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A Panorama of Traditional New Mexican Spanish

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Topic: Spanish in New Mexico

Summary: This essay provides a panorama of Traditional Northern New Mexican Spanish

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Introduction

Long before any English speaking settlers arrived in what is now the Continental United States, Spanish colonizers had already established settlements in the area that would later become the northern region of the state of New Mexico. These settlements, distant from other Spanish outposts, formed speech communities composed of relatively diverse peoples whose daily interactions would lead to the evolution of the oldest continuously transmitted variety of

Spanish in the United States. Isolated from neighboring Spanish-speaking communities to the south, the Spanish spoken in northern New Mexico went on to develop in ways that have made it both markedly different from Mexican Spanish while also sharing many characteristics with it. Although contact with Spanish-speaking communities to the south was sparse during the colonial era, the Spanish of Northern New Mexico would enter into heavy contact with English with the arrival of the American colonizers in 1848 pushing west to fulfill their 'Manifest Destiny'. The rest of this essay provides a panorama of Traditional Northern New Mexican Spanish that describes its unique characteristics that are largely attributed to isolation from other Spanish varieties and over 150 years of contact with English.

Studies of New Mexican Spanish

Because of its unique characteristics, Traditional New Mexican Spanish (TNMS) from the northern, isolated part of the state has been one of the most widely studied varieties of Spanish. Clearly the most comprehensive study of New Mexican Spanish comes from Garland Bills and Neddy Vigil who obtained recorded speech samples from 357 New Mexican Spanish speakers from 1991 to 1995. Their corpus, the New Mexico-Colorado Spanish Survey (NMCOS) consists of sociolinguistic interviews that recorded the speech of these participants and a lexical survey in which participants provided terms for almost 800 items, chiefly through responses to pictures. Although Bills and Vigil have published prolifically on TNMS, the culmination of their efforts lays clearly in their opus major, *The Spanish Language of New Mexico and Southern Colorado: A Linguistic Atlas* (2008). This linguistic atlas provides an exhaustive account of lexical variation of TNMS and, with its colorful maps and engaging language, represents one of the most accessible scholarly accounts of this variety.

The present essay will present many examples from transcriptions of the recorded portions of the NMCOS in order to provide a vivid depiction of TNMS

and will naturally rely on the work of Bills and Vigil. Additionally, one of the most widely recognized scholars who has worked on TNMS is Aurelio Macedonio Espinosa who documented its salient characteristics, focusing on contact phenomena with English and archaisms, in the early 1900s (e.g. 1909; but also see 1975). This report on TNMS will also highlight the work of other scholars, such as Esther Brown, Israel Sanz-Sánchez, and the author of this panorama.

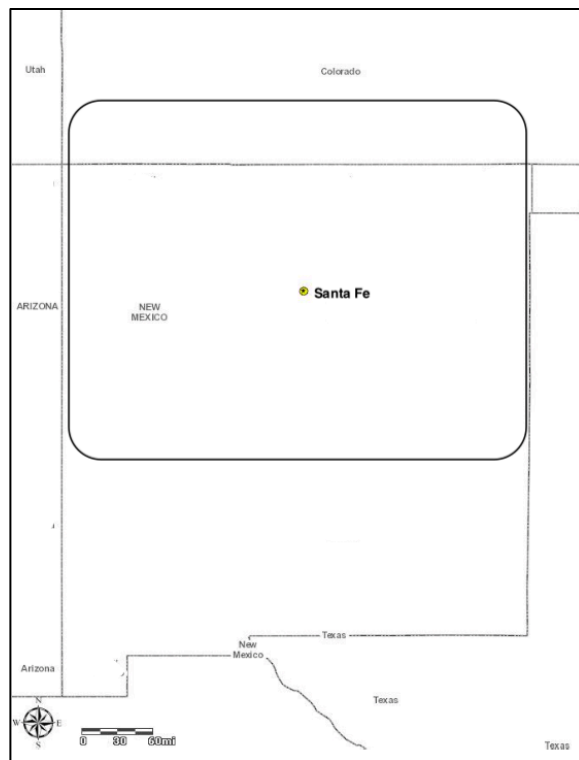
Traditional New Mexican Spanish

In summing up the great body of work on TNMS, Bills and Vigil (2008:30-31) report that unique characteristics of this variety reflect the history of its speakers and can be attributed to four major themes: 1) the perseverance of archaisms including lexicon, grammatical forms, and pronunciation; 2) internal linguistic developments; 3) language contact with English; and 4) dialectal contact with both Mexican and standard Spanish. The rest of this article will elaborate on these themes.

Many scholars, most notably Bills and Vigil (2008), propose that there are two general varieties of Spanish spoken widely in New Mexico. In the southern portion of the state the Spanish is highly characteristic of northern Mexican Spanish and is referred to as ‘Border Spanish’ by Bills and Vigil. The variety explored in more detail here, Traditional New Mexican Spanish, is found in the northern portion of the state of New Mexico and in the southern edge of Colorado. Map 1, below, gives an approximate delineation of the dialect area of TNMS. Please note that the proposed dialect area identified here is meant to give a general idea to the reader and that there is no discrete border in which the two varieties are separated. Instead, the geographic distribution of these two varieties of Spanish is gradient, meaning that there will be areas in the center of the state in which features of both dialects are present. At the same time, waves of immigration

from Mexico have introduced a stream of speakers of Mexican Spanish throughout the state (and country) who bring their speech varieties with them.

