
In Spanish there is considerable variation in the pronouns of personal address, particularly in the second-person singular and plural. Although within a given dialect zone usage is generally consistent within specific cohorts, in multi-dialect contact environments the situation becomes more complex. Contact with languages other than Spanish provides yet another dimension of potential variation. This book deals with pronominal address among Spanish-speaking immigrants in Australia, both as a function of contact with several varieties of Spanish and of contact with English. In Australia there are some 100,000 Spanish speakers, extrapolating from the 2001 census, representing in descending order Chile, Spain, Argentina, El Salvador, Uruguay, Peru, Colombia, and Mexico. Roughly one fifth of Australia’s Spanish speakers live in Melbourne, where the author’s research was conducted. The number and dialectal diversity of Spanish speakers in Australia combine to form a suitable environment for the observation of linguistic change, including dialect leveling, accommodation, language maintenance vs. language shift, and spontaneous innovation.

The book contains brief introductory and concluding chapters, six substantive chapters, plus appendices and a comprehensive bibliography. Following the introduction, Chapters Two and Three review previous studies on address pronouns in general and Spanish pronominal address systems, respectively. The principal focus is the familiar-formal distinction, referred to as T/V since Brown and Gilman’s seminal studies on the French second-person pronouns *tu* and *vous.* With respect to Spanish dialects in contact, two fundamental axes of potential variation emerge. The first involves the choice of familiar vs. formal second-personal subject pronouns, a distinction which is only manifested in the singular (except for Spain, where the familiar-formal distinction is also maintained in the second-person plural). The second dimension involves the specific choice of second-person familiar pronouns, including the canonical Spanish *tú,* the regionally more limited (and often sociolinguistically marked) *vos,* and the possible use of the second-person formal pronoun *usted* to express familiarity or solidarity.

Chapter Four provides historical and demographic information on Spanish speakers in Australia. Included is a review of studies of language maintenance in other bilingual contact environments mostly involving Spanish, in order to identify potential research variables. Given the pluricentric nature of Australia’s Spanish-speaking communities, accommodation theories will play a key role in the ensuing analysis. Chapter Five describes data collection and general methodology. The data on pronominal usage among Spanish speakers were obtained in a multifaceted approach that included focus groups, play groups, and interviews. Although the data are analyzed in detail in subsequent chapters, Chapter Five contains preliminary accounts of the focus group interactions, including indications that speakers are aware of pronominal nuances.

The results of structured interviews are presented in Chapter Six, the longest and most detailed section of the book. They are complemented by data from spontaneous observations in the playgroup setting, found in Chapter Seven. Although accurate baseline studies of pronominal usage are lacking for most of the countries of origin, Spanish speakers in Australia exhibit a range of pronominal strategies that diverge considerably from canonical norms. First, unlike in most Spanish-speaking societies, many interviewees in Australia expressed little awareness of pronominal address usage, and those who did often indicated intuitive judgments that differ from those found in patrimonial Spanish dialects. Speakers with low proficiency in Spanish showed...
some gravitation toward the familiar (tú) form, possibly indicating convergence with the single pronoun of English, but this tendency was not as pronounced as has been observed for other transitional bilingual communities. Another feature of less proficient Spanish speakers in Australia—but also found among some fluent speakers—is pronominal switching, i.e. the alternation of personal address pronouns within the same discourse span with no apparent pragmatic factors triggering the shift. The present study also contains numerous examples of accommodation among Spanish speakers from different dialect zones, with usted not surprisingly emerging as the most unmarked choice, followed by tú, and with vos highly marked and rarely used with interlocutors from countries where vos is not used.

The book under review provides a detailed qualitative analysis based on extensive interviews with fifty participants, as well as focus group interactions and observations of children and their parents at play. The resulting analysis provides a rich mosaic of personal viewpoints, semantic and pragmatic nuances, observed contradictions and inconsistencies, patterns of convergence and accommodation, and evidence of linguistic insecurity, all features of a multi-ethnic immigrant community immersed in a language and culture not their own. As such it offers a fascinating portrayal of a little-studied linguistic microcosm as well as proposed refinements to the usual descriptions of Spanish second-person pronouns that can be potentially tested against other speech communities. At the same time the sample size is small and extremely heterogeneous as regards age, socioeconomic status and level of education (in both Spanish and English), country of origin, interaction with other Spanish speakers, length of time in Australia, and proficiency in Spanish and English. In the absence of detailed quantitative studies involving control groups both in Australia and in the countries of origin (a fact that Hughson acknowledges), it is not possible to assess the relative importance of each variable. The extensive conversations with the interviewees provide many valuable clues that can readily serve as a backdrop to follow-up research, in Australia and in other Spanish-speaking communities.

In the balance, this monograph successfully models a complex emergent speech community in a fashion that will facilitate the incorporation of these data into a broader panorama of language contact environments. The limitations inherent in the sample size and composition are offset by the painstaking analysis of speech acts and metalinguistic commentary, and the results embody a surprisingly rich array of variation that challenge existing accounts of pronominal address systems in contact.

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