

Spanish/English Contact in Historical Perspective: 19th Century Documents of the Californias

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1. Introduction

This is a study of Spanish in the San Diego area during the 19th century, based on seventy-two unpublished documents. It aims to provide a panoramic and comprehensive description of this borderland variety of Spanish by considering its linguistic characteristics and its social context, in particular, its sustained contact with English. In order to do so, documents were chosen from before and after the annexation of Alta California to the United States, and their main linguistic characteristics were identified and analyzed.

It was found that Spanish retained considerable vitality in private and public domains well into the century among the Spanish-speaking population, known as Californios. A linguistic analysis revealed three main features of this variety. Firstly, it was closely connected to the varieties of northern Mexico. Secondly, it tended to be conservative, exhibiting some archaisms and rural features. Finally, it resisted the influence of the English superstratum after annexation, with only sporadic and superficial traces of contact noticeable in the later documents.

In the sections that follow, this paper provides a brief outline of the historical context of the documents, both before and after the American annexation. This is followed by an analysis of their main linguistic characteristics and a discussion of the effects of political annexation to the United States on the Spanish of California, as evidenced in the documents.

2. Objectives, Methodology, and Sources of the Study

The historical dimensions of California Spanish have received extensive attention in one work whose emphasis is mostly lexical (Blanco 1971). More recently, Perissinotto (1992, 1998) has focused on mission and presidio requisitions and invoices (*memorias* and *facturas*) to shed light on the everyday life of Santa Barbara during the Spanish period. Additionally, studies such as Acevedo (2000) and Balestra (2002) have analyzed aspects of the verbal system of this variety in the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, from linguistic and sociolinguistic perspectives.

The present study builds upon those earlier works, tackling two separate but related issues. On the one hand, it seeks to analyze the documents as products of their social context, in particular, its sustained contact with English. On the other, it seeks to describe the most salient linguistic features of the documents, in order to contribute to the understanding of Californio Spanish and its evolution.

In order to achieve these objectives, documents were classified considering when and where they were written, their communicative purpose, and their authors and addressees. The level of education of writers was conjectured through features such as handwriting, spelling, handling of complex structures, and the like. It was noted when documents alternated in their use of Spanish and English, and the patterns of this alternation were established. Documents were also analyzed for their phonological characteristics (as evidenced by orthography), and for their morphological, syntactic, and lexical features.¹

Of the seventy-two documents analyzed, five belong to the Spanish period (1793-1821) and fourteen were written during the Mexican period (1822-1845). However, the bulk of the documents, 51, was written during the process of annexation (1846-48) or during the ensuing American period (1848-1894).² They are dated in San Diego and surrounding areas, both in Alta and Baja California, or written by authors from the town while corresponding with their families back home.

The manuscripts are public and private instruments and personal letters. In the first group, there are brand registrations (14), lists of property (4), reports of damage and loss of merchandise (3), purchases of real estate and brands (4), requests for land grants and loans (3), wills (3), receipts and promissory notes (2), marriage registrations (2), the first assessment of property of San Diego, and other miscellaneous pieces (6). The personal correspondence is made up of family and personal letters (24), business and professional letters (3), and invitations (3).³

Of the forty-eight known authors, thirty-eight are men and ten are women. The list of authors includes several prominent local personalities, such as Francisco María Alvarado, an *Alcalde*, José Antonio Estudillo, the *Alcalde Comandante* and first County Assessor of San Diego under the American administration, several members of the powerful landowner families, such as the Estudillos, as well as high-ranking officers and rich merchants. There are also middle class authors, such as civil servants, low ranking officers, and store owners. Some, especially in the earlier period, are members of the local clergy. Occasionally, the authors are common laborers or semi-skilled workers for whom no biographical information has been found. The authors are mostly native speakers of Spanish, but some speak English as a first language and have learned Spanish later in life. In a few documents, some parties are Spanish-speaking, while others are not.⁴

Their levels of literacy span a range: at one end there are writers with consistent orthography and neat handwriting, both signs of high levels of education. At the other, there are illiterate authors who sign with crosses and need a scribe to compose their documents. Between these two extremes there are semi-literate speakers, with labored handwriting and inconsistent spelling. As has been pointed out before (Elizaincín *et al.* 1993), these informants are particularly valuable to historical research; they are familiar enough with writing to be able to produce documents, but not capable of overcoming the contradictions of a writing system which deviates from exact sound-symbol correspondences. One must bear in mind, however, that at the time spelling was hardly ever uniform, as the influence of the Real Academia Española was limited (Perissinotto *et al.* 1998).

