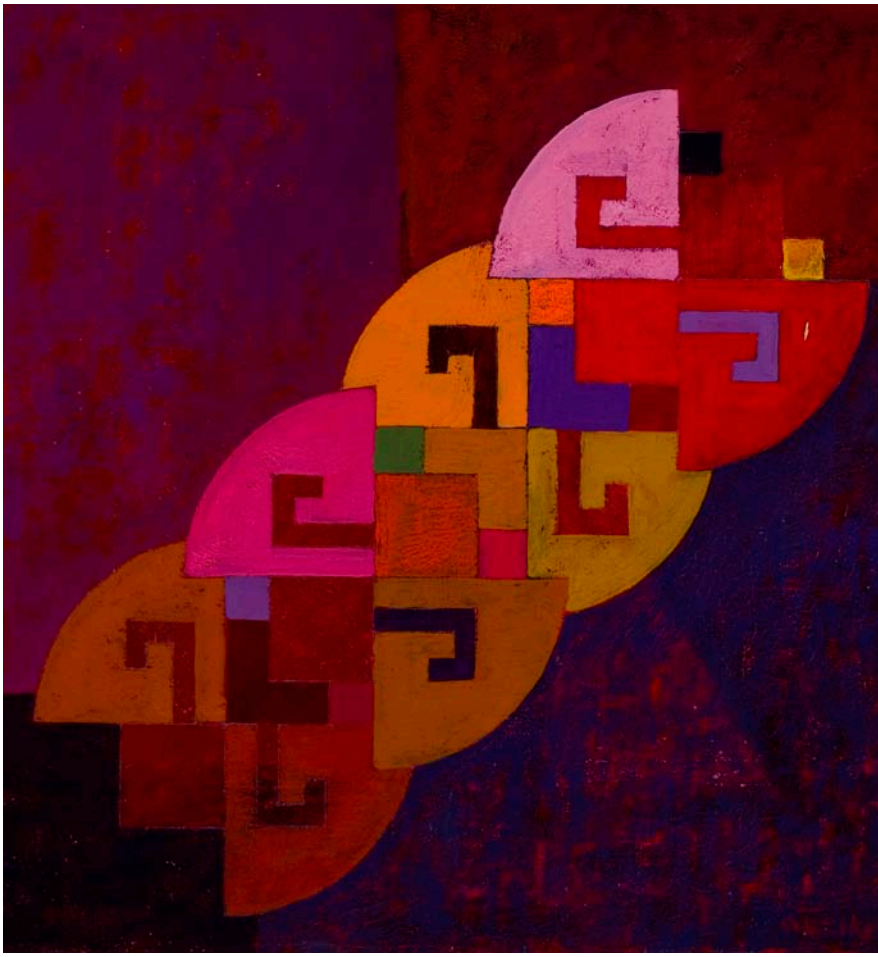
The Handbook of Hispanic Linguistics



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Editors' Note

The *Handbook of Hispanic Linguistics* is intended to present the state of the art of research in all aspects of the Spanish language. It includes chapters on all main areas of language structure (phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics), as well as chapters on sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic research related to Spanish. Research on both first- and second-language acquisition is also represented.

All chapters have undergone a review process. Our gratitude goes to several of our authors for acting as reviewers of chapters by other contributors. In addition, we are indebted to various other scholars for helping with this process, among them Inés Antón-Méndez, Xabier Artiagoitia, Kurt Blaylock, Giuli Dusias, Cecile McKee, Miguel Rodríguez-Mondoñedo, Ana Teresa Pérez-Leroux, Carme Picallo, Pilar Prieto, Andrés Saab, Victoria Vázquez, Erik Willis, and Mary Zampini.