However, in earlier times the division between the TNMS dialect area and any neighboring varieties would have been greatly exaggerated by the fact that the first Spanish settlement established in 1598 by Juan de Oñate was thirty miles to the north of Santa Fe and that the nearest Spanish settlement to the south was only reachable by traversing a vast expanse of hostile desert referred to as *La jornada del muerto* 'The Journey of the Dead'. Leading 500 people to the confluence of the Chama and Río Grande rivers, an area occupied by Tewa-speaking Native Americans, Oñate christened this first settlement as San Juan.



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Map 1. Approximate geographical area where TNMS is spoken (map extracted from USGS 2015, annotation by author).

Archaisms

The Spanish of Northern New Mexico has not failed to capture the imagination and romanticism of New Mexican speech communities and its uniqueness has given rise to many myths. Bills and Vigil (2008: Ch. 2) dedicate a great effort at untangling these ‘myths’ from realities. One of the most propagated myths is that TNMS is Golden Age Spanish from Spain that has been preserved perfectly in the isolated region in which it is spoken. While this is obviously a myth, it is worth exploring the factors that lead to its nascence.

Before continuing, we must address the following question: what is an archaism? In the New Mexican setting there are two general types. First, conventional archaisms are linguistic forms that have endured in a specific speech community but have been rendered obsolete or have become altered in standardized varieties of Spanish. It is important to note that these archaisms may not be perceived as retentions of older forms by the speech communities in question as they are the acceptable forms within these communities. This first type of archaism is the most prototypical and many of these forms can be found in literary works from the 14th to the 16th century. The second type of archaism seen in the New World comes from terms that were coined in order to describe new plants, animals, and other objects encountered by Spanish explorers and colonizers. As time passed, many of these original terms were replaced by more modern forms in many speech communities but retained in isolated ones.

Some of the most notable of the conventional archaisms found in TNMS are presented in table 1 with some of them exemplified below. These examples come from the speech samples recorded under the direction of Neddy Vigil and Garland Bills for the NMCROSS corpus.

Archaism/Retention	Modern Spanish	English Translation
<i>asina</i>	<i>así</i>	'like this, that way'
<i>muncho</i>	<i>mucho</i>	'many, a lot, much'
<i>cuasi</i>	<i>casí</i>	'almost'
<i>mesmo</i>	<i>mismo</i>	'same, self'
<i>cuerpo</i>	<i>blusa</i>	'blouse, shirt'
<i>túnico</i>	<i>vestido</i>	'dress'
<i>recordar</i>	<i>despertar</i>	'to wake up'
<i>seigo/semos</i>	<i>soy/somos</i>	'I am' / 'we are'
<i>vide/vido</i>	<i>vi/vio</i>	'I saw' / '(s)he saw'
<i>truje, trujo, trujites, trujimos, trujieron</i>	<i>traje, trajo, trajiste, trajimos, trajeron</i>	'I brought, he brought, you brought, we brought, they brought'

Table 1. Common conventional archaisms in Traditional New Mexican Spanish.

Examples 1 and 2 come from a participant with the pseudonym Sebastian, a male wood artist from Taos county, in the heart of Northern New Mexico, who was born in 1944 and was 48 years old at the time of the interview. In example 1, he uses the lexical archaism *asina* 'like this, that way' to describe the fear instilled in children through conjuring images of a mythical snake. Also of note, which will be discussed below, the speaker produces *dijían* 'they said', a variant of the imperfect indicative third-person plural *decir* 'to say' that shows /s/ aspiration (and vowel raising: 'e' > 'i'), which is realized as *decían* in careful normative speech.

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Example 1. *Asina* 'like this' (Interview 102-3A2).

S: *La serpiente era un viborón que había aquí en el Picurí que se los llevaba ¿no? Se llevaba los chiquitos dijían. Y asina los metían miedo ¿no?*
 'The serpent was a big snake that existed here in Picurí that took them away, no? It took the children away they said. And like this we filled them with fear, no?

In example 2 we are privy to a conversation about New Mexican identity between the interviewer, Dora, and Sebastian in which the grammatical archaism *semos* 'we are' is used by Sebastian, but not Dora, to confirm that he views Chicano identity as an ethnic mix.

Example 2. Semos 'we are' (Interview 102-2B1).

- S: *Un chicano es un... Lo que viene siendo un parte mexicano y parte español.*
- D: *Mhm.*
- S: *... parte indio ¿no?*
- D: *Mhm.*
- S: *Es lo que es un chicano, una mezcla.*
- D: *Un mestizaje.*
- S: *Un mestizo ¿no?*
- D: *Mhm.*
- S: *Es un mezcla.*
- D: *Lo que somos todos.*
- S: *Lo que semos todos ¿no?*
-
- S: 'A Chicano is a... That which comes being a part Mexican and part Spanish.'
- D: 'Mhm.'
- S: '.. part Indian, no?'
- D: 'Mhm.'
- S: 'That is what a Chicano is, a mix.'
- D: 'A mixture.'
- S: 'A mixed race person, no?'
- D: 'Mhm.'
- S: 'It is a mix.'
- D: 'It is what we all are.'
- S: 'It is what we all are, no?'

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Example 3 is provided by Odilia, a cook from Bernalillo county who was born in 1930 and was 62 years old at the time of the interview. In this segment, where she uses the archaisms *vide* 'I saw' and *muncho* 'a lot', she is describing the unhygienic habits of the babysitter that took care of her younger siblings while she was at school.

