Host Family Speech:
An examination of stylistic variation as a form of linguistic accommodation towards the speech of foreign exchange students

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1. Introduction

- “Style is everything and everywhere,”
  (Coupland, 2001)

- Stylistic variation of monolingual speakers
  - Labov (1984): “Styles may be ordered along a single dimension, measured by the amount of attention paid to speech.”

- Interlocutor
  - Linguistic accommodation theory (Giles, 1973)
1.1 Circumscribing the variables

- Word- and syllable-final /s/ weakening
  - Aspiration [s] > [h]
    - Caballo[s] > caballo[h]
  - Deletion [s] > [Ø]
    - Caballo[s] > caballo[Ø]

- Vocalization of final liquids
  - Co[l]mado > co[i] mado
  - Ca[r]ne > ca[i] ne

- Velarization of final /n/
  - Pa[n] > pa[ŋ]

(Lipski, 1996)
1.2 Research Questions

I. How does the host family use standard stylistic variants as a way to accommodate the speech of the American students?

II. Do the members of the host family who have had the most experience with non-native speakers of Spanish tend to use more standard stylistic variants to accommodate towards the speech of the American students?
3. Methodology

- **Data collection:** home video clips
  - Relaxed, informal
  - Daily life experiences

- Only analyzed utterances that were turns in a conversation

- Omitted utterances with an undetermined interlocutor, or an interlocutor that was not family or student
3.1 Informants

Díaz Family

Tatiana

Julissa

Joselyn

Francisco

Caroline

Kelly

Griselda

Elisa

Carmen
3.2 Procedures

- The recordings were transcribed

- The exchanges were divided into groups according to interlocutor

- The use of stylistic variants in the host family members’ speech was identified and coded

- The tokens of stylistic variation in articulation were examined with PRAAT and analyzed with GoldVarb X
4. Results

- The use of cibaeña stylistic variants:
  - 347 tokens
  - Final /s/ (n = 185)
  - Final /n/ (n = 102)
  - Liquids (n = 60)
4.1 Figure 1: The use of standard versus cibeña speech variants across two interlocutor groups

- Student:
  - Cibaeña: 75.3% (N = 165)
  - Standard: 24.7% (N = 54)

- Family:
  - Cibaeña: 60.2% (N = 62)
  - Standard: 39.8% (N = 41)
4.2 Figure 2: A closer look at the use of cibaeña stylistic variants across two interlocutor groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/n/</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liquids</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3 Figure 3: The use of standard speech variants by each part of the host family across two interlocutor groups.

- **Student**
  - Griselda: 83% (N = 92)
  - Francesca: 63% (N = 55)
  - Tatiana: 69% (N = 20)

- **Family**
  - Griselda: 30% (N = 3)
  - Francesca: 39% (N = 17)
  - Tatiana: 47% (N = 20)
5. Conclusion

I. Does the host family use stylistic variants as a way to accommodate the speech of the American students? Yes, but why?

II. Do the members of the host family who have had the most experience with non-native speakers of Spanish tend to use more stylistic variants to accommodate towards the speech of the American students? Requires further research.
Thank you!

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