Multilingual Miami: Current Trends in Sociolinguistic Research

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Abstract

In this paper, we discuss current trends in sociolinguistic work focusing on language in metropolitan Miami, an area we contend is underrepresented in the sociolinguistics literature given the unique contact situation that has arisen there during the past half century. We focus our attention on four main areas of theoretical and empirical concern: (1) Spanish–English bilingualism, (2) issues related to the varieties of Spanish spoken in Miami, (3) issues related to the varieties of English spoken in Miami, and (4) an overview of languages other than English and Spanish spoken in the region, with particular attention to Haitian Creole. We conclude with suggestions for future sociolinguistic work in all of these areas.

1. Introduction: Miami in Historical and Demographic Perspectives

Although Miami may well now be the most bilingual city in all of the Americas,[1] the sociolinguistic situation of South Florida has received little attention in the sociolinguistics literature to date. The underrepresentation of Miami in linguistics research is especially surprising given the unprecedented circumstances of language contact that have developed there over the past five decades. The objective of this article is to describe what Miami has to offer sociolinguists by showing how the language dynamics of South Florida complicate sociolinguistic theory and practice, especially with respect to the dynamics of language and dialect contact, language maintenance and shift, and bi- and multilingualism. We hope to do this by documenting the breadth of the region's language diversity and highlighting four broad areas in need of future research: (1) Spanish–English bilingualism, (2) varieties of Spanish, (3) varieties of English, and (4) languages other than English and Spanish (LOTES). In the final section of this paper, we outline four areas of sociolinguistic inquiry in Miami where additional research is especially needed. In this brief introduction, we provide some overview of the 20th century historical events that led to Miami's current sociolinguistic diversity.

Prior to what Boswell (1994) called the 'Cubanization and Hispanicization' of South Florida, Miami's population was predominantly Anglo White, African American, and Jewish. The Cuban Revolution, which ended with Fidel Castro's takeover of Fulgencio Batista's government in 1959, set forth a series of demographic changes that would radically remake Miami during the 20th century. A review of the Census data from 1960 to 2010 underscores the remarkable nature of Miami's demographic evolution. In the late 1950s, prior to the Castro takeover, approximately 6000 Cubans resided in Dade County,[2] and data from the 1960 Census show that the Cuban population in the county was just about 4%. At that time, 81% of Miami's population was Anglo White, and 15% was African American. However, by the 1970 Census, the Hispanic population had grown to 24%, a figure that rose to 36% in the 1980 Census, and following the influx of Cuban émigrés from the 1980 Mariel Boatlift and Nicaraguan émigrés fleeing their own political crisis, 49% of Miami's population was Hispanic/Latino by 1990. An influx of Cuban *balseros*

(rafters) and Colombians escaping an outbreak of guerilla violence during the 1990s resulted in 57% of Miami's population being Hispanic/Latino by 2000. In the 2000s, the Venezuelan population surged in the era of Chavismo, and following the global economic crisis of 2008, immigration to Miami increased from almost every Spanish-speaking country in the world. By 2010, 64.5% of residents in Miami–Dade County identified as 'Hispanic or Latino', a figure that reaches 95% in some areas of the city. The only other major U.S. metropolitan area with a Latino population above 50% is San Antonio (55.5%) (Brown & Lopez 2013).

Following the U.S. Census, we use the term 'Hispanic/Latino[3]' to describe Miami's historically Spanish-speaking population, but what this term means in the Miami context merits some unpacking. At the national level, the largest national-origin Latino group is Mexicans, who comprise 64.5% of the U.S. Latino population (Lopez, Gonzalez-Barrera, Cuddington 2013). This trend is reflected in the major cities of Texas, the Southwest, and the West. Of the 10 U.S. cities with the largest Latino populations, eight of them are composed of majority Mexican subpopulations.[4] Miami's Latino-related demographics differ in three ways. First, Miami is definitively Caribbean, as about 65% of Miami's Latino population is Cuban (54%), Puerto Rican (6%), or Dominican (4%) (Brown & Lopez 2013). The Mexican-origin population of Miami is only 3%, which compares to 12% in New York City, the U.S. city that perhaps most closely resembles Latino Miami, given its large Puerto Rican and Dominican subpopulations. In addition, while the overall national trend of expanding Mexican-origin populations is reflected in New York City's demographics, this is not the case in Miami. Second, as Miami has become a hub principally for political immigrants from across Latin America, Miami's Latino population is more diverse than that of any other U.S. city in terms of national origin and socioeconomic status. And finally, at 66%, Miami's Latino population is more foreign-born than that of any other major U.S. city.

In light of Miami's history and socio-demographic profile, we can make the following additional statements about Miami's sociolinguistic landscape today. Miami is arguably the most dialectally diverse Spanish-speaking city in the world, home to a wide range of historical, transplant, and locally formed varieties of English, and home to a large and growing number of languages other than English and Spanish (LOTES), including Haitian Creole, French, Portuguese, and Russian.

2. Spanish–English Bilingualism

Several scholars over the past two decades have suggested that Spanish–English bilingual ability among second- and third-generation Cuban Americans is widespread, and that even though the preference for English is undeniable among them, Spanish language use is highly valued and is both socially and economically prestigious. Other scholars have suggested that the bilingual situation in Miami has been sustained only by the constant influx of immigrants from Latin America, and that the future for Spanish does not bode well among successive generations of Cubans in South Florida. The best conclusion at this point seems to be that the sociolinguistic situation in Miami as it pertains to Spanish/English bilingualism and attitudes toward Spanish is rather complex, and at times contradictory. In this section, we describe these contradictions by reviewing the sociolinguistics literature on Spanish–English bilingualism in Miami.

