U.S. MEXICAN SPANISH: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MACRO-DIALECT SPOKEN IN THE WESTERN U.S.

DANIEL J. VILLA  
New Mexico State University  

ISRAEL SANZ-SÁNCHEZ  
West Chester University

ABSTRACT. In their *The Spanish language of New Mexico and Southern Colorado: A linguistic atlas*, Bills and Vigil examine the issue of how to label the Spanish dialects spoken in northern and southern New Mexico, settling on ‘Traditional Spanish’ for the former and ‘Border Spanish’ for the latter (2008:7). However, Villa and colleagues (2014) find features in the Spanish spoken in Washington state that closely match those found in the southwestern U.S. border regions. This would indicate a macro-dialect that developed before the relatively recent migrations of Spanish speakers into the Pacific Northwest and other areas. We seek to identify the origins and growth of that macro-dialect, based on five sets of data from the period just before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to the present. Focusing on lexical data, we demonstrate the emergence of a shared dialectal repertoire in contact with English for over a century and a half’s span resulting in the development of the Mexican origin Spanish found in the western United States.

Keywords: Arizona Spanish, Mexican Spanish, U.S. Mexican Spanish, New Mexican Spanish, Southwest Spanish, Washington State Spanish, macro-dialect

Chican@ Spanish. Following Lipski (2008), Escobar and Potowski use ‘español mexicano-americano’ and ‘español chicano’ interchangeably and propose ‘español del suroeste’ as a macro-label including these and other historical forms of Spanish in the area (2015:72-80). This variation in labels (including the once-trendy ‘@’) underscores the ambivalence in the literature regarding how to name the Spanish of speakers of Mexican origin in the U.S.

At the same time, studies such as Villa and colleagues (2014) and Van Buren (2017) find features in the Spanish spoken in Washington state that closely match those found in the descriptions of the Spanish of the southern U.S. border regions referenced above. This would indicate a macro-dialect that developed before the large-scale migrations of Spanish speakers into the Pacific Northwest and other areas outside the Southwest, a relatively recent phenomenon. These dialectal similarities point at historical continuities between forms of Spanish spoken in colonial times in the current area of the U.S. Southwest and the repertoires used by recent migrants and their descendants. This macro-dialect is the tie that connects both ends of this historical sequence, forming a base for the collection of Mexican origin Spanish dialects spoken in the U.S., particularly in its western region.

Further, sociodemographic work by Jenkins (2009, 2013) has confirmed the expansion of speakers of Mexican Spanish into areas of the western U.S. not traditionally included in discussions of so-called Southwestern or Border Spanish. Consequently, the geographical scope of this macro-dialect needs to be readjusted. As he notes,

> There are no demographic factors that distinguish Hispanics in the Northwestern U.S. from those of areas to the south besides higher demographic density and proximity to the border, since the origins of these Hispanics are similar to those in the Southwest. As such, it seems reasonable to include [Northwestern] states in discussions about Southwest Spanish, or rather, Spanish of the Western United States (2013:33, our translation).

A main goal of this article, then, is to work toward an understanding of the evolution of this macro-dialect and its current presence in the western U.S. A principal motivation for focusing on this greater region is that Spanish has a historical presence here, predating that of English as well as that of the various waves of immigration from Mexico since the early 20th century. As such, it is not a foreign language, but rather a national one, and must be analyzed as such. We label this macro-dialect U.S. MEXICAN SPANISH (USMS), motivated in part by the need to establish which variety of U.S. Spanish is being studied (for a discussion of the varieties of Spanish spoken in the U.S., see Lipski 2008 and Escobar & Potowski 2015:51-80). We also seek to underscore the historical links between this macro-dialect and Mexican Spanish.
Resorting to older labels as signifiers for this variety is problematic for several reasons. For instance, the phrase ‘Border Spanish’ (Bills & Vigil 2008, Studerus 1995) relies on the common perception of the U.S./Mexico border as something new, and thus all things pertaining to the border, including Spanish language use, are modern. While it is indeed the case that the border is recent (see below), Hispanic communities predate this border by more than three centuries. The label ‘Traditional Spanish’ is also problematic. It was first used by Lope Blanch (1987, 2000) to designate forms of Spanish used in the Southwest before 20th-century migrations (‘español tradicional del suroeste’; cf. also ‘español patrimonial’, Moreno Fernández 2009), and it is still used with that meaning in some recent work (e.g. Parodi 2014a, 2014b). It has also been invoked to refer to the variety used in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado (Bills 1997, Bills & Vigil 2008) and to refer to that same variety and Spanish-language enclaves in northeastern Texas and Louisiana (Lipski 2008, Escobar & Potowski 2015). While the macro-dialect treated here is historically related to these varieties, its geographical and sociolinguistic scope is much broader. In addition, a common problem with these and other similar labels is that they assume (or at least suggest) a historical break between dialects first formed during the colonial period and all subsequent forms of Spanish in the Southwest. On the contrary, as will be seen below, the Spanish described in the present study is firmly rooted in a continuous presence in what is now the U.S. Southwest for over 350 years. A central aim of this article is to describe the historic arc that documents this presence.

