-Jiménez 1996; Bayley and Pease-Alvarez 1996, 1997; Cameron 1993, 1996; Cameron and Flores-Ferrán 2004; Flores and Toro 2000; Flores-Ferrán 2004, 2007a, 2007b; Ranson 1991; Shin and Otheguy 2009; Silva-Corvalán 1994, 1996-97; Travis 2007). Variation in the use of expressed subjects has also been examined in L2 Spanish and the results compared with data from native speakers (Geeslin and Gudmestad 2010; Gudmestad and Geeslin 2010). Indeed, considering the number of studies that have been carried out, like -t,d deletion in English, SPP variation seems to have become something of a

showcase variable in variationist sociolinguistics. Of particular interest for studies of contact between Mexican and Puerto Rican Spanish, speakers of highland dialects, including most of Mexico, use significantly fewer overt SPPs than speakers of the lowland dialects of the Caribbean, including Puerto Rico (Hochberg 1986; Sábater 1978; Terrell 1978). SPPs thus represent a promising locus for investigating contact among different Spanish varieties in the United States in communities where speakers of both highland and lowland varieties reside.

2.1. Pan-dialectal constraints

A number of constraints on variation between overt and null SPPs have been found to extend across dialects. Thus, numerous studies have reported that subjects that are coreferential with the subject are less likely to be realized overtly than subjects that are not coreferential. In addition, singular SPPs, particularly 1 sg *yo*, are more likely to be realized overtly than plurals (see e.g. Bayley and Pease-Alvarez 1996; Cameron 1992; Cameron and Flores-Ferrán 2004; Flores-Ferrán 2004; Silva-Corvalán 1994).

2.2. Variation in SPP use in Mexican American Spanish

Variation in the use of SPPs has also been studied in Mexican American Spanish dialects. Silva-Corvalán (1994), for example, tested the hypothesis that Los Angeles Spanish would develop in the direction of greater overt pronoun use as a consequence of contact with English. She reported that most constraints on SPP variation agreed with non-contact varieties, and that the overall rate of SPP use remained stable across the bilingual continuum. However, she did observe a weakening of the effect of switch reference among English-dominant bilinguals. She also reported that ambiguous verb forms, e.g. imperfect *estaba* or *tenía*, which can be either first or third person, favored overt SPP use by first- and second- but not by third-generation Chicanos. Bayley and Pease-Alvarez (1996), in a study of Mexican immigrant and Chicano children in northern California, reported results similar to those of Silva-Corvalán. In a subsequent study, Bayley and Pease-Alvarez (1997) examined SPP use in the oral and written narratives of the children who had participated in the earlier study. Their results suggested that "functional compensation for a lack of surface morphological distinctness plays at most a minor role" in the rate of overt SPP use (367). Finally, Silva-Corvalán (1996-97) suggested that tense-aspect features rather than the neutralization of person distinctions constrained SPP use. She predicted that that overt SPPs would be least likely to be used with preterit verbs, where the focus is on the action, somewhat more likely with present tense verbs, and most likely with imperfect, conditional, and subjunctive verbs, which have the properties of ongoingness, contrafactuality, or potential and presented results that supported the hypothesis (Silva-Corvalán 1996-97).

To summarize, research has established constraints that extend across a number of Spanish dialects. When a subject differs from the subject of the immediately preceding verb, it is more likely to be expressed overtly. In addition, singular subjects in general are more likely to be expressed by overt pronominals than are plural subjects. Finally, recent research indicates that verb class has a greater effect on the likelihood of speakers' use overt pronouns than potential ambiguity.

3. Methods

3.1. The community and speakers

The overwhelming majority of Spanish speakers in San Antonio consists of people of Mexican origin. Indeed, although Latinos constitute a majority in San Antonio, persons of Puerto Rican origin amount to only .3 percent of the city's population (U.S. Census Bureau 2003) and less than one percent of the Latino population.[2] Nevertheless, a number of Puerto Rican social and professional

[2] According to the 2000 Census, 46.7 percent of San Antonio residents reported speaking a language other than English at home. While the great majority of San Antonians who speak a language other than English are Spanish speakers, that figure includes speakers of many other languages as well. Moreover, census information reveals nothing about the extent and quality of the Spanish spoken.

organizations exist and the congregations of several churches in the area are predominantly Puerto Rican. In addition, San Antonio remains attractive to Puerto Rican military retirees. Given the number of military installations in San Antonio, many army and air force veterans have been stationed at one of the city's bases at some time during their careers.