3. Background: Historical Context of the Documents

3.1. California Before Annexation

The establishment of missions in the Californias started in 1697 and continued for over two centuries, until 1823, with the founding of San Francisco Solano in Sonoma. The mission fathers and the converted Indians who lived with them were protected from the incursions of non-Christian Indians by Spanish soldiers established in *presidios*. Next to these military and commercial outposts, the *pueblos* were towns of Mexican farmers meant to sustain the *presidios* and to stabilize the settlements. However, encouraging settlement proved difficult, so the numbers of non-indigenous Spanish-speakers remained low.

The early Spanish settlements in California were multilingual and multidialectal. On the one hand, the missionaries spoke not just varieties of Peninsular Spanish but also Catalan and Mallorcan (Perissinotto 1992: 38). Moreover, the neophytes spoke a staggering number of different indigenous languages (Blanco 1971:87 estimates 22 language families and 138 varieties). Finally, the soldiers and settlers came from various locations in Mexico, such as Sonora, Sinaloa, and Baja California, and brought with them their regional dialects (Perissinotto 1992).

With Mexican independence in 1821, the California missions subsequently fell under the rule of the new republic, which started to distribute the land to private citizens and to foster colonization (e.g., the Híjar-Padrés plan of 1833, Sánchez 1995). By 1848 the non-indigenous population had grown to a total of 15,000 inhabitants (Marschner 2000). Additionally, American and European merchants and entrepreneurs had started arriving in California before Mexican independence, and their numbers grew steadily after it. By 1848, the non-Hispanic foreign-born population numbered 6,500, a third of the total non-indigenous inhabitants (Francis 1976). They often converted to Catholicism and married Mexican women, becoming fully accepted members of the local society and acquiring citizenship and property (Sánchez 1995). At the same time, the indigenous population of the region dwindled. By the time of mission secularization by the Mexican government, they were down to around 100,000, or one

third of their original numbers, having been decimated by European diseases, forced labor, and starvation (Hendrick 1976).

California, like other marginal areas of Spanish America, was mainly an oral society until the mid-19th century. The development of education was limited by the area's low population density. Education for Native Americans was religious and vocational, but even that for non-indigenous children was rudimentary and intermittent. Few children, mostly boys, attended school, and they did so briefly (San Diego Historical Society, henceforth SDHS, Subject File # 588). Children were taught to read and write, the basics of arithmetic, and religious doctrine. Education for girls was available in very few locations, such as Santa Barbara (Campbell 1997). This was in spite of the efforts of some Californio authorities, who were in favor of mandatory school attendance and taxes (Falk 1968). Access to books was limited because there were no public libraries and even private collections were heavily censored by the missionaries (Sánchez 1995).

The source of most of the documents studied in the present work is San Diego de Alcalá, the first mission founded in Alta California (1769). It grew to become the most populous, with 1,523 souls in the 1790s. The population of the *presidio* was much smaller (160 in 1800, 237 in 1811) (Griswold *et al.* forthcoming). The state of education in San Diego was no exception to the general rule in California. Suffice it to say that the local school was closed between 1800 and 1828, and by 1834 it was so inadequate that the governor exempted pupils from attending if it inconvenienced their parents (SDHS, Subject File #588).

3.2. California After Annexation

After American annexation in 1848 there were profound population changes in California. The new territory was flooded by newcomers, attracted by the lure of gold and land. It is estimated that the non-indigenous population exploded to 200,000 by 1852 (Marschner 2000), a twelvefold increase in four years. Californios were not only outnumbered but saw their social and economic power undermined. Although the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was supposed to protect their property and land rights, in fact they often lacked the titles that the Board of Land Commissioners required as proof of ownership. They had to fight long and costly legal battles against Anglo squatters, which often resulted in the loss of their land, either from court decrees or mounting legal fees. In an ironic twist of their fortunes, the Californios, who had at first been outnumbered by the Native American population they dominated, within a few years of the Mexican-American war found themselves outnumbered again, this time by the Anglos who dominated them (Griswold del Castillo *et al.* forthcoming).

The influx of immigrants was not as dramatic in San Diego as in northern California, since the area was too far from the mining centers to be affected by the gold rush. However, the population of the county did double, from an estimated 350 in 1846 to over 700 in 1850, and its internal make-up also changed quite considerably (Griswold del Castillo *et al.* forthcoming). Whereas in 1850 Mexican households were more numerous than Anglo and mixed households combined (60% of the total), in 1870 they had become a minority (17%). On the other hand, the number of mixed households, resulting from the marriage of an Anglo man and a Mexican woman, had become quite significant (20% in 1860) (Griswold del Castillo *et al.* forthcoming).