In popular cultural terms, Miami has long been perceived as a 'Spanish-speaking' city. In her widely cited book *Miami*, cultural critic and political journalist Joan Didion wrote the following in 1987:

> The sound of spoken Spanish was common in Miami, but it was common in Los Angeles, and Houston, and even in the cities of the Northeast. What was unusual about Spanish in Miami was not that it was so often spoken, but that it was so often heard: in, say, Los Angeles, Spanish remained

a language only barely registered by the Anglo population, part of the ambient noise, the language spoken by the people who worked in the car wash and came to trim the trees and cleared the tables in restaurants. In Miami Spanish was spoken by the people who owned the cars and the trees, which made, on the socioauditory scale, a considerable difference. Exiles who felt isolated or declassed by language in New York or Los Angeles thrived in Miami. An entrepreneur who spoke no English could still, in Miami, buy, sell, negotiate, leverage assets, float bonds, and if he were so inclined, attend galas twice a week, in black tie. (63)

Nonetheless, the prevalence of English use among the second generation of Cuban Spanish speakers in Miami was already quite clear at the time of Didion's commentary. García & Otheguy (1988) affirmed that the constant influx of Spanish-dominant immigrants in Miami was the only factor serving to sustain the widespread use of Spanish at the societal level in South Florida. In her studies of Cuban English during the 1980s in Little Havana, MacDonald (1990) observed varying degrees of 'acculturation' to 'mainstream' English-dominant institutions. Those who were least 'acculturated' in the second generation were the most likely to exhibit the influence of Spanish phonology in their production of English, as we describe later in this article. In the Cuban immigrant neighborhood of Little Havana, she found that factors such as interest in community preservation, enclosure, and cohesiveness countered 'acculturation.' In contrast, Zurer-Pearson & McGee (1993) showed that a majority of young Cuban Americans strongly favored English in terms of everyday usage and in media consumption. Of 110 Hispanic-background junior high school students (ages 13 to 15 years) in their study, which was conducted in 1988, 68% reported using 'only a few words in Spanish' when talking to friends outside of school, and 65% reported the same when talking to their brothers and sisters (p. 97).[5] English also appeared to be dominant in the mass media consumed by those students: 68% reported never reading in Spanish, and 58% never watched Spanish-language television; only 10% reported watching television in Spanish more than half of the time. These data led Zurer Pearson & McGee to conclude that there were 'signs of Spanish being replaced by English to a significant degree' among Miami Hispanics (1993, p. 100). In a later study, Portes & Schauffler (1996) surveyed 2843 eighth- and ninth-grade students (not all of Hispanic backgrounds), with an average age of 14.8 years, in inner-city as well as suburban schools of Miami–Dade and Broward Counties regarding their language abilities and use. They asked students to rate their own abilities to speak, understand, read, and write English based on four categories: 'not at all', 'not well', 'well', and 'very well' (p. 15). Students were asked to do the same for their parental language and asked to indicate which language they 'mostly prefer to speak' (p. 15). Portes & Schauffler observed a general pattern of language shift (i.e., preference to speak English) among all students surveyed, but noted that only about one-fourth of the Hispanic students included in their study reflected 'foreign language loss' (1996, p. 20). This figure dropped to only 11% among Cuban-background children enrolled in private schools, leading these authors to affirm that their results 'indicate that Cuban and other Latin American-origin youth in South Florida are mostly bilingual' (p. 20).

López-Morales (2003), Lynch (2000), and Roca (1991) commented on the range of social, cultural, and economic opportunities for speakers of both Spanish and English in Miami, noting the high value placed on bilingual ability there, a fact borne out in economic data from the U.S. Census (Boswell, 2000) and survey studies of area businesses (Fradd, 1996; McGuirk 2004). Lambert & Taylor (1996) observed a marked emphasis on Spanish among mothers of middle-class Cuban American families in Miami, noting that Spanish fluency of the children in those families was significantly correlated with children's school performance and also with mothers' concept of self-respect (p. 490). Yúdice (2003) affirmed that 'the tendency of culture, particularly Latin culture, and economy to merge[6]…provides greater opportunities for the

bicultural and bilingual professional class in Miami than in any other U.S. city' (2003, p. 210). According to Yúdice, 'Latinness' has been transformed in post–Cuban Miami.

Unlike in other major U.S. cities, the prevalence of Spanish in Miami extends across all so-cioeconomic strata, as indicated in data from the 2010 Census. Table 1 shows that most areas of Miami–Dade County are majority Latino/Hispanic: 70% in the city of Miami proper; 54% in Coral Gables; 80% in Doral (often referred to as 'Doralzuela' among Miami Spanish speakers because of the large Venezuelan community); and 95% in Hialeah (considered the center of the Cuban immigrant community).

In terms of use of a language other than English at home, percentages range from 58% in Coral Gables to 94% in Hialeah. With regard to median household income, it is clearly *not* the case that high levels of bilingualism in Miami are limited only to immigrant and working class neighborhoods. Hialeah, Doral, and Key Biscayne differ greatly in terms of median house-hold income (lower, middle, and high, respectively) and attainment of formal education, but nevertheless are all 80% or above in terms of reporting speaking a language other than English at home. This is also true of the more geographically peripheral parts of Miami–Dade, such as Kendall and Miami Lakes, which are both solidly middle class and report high levels of use of languages other than English. The incidence of Spanish-speaking in Key Biscayne is particularly noteworthy, since it is the most affluent neighborhood in Miami–Dade, and therefore seems to lend support to the notion that Spanish in Miami can be tied to economic prosperity.