Example 3. Vide 'I saw' and *muncho* 'a lot' (Interview 117-1A3).

- O: *Y vide también que estaban tan sucios. Ella no los lavaba pa' que comieran ni nada. Estaba la mesa toda puerca y con moscas, una bandejita de la cara con agua puerca y moscas y todo. Y a mí me dio muncha pena.*

'And I saw also that they were so dirty. She didn't wash them so that they could eat or anything. The table was all dirty and with flies, a little tray for the face with dirty water and flies and everything. And it gave me a lot of sorrow.'

Two of the most common New World archaisms are *gallina de la tierra* 'turkey' and *ratón volador* 'bat'. These were created through a process of word compounding, which is a common way to coin terms to refer to newly experienced objects, for example *silla de ruedas* 'seat of/with wheels' (Bills & Vigil 2008:32). It is unclear as to why the new settlers would coin a term for bat given that bats enjoy worldwide presence and the term at the time of colonization would have been *murciélagos* to their peninsular cousins. On the other hand, it is clear that with the case of turkeys, animals of the New World, the settlers would have found the need to find a term for this newly experience of bird.

Turning to retentions in the sound patterns of Spanish by speakers of TNMS, referred to by scholars as phonological retentions, we find that the primary phenomenon of this type is the pronunciation of word-initial 'h'. As is known even to beginning students of Spanish, the letter 'h' is silent in normative modern Spanish. However, considering that Spanish spelling aligns fairly well to the sounds produced in speech (unlike English), the silent 'h' seems out of place. In fact, the presence of this letter in standardized spelling is a reminder that at one time this grapheme did have a phonetic value highly similar to the aspirate sound represented in moderns Spanish spelling by the letter 'j'. In other words, the 'h' was pronounced in Medieval Spanish and continues to be articulated in TNMS. This phonological retention gives forms such as *jediondo* 'stinky' in TNMS instead of the normative *hediondo*, *jallar* 'to find' instead of *hallar*, and *jumo* 'smoke' instead of *humo*. The following example comes from a recording of the song *El cañutero* 'The Reed Game Player' by Abade Martínez (1992: transcription and translation by Enrique Lamadrid in liner notes, p. 17, excepting the spelling of *jállalo* added by author to emphasize 'h' retention):

Example 4. Phonetic retention of ‘h’ in *hallar* ‘to find’ in *El cañutero*.

<i>Allí vienen los cañuteros</i> <i>Los que vienen por el mío,</i> <i>Pero de aquí llevarán</i> <i>Rasguidos en el fondillo.</i>	‘There come the reed game players,’ ‘That come for what’s mine,’ ‘But from there they’ll take’ ‘Scratches on their behind’
<i>Jállalo, jállalo,</i> <i>Cañutero sí,</i> <i>Cañutero no,</i> <i>El palito andando.</i>	‘Find it, find it,’ ‘Reed game player yes,’ ‘Reed game player no,’ ‘Little stick goes round.’

Before examining internal developments in TNMS, it must be acknowledged that the notion of archaisms, while useful in many cases, is also fraught with some difficulties. First, one of the difficulties lies in the categorization of a word as an archaism. Bills and Vigil (2008: 59-66) highlight problems with the categorization of several possible archaisms as retentions. One of these problematic terms is *medias* ‘socks’ (standard *calcetines*), which was used historically to participate in a compound term *medias calzas* to refer to the lower portion of leggings along with *calcetas*, which later became *calcetines*. Therefore, both the standard and the archaism are innovations stemming from the same root. They go on to point out that *medias* is used commonly in the Americas for ‘socks’ and challenge the reader to avoid using the category of archaism in simplistic terms. Another term *albericoque* ‘apricot’ is considered to be a retention of an older form in comparison to the innovation in Mexican Spanish, *chabacano*, which has also made its way into New Mexican Border Spanish and is, to some degree, in competition with its synonym. While *albericoque* may sound quaint to speakers who use the innovation *chabacano*, it remains the de facto term for apricot in much of the Spanish-speaking world. Thus, there are many ways in which a proposed archaism, when examined with scrutiny, may not fit neatly into this category.

A second difficulty with archaisms goes back to the myth that TNMS is a perfectly preserved version of Golden Age Spanish (a myth discussed by Bills and Vigil

2008: 14-17). Many of these archaisms are considered stigmatized and garner the undue negative attention of speakers of prestigious varieties who overestimate their prevalence. Juan Antonio Trujillo (2010) examines a corpus of legal documents from colonial New Mexico, largely in the form of civil or criminal complaints. These documents were obtained from the archive at 100 year intervals over three centuries beginning with documents created by exiles from New Mexico taking refuge in El Paso during the Pueblo Revolt from 1680-1692. Trujillo finds that there was a great deal of variation in TNMS between standardized and archaic forms, as documented in his corpus. Often, the standard form outpaces the archaic one in his data. For example, the standard past tense forms for the verbs *traer* 'to bring' and *ver* 'to see' (e.g. *traje*, *vi*, etc.) appeared more frequently in his data than the supposed archaisms (e.g. *truje*, *vide*, etc.). One of the most widely referenced archaisms, *asina* 'like this, that way', did not appear in his data at all but the standard form *así* was attested robustly in all time periods. Trujillo finds evidence that TNMS was subject to standardization and modernization in similar ways to other varieties and notes the disappearance of future subjunctive and the replacement of the archaic second-person form of address, *vuestra señoría*, with *usted*. The evidence presented by Trujillo refutes the isolation model in which TNMS was impervious to any changes occurring in the outside Spanish-speaking world. The documented presence of archaisms in the TNMS, Trujillo proposes (72), could be the product of speakers making conscious or unconscious choices over the centuries to adopt these forms in order to foster a *nuevomexicano* social identity. While acknowledging that we will never truly know the spoken language from these historical times, the narrative nature of these documents at least gives a glimpse into linguistic tendencies in use at the time by educated and semi-educated speakers. This said, Bills and Vigil (2008: 123) remind us that these educated and semi-educated individuals studied by Trujillo are exactly the type of individuals who would be attuned to developments in standardized language and, thus, skew the findings.