Our initial foray into identifying USMS is based on five sets of data. The first is a collection of documents written between the years 1839 and 1844. These texts document the process of northern Mexican colonists seeking permission from the Mexican government to settle on land in the Mesilla Valley, a region in what is now southern New Mexico, before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Gadsden Purchase conceded Mexican territories to the U.S. In addition to other Spanish speaking communities already settled in the area, these were the individuals who did not cross the border, but rather had the border cross them. The second is Aurelio Espinosa’s (1914) ‘Studies in New Mexican Spanish, part III: The English elements’. It contains Spanish-English contact data drawn from research conducted by the author in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. The third data set comes from personal correspondence found in the Amador Collection, housed the archives of New Mexico State University (NMSU) in Las Cruces. We focus on the Spanish of southern New Mexicans who were born after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and grew up in a bilingual environment. They were the first speakers of USMS in this area. The fourth is a set of transcripts of interviews carried out in the mid-1970s with mexicanas born in the late 19th and early 20th centuries who migrated from Mexico to the U.S. in the early 20th century. These data represent speech samples of northern Mexican Spanish speakers who acquired Spanish in a monolingual environment but who spent most of their lives in a bilingual setting. The fifth set are
that data reported on by Villa and colleagues (2014), collected in the 21st century, which also includes Spanish speakers born in northern Mexico. As with the previous data set, these are Spanish-dominant speakers from northern Mexico who also have spent a significant portion of their lives in a bilingual environment, but in the Pacific Northwest rather than in a border region. Taken collectively, these data offer a window into over a century and a half in the development of the Mexican origin Spanish found in the western U.S.

Lastly, it should be noted that, in proposing USMS as a macro-dialect, we are not ignoring the difficulties inherent to the identification of linguistic boundaries across a continuum of linguistic repertoires stemming from many forms of linguistic contact for over four centuries. Our goal is not to disregard those connections, but rather to underscore the rooting of this larger dialectal area in patterns of settlement, communication, acquisition, and linguistic negotiation that predate the establishment of a border in the mid-1800s, and that were modified (not discontinued) by the existence of said border.

This study is divided as follows. Section 2 presents a general sociohistorical framework for the emergence of USMS from a series of contacts that predate the Mexico-U.S. border and contextualizes the study of USMS lexicon within the body of literature on Mexican origin Spanish in the U.S. Section 3 presents the data sources and their historical significance. Section 4 analyzes the main trends in lexical use found in each data source, with special emphasis on the historical influence of English on the lexical stock of USMS. Section 5 briefly discusses the implications of these findings for future research on USMS and concludes this study.

2. Sociohistorical Development of USMS. Although some of the features that characterize USMS started to coalesce in the years immediately following the annexation of the Southwest by the U.S., the roots of this dialect can be traced back to the Spanish colonial period. The permanent presence of Spanish speakers in the area started with the founding of the colony of New Mexico (1598) and the mining settlements of Chihuahua throughout the 17th century, followed by the establishment of missions in Sonora, California, and Texas throughout the 1600s and the 1700s. In this remote area, Spanish developed in an environment characterized by isolation, sparse population, relative lack of social stratification, ethnolinguistic miscegenation, and absence of the norm-enforcing mechanisms typical of more central colonial areas (Parodi 2001, Sanz-Sánchez 2013).

After Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1821, the entire area became the new nation’s northern border. Contact with English started at this time with the arrival of Anglos from the U.S. attracted by the possibility of becoming landowners, especially in Texas. Following Mexico’s loss of Texas, the 1846 American invasion, and the signing of the treaties of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848 and Mesilla in 1854, the current border between both countries was established. The former Mexican com-
Communities north of the new line became a politically subordinate group, and with the ever-increasing immigration of Anglos, their language also became subordinate to English. In many areas, especially wherever the influx of Anglos was higher, the result was language shift to English in as little as one or two generations (e.g., California, Moyna 2009). By contrast, in areas with lower initial rates of Anglo immigration, Spanish continued to be used by a demographic majority for several decades, although in a diglossic situation of increasing sociopolitical subordination vis-à-vis English (New Mexico, Sanz-Sánchez 2014:223-4, southern Texas, Martínez 2000).

Throughout this period, Hispanic populations in the Southwest continued to be connected to Mexico. Mexican workers from central and northern Mexico often crossed the new, porous border to work in the agricultural and mining industries of the Southwest during the second half of the 19th century. Starting in 1910, two factors contributed to an upsurge in migration from Mexico: the Mexican Revolution, and the increasing rejection of Asian labor in the southwestern workforce (Portes & Bach 1985:76-79). Up to a million Mexican immigrants crossed the border to work in the U.S. in the decade between 1920 and 1930. The importance of Mexican immigration to the economy of its northern neighbor in this period is underscored by the fact that Mexico was one of the few nations exempt from the immigration quotas imposed by the National Origins Act of 1924. The next large round of Mexican labor came with the Bracero Program, an agreement between the governments of Mexico and the U.S. to provide American industries and agriculture with cheap labor during and after World War II. Several million workers (as many as 450,000 in a year) were recruited.
in the period between 1942 and 1964 as per the terms of the program, and many of these workers remained in the U.S. permanently (González 2011:222-3).

Despite reactive measures in the 1950s to forcibly repatriate over one million Mexicans (even including American citizens and legal residents), immigration from Mexico into the U.S. continued over the second half of the 20th century, principally due to economic factors. Official records placed the number of Mexican immigrants living in the U.S. at 1 million in 1970, 9.8 million in 2000, and 12.5 million in 2007 (Gonzalez-Barrera & Lopez 2013). Most importantly, Mexican-origin populations in the western U.S. in the last decades have not concentrated exclusively in border areas but has also increased elsewhere across the U.S. Southwest. Consequently, the larger recent increases in Hispanic population are found in states outside the traditional Hispanic areas in the Southwest (New Mexico, California, Texas, Arizona, Colorado), as shown in Figure 1.

This recent increase in first-generation immigrants in areas of the West not historically populated by Hispanics has spread the presence of USMS outside its traditional realm; as Jenkins (2009:54) notes, ‘In essence, the Spanish-speaking Southwest is expanding in a general northerly direction’. The growth of Spanish in these areas should not only be attributed to recent migration, but also to relocation of longer-residence Spanish speakers within states and counties in this area. Although dialects other than Mexican Spanish have participated in this growth (most notably, Central American varieties), the population of Mexican origin continues to be demographically predominant among speakers of Spanish in the western U.S. The demographic predominance of speakers of Mexican origin is an important factor predicting patterns of dialectal accommodation to Mexican Spanish by speakers of other varieties in this area (cf. Hernández 2009 for Texas, Parodi 2003, 2014a, 2014b for California). Linguistically, the arrival of new immigrants has had multiple effects: on the one hand, it has led to the replacement of older variants in some areas (e.g., southern New Mexico, Bills & Vigil 2008). In others, it has reinforced and expanded the presence of USMS features, especially when these coincide with those utilized by new immigrants (Villa et al. 2014, Van Buren 2017).