Although the Census data indicate that Spanish is prevalent across Miami–Dade neighbor-hoods, we must be cautious about what interpretations we bring to bear on these data. Since we know that a majority of Miami's Latino population is foreign-born (66%), much of the use of Spanish reported in the Census figures is likely to be among first-generation immigrants. Sociolinguistic studies of Spanish use among the Miami-born conducted since 2000 indicate that cross-generational language shift is clearly underway in the second and third generations. For example, Eilers, Oller & Cobo-Lewis (2002) wrote that,

> Spanish is extremely prominent in public life in all of South Florida, and its prestige is high…. Yet Hispanic children in Miami [show] strong signs of rejecting Spanish in circumstances where they [have] a choice to speak either language (p. 43).

Table 1. Ethnic identity, language use, and social status according to 2010 U.S. Census data in Miami.

City/area	% Hispanic/ Latino	% White non- Hispanic	% Black	% Foreign- born	% Speak non-English language at home (age 5+ years)	% High school degree (age 25 + years)	% Bachelor's degree (age 25 + years)	Median household income
Miami-Dade County	64.5	16.0	19.3	51.1	71.9	77.0	26.2	$43,605
Miami (city)	70.0	11.9	19.2	58.1	77.3	67.4	22.2	$29,621
Coral Gables	53.6	40.1	3.0	36.3	57.5	94.7	63.7	$84,027
Hialeah	94.7	4.2	2.7	73.2	94.2	66.7	13.5	$31,648
Miami Lakes	81.1	14.4	3.3	47.7	81.8	88.5	34.4	$66,369
Doral	79.5	14.6	2.5	60.5	88.8	94.6	55.4	$69,300
Miami Beach	53.0	40.5	4.4	51.7	66.9	84.2	43.1	$43,538
Kendall	63.7	28.4	4.4	44.8	69.5	88.6	41.5	$61,266
Key Biscayne	61.6	36.5	0.4	50.7	79.9	97.5	74.7	$104,554

The same authors affirmed that, 'in spite of the prominence of Latin culture, Spanish appears to be dying in Miami[7]' (2002, p. 63). Likewise, in their reflections on the linguistic situation of Miami Cuban Americans, Otheguy, García & Roca (2000) affirmed that the 'intergenerational maintenance of productive ability in Spanish, especially of full Spanish literacy, is difficult to achieve' (p. 184), and Porcel (2006) affirmed that there was a 'clear pattern of transitional bilingualism in Miami Cubans' (p. 107). Hurtado (2002) provided further evidence for the cross-generational erosion of Spanish among the Miami-born. Her work showed that U.S.-born Colombian-Americans in Miami used Spanish mostly for instrumental purposes and that some Colombian-Americans no longer even had ties to being Hispanic or Colombian ['no existen lazos que los vinculen con el ser hispano o colombiano'] (p. 162).

In sum, what emerges from prior research in the fields of sociolinguistics and cultural studies in South Florida is a highly complex ideological and sociological configuration of variables related to intergenerational language transmission (i.e., language shift to English by the third generation), Spanish language as an imagined criterion for considering oneself 'Hispanic' or 'Latino' in Miami, and prevailing language ideologies which fully favor English in the U.S. national context and, at the same time, construct both Spanish and English as economically and culturally vital languages at the local level (South Florida) and in the more macro-level discourse of globalization. Porcel (2006) affirmed that

> Arguably, Miami Cubans might have greater incentives and the best conditions for language maintenance among all U.S. Hispanics, but… [t]he other position in this language equation, it should be remembered, is occupied by English, the language with more resources devoted to its promotion than any other language in the world (p. 107).

We would conclude that cross-generational continuity of Spanish in Miami will likely remain very difficult in the years ahead, and that English is indisputably the language of preference and dominance among second-, third-, and fourth-generation bilinguals in South Florida, i.e., there is a clear shift to English among Spanish-speaking immigrants, as in all other areas of the U.S. Nonetheless, we also observe that it is not difficult to encounter third-generation bilingual speakers of Spanish in Miami who possess remarkably high levels of heritage proficiency in the language, and who hear and speak the language very frequently in their daily lives. Without a doubt, frequency of use of Spanish and proficiency in the language among U.S.-born bilinguals are generally higher in Miami than in other comparable major urban centers of Spanish-speaking immigration in the U.S. The bilingual Hispanic majority in Miami and the continued influx of monolingual and Spanish-dominant immigrants from all over Latin America are both factors that contribute to this phenomenon.

3. Varieties of Spanish

South Florida is among the world's most pan-Hispanic places in sociolinguistic terms. Miami-Dade and Broward Counties are home to large contingents of Cubans, Nicaraguans, Colombians, Venezuelans, Argentines, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Hondurans, Peruvians, Spaniards, and Mexicans (the latter found mostly in rural areas of these counties). Among those who arrived in the U.S. after adolescence, everyday conversation is principally, and in some cases exclusively, in Spanish. The sustained use of Spanish among first-generation immigrants – and the second- and third-generation speakers with whom they interact – leads to a plethora of dialect contact phenomena at all linguistic levels. Language use is of course not reducible to patterns of language contact, and here the ever-present issue of individual and group identity comes into play, as do the complex ways in which categories such as 'Latino' and 'Cuban' are

constructed in the Miami context. Further, as we begin our discussion of language varieties, we must point out the conceptual limits of the terms 'language', 'dialect', and 'language variety'. We do not use these terms here uncritically and do not wish to imply by invoking 'national languages' or 'national varieties' or 'dialects' that the language forms grouped under these terms are uniform or homogenous in any way, or that they map easily and unproblematically onto geographic and national boundaries.[8] These terms, instead, provide a convenient shorthand means of describing what are in fact highly complex language systems embedded in the socially and psychologically nuanced lives of diverse language users, and which vary not only by region but also according to the myriad ways in which language users differ from one another.