Internal linguistic developments

Language is never static and is always changing over time in any language variety and in any community of practice (for a treatise on mechanisms of language change, see Bybee 2010, referenced below). As mentioned in the previous discussion of archaisms, there were many changes that occurred in TNMS since its arrival in the new world. Many of these changes were internal developments that happened within the speech community of TNMS speakers. In their exhaustive linguistic atlas, Bills and Vigil (2008: Ch. 8) document four types of internal, or independent, linguistic developments: change in form, semantic change of an existing form, lexical compounding, and grammatical or phonological change.

Changes in form

According to Bills and Vigil, changes in form occur when a word is changed over time through phonological processes that may facilitate efficient speech. They propose that the evolution of the term *muchito* ‘child’ came about through the elimination of the double ‘ch’ sound in the diminutive form for *muchacho*, which is *muchachito*, seen in table 2 and example 5, below, (described by Bills and Vigil 2008: 124-127).

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Root form	Innovative form	English Translation
<i>muchachito</i>	<i>muchito</i>	‘child’
<i>puercoespín</i>	<i>cuerpoespín</i>	‘porcupine’
<i>ciempiés</i>	<i>cientopiés, santopiés</i>	‘centipede’

Table 2. Changes in form for TNMS.

Example 5. *Muchito* (taken directly from Bills & Vigil: 124, Ex. 8-1).

Esque le dijo Mano Cacahuete que si de ónde había venido el muchito ese.

‘They say Mano Cacahuete asked her where that little boy had come from’.
(Interview 291)

Another change in form comes about through a process Bills and Vigil (2008: 127) refer to as folk etymology in which speakers change the elements of a term to be more meaningful. Turning to the compound term *puercoespín* ‘porcupine’ derived from *puerco* ‘pig’ and *espina* ‘spine’, Bills and Vigil propose the following explanation for *cuerpoespín* (127). In their data they found that only a small portion of their consultants used the term *puerco* to refer to the pig. Instead, a great proportion provided the term *marrano* (75%) while a smaller proportion preferred *cochino* (20%). However, *puerco* is not absent from TNMS and is more widely used to as an adjective to describe something filthy (see example 3, above). Therefore, speakers transposed the ‘c’ and the ‘p’ creating the element *cuerpo* ‘body’. The new compound form, *cuerpoespín*, thus became a term that was semantically more accurate to these speakers than its counterpart. In example 6, we are privy to the process of data collection for the different lexical terms studied by Bills and Vigil in which the interviewer, Estefanía, is showing the participant, Uriel, different images in order to elicit and document the different terms of interest. Uriel is a truck driver from Mora County, born in 1917 and 76 years old at the time of the interview. Note that Uriel begins by calling the animal in question a *cueroesfín* first before clarifying that it is a *cuerpoespín* and then going on to say the term in English.

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Example 6. *Cuerpoespín* (Interview 214-1B2)

- E: ¿Y esto?
 U: Mira este es un *cueroesfín*, ¿que no?
 E: ¿Cómo?
 U: *Cuerpoespín*.
 E: Mhm.
 U: ... Porcupine se llaman esos ¿no? Yo no sabía muy mucho en inglés de animales.
- E: And this?
 U: Look this is a *cueroesfín*, no?
 E: What?
 U: *Cuerpoespín*.
 E: Mhm.
 U: ... these are called porcupines, right? I didn’t know very much in English about animals.

Semantic change of an existing form

Semantic changes to existing words can take many forms in a language and generally involve an extension in which a term gains an additional meaning. This section will briefly discuss the cases of *plebe* and *arrear*.

According to the DRAE (*Diccionario de la lengua española*), the term *plebe* was used in antiquity to refer to the common social class harkening back to its etymological Latin root. In TNMS, according to the findings of Bills and Vigil (2008:124-127), the term *plebe* was the second most frequent term for children, the first most frequent being *niños* and a somewhat distant third being *muchitos*. In their discussion of the geographical distribution of these terms, these authors find that *muchito* and *plebe* are strong dialectal indicators because they appear almost exclusively in the dialect area attributed to TNMS.

According to Bills and Vigil (2008: 137), the term *arrear* ‘to drive cattle’ has a similar development path to the English term ‘drive’ in that both were used to describe the movement of animals by humans (e.g. *drive cattle*, *drive a team of horses*). Consequently, both of these words were useful candidates for extension in order to describe the operation of the automobile. At the same time, Bills and Vigil note that the more standard *manejar* or its variant *manijar* were also found to describe the action of driving an automobile, along with *arrear* in TNMS.