Nineteen speakers provided the data for the present study. Participants included ten Puerto Ricans and nine Mexican-background speakers, ranging in age from 12 to 56. All of the Puerto Rican speakers had attended college, although most did not graduate. Seven Puerto Rican speakers were born on the island and three in New York City. The length of residence in San Antonio of the Puerto Rican participants ranged from one to 18 years, with an average of 9 years. One speaker, with only a year of residence in San Antonio, spent the greater part of her life in the U.S. Southwest and the majority of her Spanish interactions were with people of Mexican origin. Table 1 summarizes the Puerto Rican participants' social and demographic characteristics. In addition to providing social and demographic information, Table 1 also summarizes information derived from detailed questionnaires about participants' Spanish-speaking social and professional networks and the extent to which they used Spanish with their families or elsewhere. Seven speakers reported that they spoke Spanish primarily with other Puerto Ricans. Three speakers, all of whom were involved in bilingual education, reported using Spanish primarily with Mexican-background speakers. Only one speaker reported using less Spanish than English both with her family and in her social and professional networks.

Table 1. Characteristics and self-reported Spanish use of Puerto Rican speakers

				Years	Social	Spanish Use	
Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Born	in SA	network	Social/Prof.	Family
Nora	f	35	PR	9	PR	≈	+
David	m	28	PR	2	PR	≈	+
Gustavo	m	51	PR	8	PR	+	+
Lilian	f	42	PR	6	PR	≈	+
Mari	f	56	NY	18	PR	+	+
Nina	f	38	NY	6	PR	+	+
Fonz	m	28	NY	7	PR	+	+
Juan	m	55	PR	17	Mex	+	+
Maritza	f	50	PR	1	Mex	–	–
Raúl	m	45	PR	16	Mex	+	+

Note: For Spanish use, +, 61 –100%; ≈, 41-60%; –, 0-40%

Table 2. Characteristics of Mexican-background Spanish speakers

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
María	f	35	Cafeteria worker	Coahuila, Mexico
Alicia	f	40	Home maker	Tamaulipas, Mexico
Ruben	m	41	Construction worker	Tamaulipas, Mexico
Rosa	f	46	Clerk	San Antonio, Texas
Roberto	m	38	Ranch worker	Coahuila, Mexico
Ernesto	m	12	Student	Coahuila, Mexico
Alicia	f	30	Homemaker, student	Coahuila, Mexico
Lisa	f	39	Homemaker	Coahuila, Mexico
Anita	f	33	Reservations agent	San Antonio, Texas

The Mexican-background speakers, whose demographic information is summarized in Table 2, tended to be concentrated in less prestigious occupations than the Puerto Rican speakers in this study. However, several of the speakers considered here lived in middle class neighborhoods in the ethnically mixed north side of the city. All of the Mexican-background speakers preferred to use Spanish in most of their day-to-day interactions.

3.2. Data elicitation

The Puerto Rican data used in the quantitative analysis were extracted from sociolinguistic interviews conducted in participants' homes in San Antonio (Vélez et al. in press). The data from the Mexican-background speakers were extracted from the extensive corpus of Texas interviews conducted as part of a project on home language use by Mexican immigrant and Mexican American families in California and Texas (Schecter and Bayley 2002).[3]

3.3. Coding

After the interviews were transcribed in standard orthography, we coded for the major linguistic constraints including coreference with the subject of the preceding finite verb, as illustrated in (5) and (6):

(5) Coreferential with the subject of the preceding finite verb, e.g. *Ø me siento bien en la ciudad y yo valúo la educación*.
(6) Switch in reference, e.g. *y yo le dije de donde Ø crees que vengo yo. Y Ø me dijo....*

We also coded for person and number and ambiguity of person and number (no ambiguity with respect to person inflection, two way ambiguity, potential three way ambiguity). In addition, following Silva-Corvalán (1996-97), we coded for verb features as follows:

Type 1. Preterit: factual, assertive, dynamic, focus on event, foregrounded.
Type 2. Present: factual assertive, but not always dynamic and focal like the preterit.
Type 3. Imperfect, conditional, and subjunctive: backgrounded, irrealis, non-dynamic, non-assertive, polite.