By 1880, the number of Mexicans had increased slightly, but their relative weight as a percentage of the total population was very low, at under 10%; the number of Anglos now exceeded that figure at least eightfold. In subsequent years, the percentage of Mexicans would dip even further (to 2.3% in 1890) and would only start to pick up again in the 1910s and 1920s, due to waves of migration caused by the Mexican Revolution (SDHS, Subject File # 490).

With American annexation, there was rapid expansion of California schools in an effort to keep up with the population boom. However, the brief educational plan included in the first Californian Constitution of 1849 was rather inadequate. In 1855, the state superintendent, Paul Hubbs, complained that 75% of Californian children were still illiterate. It was not until 1874 that school attendance became compulsory (Hendrick 1980). However, Spanish-speaking children were less likely to attend public school, since they often suffered punishment for speaking their language (Griswold del Castillo 1979).

In San Diego some efforts were made to accommodate Hispanic students. For example, in 1851, the first village school with a bilingual curriculum was devised and implemented by W. P. Toler.⁵ However, the school did not last beyond six months, and there were no public schools open in the city between 1851 and 1854. When the first permanent school was opened in 1854, education was conducted in English. There were other sporadic efforts to reintroduce Spanish, but instruction in English was the norm (Wilson 1942).⁶

4. Contact between English and Spanish

The documents show that even after annexation, both in the public and private spheres, the lives of Californios were lived in English and Spanish, and so were those of the Anglo newcomers, especially the earlier arrivals. In the documents immediately following annexation, in particular, Spanish and English are not clearly distinguished as a low/high pair in a diglossic dyad. In fact, Spanish is accepted or at least tolerated in the public domain. It becomes apparent that, while English became more and more predominant, Spanish did not disappear overnight and for a time the relationship between the two was fluid and dynamic. For example, in six of the seventy-two documents, the body is written in Spanish, signed by Spanish- and/or English-speaking witnesses, and followed by additional transactions, notarial certifications, emendations, or other explanatory notes in English. The Spanish original is never followed by a translation, which presumably means that the notaries or the authorities were in a position to read and witness the original as submitted to them in Spanish, or relied on interpreters, translators, or other means to understand it. It could also indicate a shortage of qualified translators who could carry out the job. This warrants further study.

In some documents the Spanish text has actually been produced by non-native speakers, either on their own behalf or in the name of someone else. In the earlier documents, written during the Spanish and Mexican periods, this is simply an attempt to communicate in the language of the land, sometimes as civil servants for the government (e.g., Fitch, 1845, and Bona, 1846).⁷ In the later documents produced in Alta California, English native speakers use Spanish to communicate with or on behalf of Spanish monolinguals. Occasionally, the nationality of the writer can be deduced from the signature alone (Ensworth, 1858). In other cases, they do not appear in the document as authors but as witnesses, while the nominal author signs with a cross (Cota, 1884). Finally, there are cases where the identity of the English-dominant writer is shrouded in mystery, as when they act as anonymous scribes (Victoria Domínguez de Estudillo, 1873).

Non-natives often reveal their status through the linguistic features of the documents. For example, there may be instances of confusion of vowel quality: *potres o patrancas* for *potros o potrancas*, *ducomenta* for *documento* (Cota, 1884, 1.9, 1.12), *espirita* for *espíritu* (Victoria Domínguez de Estudillo, 1873, 1.2). These are attributable to the reduction of unstressed vowels to schwa transferred from English to Spanish. Another sign of non-native speaker status is lack of gender concord: *lacra ninguno, los mismas animales* (Cota, 1884, 1.8, 1.9), a feature one could expect from a speaker whose native language lacks grammatical gender. Occasionally, one finds errors or omissions in the use of prepositions: *ygal de que se figura* (Bona, 1846, 1.7-8). The evidence is sometimes subtler. For example, in a clean copy of a rough draft of a will, the scribe confuses the reflexive passive marker *se* and the indirect object *le*: *entre los cuales mando y es mi Voluntad que le distribuyan mis bienes* for *que se distribuyan mis bienes*; *mando que antes que le proceda a reparticion alguna de mis bienes, le paguen primero todas mis deudas* instead of *se proceda* and *se paguen* (Victoria Domínguez de Estudillo, 1873, arts. 4, and 8). Although this mistake would not have been possible in a native speaker, it reveals considerable knowledge of Spanish, since the substitution is not arbitrary and results in an existing, albeit incorrect, personal pronoun.