With these qualifications in mind, we turn to a discussion of some of the more noteworthy features that we have observed either impressionistically or in our ongoing fieldwork in Miami and which remain to be systematically studied. These features include

(1) Lexical leveling (*cf.* Zentella 1990), with particular influences from Cuban dialect, e.g., use of *guagua* for 'bus'; *fajar* instead of *pelear* ('to fight'); and *comemierda* to refer to a naïve or pretentious person. Although directionality of lexical leveling tends to be from the Cuban to other varieties of Spanish, other patterns can be observed in particular neighborhoods or social networks in which Cubans are largely absent or find themselves in the minority. We have observed some Cubans who use terms and phrases typical of other dialects when they form part of social networks with speakers of those dialects, e.g., *auto* rather than *carro*; *campesino* instead of *guajiro*; *pastel* vs. *cake*; and *palta* vs. *aguacate*.

(2) Higher rates of explicit subject pronoun expression vis-à-vis most other varieties of Latin American Spanish, owing to the preponderance of Caribbean varieties of Spanish in South Florida and to possible influences of English. By way of comparison, Otheguy & Zentella (2012) documented higher rates of subject pronoun expression among U.S. Hispanic bilinguals of Mexican origin in New York City, a fact that they attributed to the influence of English and dialect accommodation in the direction of Puerto Rican, Dominican, and Cuban New Yorkers, who tend to use pronouns at higher rates than their 'Mainlander' counterparts. In a cross-generational variationist comparison of speakers of varieties of 'Mainlander' and 'Caribbean' varieties of Spanish, these authors observed significant increases in the occurrence of overt subject pronouns in the course of one apparent-time generation, though the authors noted that the linguistic factors that condition pronoun use is largely conserved across the generations. A similar pattern is likely to be found among bilinguals in Miami, where the situation of societal bilingualism is more dynamic than in New York or Los Angeles and where the two languages appear to be much more widely used on a daily basis (*cf.* Lipski 1996).

(3) Generalized use of *tú* as second person singular form of pronominal address across all social strata, at the expense of *usted* and *vos* forms, which are of more common usage in Colombian and Central American varieties, and *vos*, always used in Argentine Spanish.[9] The overgeneralization of *tú* is likely owed not only to the fact that a majority of Spanish speakers in South Florida hail from countries where *tú* is the norm (including Cuba) but also because it is considered the pronoun of solidarity throughout most of the Spanish-speaking world and indexes friendliness and interpersonal informality as compared to *usted*. The fact that Caribbean, Venezuelan, and Peninsular speakers tend to perceive *usted* as highly deferential and formal (overly so in some contexts), as well as the fact that *vos* is a highly marked form in pan-Hispanic terms and is even socially stigmatized in much of Central and South America (except Argentina and Uruguay where its use is entirely normative), lends further support to the greater use of *tú* in Miami. Here, again, we must be cautious of reducing patterns of usage to geographical and national origin explanations, especially considering that the

indexical use of *tú* and *vos* is variable in Latin America and likely to be further complicated in U.S. Latina/o communities, where *vos* may both be stigmatized but also used to signal solidarity. For example, Raymond (2012) showed that Salvadorans in Los Angeles use both forms in ways that do not conform directly to Salvadoran norms or the norms of the Mexican-dominant Spanish spoken in Los Angeles. Their patterns of pronoun usage reflected the *in situ* negotiation of identity in the Los Angeles context rather than national-origin dialect norms as such.

(4) Shared patterns of phonological variation, by which dialectal features such as sibilant weakening, may reflect affiliation with other groups along lines of regional or national origin, as well as socioeconomic class background. As explained by Silva-Corvalán (2001), the lenition of syllable- and word-final /s/, manifest as [s > h > ø], is considered a highly meaningful sociolinguistic variable throughout the Spanish-speaking world, e.g., *las costas* ('the coasts') potentially pronounced as [las kostas], [lah kohtah], or [laø koøtaø]. Because of its great social sensitivity, we hypothesize that this variable likely constitutes an identity marker in Spanish-speaking Miami. A principal distinction is manifest among Caribbean- and non-Caribbean-origin speakers in Miami, e.g., Cubans versus Colombians (the city's second most numerous Hispanic contingent according to U.S. Census 2010). Even within Colombia, however, final /s/ serves to index coastal and highland identities. In highland Colombia (e.g., Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali), aspiration or deletion of final /s/ is extremely rare, i.e., this regional dialect of Spanish is considered to be fully /s/-retaining (Lipski 1994). Coastal (lowland) dialects of Colombian Spanish (e.g., Cartagena and Barranquilla), on the other hand, are characterized by high rates of final sibilant weakening (Lafford 1986). A plausible hypothesis that bears future testing is that, given the preponderance of speakers of dialects in which sibilant weakening is the norm (especially aspiration), this feature becomes widespread and consensual across South Florida.

Within Miami's Cuban communities, the relative prestige of pre-Mariel variants of Cuban Spanish has been attested by Alfaraz (2002, 2014) as compared to post-Mariel variants, and the sharp and at times contentious divisions between pre-Mariel, Mariel, and post-Mariel Cuban immigrants in Miami have been discussed by sociologists (Alberts 2005). These divisions are of particular interest to a broad-based study of language in Miami, given the historical precedence and predominance of Cubans in the city and the identity issues at stake not only within the Cuban community but also among the city's Hispanic bilingual majority in general. Comparing the speech of older, early exile Cuban immigrants who arrived in Miami as adults in the 1960s and 1970s with that of young Miami-born Cubans whose grandparents immigrated to Miami from Cuba prior to 1980, Lynch (2009a) observed significantly higher rates of sibilant retention among young Miami-born speakers. Lynch attributed this finding in Cuban Miami principally to the social need of the Miami-born grandchildren of early exile Cubans to differentiate their speech from that of more recent (i.e., post-Mariel) Cuban immigrant groups, on political and ideological grounds. The data of this rather small-scale study, limited to 16 speakers, suggested that rates of sibilant retention[s] were highest among less fluent Miami-born Cuban Spanish speakers of the third generation, and lowest among same-age Marielitos who had been in Miami since very early childhood. The rate of sibilant use among highly fluent Miami-born speakers was much lower than that of their less fluent peers, but still slightly higher than among the older generation of pre-1980 immigrants and more than double the rate found among young Marielitos. This pattern appears to reflect a 'reversed' language change (*cf.* Lafford 1986 who observed a similar phenomenon in the Colombian context), if one considers that sibilant weakening is an ongoing diachronic change in Caribbean Spanish (Silva-Corvalán 2001).