Finally, because we were dealing with a relatively small number of speakers, we coded each speaker as a separate factor.

3.4. Exclusions

Tokens where an overt pronoun is categorically present or categorically absent in our data were excluded from the analysis. Table 3 summarizes the exclusions from coding.[4]

4. Results

Results of multivariate analysis with GoldVarb (Sankoff, Tagliamonte, and Smith 2005), a specialized application of logistic regression, showed that SPP use by Puerto Ricans in San Antonio, like SPP use in other dialects, is subject to a complex set of constraints.[5] SPP use was significantly constrained by whether the variable was coreferential with the subject of the preceding finite verb, person and number, and the tense-mood-aspect of the verb of which the variable was a subject. In

[3] A reviewer questioned our use of data from different studies. While we concede that it might be ideal to collect exactly the data needed for each particular study, sociolinguistic interviews provide the basis for examining many different variables. In the case of the present study, we initially examined only the Puerto Rican data and compared the results with studies of Mexican Americans in other areas. However, the Puerto Rican speakers examined here were not in contact with Mexican Americans in other areas. Therefore, because we had a recent corpus of San Antonio Mexican American data available, we sampled that corpus for what we expected would be a better comparison.

[4] Amaral and Schwenter (2003) have shown that constrastive contexts do not always require an overt pronoun. Hence, although they are quite infrequent in our data, we did not exclude tokens in contrastive contexts where a null pronoun is possible.

[5] For details on multivariate analysis with GoldVarb, see Bayley (2002), Paolillo (2002), and Tagliamonte (2006).

addition, individual speakers varied considerably in their use of overt SPPs.

Overall, the Puerto Rican speakers in this study choose the overt option at a rate of 38 percent, much higher than the rate reported in studies of Mexican-origin Spanish (Silva-Corvalán 1994; Bayley and Pease-Alvarez 1996), but lower than the rate reported for Puerto Ricans on the island (Cameron 1992) or in New York (Flores-Ferrán 2004). Table 4 shows the results of the VARBRUL analysis of the Puerto Rican data for all significant factors, with use of an overt pronoun counted as the application value. We will first discuss the results for individual factors and then turn to more global differences between Puerto Rican speakers' SPP use in San Antonio and other dialects, including Mexican Spanish in San Antonio.

Table 3. Exclusions from coding

Pronoun absent	Example
Atmospheric verbs	*Ø hacía mucho frío*. 'It was very cold.'
Existential *haber*	*Ø habían miembros del club que hablaban japonés y español*. 'There were club members who spoke Japanese and Spanish.'
Subject headed relative clauses	*No todas las personas que Ø hablan español vienen de México*. 'Not everyone who speaks Spanish comes from Mexico.'
Non-specific 3 pl subjects	*En San Juan, siempre comen a las ocho.* 'In San Juan they always eat at 8.'
Pronoun present	
Emphatic *mismo*	*él mismo dijo....* 'he himself said .... '
Subject as focal partner of *también*	*Me fui para Nueva York a estudiar y ella también....* 'I went to New York to study and she went also....'
Answers to *wh*- questions	*¿Y qué hacen ustedes ..., tú y tu esposo? Bueno él es farmacéutico y yo trabajo....* 'And what do you do ..., you and your husband? Well he's a pharmacist and I work....'
Set phrases	*Tú sabes.* 'You know.'

4.1. Linguistic constraints

As expected, the Puerto Rican speakers were more likely to choose the overt option when the subject was not coreferential with the subject of the preceding finite verb (.610) than when no switch in reference was involved (.419). In this respect speakers performed much like speakers of other Spanish dialects that have been systematically investigated. In addition, speakers were more likely to use an overt SPP for 1 sg *yo* than for other SPPs. As shown in table 4, the factor ordering for person/number was 1 sg > 3 sg > 2 sg[+spec] > 2 sg[–spec] > 2 pl/3 pl > 1 pl. The results for the person/number factor group are broadly similar to those found in other dialects, although the ordering of +/–spec 2 sg differs from the order reported in Cameron (1996). As there are relatively few tokens for these factors in our study, this difference may simply be a consequence of the small number of tokens and the small number of speakers in the current study.