To summarize this section, then, Spanish and English coexist side by side in some documents, as evidenced by the alternating use of the two codes and by errors attributable to English native speakers. In what follows, the linguistic characteristics of the documents are considered. A close examination will show that they mirror the society that produced them in other ways.

5. Linguistic Features of the Documents

A linguistic analysis of the documents reveals three main characteristics of the Spanish of San Diego. Firstly, it is a conservative variety, with some archaic and rural features, which could be expected, given the town's isolation and the tendency for colonies to be more conservative than the metropoli (Penny 1991:7). Although some of the lexical and syntactic archaisms could be expected in the formulaic language of deeds, contracts, and wills, those are by no means the only documents that exhibit them. Rural features are often found in informal letters and in legal documents penned by semi-literate writers (cf. Lapesa 1968:298-306). Secondly, it is a variety closely related to those of Mexico, a claim that can be substantiated with phonological, syntactic, and lexical evidence (cf. Perissinotto 1992). The final feature of San Diego Spanish makes its appearance after the annexation of California to the United States. It is, of course, the innovation brought about by the influence of English, which is only noticeable in the later documents and tends to be restricted to the borrowing of a few lexical items and some syntactic and semantic calques.

What follows is a description of the features found in the various levels of linguistic analysis. It includes phonological features as revealed in the orthography, morphological features of the verbal paradigm, syntactic features such as concord, agreement, and word order, and the lexicon.⁸

5.1. Phonology

Some of the phonological characteristics found in the dialect are general for American Spanish, while others are typical of Mexico, especially the northern regions. For example, in the consonantal system, the majority of the documents exhibit widespread confusion of the grapheme <s> with <c> and <z>, a sign of Panhispanic *seseo* (i.e., lack of distinction between the alveolar sibilant /s/ and the interdental /θ/). The first manifestations occur very early, in the Spanish period: *catesismo*, *erudision* (Fiscal-Gentil, 1803, l. 59 and 62). Similarly, the documents show instances of *yeísmo*, confusion of <y> and <ll>, an indication that the palatal lateral /ɲ/ had merged with the palatal fricative /y/. The first evidence of *yeísmo* also appears early: *si lo hayare por conveniente* (Fiscal-Gentil, 1803, l.73); other later examples include *lluntas de buelles* (Rodríguez, 1857, l. 14-15).

It should also be noted that the present sample of San Diego Spanish rarely exhibits loss of /-s/, even in letters by semi-literate speakers, whose spelling is otherwise rife with pronunciation-driven errors. The cases of /-s/ loss can normally be attributed to morphosyntactic ambiguity rather than phonological erosion; examples shall be discussed in the corresponding section. It can be deduced, then, that aspiration was not a dominant feature, a fact in keeping with the general characteristics of most Mexican varieties (but cf. Lipski 1994).

The hypothesis of the connection of San Diego Spanish with Northern Mexican varieties is strengthened by examples, in the later letters, of the elimination of the palatal /y/ when flanked by a high vowel on either side, a well described feature of northern Mexican and Chicano dialects: *semia* for *semilla* (Rodríguez, 1857, l.7) (Ross 1980; cf. also Lope Blanch 1992, especially *silla*, 266, and *tortilla*, 267). The opposite phenomenon, i.e., the hypercorrect appearance of the grapheme <y>, is also documented: *cayida* for *caída* (Ortega, 1888, l.12) (cf. Lope Blanch 1992, *correa*, 274).

Another consonantal feature common to non-standard varieties (Penny 1991:92) is the reduction of complex coda clusters and the weakening or loss of coda obstruents: *exclusiva* (Silva, 1872, l.19), *dotor* (Alvarado, unknown date, l. 41), *autual* (Armenta, 1839, l.1), *salu* for *salud* (María Alvarez y Bona, 1849, l. 8).

Finally, the vowel system also shows features common to many rural varieties of Spanish (Lapesa 1968:299), such as confusion of high and mid vowels: *sirvirá* (Bona, 1846, l.8 and l.10), *agusto* for *agosto* (Olvera, 1857, l.45); diphthongization of mid-vowels: *liciencia* (Bona, 1846, l.3); and diphthongization of hiatus: *Juaquinito* (Alfredo Stokes, 1873, l. 58); *falsiarlo* (Arce, 1841, l.15); cf. also the hypercorrect *crear [ganado]* (Armenta, 1839, l.1).

5.2. Morphology

Due to space constraints, only two aspects of verbal morphology shall be addressed, namely, the future indicative forms and the subjunctive mood. On both counts, the Spanish of San Diego is quite conservative, keeping the synthetic future and a full array of subjunctive forms well into the 19th century. Innovations come late and some are attributable to contact with English.