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1 Geographical and Social Varieties of Spanish: An Overview

JOHN M. LIPSKI

1 Introduction

According to Spain's government-sponsored Cervantes Institute,[1] there are more than 400 million native or near-native speakers of Spanish in the world, distributed across every continent except Antarctica.[2] Spanish is the official language in twenty-one countries plus Puerto Rico; is the *de facto* first language for most of Gibraltar (Fierro Cubiella 1997; Kramer 1986); still maintains a small foothold in the Philippines, where it once enjoyed official status (Lipski 1987a); and is known and used on a regular basis by many people in Haiti (Ortiz López forthcoming), Aruba and Curaçao (Vaquero de Ramírez 1986), and Belize (Hagerty 1979). Moreover, in the country that harbors one of the world's largest native Spanish-speaking populations (effectively tied for second place with Colombia, Argentina, and Spain, and surpassed only by Mexico), the Spanish language has no official status at all. That country is the United States, which has at least 40 million native Spanish speakers, that is, some 10% of the world's Spanish-speaking population (Lipski 2008c).

All languages change across time and space, and Spanish is no exception. Although the Spanish language was relatively homogeneous in Spain circa 1500 – the time when Spanish first expanded beyond the boundaries of the Iberian Peninsula – it has diversified considerably as it spread over five continents during more than five hundred years. Many factors are responsible for the evolution of Spanish, including the natural drift of languages over time, contact with other languages, internal population migrations, language propagation through missionary activities, the rise of cities, and the consequent rural–urban sociolinguistic divisions, educational systems, community literacy, mass communication media, and official language policies. It is therefore not surprising that although the Spanish language retains

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a fundamental cohesiveness throughout the world, social and geographical variation is considerable. To explore all varieties of Spanish would require several volumes; the following sections offer an overview of regional and social variation in Spanish by means of a number of representative cases, selected to give a sense of the full range of possibilities.

2 Dialect divisions in Spain

Spain contains a complex array of regional and social dialects, but the most striking division – immediately noticeable by Spaniards and visitors alike – separates north and south. In the popular imagination, this translates to Castile–Andalusia, but to the extent that dialects exhibit geographical boundaries, the north–south distinction only approximately follows the borders between these historically distinct regions, while also encompassing other areas. The primary features used to impressionistically identify regional origins in Peninsular Spanish are phonetic: "southern" traits include aspiration or elision of syllable- and word-final /s/ (e.g., *vamos pues* [ˈba.moh.ˈpu̯e] 'let's go, then'), loss of word-final /ɾ/ (e.g., *por favor* [po.fa.ˈβo] 'please'), and the pronunciation of preconsonantal /l/ as [ɾ] (e.g., *soldado* [soɾ.ˈða.o] 'soldier'). Traits widely regarded as "northern" include the apico-alveolar pronunciation [s˚] of /s/, the strongly uvular pronunciation [χ] of the posterior fricative /x/ (e.g., *caja* [ˈka.χa] 'box'), and the phonological distinction /θ/-/s/ (e.g., *casa* [ˈka.s˚a] 'house' -*caza* [ˈka.θa] 'hunting'). In reality, the regional distribution of these traits does not conform to a simple north–south distinction, since the traits intersect with one another and with additional regionalized features in fashions that cannot be reduced to a single geographical matrix. Most traditional dialect classification schemes for Peninsular Spanish cluster around historically recognized kingdoms and contemporary autonomous regions, albeit with considerable overlap of defining traits along border areas (e.g., Zamora Vicente 1967 and the studies in Alvar 1996). In contemporary Spain, at least the following geographically delimited varieties of Spanish can be objectively identified by linguists, as shown in (1):

(1) Geographically delimited varieties of Spanish:
- northern Castile, including Salamanca, Valladolid, Burgos, and neighboring provinces;
- northern Extremadura and León, including the province of Cáceres, parts of León, western Salamanca province, and Zamora;
- Galicia, referring to the Spanish spoken both monolingually and in contact with Galician;
- Asturias, especially inland areas such as Oviedo;
- the interior Cantabrian region, to the south of Santander;
- the Basque Country, including Spanish as spoken monolingually and in contact with Basque;
- Catalonia, including Spanish spoken in contact with Catalan;

- southeastern Spain, including much of Valencia, Alicante, Murcia, Albacete, and southeastern La Mancha;
- eastern Andalusia, including Granada, Almería, and surrounding areas;
- western Andalusia, including Seville, Huelva, Cádiz, and the Extremadura province of Badajoz – the Spanish of Gibraltar is also included;
- south-central and southwest Spain, including areas to the south of Madrid such as Toledo and Ciudad Real.

