

Abstract

In the Caribbean Archipelago of San Andres, Colombia, Spanish coexists with an English-based creole known as Islander. This paper examines the outcomes of language contact in terms of the variable production of bilingual rhotics in two settings where contact with Spanish has taken place differently: the island of San Andres was declared a free-duty port in 1953, thus encouraging commercial expansion and greater contact with Continental Spanish, the immigrant language; on the other hand, Old Providence, its sister island, has far less day-to-day interaction with Spanish speakers, and as such Islander is still prevalent in most life aspects of native Raizales, the self-denominated Islander community (Morren, 2001; Bartens, 2013; Moya Chaves, 2014). Speech data was collected by means of sociolinguistic interviews and other-speech elicitation tasks<sup>1,2,3</sup> and over 5000 Praat-annotated tokens were extracted from a transcribed corpus of approximately 65.000 words. The linguistic varieties in contact (Raizal Creole, Raizal Spanish or the bilingual variety, and Continental Spanish) were compared in terms of 1) the acoustic correlates that identify non-vibrant (i.e. zero-occlusion) rhotics produced in spontaneous speech in these varieties, and 2) the relative frequencies and linguistic constraints that condition vibrant rhotic variation in the Archipelago of San Andres.

A discriminant function analysis revealed that duration and formant frequencies (i.e. F3, F3-F2 distance) best discriminate between non-vibrant rhotics in these varieties, while values for spectral moments (kurtosis, COG, and skewness) identified an approximant manner of articulation rather than an assibilated realization in all the varieties under study. Mainly, these acoustic correlates are significantly different in Continental Spanish and Islander Creole, where the former produces an alveolar approximant rhotic and the latter a post-alveolar approximant /r/. Moreover, an effect was found between generation and place of dwelling, where F3 and F3-F2 distance frequencies increasingly resemble Islander Creole approximants, whereas younger generations are more closely associated to Continental Spanish. The divergence of acoustic correlates between generations and islands of the Archipelago suggest that the effect of contact is less pronounced in Old Providence, where approximant rhotics in older generations are converging in the direction of Islander Creole, corroborating the assumptions posited in this study.

In addition, a comparison of Rbrul tests was conducted with the aim of contrasting the linguistic constraints that condition vibrant rhotic variation between Continental Spanish and generations of

Raizal Spanish. Results show that the linguistic constraints and the direction of effect in Raizal Spanish are similar to those of Continental Spanish, which suggests linguistic-internal processes in place. This original research contributes to the fields of Romance linguistics and bilingualism through acoustic and usage-based analyses of natural language, while helping us to understand the potential process of sound change in different island communities of the same Islander language (Weinreich, Labov & Herzog, 1968; Penny, 2000; Thomason, 2001). Documentation of the unique linguistic situations of these islands allows us to see first-hand the effects of contact, and the particular social situation of these communities, providing an account on how language contact in the Caribbean, and more specifically, the Western Caribbean, is occurring in local communities displaced by national non-lexifier languages.

#### References

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