Let us first consider the situation of the future. It has been said before that the synthetic future (*cantaré*) is less frequent in American Spanish than in its Peninsular counterpart (Moreno de Alba, 1978:90 and references therein). It has been partially replaced by the simple present and by the periphrastic *ir + a + infinitive* construction. It has been claimed that this replacement of the synthetic by the analytic forms is accelerated in U.S. Spanish due to its contact with English (Gutiérrez 1990, Villa 1997). On the other hand, Acevedo (2000) claims that in California between 1770 and 1880 the synthetic future is preferred. The present findings agree with Acevedo: the synthetic future is the only form found in the documents until 1873 (1). The earlier documents are formal, which might explain the absence of the more innovative *ir + a + inf.* construction. However, even in the more informal letters, the synthetic future predominates throughout (2) and the periphrastic forms appears late (3).

1. a. Mediante loqual podrá V.E. si fuere servido mandar (Fiscal-Gentil, 1803, l. 28-29)
b. Mi derecho al Rancho San Jacinto, y Janal sera distribuido en iguales partes (Victoria Domínguez de Estudillo, 1873, l. 38)
2. a. Esto no obstante, quedaré satisfecho con lo que U. dispusiere (Agustín Olvera, 1862, l. 20-21)
b. el doctor me ha dado esperanzas que estaré bueno en una semana más (Adolfo Stokes, 1873, l. 33-35)
3. digale a Mi Viegita que voy a llevar muchas semillas de florecitas (Adolfo Stokes, 1873, l. 41-43)

An additional point on which the present data agree with Acevedo's is the different uses of the two future forms. The periphrastic construction is restricted to expressing future time, not modality (Moreno de Alba 1978: 89-95) and is used in contexts of planning (3) and certainty (4). The synthetic forms, on the other hand, can be used for any context of futurity, including plans (5a), certainty (5b), hypotheses (5c), predictions and conditioned events (5d), and directives (5e).

4. En fin veremos como saldremos del paso – Lo que si creo es que voy á perder todo el pelo (Adolfo Stokes, 1878, l.19)
5. a. tan pronto como regrese, me hire aberlos (José Ignacio Argüello, 1861, l. 14-15)
b. ya me la pagaras – Te voy a hacer que me espulgues por esto (Alfredo Stokes, 1888, l. 27-29)
c. en este momento que seran las cuatro de la tarde (José Ramón Argüello, 1872, l. 4-5)
d. beo desde aqui su sufrimiento y pior sera para héya cuando se en cuentre aqui solita (José Ignacio Argüello, 1861, l. 22-24)
e. también me hara favor de entregarle a mi prima Refujio un regalo (Castro, 1860, l. 10-11)

As far as the subjunctive is concerned, it has been noted in the past that the entire mode undergoes simplification in California Spanish. Acevedo (2000), for example, finds the future perfect (*hubiere + cantado*) only once before the end of the 18th century, while the future subjunctive (*cantare*) exhibits little vitality and is reduced to set phrases. Penny (1991:179) likewise indicates the decline of the future subjunctive from the 18th century onward and its loss in the 19th century, and Moreno de Alba (1978:164) shows its demise not only in Mexican but also in general Spanish.

In the San Diego documents studied, however, the situation of subjunctive tenses is somewhat different. The future subjunctive shows no sign of loss of vitality until at least the mid-19th century (6). After that, it is replaced by other tenses of the subjunctive, such as the present (7), in a process parallel to that of other varieties of Spanish.

6. a. si le pareciere oportuno (Beltrán, 1794, 1.22-23)
 b. quien de ella causa poder hubiere o derecho representare (Alvarado, 1845, 1.20-22)
 c. Si estuviere ahí mi compadre Dⁿ Santiaguito digale lomismo (Agustín Olvera, 1855, 1. 18)
7. los señores jueces y tribunales que de su causa puedan y deban conocer (cf. pudieren y debieren) (Alvarado, 1845, 1.58-60)

The imperfect subjunctive is sometimes used instead of the conditional, a feature typical of Mexican Spanish (Moreno de Alba 1978:108) which points to the lineage of the variety spoken in San Diego (cf. the standard construction in 8 and its variant in 9).