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Lexical compounding

As mentioned above in the discussion of archaisms, settlers in the new world often created new terms through compounding of existing terms in order to describe newfound flora and fauna. These terms would endure over time and come to be archaisms relative to normative Spanish as newer terms came in to favor. Therefore, compounds such as *gallina de la tierra* ‘turkey’ and *ratón volador* ‘bat’ were at one time innovations that arose in TNMS only to go on to

become archaisms. This phenomenon highlights the fact that the identification of archaisms is not always clear cut, categorical, or discrete.

Phonological and grammatical developments

Some of the most interesting internal developments to TNMS occurred in the realm of grammar and phonology. This section will examine the use of *-nos* in variation with *-mos* as a first person plural (1ps, *nosotros*) suffix, the regularization of first person auxiliary *haber* in the present perfect, the aspiration of syllable-initial /s/, paragogic *-e*, retroflexion of simple /r/ before consonants, and the merger of sounds once distinguished by the graphemes ‘y’ and ‘ll’ called *yeísmo*. Of course, this section will highlight some of the developments documented by Bill and Vigil’s (2008) authoritative work. It will also describe the work of Esther L. Brown using the NMCOS data, mention historical work on TNMS by Israel Sanz-Sánchez, and briefly describe an investigation realized by the present author.

Beginning with the TNMS 1ps suffix, *-nos*, Bills and Vigil (2008: 145) acknowledge that this phenomenon has been found in many parts of the Spanish-speaking world, but not to the extent that it is found in New Mexico. In TNMS, it has extended to all ‘*nosotros*’ verb forms having antepenultimate stress, including present subjunctive forms that have encountered a shift in stress from the penultimate to the antepenultimate syllable, as seen in *háblenos* in table 3. In addition to the four examples drawing from the ‘-ar’ verb, *hablar* ‘to talk’, an example of *comer* ‘to eat’ is provided to indicate that this extends to all verbs types.

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TNMS	Normative	Verb tense	English Translation
<i>háblenos</i>	<i>hablemos</i>	Pres. Subjunctive	'that we talk'
<i>habláranos</i>	<i>habláramos</i>	Past Subjunctive	'that we talked'
<i>hablábanos</i>	<i>hablábamos</i>	Imperfect	'we used to talk'
<i>hablaríanos</i>	<i>hablaríamos</i>	Conditional	'we would talk'
<i>comiéranos</i>	<i>comiéramos</i>	Past Subjunctive	'that we ate'

Table 3. First person plural 'nosotros' forms with antepenultimate stress in TNMS.

Example 7 comes from a weaver named Lourdes, hailing from Española, who was born in 1897 and was 96 years old at the time of the interview. In this conversation, Lourdes is describing to the interviewer, Estefanía, how the local police had killed a couple of locals, including a son of Lourdes. This portion deals with the court case against the accused policeman. In the following example we see not only a usage of the TNMS *nosotros* suffix in *íbanos* but we also see examples of paragogic -e in *male* 'bad' and *dare* 'to give', which will be discussed below.

Example 7. *Íbanos* 'we were going', *male* 'bad', and *dare* 'to give' (Interview 219-1B1).

- E: ... (SIGH) *Y nunca vino a pedirle disculpas, o a --*
L: *No pues qué disculpa. Me iba a pedir el pobre cuando yo ...ya yo le había ganado en en la --*
E: *En la corte.*
L: *En la corte, que había hecho male. Ya no era más de la última corte a la que le íbanos a dare.*
- E: '... (SIGH) And he never came to ask for forgiveness, or to--'
L: 'No, well pardon me. The poor guy was going to ask when I...I had already won against him in the--'
E: 'In court.'
L: 'In court, he had done [something] bad. It was nothing more than the last court case that we were going to give him.'

The auxiliary forms of the verb *haber* when used in the present perfect have undergone regularization in TNMS in the first person plural and singular. For example, instead of the normative *yo he comido* 'I have eaten' and *nosotros*

hemos comido ‘we have eaten,’ the auxiliaries are frequently realized as *yo ha comido* and *nosotros hamos comido*. Regularization in verb paradigms occurs in many forms in the Spanish-speaking world and occurs when one member of the paradigm does not match with the other members in a conspicuous manner. The paradigm for auxiliary *haber* in the present perfect is *he* (1s), *has* (2s), *ha* (3s/2s), *hemos* (1p), *han* (3p/2p), and peninsular *hais* (2s). This renders the auxiliaries *he* and *hemos* as different from the others in that they have an ‘e’. Furthermore, in the past perfect (e.g. *había comido* ‘I have eaten/ he, she has eaten’) the auxiliaries are more regular in their spelling in the stem and the first person and third person forms are the same: *había* (1s), *habías* (2s), *había* (3s/2s), *habíamos* (1p), *habían* (3p/2p), and peninsular *habíais* (2s). In addition to similar forms in the past perfect between the *yo* (1s) form and the *el, ella, usted* (3s/2s) form, there are other cases in which there is no orthographic or phonemic difference between these. For example, there is no difference between the forms in question in the imperfect tense (e.g. *yo no sabía* ‘I didn’t know’ versus *el no sabía* ‘he didn’t know’). While this creates the potential for ambiguity, this uncertainty is resolved in discourse through contextual means. Therefore, given the relative oddity of the *he* and *hemos* forms, the fact that conceptually similar paradigms using *haber* as an auxiliary do not distinguish between first person and third person in form, and that potential ambiguity between similar forms is both common and resolved contextually in discourse, it is rational that speakers would come to produce *ha* and *hemos* as the first person singular and plural auxiliaries for the present perfect. Example 8 provides two instances of this phenomenon.

