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
  - Caroline

- Francesca
  - Francina
  - 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
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% (N = 21)</td>
<td>64% (N = 42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/n/</td>
<td>30% (N = 22)</td>
<td>50% (N = 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liquids</td>
<td>33% (N = 11)</td>
<td>58% (N = 11)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
4.3 Figure 3: The use of standard speech variants by each part of the host family across two interlocutor groups

![Bar chart showing the use of standard speech variants by each part of the host family across two interlocutor groups.

- Student:
  - Griselda: 83 out of 92 (N = 92)
  - Francesca: 69 out of 55 (N = 55)
  - Tatiana: 63 out of 17 (N = 17)

- Family:
  - Griselda: 30 out of 3 (N = 3)
  - Francesca: 39 out of 17 (N = 17)
  - Tatiana: 47 out of 20 (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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