In short, USMS is the product of a centuries-long series of multidialectal and multilingual contacts in the larger area comprising northern Mexico and the U.S. Southwest, starting with the first colonial settlements. After annexation by the U.S., the dialect continued evolving as a function of contact with local, pre-existing Hispanic populations, recent arrivals from Mexico, and increasing bilingualism in Spanish and English. These sociohistorical triggers have determined linguistic differences between USMS and so-called traditional dialects, although the historical and dialectal break between these varieties is not complete. While we do not disagree with Parodi’s (2014b:1541) assessment that forms of USMS, such as ‘español chicano’ or the LA urban koiné, have effectively superseded earlier forms of Spanish, the linguistic pools that integrate these new Spanish repertoires are historically and sociolinguistically
connected to those spoken in the wider north area of Mexico before the drawing of a new international border.

A large body of literature has described the features of USMS, often noting the dialectal continuities between varieties of Mexican Spanish in the western U.S., on the one hand, and Mexican Spanish, especially that of rural areas of northern and western Mexico, on the other (Bills & Vigil 2008, Espinosa 1909, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, Hidalgo 1987, Lipski 2008:75-97, 192-222, Lope Blanch 2000, Lozano 1977, Parodi 2014a, 2014b, Solé 1977, Studerus 1995, to list but a few). From a historical point of view, these dialectal commonalities are symptomatic of a long history of language contact and transmission involving Spanish-speaking northern Mexican and Southwestern communities in shared geographical and social spaces. In addition, elements of this history can be traced in the extant archival and sociohistorical record (e.g., Moyna 2009, Moyna & Decker 2005, Sanz-Sánchez 2014).

Due to space limitations, we will examine only one feature of USMS that distinguishes it from Mexican Spanish: its lexicon. In establishing distinctions between different dialects of a variety of Spanish, lexical items are one means of drawing linguistic boundaries; as Bills and Vigil (2008:54) note, ‘Vocabulary is perhaps the most easily and identified aspect of linguistic variation...’. The lexical analysis of USMS (in any of its historical denominations) has a long tradition (e.g. Bills 1997, Bills & Vigil 2008, Craddock 1976, Espinosa 1914, Ornstein 1951, Galván & Teschner 1977). Most of these studies, however, are not diachronic. The few studies that focus on change in lexical patterns (e.g, Sanz-Sánchez 2014) show a direct relationship between different types of influence of English lexicon in Spanish and the changing sociohistorical context of language use in the community. Starting with New Mexico as the site of the first Spanish-speaking settlers in what is now the western U.S., these analyses serve as the base for identifying lexical elements that distinguish USMS from other forms of Spanish, including Mexican Spanish. In what follows, we add to the diachronic study of lexical change in USMS by analyzing the lexicon in a historical sequence of five corpora, several of which have not been the object of linguistic inquiry in the past.

3. THE DATA.

3.1. THE ANCÓN DE DONA ANA/DOÑA ANA BEND COLONY DOCUMENTS. The first set of data is a series of formal letters written between 1839 and 1844 in El Paso del Norte. The documents represent the process that residents of la villa del Paso, today Ciudad Juárez, followed in order to obtain a land grant in the Mesilla Valley, some 50 miles to the north. By the early 19th century, arable land around El Paso del Norte had become scarce. This was due in large part to the annual spring flooding of the Río Grande, commonly known in Mexico as the Río Bravo, the ‘wild river’. In the time period in question, the spring snow melts in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado did indeed make the río bravo, a common occurrence before the building of the Elephant
Butte Dam in the early 20th century. The ensuing floods would wipe out any crops planted in the lower areas around El Paso del Norte, and hence the need for new farmlands. The request for the land was granted, and in 1840 permission to establish the new colony was given. In seeking clear title to the land after it became part of the U.S. territory, the original settlers and their heirs included the documents in a legal petition to the federal government, and these documents were then published in the 1873-4 Congressional Record. Data samples from this source are labeled Ancón.

3.2. The Espinosa Study. Aurelio Macedonio Espinosa was born in southern Colorado in 1880. He attended the University of Colorado, Boulder, and after obtaining his undergraduate and master’s degrees he went on to the University of Chicago to study for his doctoral degree (for a discussion of Espinosa’s background, see Nieto-Phillips 2004:178-87). During the opening decade of the 20th century he gathered data for his 1909 dissertation, which was subsequently published in the form of several papers between 1911 and 1914. The one we use here is the third, titled ‘Studies in New Mexican Spanish, part III: The English elements’. This study provides a treasure trove of information on a dialect of USMS in the years following the integration of former Mexican territories into the U.S. As he notes in the first chapter of his text, New Mexican Spanish had been in close contact with English at that time for some sixty-five years (Espinosa 1914:242). His work provides a baseline for analyzing the subsequent evolution of USMS lexicon in New Mexico. For the purposes of this article, we focus on the loanwords he documents. Data samples from this source are labeled Espinosa.