Example 8. First person singular (1s) and plural (1p) *haber* in the present perfect.

- a. *todo lo que tengo, yo me ha tenido ... yo ha tenido que trabajar.*
 ‘everything that I have, I have had to ... I have had to work.’
 (Interview 190-3B2)
- b. *yo lo conozco, oiga, de... Hemos ido a unos parties y lo conozco bien.*
 ‘I know him, listen, from... We have gone to some parties and I know him well.’ (Interview 88-1A3)

As with many other phenomena presented to characterize TNMS, the usage of *ha* and *hamos* is variable in the speech community. In studying this variability, Bills and Vigil (2008: 146-148) find additional evidence that this is also a fairly recent internal development in TNMS. The innovative variants, *ha* and *hamos*, tend to be used more frequently by the younger speakers in the NMCOS who have had little education in Spanish. This is indicative of a recent change in speech patterns, because the older speakers have a preference for retaining the more normative *he* and *hemos* forms.

Turning to the next phenomenon, in the realm of phonology, Bills and Vigil (2008:148) note that while a great deal of attention has been paid to the aspiration or elimination of syllable-final /s/ in Spanish worldwide (examples 9a. and 9b.), there has been scant attention paid to the reduction of /s/ at the beginning of a syllable (9c.) or at the beginning of a word (9d.). Please note that the use of brackets is used to highlight that we are examining both the sound of ‘s’ and its status as a meaningful unit that is represented by the letters ‘c’, ‘s’, and ‘z’ in American Spanish.

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Example 9. The reduction of /s/ in different positions.

- a. Syllable-final aspiration: *todoj loj díaaj* versus *todos los días* ‘every day’
- b. Syllable-final deletion: *todo lo día* versus *todos los días* ‘every day’
- c. Syllable-initial aspiration: *ajina lo hajemos nojotros* versus *asina lo hacemos nosotros* ‘that is how we do it’
- d. Word-initial aspiration: *jí, jeñor* versus *sí, señor* ‘yes sir’

Syllable-initial reduction was noted over a century ago by Aurelio M. Espinosa (1909; 1930) who believed that it was a retention from Peninsular Spanish and attributed it to the generally archaic nature of TNMS. However, other authors, including Bills and Vigil (1999) and Esther L. Brown (2005), argue that it is an innovation stemming from new varieties of Spanish that evolved in the New World instead of a retention.

The first rigorous attempt at analyzing syllable-initial /s/ reduction comes from a study by Brown (2005) who examined the variability of this feature in the recordings from the NMCOS. She found that out of 2,585 instances of words beginning with /s/ in this corpus, 16% showed reduction, mostly aspiration as in 9d., above. When the syllable-initial /s/ occurred inside the word (9c.), she found that out of 3,048 instances, it was reduced in 30% of them with 85 cases of deletion and 843 cases of aspiration (Brown 2005: 19). What is more, she found that frequently occurring words, such as *nosotros* and *asina* displayed more reduction than infrequent ones. This study of frequency effects in /s/ reduction was later explored from a cognitive perspective by Brown (see Brown and Harper 2009).

While all of the other phenomena discussed in this section on phonological and grammatical developments occur in many varieties throughout the Spanish-speaking world, the paragogic –e is one of the most unique to TNMS. As shown in example 7, above, Lourdes utters *male* instead of *mal* ‘bad, wrong’ and *dare* instead of *dar* ‘to give’. This variable phenomenon occurs on words that end in consonants and that have the stress on the last syllable. The paragogic infiltration appears as both an ‘e’ and an ‘i’ sound. The paragogic ‘i’ is immortalized in the book title *Yo seigo de Taosi*, a collection of essays by the bilingual humorist and cultural critic Larry Torres (1992)(1992). Bills and Vigil (2008: 149) note that the phenomenon of paragogic –e has only been documented in one other place, an indigenous community in Costa Rica (Quesada Pacheco 2000:52–53). Therefore, this phenomenon distinguishes TNMS from its neighbor, Border Spanish, and from the rest of the Spanish-speaking world.

A feature of TNMS that has vexed some casual observers is the retroflex ‘r’. Because of the similarity of this sound to the English ‘r’ some have thought that it is evidence of the influence of English on the Spanish of New Mexico. This retroflex ‘r’ occurs before the consonants ‘l’, ‘n’, and ‘s’ and is named such

because the tongue does not tap the roof of the mouth in the same way as the canonical simple Spanish ‘r’ between vowels. It is found in words such as *carcel* ‘jail’, *carne* ‘meat’, and *perla* ‘pearl’ (Bills & Vigil 2008: 151). Because this feature occurs in non-contact varieties in Spanish, we may argue that it is a feature that has emerged through internal development.