Lynch's (2009a, 2009b) findings regarding divisions within the Cuban community in Miami, as well as Alvord's (2010) findings on differential intonation patterns of Cuban Americans vis-à-vis first-generation Cuban immigrants, pose interesting questions regarding Cuban dialect change, Spanish dialect contact, and the phonological evolution of Spanish in a language contact situation. Similarly, research on processes of liquid variation within the context of Miami would likely yield interesting findings on both synchronic and diachronic grounds. More socially marked processes such as lateralization (e.g., [muhél] for *mujer*), common in the Caribbean, or assibilation (e.g., [peřo] for *perro*), which is frequent in Andean varieties of Spanish, are disfavored in broader society. Furthermore, we hypothesize that, in the same way that assibilation might indicate affiliation with a dense social network of Andean speakers, spirantization of the palatal /ʧ/ (e.g., [muʃáʃo] for *muchacho*) would likely convey a decidedly post-Revolutionary identity among Cuban-origin speakers. These phonological phenomena merit future investigation in Miami.

4. *Varieties of English*

In this section, we turn to a description of Miami's diverse English language scene, which is characterized by immigrant, transplant, historical, and locally formed varieties of English. For the purposes of organization, we divide these varieties into three categories: (1) varieties of English spoken in Miami before the Cuban Revolution, which we will call pre-1960 varieties, (2) varieties that emerged among U.S.-born and immigrant Latinos since the 1960s, which we will call post-1960 varieties, and (3) the immigrant and transplant varieties of English brought to Miami by immigrants from the Anglophone Caribbean and migrants from elsewhere in the U.S. We use the terms 'pre-' and 'post-1960' in acknowledgement of the profound influence of the Cuban Revolution on English spoken among Miami-born Latinos in South Florida.

4.1. PRE-1960 VARIETIES OF ENGLISH

The pre-1960 varieties are principally those spoken by African Americans, Anglo Whites, and Jews. Of these groups, the English of Anglo Whites[10] in South Florida is the most studied, despite the fact that Anglo Whites represent less than one-fifth of Miami-Dade's population today. This fact is mostly due to (1) the overrepresentation of Anglo Whites in the American dialectology literature in general and (2) the coverage of South Florida in a number of linguistic atlas projects. For example, the *Linguistic Atlas of the Gulf States* (Pederson 1988) studied the speech of eight speakers from Miami using traditional lexical elicitation techniques and handwritten phonetic transcriptions. On the basis of these data, Miami was grouped into a single dialect region with the rest of Dade County as well as Broward and Monroe Counties. A few years after the publication of *LAGS,* data collection began for what would become the definitive work of dialectology in North America – Labov, Ash, and Boberg's 2006 *Atlas of North American English* (ANAE). The researchers describe the whole of Florida this way:

> Florida belongs to a number of marginal areas. It lies outside of the definition of the South as the area of monophthongal /ay/. However it is not completely devoid of Southern character: It belongs to a Southeastern region that is defined as an area of fronting of /ow/, and no low back merger.

The so-called 'low-back merger' is a well-studied feature of English in North America in which the vowels /a/ and /ɔ/, in which words such as *cot* and *caught,* are homophonous in production and perception. Labov, Ash, and Boberg's work on Miami, based on the speech of one speaker – a 43-year-old Anglo White woman – classifies all of South Florida as part of the Southeastern Region.

Recent work by Doernberger and Cerny (2008) and Cerny (2009) has called this classification into question. An important characteristic of the Southeastern region, as defined by the *ANAE*, is resistance to low–back merger between /a/ and /ɔ/. This merger is characteristic of the varieties of English spoken in the West, the Midlands, and parts of Eastern New England. However, Doernberger and Cerny (2008) pointed out that Miami is included in this region of resistance to the 'low–back merger', despite the fact that the sole *ANAE* informant from Miami actually demonstrated the merger in certain phonetic environments. In order to probe this discrepancy, they conducted a study of the low back merger in Miami that included perception and production tasks involving 18 participants (seven African Americans, seven Anglo Whites, and four Latinos) from various age groups. They found that all speakers were fully merged in both production and perception, leading them to assert that 'there is a full low back merger in Miami (15)'. Following up on this study, Cerny (2009) used the acoustic criteria set forth in *ANAE* to examine additional features of the Southern Shift, a systematic vocalic chain shift identified by Labov, Ash, and Boberg (2006) that characterizes the vowel phonology of much of the U.S. South. He found no evidence of Southern Shift features in the speech of the 11 Miami speakers he studied.

African Americans have lived in the Miami area since well before the incorporation of the city in 1896. The historically Black neighborhood known as Overtown (previously 'Colored Town') is one of the oldest neighborhoods in South Florida. Unlike Anglo Whites, who for the most part left Miami during the course of the region's Latinization, African Americans have mostly stayed. To our knowledge, no study has systematically examined the language of African Americans in South Florida, which is itself noteworthy given the emphasis on African American English in the U.S. variationist sociolinguistics literature. It is noteworthy that a substantial percentage of Miami's African American population during the 20th century was of Bahamian or other Caribbean origin (Parks & Bush 1996).