The results for the tense-mood-aspect factor group support Silva-Corvalán's (1996-97) suggestion that differences in the rates of SPP use are constrained not by ambiguity of the verb with respect to person but by the features of the verb. The results for this factor show that SPPs are most likely to be used with imperfect, conditional, or subjunctive verbs forms (.574), followed by present tense forms (.496). Speakers are least likely to choose the overt option with a verb in the preterit or with *ser* (.442). The verbal ambiguity factor group failed to reach statistical significance.

Table 4. Subject personal pronoun use: Puerto Rican Spanish in San Antonio, Texas

Factor group	Factor	N	% overt pronoun	Weight
Coreference	Switch	1654	46	.610
	Same	2265	32	.419
Person/number	1 sg *yo*	1997	44	.597
	3 sg *él, ella*	603	43	.557
	2 sg (+spec) *tú*	143	37	.523
	2 sg (–spec) *tú*	223	33	.444
	2, 3 pl *ustedes, ellos/as*	321	32	.436
	1 pl *nosotros*	632	19	.218
Tense-mood-aspect	Imperf., cond., subj.	971	42	.574
	Present	1845	38	.496
	Preterit (and *ser*)	1103	35	.442
Speaker	High (4)	1387	54	.698
	Medium (2)	803	40	.492
	Low (1)	539	28	.395
	Lowest (3)	1190	23	.318
Total	Input (corrected mean)	3919	38	.359

Notes: Chi-square/cell = 1.3428; log-likelihood = –2287.799, all factors significant at $p < .05$.

4.2. Variation among Puerto Rican Speakers

Although the overall rate of overt pronoun use by the Puerto Rican speakers studied here was high, individual speakers varied considerably, ranging from a low of 22 percent for Maritza and Raúl to a high of 52 percent for Lilian. However, not all differences between individual speakers were significant. We therefore grouped speakers with other speakers from whom they did not differ significantly in their use of SPPs. This procedure resulted in four groups containing between one and four speakers: high SPP users (David, Gustavo, Lilian, Nora), medium users (Mari, Nina), a low user (Fonz), and lowest users (Raúl, Juan, Maritza). The most striking finding is that the three lowest SPP users all reported that most of their Spanish interactions were with Mexican Spanish speakers and their SPP use approximates the Mexican norm of overt SPP use. That is, speakers who most frequently use Spanish with Mexican-background interlocutors and who in some cases strongly identify with the Mexican-origin population are least likely to use overt SPPs. Most other speakers, however, who interact in Spanish mainly with other Puerto Ricans, have maintained their linguistic distinctiveness and used overt SPPs at rates that are considerably higher than those found in Mexican Spanish varieties, including the Spanish spoken in San Antonio.

To examine the effect of the social networks that speakers reported, we performed three additional variable rule analyses, one with only data from the three lowest SPP users, all of whom had extensive Mexican or Mexican American social networks, the second with data from speakers who reported that their social networks were predominantly Puerto Rican, and the third with a sample of Mexican and Mexican American speakers from San Antonio. The results for these analyses are shown in tables 5 and 6.

As table 5 shows, with the exception of 2 sg [+/–spec], the constraint ranking for individual factors is the same for Puerto Ricans whose social and professional networks are predominantly Puerto Rican and those whose social and professional networks are mainly Mexican or Mexican American. Indeed, in many cases, the VARBRUL weights are nearly identical despite the fact that the input values, or corrected means, differ markedly (.438 for Puerto Rican network speakers and .205 for Mexican network speakers).[6] For example, for Puerto Rican network speakers, switch reference favors an overt SPP with a weight of .605 and continuity of reference disfavors an overt SPP with a weight of .420. For the three Mexican network speakers, the corresponding factor weights are .613 for switch

[6] The input value provides a meaure of the overall likelihood that speakers will use the variant selected as the application value, in this case an overt pronoun, regardless of the presence of absence of any other factor in the enviornment.

reference and .423 for same reference. The VARBRUL weights for most other factors are similarly close and even where the values diverge, the factor ordering is unperturbed. Thus, except for the case of 2 sg pronouns, all speakers behave in very similar ways with respect to SPP use, despite their very differing rates of overt pronouns.