3.3. The Amador Papers. The Amadors were one of the most prominent and wealthy families in the Mesilla Valley after it became a territory of the U.S. The documents they left behind include correspondence, financial, and legal records, now curated at the New Mexico State University library (http://lib.nmsu.edu/archives/rghc.html). The parents, Martin and Refugio, were younger contemporaries of the first settlers of the Mesilla Valley, as Martin’s mother, the widow Gregoria Rodela de Amador, moved to the newly founded town of Las Cruces in 1850, just some ten years after the Ancón colonists initiated their grant request. The data are drawn from a sampling of the correspondence between the Amador children and their spouses, relatives, and friends of the family. These individuals were born in the late 19th century, following the annexation of former Mexican territories. Thus, they represent the first native-born generation of USMS speakers in what had become the southern portion of the New Mexico Territory. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railway line reached Las Cruces in 1881 (Roberts et al. 2004:250), and with its arrival came an influx of English speakers. Being members of a prominent family, the Amador children, as well as many of their relatives, were taught English as well as Spanish; some also studied French. This generation was the first to be born into and come of age in a Spanish/English bilingual
environment. The data for this study are drawn from their personal correspondence. Students taking advanced undergraduate and graduate Spanish courses at NMSU read and transcribed the letters employed for this analysis. Data samples from this source are labeled **Amador**.

**3.4. The Mexican Revolution Period Data.** In the mid-1970s a research team led by Miguel Montiel, then a professor at Arizona State University, carried out a series of oral history interviews with principally Mexican-born women who migrated north from their homeland during the Mexican Revolution Period (MRP) in the early 20th century (Montiel & Montiel 2019).¹ They gathered stories from over a hundred participants in Arizona, California, and the Midwest. These women arrived from the following Mexican states, principally northern: Sonora, Sinaloa, Coahuila, Chihuahua, Durango, Baja California Sur, Jalisco, Zacatecas, Guanajuato, México, Tlaxcala, and Tamaulipas. A portion of the data was transcribed at that time, and then digitized in 2018. The importance of this particular data set for this article is that the interviewees represent monolingual speakers of a dialect of northern Mexican Spanish who came into contact with established dialects of USMS in the areas in which they settled. A comparison between their speech, as recorded in these interviews, and early 20th-century USMS, as documented by Espinosa, confirms that many of their dialectal features were already present at that time in the Southwestern speech communities into which they integrated. That is, USMS features were not confined only to New Mexico, but had also spread to the other regions where these data were collected. Data samples from this source are labeled **MRP**.

**3.4. U.S. Mexican Spanish Outside the Southwest.** We draw the present-day USMS data as spoken outside the Southwest from two sources: Naomi Shin’s *Corpus of Spanish in Washington and Montana* (CSWM, Villa et al. 2014), and Melero & Van Buren 2016 (working with data from the Shin corpus). The data from Shin’s corpus were recorded in the form of sociolinguistic interviews conducted in 2011 and 2012 with migrant workers from Washington state who came to pick cherries in western Montana (see Villa et al. 2014 for a detailed description of this corpus). Most of the adults interviewed were born in northern Mexico, while their children were born in the U.S. These data reflect the arrival of monolingual speakers into a bilingual environment, as with the MRP collection, but a century later and in a region far removed from the U.S.-Mexico border. Here again we find items that both overlap and differ from Mexican dialects, clearly demonstrating a link to USMS. These data offer additional proof that, over the past several decades, USMS has continued to spread far from the Southwest into areas where it has a relatively recent history. Data samples from this source are labeled **CSWM**.