Jews have lived in the region in large numbers since well before the start of the Latinization of the city in the mid-20th century. In Miami Beach, where the first synagogue opened in 1929, Jews have had a strong presence since the early 20th century. Miami Beach is sometimes called 'the sixth borough of New York', both because of the presence of non-Jewish New Yorkers as well as the large Jewish community. Here again, to our knowledge, no study has systematically examined the language of Jews in South Florida. The study of Jewish English, which has been productive elsewhere in the U.S. (e.g., Benor 2009, Bernstein 2006) is needed in South Florida.[11]

4.2. POST-1960 VARIETIES OF ENGLISH

Despite the size and influence of the Cuban American community in metropolitan Miami, and despite the interesting theoretical questions, their unique language contact situation raises for sociolinguists, surprisingly little work has been carried out on the English of Cuban Americans. No work has been conducted on the English of any other Latino national origin group in the region. In her studies of Cuban English during the 1980s in Little Havana, MacDonald (1985, 1988, 1990) found evidence of various degrees of 'acculturation' among Cuban Americans. Those in the second generation who she described as least 'acculturated' were found to exhibit the greatest phonological influence from Spanish.

Following MacDonald's work, the study of English among Miami Latinos lay dormant for two decades until very recently when Carter, López, and Sims (2014) studied the English of 21 Miami-born Latinos in the second generation of Cuban, Colombian, Venezuelan, and mixed national–origin backgrounds, as well as the speech of five Miami-born Anglo Whites. Their study engages with the dialectological and sociolinguistic literatures that document the

persistent substrate influence of immigrant languages on varieties of English in the U.S. (e.g., Fought 2003; Thomas 2001; Wolfram et al. 2004) and seeks to understand the possible structural influence that Spanish exerts on English in Miami after more than a half century of sustained contact. They investigated two types of phonetic variables that have been shown in prior studies to demonstrate subtle influence of Spanish on English in the U.S.: (1) prosodic rhythm, in which Latinos have been shown to demonstrate more syllable-timed rhythm than non-Latinos (e.g., Carter 2005, Robles-Puente, 2014, Shousterman 2014), and (2) the quality of the low front vowel /æ/ in pre-nasal and non-pre-nasal contexts, in which Latinos have been shown to resist the so-called allophonic split (Thomas 2001) in which /æ/ is raised before nasals in words such as *can*, *hand,* and *man,* but is un-raised in words such as *bat*, *trap*, and *smash*.

An application of the Pairwise Variability Index (Low & Grabe 1995), a method for quantifying rhythm while controlling for speech rate, revealed that the speech of Miami-born Latinos was significantly more syllable-timed than that of the Anglo White comparison group. With respect to vowel quality, Carter et al. did not find the expected allophonic merger of /æ/ for Latinos, although they did find the vowel quality of both allophones (prenasal and non-prenasal) to differ significantly by ethnic group, with Latino productions being lower and more backed and Anglo White productions being higher and more fronted. Carter et al. (2014) noted that although influence from Spanish seems to be a likely explanation for the pattern of prosodic rhythm found among Miami Latinos, more work is needed in order to understand the role of Spanish on the Miami Latino English vowel system, especially as it pertains to the construction of identity along the lines of national origin group, ethnicity, neighborhood, and other factors salient in local sociocultural contexts.

In terms of the Miami Latino English lexicon, Mullen (2014) conducted an experiment among 10 Cuban immigrant and 10 Cuban American residents of Miami designed to study (1) the local use of Spanish-origin loan translations and (2) the extent to which these constructions remain in use beyond the immigrant generation. Using a Spanish-to-English translation task, she found that participants used loan-translated expressions such as 'meat empanada' (*empanada de carne*) rather than 'beef empanada', 'he invited me to a beer' (*me invitó a una cerveza*) rather than 'he offered me a beer', and 'thanks God' (*gracias a Dios*) rather than 'thank God'. While both groups used these types of expressions, Mullen (2014) observed a marked decline among the Miami-born.

4.3. IMMIGRANT AND TRANSPLANT VARIETIES

Finally, we note that the English language scene in Miami–Dade has long been influenced by two other broad groups: migrants from other parts of English-speaking North America and immigrants from the Anglophone Caribbean. The latter group includes Bahamians, Barbadians, Jamaicans, and Trinidadians and Tobagonians. The largest of these groups are the Jamaicans, who have made the Miami-Fort Lauderdale Metropolitan Region home to the second largest Jamaican community in the U.S., following New York City. Some 160,000 Jamaicans live in the region (Census 2010). Although Jamaican English is well documented on the island (e.g., Patrick 1999), little is known about Jamaican English or Jamaican Creole English in South Florida, especially the extent to which children of Jamaican immigrants acquire elements of the heritage variety.

5. Languages Other than English and Spanish

According to the 2008–2012 American Community Survey, of Miami-Dade County's population of just more than 2.5 million people, nearly 1.3 million were foreign-born. Of those who were foreign-born, 75% indicated having Latin American origins; another 10% came from Europe; 10% from Asia; and less than 2% were of African origin. Of the total population 5 years

of age and over (2.36 million), 72% indicated speaking a language other than English at home. As Table 2 reflects, in the great majority of those cases, Spanish was the language spoken at home, though 'Other Indo–European languages' also had an important presence (7%), though we do not know how many or which languages were included in this category.

Other Indo–European languages spoken in Miami–Dade include French, Italian, German, Haitian Creole, Brazilian Portuguese, and Russian. The latter three are the most important languages in Miami-Dade following Spanish and English. To our knowledge, as of yet, there are very few or no prior published studies addressing issues of bilingualism and language use among these populations.