Table 5. Subject personal pronoun use by Puerto Rican and Mexican network speakers

		Puerto Rican network			Mexican network		
Factor group	Factor	N	% +pro	Weight	N	% +pro	Weight
Coreference	Switch	1174	53	.605	480	29	.613
	Same	1555	39	.420	710	18	.423
Person/number	1 sg	1474	50	.597	523	27	.601
	2 sg (+spec)	74	65	.676	69	7	.223
	2 sg (–spec)	128	48	.489	95	13	.346
	3 sg	388	50	.539	215	30	.606
	2, 3 pl	189	40	.427	132	20	.462
	1 pl	476	22	.209	156	12	.289
Tense-mood-aspect	Imperfect, cond., subj.	653	48	.574	318	28	.571
	Present	1295	45	.494	550	21	.504
	Preterit (& *ser*)	459	41	.448	322	19	.423
Speaker group	High	1387	54	.624	na	na	na
	Medium	803	40	.410	na	na	na
	Low	539	28	.319	na	na	na
Total	Input	2729	45	.438	1190	23	.205

Notes: For Puerto Rican network speakers chi-square/cell = 1.3686; log-likelihood = –1680.155; for Mexican network speakers chi-square/cell = 0.6068; log-likelihood = –594.863.

4.3. Variation among Mexican-background Spanish Speakers

The results for the nine Mexican-background speakers whose data are examined here show a different picture. Perhaps most importantly, the results of multivariate analysis, presented in Table 6, show that the Mexican-background speakers and the Puerto Rican Mexican network speakers are much closer to each other with respect to SPP use, at least judging from the input values, than the Puerto Rican Mexican network speakers are to their fellow San Antonio Puerto Ricans. The difference between the input values for the Puerto Rican Mexican network speakers and the Puerto Rican network speakers is .253; the difference between the input values for the Puerto Rican Mexican network speakers and the nine Mexican Spanish speakers whose results are shown in table 6 is only .040. Expressed as percentages, the difference between the Puerto Rican Mexican network speakers and their fellow San Antonio Puerto Ricans is 22 percent, while the difference between the average rate of SPP use of the Puerto Rican Mexican network speakers and the Mexican Spanish speakers in the comparison group is slightly less than 4 percent.

With respect to other constraints, the results for the San Antonio Mexican-background speakers generally conform to other studies. That is, switch reference favors the use of an overt SPP with a weight of .593, as does 1 sg with a weight of .652. Coreference and 1 and 3 pl disfavor use of an overt SPP. Third person singular is nearly neutral, with a weight of .533. There are too few tokens of 2 sg, whether specific or non-specific, to reach any conclusion. In addition, neither morphological ambiguity nor the TMA factor group, which were run separately and later combined in an interactive factor group, reached statistical significance. The lack of significance for the TMA group may well be a consequence of the relatively small sample size of only 1,398 tokens. However, the data come from a fairly large corpus collected from a range of speakers representing different social strata. The data are currently being recoded for a much larger study that will consider a range of additional factors including verb semantics and verb frequency.

Table 6. SPP use by Mexican-background Spanish speakers

Factor group	Factor	N	% +pro	Weight
Coreference	Switch	610	33.9	.593
	Same	788	21.4	.427
Person/number	1 sg	441	38.1	.652
	2 sg (+spec)	14	28.6	.505
	2 sg (–spec)	32	11.4	.238
	3 sg	426	26.5	.533
	2, 3 pl	304	20.7	.430
	1 pl	179	13.4	.238
Tense-mood-aspect	Imperf., cond., subj.	215	27.0	ns
	Present	891	27.4	ns
	Preterit (and *ser*)	292	25.3	ns
Speaker group	High (1)	117	39.3	.727
	Medium (3)	640	30.3	.536
	Low (3)	576	22.7	.453
	Extremely low (2)	65	7.7	.178
Total	Input	1398	26.9	.245

Notes: Chi-square/cell = 1.2122; Log likelihood = –.748.444.