Additional present-day data come from Bills and Vigil’s *Atlas*. The field research for this magnum opus, titled the ‘New Mexico/Colorado Spanish Survey’ (NMCOSS),
was carried out during the 1990s (for a finely detailed description of the project, see Bills & Vigil 2008:21-27). Spanish speakers from twelve regions in New Mexico and southern Colorado were interviewed, with the resulting recordings digitized and then a portion transcribed. We include these data from the Southwest so that we can compare not only CSWM data with a historic source but also with current-day USMS in another region.

4. The lexicon of USMS. In this section, we use this historical documentary sequence to shed light on the evolution of USMS over the past century and a half. Specifically, we focus on items that demonstrate transfers from English or can be argued to be typical of USMS, e.g. borrowings such as *lonche* > ‘lunch’ and semantic calques such as *casa de corte* < ‘courthouse’ (for a discussion of the classification of transfers, see Clegg 2015). At the same time, we note that certain USMS lexical items also appear in dialects of Mexican Spanish. For example, in Chihuahua *troca* ‘truck’ is commonly used instead of *camioneta*, and in Guadalajara one can buy a delicious sandwich called a *lonche* in a *lonchería*, semantic extensions of the USMS borrowing of ‘lunch’. Indeed, some USMS lexical items such as *chequear* ‘to check’ and *parquear* ‘to park (a car)’ have become so common that they appear in the *Diccionario de la lengua española* of the Real Academia Española (RAE 2019a), a typically conservative Spanish language dictionary, indicating they are used in other regions of the Spanish speaking world. As a result, we recognize that certain items historically found in USMS now appear (or are at least acknowledged) in other varieties of the language, in the Americas as well as in Europe. Because of space limitations, we only offer a representative sample of the lexical trends that may be gleaned from these corpora.

4.1. The Ancón de Doña Ana/Doña Ana Bend Colony documents. Regarding lexical influences from contact with English in the Ancón data, we find none. There was certainly some contact with English speakers, as the Santa Fe Trail and the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro were active trade routes linking St. Louis with Mexico City via Santa Fe and Chihuahua. As El Paso del Norte was founded on the Camino Real, certainly some English-speaking traders would have passed through (see Section 2). However, their linguistic and social impact in the area is not present in the texts. For example, all geographical measurements are those of Mexico at that time, i.e. *vara* and *legua*, instead of *yarda* ‘yard’ and *milla* ‘mile’. Land designated for houses is labeled *solar*, not *lote* ‘lot (parcel of land)’. It is entirely possible that the writers of the Ancón documents employed English borrowings in their day-to-day speech, but none appear in the texts. In short, the Ancón data represent a baseline dialect of the northern Mexican Spanish from which USMS derives, one that had existed there for centuries and was then incorporated into the U.S.

4.2. The Espinosa study. While lexical influence from English seems to be absent from the Ancón documents, the same is not true for the Espinosa data. He records
in great detail the results of Spanish/English contact in what was at that time the Territory of New Mexico. For the purposes of this article, we focus on Espinosa’s documentation of loanwords (as defined by Clegg 2015) in his lengthy 1914 article on the influence of English in New Mexican Spanish. In the introduction to this study, Espinosa notes the sudden increase of English speakers in certain regions of New Mexico following Stephen Kearny’s 1846 military incursion and provides a general description of the demographic and sociolinguistic landscape of contact between both languages in the state (1914:241-5). As a result of this contact, for loanwords he records items such as *cute* < ‘coat’, *queque* < ‘cake’, *greve* < ‘gravy’, *jarirú* < ‘how do you do’, *breca* < ‘brake’, *chequiar* < ‘to check’, *yarda* < ‘yard’, and *suichi* < ‘switch’, among many, many others (245). Espinosa was careful to note the complex sociolinguistic patterns of use of these loanwords, which were common among some New Mexican and southern Colorado Spanish speakers but much more infrequent among others (246).

Another aspect discussed by Espinosa concerns the various degrees of phonological and morphological integration of each item. If we take the degree of phonological integration of a loanword as an indication of its sociolinguistic history and its incorporation as part of the active lexicon of the speakers of a language regardless of their degree of bilingualism (Bills & Vigil 2008:165-90), there can be little doubt that the examples Espinosa documents had become part and parcel of New Mexican Spanish at that time. As he writes,

> Words that are once adopted and which become phonetically Spanish, become a part of the New Mexican Spanish vocabulary and no one is cognizant of their English source. The New Mexicans who come from the mountain districts, or from the remote country villages and who speak only Spanish, and on arriving at a town enter a drug store to ask, ‘Quier’ una botëit’ e penquila (< PAIN-KILLER, a patent medicine), or a saloon to ask, ‘Quier’ un frasquitu e juisque (< WHISKEY), are speaking, as far as they are concerned, pure Spanish (1914:247).