8. si yo estuviera en aptitud de pagarlos no les diria nada (Alfredo Stokes, 1878, 1.61-63)
9. que adivine generosamente todo lo que deseara decirle y tendrá una idea de mis sentimientos (Alfredo Stokes, 1878, 1.56)

Finally, a verbal innovation which possibly shows the influence of English involves the use of the future indicative in subordinate clauses introduced by *esperar*, where canonical usage requires present subjunctive (10). In the later letters, written by speakers brought up after the American annexation, several cases are found where *esperar* is followed by the future indicative, following the English construction (11) (cf. the notion of transfer in Silva-Corvalán 2001:272).

10. a. espero que cuando reciba esta ya esten buenos y sin novedad (Alfredo Stokes, 1878, 1. 25-26)
 b. espero que sigas mejor de tus males (Josefa del Castillo, 1892, 1.13-14)
11. a. Espero q[u]e cuando esta llegue a sus manos se encontrará disfrutando de buena salud (Adolfo Stokes, 1894, 1 6-8)
 b. y espero no dudara Ud. q[ue] pudiendo no me escusaria de adelantarle lo q[ue] tanto necesita (Adolfo Stokes, 1894, 1.67-71)

To sum up, then, the verbal paradigm shows a conservative tendency in San Diego, which keeps distinctions longer than documents analyzed by other authors. San Diego Spanish is also linked to Mexican dialects and starts to show some degree of convergence with English.

5.3. Syntax

The documents exhibit some examples of loss of morphological features which are the manifestation of syntactic relations, such as concord and agreement, but these affect only marginal or doubtful constructions. It is unlikely that they are the consequence of syntactic simplification due to the contact with English. Rather, it is proposed here that they are the result of structural ambiguity.

Lack of concord within the noun phrase is not frequent and appears in legal formulas, strongly suggesting that it is due to imperfect adaptation of the formula itself. Some examples are: *el expresada Hannah Mannasse, del referido Hannah Mannasse* (Silva, 1872, 1.12 and 1.20). There are very few examples of lack of number concord: *de como 21 año* (Molino, 1861/62, 1.55), where concord was established between the noun and the last digit in *veintiuno*, rather than they entire figure. The neuter article *lo* triggers the absence of number concord in some authors: *veo en hella lo conforme que estan los dos* (Argüello, 1862, 1.9-10); *lo malo q[u]e están todos los negocios* (Adolfo Stokes, 1894, 1.11-12). As for lack of subject-verb agreement, it can appear when syntactic structure and semantics are at odds, for example, with singular collective nouns: *la familia quieren aprovechar estos días* (José Argüello, 1855, 1. 12-13). In most cases, then, the loss of concord and agreement can be attributed to ambiguity.

The documents exhibit other syntactic peculiarities. Some of these, especially word order, point to the dialect's archaism. Others, such as the use of certain prepositions, show the connection between

San Diego Spanish and Mexican varieties. Finally, the later documents exhibit sporadic cases of syntactic calquing from English (a type of transfer described in Silva-Corvalán 2001:272).

Archaic verb-final word order is found especially often in subordinate clauses. Although this happens predominantly in the legal documents (12a), it is not impossible to find in personal letters (12b-c). There are even occasional examples of verb-final main clauses (12d).

12. a. que de su causa puedan y deban conocer (Alvarado, 1845, l.56)
- b. despues de insertada pondrá la formulita que á esta tambien le adjunto (Agustín Olvera, 1860, l.26-27)
- c. sin mas tu madre que verte de sea (María P. de Ortega, 1888, l.33-34)
- d. Siquiera que Uds me escribi[e]ran estaria mas tranquila, pero nada se (María P. de Ortega, 1888, l. 20)

Other archaic features show up in relative clauses. For example, the legal documents occasionally have absolute participial constructions acting as adverbial adjuncts: *y presentados que les sean los documentos por mi Albasea y tutor de bienes* (Alvarado, unknown date, l. 43-44) (Keniston 1937:174). In other cases, relative clauses include their antecedent resumptively (13), something normally disallowed in modern Spanish syntax, but which has been documented for other historical varieties of American Spanish (Elizaincín *et al.* 1997).

13. una casa de su habitación que se halla hubicada en la plaza de este pueblo contigua á la casa de Don Tomás Retinton, compuesta de cuatro cuartos ó recámaras, una sala y cocina, cuyo terreno comprende trece varas de frente hacia el Norte, la cual casa le cupo por donación espontánea que le hizo su finado Esposo Hilario Ponciano (Alvarado, 1845, l. 22-30)

As far as the syntactic features close to Mexican Spanish, it can be pointed out that a number of prepositions are used in constructions not found in general Spanish. For example, *hasta* sometimes marks the beginning of an action rather than its completion (Lope Blanch 1953: 41) (14).