We now compare the rates of SPP use of the two social and professional network groups with Puerto Ricans on the island and with the results of a range of studies including the Mexican-background speakers examined here. Table 7 compares the overall rates of SPP use by speakers in this study with results from six other studies of Puerto Ricans in San Juan (Cameron 1992), Puerto Ricans in New York (Flores-Ferrán 2004), Caribbean newcomers and longer-term Caribbean residents in New York (Otheguy et al. 2007), Mexican immigrants and Chicanos in California (Bayley and Pease Alvarez 1996; Silva-Corvalán 1994), and Mexican immigrants in New Jersey (Flores-Ferrán 2007b). Overall, San Antonio Puerto Ricans whose Spanish-speaking social networks consist primarily of other Puerto Ricans use overt SPPs at a rate of 45 percent, which is identical to the rate of their countrymen in San Juan and New York reported by Cameron (1992) and Flores-Ferrán (2004), but somewhat higher than the rate of 36 percent for Caribbean newcomers and 42 percent for longer-term Caribbean residents of New York reported by Otheguy et al. (2007). San Antonio Puerto Ricans whose social and professional networks are predominantly Mexican or Mexican American use overt SPPs at an overall rate of 23 percent. Of the two California studies, Bayley and Pease-Alvarez (1996) reported that Mexican immigrant and Chicano children used SPPs at an overall rate of 20 percent, while Silva-Corvalán (1994) reported that Mexican immigrant and Chicano adults used SPPs at a rate of 28 percent. In New Jersey, Flores-Ferrán reported that Mexican immigrants used SPPs at a rate of 24 percent. Finally, as mentioned above, the nine San Antonio Mexican-background Spanish speakers included in this study used SPPs at an average rate of 27 percent. Although the overall percentage of SPP use is a fairly rough measure that does not account for differences in the distribution of pronominal forms that may result from differences in discourse context (Travis 2007), the data in Table 7 nevertheless suggest that Puerto Rican San Antonians with Mexican social networks are behaving more like Mexican-origin Spanish speakers with respect to overt SPP use than they are like Puerto Rican Spanish speakers from San Antonio, San Juan, or New York City. That is, the data provide a clear indication of the extent to which social networks – and the desires of individual speakers to identify with a particular group – can influence patterns of variation even in cases like variation in SPP use, where the choice of one or another variant does not result in an ungrammatical or stigmatized construction.

Table 7. Use of Overt SPPs in Puerto Rican and Mexican American Spanish

Variety	% Overt Pronoun
Caribbean newcomers to New York City	36
Caribbean longer-term residents in NYC	42
San Juan	45
New York City Puerto Rican	45
San Antonio Puerto Ricans (Puerto Rican network)	45
San Antonio Puerto Ricans (Mexican network)	23
San Antonio Mexican-background speakers	27
Mexican immigrants in New Jersey	24
Los Angeles Mexican immigrant and Chicano adults	28
Northern California Mexican immigrant and Chicano children	20

Sources: Caribbean newcomers to New York, Otheguy et al. (2007); Caribbean longer-term residents in NYC, Otheguy et al. (2007); San Juan, Cameron (1992); New York City Puerto Rican, Flores-Ferrán (2004); New Jersey, Flores-Ferrán (2007b); Los Angeles, Silva Corvalán (1994); Northern California, Bayley and Pease Alvarez (1996).

5. The Individual and the Group: Issues in Modeling Variation

We now turn to the problem of the individual in modeling variation, using data from the Mexican-background speakers. The problem has given rise to considerable controversy in variationist sociolinguistics, with Johnson (2009) in particular arguing that studies need to consider each individual speaker as a random variable, while other scholars such as Guy (2009) have argued that the assumptions behind such a procedure entail a radical (and unexamined) departure from our understanding of the nature of the speech community. We provide several examples showing that, given sufficient data, individual results match the constraint ranking for group results. That is, our results provide support for the traditional model of the speech community in which members of the community may vary in their rate of use of particular forms, but not in the constraint ranking (Guy 1991).