In sum, with his work Espinosa identifies one of the earliest forms of USMS to emerge from Mexican Spanish after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. These data complement those in Sanz-Sánchez (2014). In this more recent study of New Mexican Spanish private correspondence between the 1840s and the 1930s, influence from English lexicon in the first decades after annexation appears to be primarily semantic (with Spanish words taking on the meaning of formally equivalent English words). English loanwords start being incorporated at higher rates in the late 1800s, thus coinciding with Espinosa’s description. Bills and Vigil (2008:190) point out a particularly telling parallelism between Espinosa’s data and theirs; every single one of the fully
integrated English loans that they found in their survey of New Mexican and southern Colorado Spanish was already present in Espinosa’s early 20th-century data (bisquete < ‘biscuit’, craque < ‘cracker’, cuque < ‘cookie’, pene < ‘penny’, queque < ‘cake’, sute < ‘suit’). Interestingly, this fact underscores the role of contact with English as a factor in the historical continuity of USMS, and not just as one of the reasons for the dialect’s demise.

4.3. The Amador papers. The Amador data provide additional evidence of a USMS dialect emerging at approximately the same time as the one Espinosa studies. He notes that ‘Santa Fé, Taos, Socorro, Las Cruces, Tomé, West Las Vegas and a score of other smaller towns and many more villages are predominantly Spanish and in these places the English influence on language, customs and habits in life is very insignificant’ (1914:243). It may be due to the conservative nature of the Spanish/English contact in Las Cruces that we find few incorporated borrowings, but rather the use of English words (or high-frequency lexical chunks) embedded in the Spanish texts (1-4) (in addition to the data source, the author and date of the letter are included).

(1) Y el **baby** de Juan ¿a quien se parece?
   (Amador, Gregoria, 1897)

(2) …salgo á pasearme en trineo á la luz de la luna con algunas **friends**.
   (Amador, José, 1899)

(3) …díces que yo ya se quien es tu novio, sere yo? **Hope so**.
   (Amador, signature illegible, 1897)

(4) Ya escribi que no mandaron el **Citizen** [newspaper].
   (Amador, Emilia, 1902)

We do encounter isolated instances of loanwords, as in (5):

(5) …solo tu no sabes jugar ni **poca** ni damas, hombre, yo tampoco se jugar **poca**, ni entripado ni jugar alguno con baraja. (poca < ‘poker’, Espinosa 1914:259)
   (Amador, J.M. Falomir, 1898)

There are also a few instances of semantic extension via calquing (6):

(6) **Espero que no se te olvide la tasacion**, pues le temo a la multa.
   (Amador, Emilia, 1902)

In this case, a Spanish word takes on the meaning of a word in English that is perceived to be its formal equivalent; **tasación** derives from the verb **tajar**, which the
Real Academia Española defines as ‘[fijar oficialmente el precio máximo o mínimo para una mercancía]’ (RAE 2019a, tasar, cf. English ‘value’ or ‘rate’). In this letter, however, it refers to a tax payment. Recall that this form of influence on the lexicon of USMS Spanish has been described as pervasive in other studies (Espinosa 1914, Moyna & Decker 2005:160-61, Sanz-Sánchez 2014). Sociolinguistically, it reveals the agency of bilingual speakers with enough knowledge of both languages so as to access the forms of both lexicons, as well as the meaning in English.

In sum, we may characterize the Spanish in which the Amador letters were written as a dialect that demonstrates incipient, although not overwhelming, influence from English. The fact that the Amador children and their contemporaries were to one degree or another bilingual is evident by their inclusion of English words and phrases. As with the Ancón generation, there is every possibility that they used loanwords that do not appear in their correspondence. There can be no doubt English loanwords existed in USMS at this time period. As noted above, Espinosa documents a relatively greater number of loanwords in the Spanish of northern New Mexico. This appears to confirm, at least at the lexical level, the emergence of the macro-dialect we propose.