The final internal development to be described here takes us back to the colonial times and before, and is called *yeísmo*. As is the case with the ‘h’ above, Spanish spelling provides insight into previous norms in pronunciation. In Modern Spanish, with certain exceptions, the graphemes ‘y’ and ‘ll’ represent the same sound, but they represented different sounds in Medieval Spanish. Over time these two distinct, but similar, sounds merged with the pronunciation previously represented by ‘y’ (a voiced fricative palatal) encroaching upon the one represented by ‘ll’ (a voiced lateral palatal). For example, most Spanish speakers pronounce *mayo* ‘may’ and *mallo* ‘mallet’ exactly the same, which was not the case in Medieval Spanish. Israel Sanz-Sánchez (2013) examines a written corpus that includes legal and personal documents that begin with the return of the settlers to New Mexico in 1693 after they fled the Pueblo Revolt in 1680. He uses non-etymological spellings as evidence for a merger of the two sounds. For example, if a person writes *mallor* ‘major, greater’ and *cabayo* ‘horse’ instead of etymological *mayor* and *caballo* it is evidence that this person does not maintain a distinction at the sound level. Sanz-Sánchez finds a clear divide among the returning settlers in which those born in New Mexico prior to the revolt did not tend to exhibit signs of this merger while those from other places in Mexico or Spain returning with the settlers did exhibit evidence of merging the two sounds. In the resettled area, the merger occurred very quickly and was likely accelerated due to dialect contact among the diverse population that resettled the area. What makes this situation unique, in fact, is the rapidity of the change.

Language contact with English

The Spanish of New Mexico has been in contact with English for over 150 years, beginning with the arrival of General Kearny, who heralded the beginning American colonization of the region in 1848 as recognized by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. This cultural and linguistic contact has resulted in two overarching tendencies: increasing abandonment of Spanish and the emergence of a wide variety of contact phenomena in the Spanish that endured. Although a complete discussion of contact phenomena in New Mexico is beyond the scope of the present report, we will briefly examine the incorporation of Anglicisms (word borrowing) and code-switching, two of the most prominent outcomes of contact.

In Aurelio M. Espinosa's 1917 article, *Speech Mixture in New Mexico: The Influence of the English Language on New Mexican Spanish*, reprinted in 1975, he documents both borrowing and code-switching. Table 4 provides some of the most salient borrowings of Anglicisms.

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<i>bisnes</i> < business <i>breca</i> < brake <i>crismes</i> < Christmas <i>cuque</i> < cookie <i>daime</i> < dime <i>espor</i> < sport	<i>greve</i> < gravy <i>lonchi</i> < lunch <i>nicle, niquel</i> < nickel <i>queque</i> < cake <i>sanamagón</i> < son of a gun <i>troca</i> < truck
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Table 4. Borrowings in New Mexican Spanish documented by Espinosa (1917/1975).

Espinosa also provides examples of what he calls 'speech mixture', which is usually referred to as code-switching, as seen in example 10.

Example 10. Speech mixture documented by Espinosa (1917/1975: 104)

- a. *quería andar de smart* and he got it in the neck.
'he wanted to come off as smart and he got it in the neck.'
- b. *vamos ir al foot-ball game y después al baile a tener* the time of our lives.
'let's go to the football game and afterwards to the dance to have the time of our lives.'
- c. *sean hombres y no anden* fooling around *tanto*.
'be men and don't go fooling around so much.'

What would cause speakers to switch between languages? The topic of code-switching has fostered many debates and has provoked many opinions. While some believe that it is an erosion of the Spanish language, or indicative that speakers who engage in this behavior do not know either language involved, others see it as a site of linguistic innovation that is an important part of the speaker's identity. In order to study bilingual phenomenon, Catherine Travis and Rena Torres Cacoullos (2013) recorded and transcribed bilingual behavior in the TNMS area. Their corpus is called the *New Mexico Spanish-English Bilingual* (NMSEB) corpus and has fed many studies on bilingual behavior. For example, the present author, Damián Vergara Wilson, and his colleague Jenny Dumont (2014) studied a bilingual compound verb that makes use of the verb *hacer* 'to make, to do' as an auxiliary and a bare English infinitive to contribute lexical information. In notation, this bilingual compound verb is referred to as *hacer* + VERB_{Eng} and is shown in example 11.

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Example 11. The bilingual compound verb, *hacer* + VERB_{Eng} (Wilson & Dumont 2014: 5 [Ivette in Interview 06 El Túnico, 0:09:03–0:09:11])

*sí tengo .. este sentimiento que yo sabía,
.. que yo podía hacer draw mejor.
... yo digo que en mi mente yo --
... yo hacía draw mejor.*

'I do have .. this feeling that I knew,'
'.. that I could draw better.'
'... I say that in my mind I -'
'... I drew better.'

The purpose of the study was to explore the possibility that bilinguals employed *hacer* + VERB_{Eng} due to the cognitive load of maintaining two languages. In order to address this question, we examined disfluencies such as pauses and word truncations (similar to a brief stutter) in segments known as intonational units that contained this construction as compared to intonational units without it. These disfluencies are considered a sign that the speaker is struggling with their speech. We found that intonational units with *hacer* + VERB_{Eng} did not have a higher rate of disfluencies than other units and viewed this as evidence that it is merely another linguistic tool at the disposal of highly bilingual speakers. In fact, some forms of *hacer* + VERB_{Eng} appear to be the norm for describing certain actions. For example, *hacer retire* ‘to retire’ (standard *jubilarse*) is used throughout the region by a variety of speakers and appears to be the de facto way of expressing this action. Furthermore, many speakers used both the *hacer* + VERB_{Eng} form and the monolingual one (Ivette, from the above example also uses *dibujar*). Our study joins others in proposing that code-switching behavior represents a bilingual mode that has emerged over time and has its own norms and grammar.