Features specific to this expanded list of regional varieties as well as socially-stratified variables within given areas will be presented in subsequent sections.

3 Dialect divisions in Latin America

There is no consensus on the classification of Latin American Spanish dialects due to the vast territorial expanse in question, the scarcity of accurate data on the speech of many regions, and the high degree of variability due to multiple language contact environments, internal migrations, and significant rural–urban linguistic polarization. In the popular imagination (e.g., as mentioned in casual conversations), Latin American Spanish dialects are defined by national boundaries, thus Mexican Spanish, Argentine Spanish, Peruvian Spanish, etc. Objectively, such a scheme cannot be seriously maintained, except for a few small and linguistically rather homogeneous nations. Rather, Latin American Spanish is roughly divided into geographical dialect zones based on patterns of settlement and colonial administration, contact with indigenous and immigrant languages, and relative proportions of rural and urban speech communities. For pedagogical purposes, the following classification, which combines phonetic, morphological, socio-historical, and language-contact data, provides a reasonable approximation to actually observable dialect variation in Latin America. This classification, shown in (2), is based on Lipski (1994), where the other dialect classifications are also discussed:

(2) Latin American Spanish dialect classifications:
- Mexico (except for coastal areas) and southwestern United States;
- Caribbean region: Cuba, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Panama, Caribbean coast of Colombia and Venezuela, Caribbean coast of Mexico, and also Mexico's Pacific coast;
- Guatemala, parts of the Yucatan, and Costa Rica;
- El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua;
- Colombia (interior) and neighboring highland areas of Venezuela;
- Pacific coast of Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru;
- Andean regions of Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, northwest Argentina, and northeast Chile;
- Chile;
- Paraguay, northeastern Argentina, and eastern Bolivia;
- Argentina (except for extreme northwest and northeast) and Uruguay.

4 Major variation patterns: phonetics and phonology

Overviews of the pronunciation of Spanish in Spain are found in Alvar (1996) and for Latin America in Canfield (1981) and Lipski (1994). Among the most rapidly identifiable features separating regional and social varieties of Spanish are differences in pronunciation, both the realization of particular sounds and combinations of sounds, and the presence or absence of certain phonological oppositions. The following sections outline some of the more salient phonetic and phonological dimensions of Spanish dialect differentiation.

4.1 Presence–absence of oppositions: /s/-/θ/,/ʝ/-/ʎ/

In general, all regional and social varieties of Spanish share the same inventory of vowel and consonant phonemes, with two exceptions: the voiceless interdental fricative/θ/and the palatal lateral/ʎ/have geographically delimited distribution, and are absent in the remaining varieties of Spanish. The phoneme/θ/occurs as an independent phoneme opposed to/s/(e.g., *casa* [ˈka.sa] 'house' -*caza* [ˈka.θa] 'hunting') only in Peninsular Spain. The opposition/s/-/θ/characterizes all Peninsular varieties of Spanish except for western and central Andalusia. In western Andalusia, the neutralization of/s/-/θ/in favor of/s/is known as *seseo*, and it typifies the speech of these provinces. Many speakers in rural areas and smaller towns throughout Andalusia neutralize the opposition in favor of [θ] (e.g., *mi casa* [mi ˈka.θa] 'my house'). This neutralization is known as *ceceo*, and is usually stigmatized by the speakers themselves and in neighboring urban areas; *ceceo* imitations figure prominently in the verbal repertoires of many Spanish comedians as well as in dialect literature. The opposition/s/-/θ/is not found in the Canary Islands (where *seseo* is the norm), nor in any part of Latin America. In the residual Spanish still found in the Philippines, the opposition/s/-/θ/occurs sporadically, given the varying Peninsular origins of the ancestors of Philippine Spanish speakers (Lipski 1987a). In Equatorial Guinea, the only officially Spanish-speaking nation in Africa, the opposition/s/-/θ/is also variable since the Peninsular sources for Guinean Spanish came both from Castile (where the distinction is made) and from Valencia (where *seseo* used to prevail). Most Guineans, except for those who have lived extensively in Spain, are not consistent with respect to the/s/-/θ/distinction (Lipski 1985a).