14. a. he estado pidiendo a Dn Abel su cuenta y la copia del pagaré y hasta hoy [...] me ha entregado el papelito. (Agustín Olvera, 1857, l.14-18)
- b. Pues hasta ayer resibi tu apresiabile Carta. (Eduardo Stokes, 1891, l.6)

Finally, some syntactic calques from English are worthy of mention. For example, there are indirect questions with English word order: *entiendo que la cadena significa* (Alfredo Stokes, 1888, l.19-20). Sporadically, an idiomatic expression is also calqued on an English model: *hay algún dicho al efecto de que* (Alfredo Stokes, 1888, l.12-13), a calque on ‘there’s a saying to the effect that.’ It must be stated, however, that these constructions are very infrequent, and attributable in their entirety to the last generation of Spanish-speakers, born around 1850.

5.4. Lexicon

The lexicon exhibits the same characteristics found in the other levels of analysis, namely, archaisms, Mexicanisms, and a few incipient Anglicisms. Each one of these shall be considered in turn.

Lexical archaisms are often attributable to the legal nature of the documents. The verb *haber*, for example may retain its lexical usage: *de una casa que uvo de la mision* (Arena, 1835, l.29).

That the vocabulary of San Diego Spanish is indebted to that of Mexico is apparent from the earliest stages. As early as 1793, the receipts and bills of lading have references to *panocha* and *chile* (Grafera, 1793, l.9 and l.13), a clear reflection of the Mexican heritage of the Californian diet (cf. also Perissinotto 1992). Other Mexicanisms refer to agricultural terms, such as *rancho* (in Escajadillo, 1854, l. 4; Victoria Domínguez de Estudillo, 1873, l. 37; Brach, 1878, l.3, etc.), *jacal* (Estudillo, 1850, #16), *bronco* (Estudillo, 1850, #17), and *pasto* (Brach, 1878, l. 41). The general Mexican usage of the

verb *piscar* tends to be reserved for the harvest of corn, but the documents reflect the usage in northern Mexican and U.S. varieties of Spanish, where it is extended to other crops, such as potatoes (Santamaría 1983, Lara 1996, Gómez de Silva 2001, Galván and Teschner 1989) (example in Eduardo Stokes, 1891, 1.12). Other colloquial Mexicanisms are *la vieja*, to designate the wife (Eduardo Stokes, 1891, 1.18) and *chiqueo* for excessive care or spoiling (Alfredo Stokes, 1873, 1.26-27).

Apart from these lexical items, the Mexican influence is seen in the semantics of adverbs. Thus, *luego* is used in the etymological sense of ‘immediately,’ rather than ‘later’ (15). Also revealing is the use of *siempre* as an adversative rather than a temporal adverb (Lope Blanch 1953:60) (16).

15. que no seballa asta que yo lo bea, que meaga el favor de esperarme, pues luego meboi (José Ygnacio Argüello, 1861, 1.61-63)

16. Pero siempre si no se alivia (María Pico de Ortega, 1888, 1.15-16)

Anglicisms are non-existent until after the American annexation in 1848. The first isolated cases involve proper names flagged with punctuation devices such as semi-colons: *al [baile] que se dará esta noche á las 8 en el “Franklin House”* (Estudillo, 1865, 1.3-4). English terms also act as a clarification when the author anticipates a problem for an English-dominant reader: *Un establecimiento mercantil al menudeo (retail)* (Rodríguez, 1854, 1.6). In addition to these intentional translations, there are borrowings that seem to have been completely spontaneous and gone unnoticed and uncorrected: *lot* and *goat* (Serrano, 1854, 1.4 and 1.10).

In the later documents, the inroads of Anglo culture in the lives of the Californios are apparent in the increasing numbers of borrowings of culturally specific terms. Thus, one reads: *con la escritura de Usted y la del Sheriff* (Ensworth, 1858, 1.54); *como presente de Cristmas* (Alfredo Stokes, 1878, 1.21-23); *por el ‘Post Office’ remito una encomienda* (Alfredo Stokes, 1888, 1.34-35); *yo aun no hé pagado mis taxes* (Adolfo Stokes, 1894, 1.16-17). It must be noted that even in the later letters these borrowings never become too prevalent and hardly ever involve semantic extension of pre-existing Spanish terms. One exception to the above is *prospecto*, used with the meaning of ‘prospect’ rather than its standard Spanish meaning, ‘prospectus’: *con el prospecto del año q[u]’ está pintando tan mal* (Adolfo Stokes, 1894, 1.14-16).