Haitian Creole is a French–based creole language spoken by some 10 million people in Haiti as a first language (see Spears and Berotte Joseph 2010 for description of Creole in Haiti). A small minority of Haitians also speak French, among whom the situation between French and Creole has been described as diglossic (Fishman 1972). Haitian immigration to South Florida first occurred en masse in late 1979 and early 1980, coinciding with the Mariel Boatlift from Cuba. At the end of the Duvalier regime in 1986, another mass immigration from Haiti occurred, and again in 1991 upon the overthrow of Aristide (Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program, 2005). So many Haitians settled in a part of Miami-Dade known as Lemon City that the name was officially changed to Little Haiti. Neighborhoods surrounding Little Haiti such as Miami Shores and North Miami are also home to large Haitian communities. By 2008, the Miami metropolitan area (including Broward County) had become home to the largest number of Haitian-born immigrants in the U.S.: 183%,108%, or 34.2% of the total Haitian-born population in the U.S. (Terrazas 2010), and today, Miami is the indisputable epicenter of the Haitian community in the U.S. (Hebblethwaite 2006, 52). Among the Haitian population in Miami, there are no reliable data regarding the percentage of French speakers, or the extent to which French, Haitian Creole, and English are used at home. Given the fact that the great majority of Haitians on the island are Haitian Creole speakers with little to no knowledge of standard French, one must assume that Haitian Creole and English are the languages that prevail in home use and in everyday interactions among Haitians and Haitian-Americans in Miami.

Despite what we can assume about the use of Haitian Creole in the home, a number of studies suggest that Haitian Creole speakers experience immense assimilatory pressures regarding language use, especially the adoption of English at the expense of Haitian Creole. For example, Portes and Schauffler's (1996) survey of language use and attitudes among Miami public school students found that Haitian students demonstrated the lowest level of language loyalty among all national origin groups studied. They showed that among the same groups, Haitians considered themselves to be the weakest in speaking their mother tongue: 67.8% of Haitians considered their Haitian Creole to be 'weak', in contrast to just 27.50% of Cuban students who assessed their Spanish as 'weak'. The reporting of 'weak' language skills in Haitian Creole could

Table 2. Language spoken at home in Miami-Dade County, total population age 5 years and over, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

Language	Number of speakers	Percentage of total population
English only	654,057	27.7%
Spanish	1,508,139	63.9%
Other Indo-European	164,226	7.0%
Asian/ Pacific Islands	21,730	0.9%
Other languages	12,982	0.5%

of course be more a reflection of the disparaged nature of the language than of an individual's linguistic ability, but in either case, the data from Portes and Schauffler's (1996) study suggest that the conditions are right for cross-generational language shift in Miami's Haitian community. In an ethnographic study of a Miami high school carried out during the late 1980s through the mid 1990s, Stepick et al. (2003) observed the pressures placed on lower-class Haitian youth to assimilate to African American English-speaking norms and, in some cases, to deny their Haitian origin altogether. Among adults of Haitian origin during the same time (the late 1980s), Stepick et al. noted that 'because of the power of Cubans in Miami, Miami Haitian adults were more likely to learn Spanish than African American English' (131). Despite the fact that Haitian Creole seems to prevail still today in Miami's Little Haiti neighborhood among immigrants, the pressure to know French imposed by the minority Haitian Francophone elite has been remarked upon by residents and visitors to the community (Pierre 2014). At the same time, the pressure to know English is also reflected in work on Haitian Creole/English biliteracy and code-switching conducted by Hebblethwaite (2006, 2010).

In contrast to Spanish speakers and Haitians, Brazilians and Russians are fairly recent immigrant communities. Russians have tended to concentrate in the area of Aventura and Sunny Isles, in northeastern Miami–Dade County, where they now constitute more than 10% of the population (zipatlas.com). The number of Brazilians in South Florida grew during the 1990s and 2000s; by 2010, there were over 18,000 Brazilians in Broward County and over 17,000 in Miami–Dade. The strength of the Brazilian *real* during the 2000s contributed to the condo boom during that period, and real estate advertisements can still be seen around Miami Beach and Broward County in Spanish, English, and Portuguese. Portuguese–English bilingual education programs have been established in a number of schools in both counties. Given the linguistic proximity of Portuguese to Spanish, one must assume that, after some time living there, many Brazilians in Miami accommodate to Spanish speakers in Spanish-speaking contexts.

Finally, we should mention that South Florida was once a region where a number of Native American languages were spoken. In pre-Columbian times, current-day Miami was home to an indigenous group known as the Tequesta. The Tequesta language, whose origins are unknown to linguists, disappeared with the people and the culture following the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th Century. Today, the Native American (Muskogean) language Mikasuki is still spoken by some 400 people in the Miccosukee Tribe who inhabit the Everglades in Western Miami–Dade County, as well as by some ethnic Seminoles. Although the language has been described by field linguists (West 1962, 1974), little is reported in the literature on any sociolinguistic aspect of the language, including ongoing Miccosukee revitalization efforts.

6. Setting a Research Agenda in Miami

As we have shown in this article, the sociolinguistic landscape in Miami is rich and diverse. It is difficult to imagine a region more primed for sociolinguistic inquiry, as it pertains to issues of language maintenance and shift, new dialect formation, dialect contact and leveling, and bilingual education. In this final section, we describe four areas of research where sociolinguistic inquiry is especially needed.

(1) *English in Miami*. Although we have launched a program of research to investigate the development of English among Miami-born Latinos, much work is still needed in this area. We currently know very little about the social meaning that attaches to the features we are studying, but our preliminary investigations of language attitudes suggest that English in Miami is ideologically laden. We are also concerned to understand how non-Latino groups participate in the English language patterns we are documenting among Miami-born Latinos.

Work in Miami's diverse Black diaspora communities is especially needed. African Americans still comprise some 19% of Miami's population, yet no work on their language varieties has been conducted. At the same time, ethnographic evidence suggests that children of Haitian immigrants accommodate their African American peers (Stepick et al. 2003) in terms of cultural practices, though as of yet we do not know the extent to which Haitians adopt features African American English in interaction with African Americans or more generally. We have anecdotal evidence that Jamaicans and other African Diaspora Anglophone groups from the Caribbean are assumed to be 'Black' (i.e., African American), but this claim and its linguistic implications need to be investigated systematically, ideally through sustained sociolinguistic ethnography.