The palatal lateral phoneme/ʎ/(written as *ll*) was once opposed to/ʝ/(written as *y*) in all varieties of Spanish (e.g., *se calló* [se ka.ˈʎo] 'he/she became silent' -*se cayó* [se ka.ˈʝo] 'he/she fell down'). The opposition, with few minimal pairs to its credit, began to erode in favor of non-lateral pronunciations beginning in the sixteenth century, and today only a few Spanish-speaking regions maintain the distinction. The neutralization of/ʎ/-/ʝ/in favor of the latter phoneme is known as *yeísmo*. In Peninsular Spain,/ʎ/occurs as an independent phoneme in a few northern areas, but is rapidly disappearing today among younger generations. In the Canary Islands,/ʎ/was retained robustly by all speakers until the final decades of the

twentieth century, but is now rapidly fading. The phoneme/ʎ/is not present in the Spanish of Equatorial Guinea and is heard only occasionally in Philippine Spanish. In Latin America, the phoneme/ʎ/is maintained in all regional and social dialects of Paraguay and Bolivia, and in neighboring areas of northeastern and northwestern Argentina. In highland Peru, pockets of/ʎ/still remain, as they do in the central highlands of Ecuador. In Quito and other northern highland areas of Ecuador, the lateral pronunciation of/ʎ/gives way to a groove fricative pronunciation [ʒ], but the opposition/ʎ/-/ʝ/is still maintained (e.g., *halla* [ˈa.ʒa] 'he/she finds' – *haya* [ˈa.ʝa] 'that he/she may have') (Haboud and de la Vega 2008).

4.2 Realization of coda consonants: /s/,/n/,/l/,/ɾ/

In Spanish the greatest variation in the pronunciation of consonants occurs in post-nuclear position, often referred to as "coda" or "syllable-final." The post-nuclear or coda position is universally regarded as the weakest in terms of neutralization of oppositions, replacement by weaker versions of the consonant, such as approximants (sounds with very slight constrictions, weaker than fricatives) or vocoids (near-vowel sounds such as semivowels), depletion of all supralaryngeal features (meaning those features involving the action of the tongue, lips, pharynx, and velum), and total effacement (Hualde 1989a, 2005). Coda position is also the environment in which the greatest sociolinguistic differentiation of Spanish dialects typically occurs. The consonants most affected by coda-weakening processes are/s/,/ɾ/,/l/, and/n/.

By far the most common modification of Spanish coda consonants involves/s/, including aspiration to [h], deletion, and other instances of weakening. In Spain, syllable- and word-final/s/is aspirated or elided massively in the south, from Extremadura through Andalusia (including Gibraltar) (Lipski 1987b), Murcia, and parts of Alicante, but even in central and some northern regions (e.g., Cantabria), coda/s/is frequently aspirated. In the Canary Islands, weakening of coda/s/ occurs at rates comparable to Andalusia (Lipski 1985b). In Latin America, reduction of coda/s/reaches its highest rates in the Caribbean (Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Venezuela, coastal Colombia), as well as on the Mexican coast centering on Veracruz and Campeche. On nearly all Mexico's Pacific coast, final/s/is also reduced nearly as frequently as in the Caribbean (Moreno de Alba 1994). In Central America,/s/-reduction is massive in Nicaragua, and occurs at a lesser rate in El Salvador and Honduras. In South America, the entire Pacific coast from Colombia through Chile is a zone of heavy/s/-reduction. In Argentina and Uruguay,/s/-reduction is somewhat tempered in the large cities, but reaches high levels in provincial areas, as it does throughout Paraguay and eastern Bolivia. It is more economical to mention those Spanish-speaking areas where coda/s/ strongly resists effacement: most of northern Spain, most of Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and the highlands of Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia (Lipski 1984, 1986).