6. Conclusions

It can be concluded from the documentary evidence that, for the Californios of San Diego, Spanish continues to be a preferred language of written communication well into the century. In fact, it is a language used often by Anglos when they communicate with or on behalf of these Spanish speakers.

The formal features present in the documents suggest that the Spanish of the San Diego area in the 19th century is in many ways conservative. For example, it retains the synthetic future and the future subjunctive forms until rather late in the century. It also has several characteristics of marginal varieties, such as archaisms (word order of relative clauses, use of *haber* as a lexical verb), and rural features (simplification of consonantal clusters, confusion of high and mid vowels).

The variety is also closely connected to the dialects spoken in Mexico. It exhibits a consonantal system with *seseo*, *yeísmo*, loss of /y/ next to high vowels, and conservation of /-s/. It also shows these connections in its lexicon and in the semantics of prepositions and adverbs.

As for the influence of English, although the Spanish of San Diego adopts some borrowings and calques, few structures appear to be substantially affected by the contact. For example, the documents show little evidence of accelerated simplification of the verbal paradigm and few of the syntactic calques result in system-wide changes, with the possible exception of *esperar* + future.

There are several possible avenues for future research. Additional data would be particularly useful to study a number of outstanding structural issues, such as the interplay between the *-ra* and *-se* imperfect subjunctive forms, and the sequencing of tenses in conditional sentences. Moreover, the analysis of pragmatic features such as terms of endearment and forms of address would provide

insights into the prevalent politeness system. A sociolinguistic analysis is also possible if enough data can be collected and classified according to age, gender, and class of their authors. Finally, this historical variety could be compared with other types of Spanish of the Southwest and with the evolution of Spanish in other borderlands.

Notes

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¹. A detailed classification of each linguistic feature using social parameters (such as age, sex, class) would certainly be desirable if each linguistic feature appeared frequently enough to make this type of analysis meaningful and if it were possible to establish the social parameters beyond doubt. At the present time, neither of those conditions is present, so a panoramic linguistic study was preferred.

². Two of the documents were not dated, but they were written by people alive during the mid-19th century.

³. Due to space constraints, we are limited to the general description presented above. A detailed list of all seventy-two documents would take up considerably more space than available.

⁴. It would be desirable to provide biographical information about each author. Unfortunately, this information is available only for a minority of prominent authors.

⁵. Toler, the son of an American diplomat and a Spanish mother, was born in Venezuela and schooled there and in Virginia. He arrived in San Diego in 1850, after serving in the U.S. Navy, and was active in local government. However, Toler's record did not protect him from accusations of being un-American by those who opposed his teaching in a language other than English. (SDHS Biographical File # 220).

⁶. By contrast, the bilingual education experiment lasted longer in Los Angeles. There, the Spanish language school survived between 1848 and 1853, but by then, the English language school was opened and Spanish retreated to the private Catholic schools (Díaz de Cossio *et al.* 1997).

⁷. The documents are identified with the author's name, the year, and where appropriate, the exact line or paragraph from the transcriptions.

⁸. Orthography itself will not be dealt with in detail in the paper. However, some comments are in order here. With the exception of early documents produced by ecclesiastics, spelling is in general chaotic. There are frequent errors involving pairs of letters used to represent the same phoneme, such as and <v>: *llebe* for *leve* (Silva, 1872, 1.18); <c> and <z>: *Diziembre* for *diciembre* (Bejar, 1800, 1.16). The grapheme <h> is often absent from positions where standard orthography requires it and vice versa: *proive* for *prohíbe* (Silva, 1872, 1.22), *huse* for *use* (Gastelum, 1839, 1.9). Finally, there is quite considerable hesitation in the representation of the trill and tap: *rresguardo* (Armenta, July 1839, 1.15), *fiero*, *herar*, *tereno* (id., 1. 7, 8, and 11). Two additional inconsistencies of spelling may well have stemmed from changes in the orthographic rules of the Spanish Royal Academy, rather than ignorance of those rules. For example, in several documents <c> and <q> are used in front of [ua]: *quatro* instead of *cuatro* (Bejar, 1800, 1.5). Until 1803, <qua> was the spelling prescribed for [kua], and it was not until 1817 that it was replaced by its modern spelling. Finally, the grapheme <y> is used to represent the vowel sound [i], and inversely, <i> is used to represent the palatal semiconsonant [y]: *ylustre* instead of *ilustre* (Arena, 1835, 1.21), *estoi* for *estoy* (María P. de Ortega, 1888, 1.7). The orthographic value of <y> was a matter of considerable fluctuation in the 18th century (Rosenblat 1951).

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