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At the same time, contact with English is not always so felicitous. Language contact with English through American colonial expansion created a situation in which English was the language of the dominant society and Spanish became the language of the subordinate one. This dynamic has fostered a situation in which Spanish became devalued and there has been steady abandonment of the language ever since. In studying census data from 2000, Devin Jenkins (2009) found that New Mexico was losing ground in terms of language loyalty (the percentage of Hispanics who claim to speak Spanish) and in intergenerational transmission compared to data from 1980 and compared to figures from surrounding states including Texas, Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, and California. On the other hand, Jenkins (2013) found that there were encouraging trends regarding maintenance in the 2010 census for the Southwest in general. Basically, he found an erosion of the correlation between claiming Spanish as a

home language to variables indicating poverty and a lack of educational attainment. However, he did not examine New Mexico individually but we can hope that some of the positive indications found might be seen for our state. Nevertheless, as will be discussed in the following section, TNMS is not being affected only through language shift to English, it is also undergoing influence from other Spanish varieties.

Dialectal contact with both Mexican and standard Spanish

Returning to the rich lexical studies of Bills and Vigil (2008: Chs. 14 & 15), they found that there were two additional influences on the TNMS lexicon: dialect contact with Mexican Spanish and contact with standard Spanish through the classroom. They found that sometimes these variables occurred independently from one another and sometimes they were connected. For example, they found that the TNMS term for 'dollar' was *peso* but that *dólar* was encroaching upon the former through exposure to classroom study and through Border Spanish, which used the latter. In terms of the exposure to education, Bills and Vigil documented the effect of education on replacing many terms: TNMS *velís* replaced with *maleta* 'suitcase', *rula* with *regla* 'ruler', and *paisano* with *correcaminos* 'roadrunner', to name a few. At the same time, terms have been introduced into the TNMS by over a century of Mexican immigration and Bills and Vigil cite the following replacements, among others: TNMS *empeloto* replaced with *desnudo* 'nude', *brecas* with *frenos* 'brakes', and possibly *col* with *repollo* 'cabbage'. While it is difficult to untangle the educational factor from contact with Mexican Spanish, we see that the vocabulary unique to TNMS is at increasing risk of being replaced by Spanish speakers who will likely see the TNMS variants as more stigmatized than their counterparts.

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Concluding remarks

Traditional New Mexican Spanish is the oldest variety with continuous presence in the region that is now the United States. We have seen that it experienced evolution in relative isolation thereby producing a variety that was distinct from its nearest neighbor, Border Spanish, at the time of contact with English. This contact with English, and later contact with other varieties, have also had a great impact on TNMS. Despite its differences, Bills and Vigil (2008) highlight throughout their atlas that TNMS is a member of the family of Mexican Spanish varieties and that it has many similarities to this latter variety. Notwithstanding, because the distinguishing features of TNMS are very salient, it has created a situation for researchers that is perfect for studying phenomena of contact between languages and between dialects. In other words, TNMS is in a very advanced stage of contact after having been in close proximity to English for over a century. Bilinguals borrow words, alternate intimately between languages, and create new bilingual compound verbs that are not found in other contact varieties of Spanish in the US.

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If TNMS gives us a window into bilingual phenomena through intense contact in a way that no other variety of US Spanish does, it also gives us insight into dialect disappearance. Bills and Vigil wrap up their impressive tome with many laments about the increasing disappearance of TNMS in the New Mexican speech community and warn the reader that it is an endangered variety. As things stand, Spanish will not disappear from New Mexico, but TNMS probably will be replaced by Mexican Spanish. We can only hope that young New Mexicans in the TNMS area see the validity and importance of TNMS and learn it from their native-speaking elders before all of these are gone.

Suggested Internet sources for hearing TNMS

Although this essay details the main characteristics of TNMS that are studied by linguists, the depiction of an entire variety of Spanish, one that is passed down from parents to children and used by entire communities, is a difficult task. To those who are raised by families in which TNMS is spoken, it is more than just a dialect that can be described by a linguistic treatise. Hearing TNMS evokes feelings of belonging to the biosphere in which it was engendered, feelings of *querencia* 'home land'. This is a complicated set of feelings that, for the author at least, contain a longing for the traditions and lifeways that are being replaced by modernity. Being that we live in a time of high connectivity, the reader can make use of online resources in order to hear TNMS and New Mexican bilingual phenomena for themselves.

- Referring back to example 4, *El cañutero* by Abade Martínez, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings has placed this onto its YouTube page and this particular recording can be found with a search for the title and be heard at the following link (at the time of publication): <http://bit.ly/1SJUBaC>
- Ethnomusicologist Donald Robb collected thousands of songs in the 40s and 50s as he roamed the American Southwest, and inspired others to continue his work. KNME Public Media (2008) has a site dedicated to the work of Robb that contains a documentary of the work and links to recorded songs with the singers frequently introducing the songs in TNMS: <http://bit.ly/1Ln3KDX>
- Larry Torres writes a humorous cultural column in 'Spanglish' in the Santa Fe newspaper *El Nuevo Mexicano*: <http://bit.ly/1KaafJB>

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- Author Jim Sagel is one of the few authors to write in TNMS. His archive is housed at the University of Texas at Austin and references to his work can be found at this link: <http://bit.ly/1dg7Obm>
- On a much more picaresque note, comedian and musician Carlos Medina uses bilingual behavior as a vehicle for his outrageous comedy (you have been warned). While his work contains many instances of exaggeration and sociolinguistic stereotyping, he would not be popular, or reviled, without presenting at least some form of authenticity in his work. In fact, the listener must be both bilingual in Spanish and English, and familiar with TNMS terms in order to fully understand much of his work: <http://bit.ly/1KcCAjY>

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