(2) *Spanish dialect contact.* Recent work by Otheguy and Zentella (2012) on Spanish in New York City and by Parodi (2004) in Los Angeles, as well as work by Potowski and Matts (2008) and Potowski (2014) on mixed ethnicity Latino groups in Chicago, demonstrates the profitability of dialect contact studies for our ongoing description of language in U.S. Latino communities. At this stage, we do not know whether the Miami-born (a) maintain the national–origin varieties spoken by their parents, (b) accommodate local, majoritarian (i.e., Caribbean) dialect norms, or (c) participate in the emergence of a unique variety of Miami Spanish, along the lines of what has been suggested in Los Angeles by Parodi (2006, 2014). A large-scale variationist community survey project that also attends to the complexities of identity among Miami's diverse Spanish-speaking groups is needed to address these questions.

(3) *Perceptual Studies.* We have begun to explore the way Miami's sociolinguistic diversity is represented cognitively. Carter & Lynch (2013) have conducted a matched-guise style study testing listener's implicit perceptions of English and Spanish, while Carter & Callesano (2014) have tested implicit perceptions of three varieties of Spanish spoken in metropolitan Miami-Dade (post-Castro Cuban, highland Colombian, and Peninsular). These studies have begun to map the differential ways in which linguistic diversity in Miami is mentally represented, but much more work in this area is needed, especially as both of our studies show that language perceptions correlate with perceived material outcomes, such as annual household income. Matched-guise studies conducted in Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Russian communities would be valuable in helping us understand the socio–cognitive figuration of those languages in the region, and help us understand patterns of language maintenance and shift.

(4) *Miami Dade LOTES.* Miami's LOTES are all fertile ground for sociolinguistic inquiry. Excepting work by Blondeau and Nichols (2012) on French and Hebblethwaite (2006) on Haitian Creole, these languages remain unstudied in Miami.

We believe that the sociolinguistic study of language in Miami is important not only for issues of language documentation and questions of linguistic theory but also because in the decades that come more U.S. cities may begin to resemble Miami linguistically, as the U.S. Latino population grows and diversifies. Miami thus may serve as a model for what is to come.

Short Biographies

Phillip M. Carter is a sociolinguist and a scholar of language and culture in immigrant and ethnolinguistic minority communities. His scholarship addresses a range of issues of contemporary concern, including the relationship between social formations and linguistic variation, immigration and bilingualism, Spanish language change in the U.S., maintenance and shift of Spanish in the U.S., and popular discourses about language. He has authored or co-authored papers on these areas in journals such as *English World Wide, Language in Society, Language &*

Linguistics Compass, Spanish in Context, and *Journal of Sociolinguistics.* With Julie Tetel Andresen, he is the author of *Languages in the World: How History, Culture, and Politics Shape Language.* He holds a B.A. in Spanish Language and Literature from North Carolina State University, an M.A. in English (with a concentration in sociolinguistics) also from North Carolina State University, and a Ph.D. in English Linguistics from Duke University. He is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of English and Program in Linguistics at Florida International University.

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Notes

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[1] While we do not have comparable data on bilingual proficiency in Miami-Dade, we do know that in 2010, 71.9% of Miami-Dade's population spoke a language other than English in the home (U.S. Census 2010). We can safely assume that Spanish speakers are the overwhelmingly largest share in this number, and that these speakers are also proficient in English in light of new data by Krogstad & Gonzalez-Barrera (2015) that show that a majority (62%) of adult U.S. Latinos speak English or are bilingual. We also note that in terms of language policy, Quebec is likely to be more supportive of bilingualism, but as an oral phenomenon, Miami is likely to have more bilingual speakers.

[2] In 1997, Dade County was renamed Miami-Dade County, our area of interest in this paper. We use the names 'Miami', 'Miami-Dade County', and 'metropolitan Miami' interchangeably unless specifically defined otherwise.

[3] See Bayley (2014) for an in-depth description of demographic categories in U.S. Latino communities.

[4] This includes Chicago (79%), Dallas (85%), Houston (78%), Los Angeles (78%), Phoenix (91%), Riverside (88%) San Antonio (90%), and San Francisco (70%) (Brown & Lopez 2013).

[5] Thirty percent of students polled by Zurer Pearson & McGee (1993) were born abroad; 55% had been born in the U.S. to parents who were born abroad; the remaining 15% had at least one parent who was born in the U.S. (p. 96).

[6] Yúdice (2003) is referring to the influence of 'Latin culture' on 'mainstream' U.S. culture.

[7] When the authors claim that Spanish is dying in Miami, they are referring specifically to the Miami-born, where data from multiple studies indicate that cross-generational language shift is underway. The use of Spanish among Spanish-speaking immigrants is not in question.

[8] Readers interested in the historical and ideological construction of national language varieties should see Anderson (2006).

[9] The pronominal forms *tú* and *Usted* are characteristic of the so-called T/V distinction (*tu, vous,* based on the French pronouns) and in the varieties of Spanish where they are found and are used to mark degrees of formality or social distance, where *tú* is characteristically used in informal or intimate situations and *usted* in formal or deferential ones. As we have set forth in this article, the actual usage of these forms varies regionally. To further complicate matters, *vos* is categorically used in Argentina, widely used in Uruguay, and variably used in Colombia and parts of Central America in a tripartite system also involving *tú* and *usted.*

[10] Readers interested in the origins and history of Anglo Whites in Miami should see Parks and Bush (1996).

[11] See Yager-Dror (2014) for discussion of considering religion as a sociolinguistic variable.

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