As with the Puerto Rican data, the initial analysis of the Mexican-background participants considered each speaker individually and then combined results for speakers who did not differ significantly from one another. Table 8 illustrates the results by individual. Note, however, that the first two speakers, Ruben and Ernesto, had very short interviews. Also, the speaker with the highest rate of overt SPP use, Roberto, was fairly taciturn in his interview and produced only a little over 100 tokens.

The results in table 8 suggest that there is considerable variability among speakers with respect to SPP use. However, when we consider only the speakers for whom we have 150 or more tokens (the six women), we find that the difference between the lowest SPP user with substantial data, Anita, and the highest SPP user with substantial data, Alicia, is only 9 percent. Moreover, the difference in input values from individual variable rule analyses is even less: .192 for Anita and .250 for Alicia. In addition, although the reduced number of tokens in the variable rule analyses for individuals does not allow the level of detail possible in the group analysis, the results of individual analyses are consistent with the group results, at least with respect to main effects. For example, all of the Mexican background speakers for whom we have sufficient data to run individual analyses were more likely to use an overt pronoun when there was a switch in reference than when the subject of a tensed verb was coreferential with the subject of the preceding verb. To provide just two examples, in the cases of Anita and Alicia, a switch in reference favored the use of an overt pronoun with weights of .651 and .669 respectively, while coreference disfavored the use of an overt pronoun with weights of .378 and .381, despite the fact that the input values differed: .192 for Anita and .250 for Alicia. Similarly, singular pronouns were more likely to be realized overtly for all speakers, regardless of the input values. Individual results such as these, then, provide evidence that suggests that we are perfectly justified in grouping speakers, provided that we have considered the relevant social features such as the social network affiliations in the case of the Puerto Rican speakers examined here.

Table 8. Mexican Origin Speakers: Individual Results

Pseudonym	% + Pro	Weight
Ruben*	10.5	.157
Ernesto*	6.5	.181
Anita	21.2	.436
Alicia	24.0	.472
María	26.0	.475
Lisa	30.6	.525
Rosa	30.1	.526
Alicia	30.4	.600
Roberto	39.3	.738

* Low token count

6. Discussion and Conclusion

The results for the effect of social and professional networks on speakers' rates of SPP use suggest that neither geographical proximity nor extreme demographic imbalance is sufficient to lead to convergence with the most commonly spoken minority dialect in an area. Rather, frequent contact in a variety of situations is required. Moreover, frequent and regular contact seems particularly important in the case of a variable like overt and null subject pronoun use. Unlike, for example, /s/ aspiration and deletion, SPP variation does not exhibit social stratification and variation in the rate of SPP use is not socially stigmatized. Hence, speakers are unlikely to experience normative pressure to alter their rates of SPP use to conform to a local pattern. Rather, convergence must take place well below the level of conscious awareness.

With respect to linguistic constraints, this study has shown that subject personal pronoun use by Puerto Ricans living in San Antonio, Texas is subject to many of the same constraints observed in other dialects including coreference, person/number, and features of the finite verb of which the pronoun is a subject. Within the person/number factor group, the results for specific and non-specific 2 sg *tú* differ from the results reported in previous studies of Puerto Rican Spanish and suggest the need for further research on the way that the distinction between specific and non-specific *tú* operates in Mexican and Mexican American Mexican Spanish. The study has also illustrated the importance of social and professional networks in conditioning speakers' choice between variable forms. Speakers with predominantly Puerto Rican Spanish-speaking networks use overt SPPs at the same rate as speakers in San Juan and New York. The three Puerto Rican speakers with predominantly Mexican or Mexican American networks use overt SPPs at a rate that is similar to the rate reported for Mexican American speakers in other studies and to the rate of the Mexican immigrant and Mexican American speakers reported in this study. Finally, the results of this study, although it deals with a small number of speakers, suggest that studies of language contact in U.S. minority communities should not be limited to contact between English and the minority language. Rather, many language minority communities, like the San Antonio Puerto Rican community, offer rich opportunities for studies of contact between minority language dialects that can enrich our understanding of language and dialect contact in the increasingly diverse linguistic landscape of North America and deepen our understanding of the complex dynamics of identity formation in Latino/a communities.

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