Found in some/s/-aspirating dialects is the aspiration of word-INITIAL postvocalic/s/, as in *la semana* [la.he.ˈma.na] 'the week.' Aspiration of word-initial/s/is

most frequently found in the vernacular speech of El Salvador and much of Honduras (Lipski 1999a), and also in the traditional Spanish of northern New Mexico (Brown 2004). Rates of aspiration of word-initial/s/are considerably lower than those for word-final/s/-reduction, but there are no Spanish dialects in which word-initial/s/is aspirated while word-final/s/remains intact. Unlike aspiration of syllable- and word-final/s/, which is often just a regional trait with no negative connotations, aspiration of word-initial/s/is frequent only in colloquial speech in the regions where it occurs, and is predominantly found among less educated speakers.

In much of central Spain where reduction of coda/s/reaches only moderate levels, the phonetic result before a following consonant is a weak [ɾ] as in *los niños* [loɾ.ˈni.ɲos] 'the children.' This variant is not consistently found anywhere in Latin America.

Coda liquids/l/and/ɾ/are particularly susceptible to weakening processes in Spanish, and most weakening phenomena affect both consonants to some extent. In phrase-final position, the most common result is complete elision. Loss of phrase-final/l/and/ɾ/is common in southern Spain; it is also frequent in most regional and social dialects of the Canary Islands. In Latin America, deletion of word-final/ɾ/is common in eastern Cuba, Panama, the Caribbean coast of Colombia, much of Venezuela, along the Pacific coast of Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, and in Afro-Bolivian Spanish (Lipski 2008a). In all of these regions, deletion of/ɾ/is associated with colloquial speech, but does not necessarily carry a heavy stigma, as indicated. Deletion of final/l/is less frequent in careful speech. In southern Spain (including the Canary Islands), the opposition of preconsonantal/l/and/ɾ/is tenuous, with neutralization in favor of [ɾ] constituting an Andalusian stereotype (e.g., *el niño* [eɾ.ˈni.ɲo] 'the child'). In some parts of the Canary Islands and occasionally in Murcia, coda/ɾ/is realized as [l] as in *puerta* [ˈpu̯el.ta] 'door.' The change of coda/ɾ/to [l] is more common in the Caribbean, particularly in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, in central Cuba and eastern Venezuela. Lateralization of/ɾ/, although occurring frequently in the aforementioned dialects, is often criticized, and forms the basis for jokes and popular cultural stereotypes. Found in western Cuba, the Caribbean coast of Colombia (and in the Afro-Colombian creole language Palenquero: Schwegler 1998: 265; Schwegler and Morton 2003), and parts of Andalusia is loss of word-internal preconsonantal coda liquids combined with gemination of the following consonant; when the following consonant is a voiced obstruent/b/,/d/, or/g/the resulting geminate is always a stop, not a fricative or approximant as normally occurs intervocalically. Examples include *algo* [ˈag.go] 'something,' *puerta* [ˈpu̯et.ta] 'door,' and *caldo* [ˈkad.do] 'soup.' Gemination is frequently depicted in dialect literature, always in portrayals of uneducated speakers, and is usually avoided in careful speech. Another regional variant is "vocalization" of coda liquids to semivocalic [i̯]; this occurs primarily in the Cibao region in the north of the Dominican Republic, and was once found occasionally in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and southeastern Spain (e.g., *por favor* [poi̯.fa.ˈβoi̯] 'please,' *capital* [ka.pi.ˈtai̯] 'capital'). This pronunciation is stigmatized and found in many literary stereotypes, particularly in the Dominican Republic.