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

Cecily Corbett
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 cibeneña speech variants across two interlocutor groups
4.2 Figure 2: A closer look at the use of cibaeña stylistic variants across two interlocutor groups

![Bar chart showing the use of /s/, /n/, and liquids in student and family groups.]

- **Student Groups**
  - /s/: 19% (N = 21)
  - /n/: 30% (N = 22)
  - Liquids: 33% (N = 11)

- **Family Groups**
  - /s/: 64% (N = 42)
  - /n/: 50% (N = 9)
  - Liquids: 58% (N = 11)
4.3 Figure 3: The use of standard speech variants by each part of the host family across two interlocutor groups.
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!

ccorbett@albany.edu