4.4. The Mexican Revolution Period data. However frequently loanwords may have been used by the Amador children, it is the case that by the time the interviewees in the MRP data arrived in the U.S., those items had become part of the USMS lexicon. This is evidenced by the fact that the señoras who migrated north integrated a number of these loanwords into their vocabulary. The following comes from an MRP interview with Esperanza, born in 1898, who migrated to Arizona at the age of twenty-four:

(7) ...cruzamos el desierto en un troque. (troque < ‘truck’)

(8) Allí atrás iba mi esposo con todos los niños y lonche…. (lonche < ‘lunch’)

(9) Había jáiscul, elemental. Había tres escuelas para los niños. (jáiscul < ‘high school’)

(10) Él [Esperanza’s husband] era timbrero. (timbr- < ‘timber’, + -ero, ‘a man who installs timbers in a mine shaft’)

(11) Tú tienes que venir a una mitín. (mitín < ‘meeting’)

(12) …en cuando llegué al bas dipo una persona me preguntó si quería un cuarto…. (bas dipo < ‘bus depot’)

(13) …en el Triunfo estuve un año, no un año complete en el quinto. (complete < ‘complete’)

Also found in Esperanza’s speech are English origin Arizona toponyms: Yurón < ‘Jerome’, Supirio < ‘Superior’, and Clacdel < ‘Clarkdale’. She employed several
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSWM</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Espinosa</th>
<th>Bills &amp; Vigil</th>
<th>More- no Fdez.</th>
<th>RAE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>aplicación</em></td>
<td>semantic extension (‘application, e.g. for a job’)</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>army</em> (armi)</td>
<td>borrowing (‘army’)</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>basketbol</em> (básquetbol)</td>
<td>borrowing (‘basketball’)</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bil</em></td>
<td>borrowing (‘bill, e.g. for water, gas, etc.’)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>cachar</em></td>
<td>borrowing</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>chanza</em></td>
<td>semantic extension (‘opportunity’)</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>cherry</em></td>
<td>borrowing (‘cherry’)</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>chor</em> (chor-tes)</td>
<td>borrowing (‘shorts’ (short pants))</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>colegio</em></td>
<td>semantic extension (‘college, post-secondary institution’)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>cora</em> (cuara)</td>
<td>borrowing (‘quarter’ (coin))</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>eskipar</em> (esquipear)</td>
<td>borrowing (‘to skip school’)</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fil</em> (field)</td>
<td>borrowing (‘field’)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>high school</em> (jáiscul)</td>
<td>borrowing (‘high school’)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lonche</em></td>
<td>borrowing (‘lunch’)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>nerseria</em> (nursería)</td>
<td>borrowing (‘nursery for plants’)</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>pushar</em> (puchar)</td>
<td>borrowing (‘to push’)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>sortear</em></td>
<td>borrowing (‘to sort’)</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tip</em></td>
<td>borrowing (‘to tip’)</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>troca</em></td>
<td>borrowing (‘truck’)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>yarda</em></td>
<td>borrowing (‘yard’ (e.g. of a house))</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>yonke</em> (yonque)</td>
<td>borrowing (‘junk’)</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. USMS items found in Washington State Spanish common to other historic periods and other regions.
loanwords found in Espinosa’s study, such as *quequi* < ‘cake’ (*queque* in Espinosa) and *yarda* < yard ‘area in front and back of a house’ (*vs. patio*), another semantic calque, indicating that certain items were not just regional, as toponyms might be. Other USMS forms in these data that are not loanwords from English but emerged via forms of semantic extension and semantic calquing are *vistas* < ‘movies’ (*vs. películas* in other forms of Spanish), *aplicación* < ‘application’ (*vs. solicitud*) and *blanco* < ‘blank’ (*application form, vs. formulario or impresos* in other forms of Spanish). At this point we must mention that while these USMS features are present in the MRP data, they are infrequent; for example, in the Esperanza interview we identified thirty-six items such as those mentioned above, out of a total of 23,772 words, or .001% of the total.

4.5. U.S. MEXICAN SPANISH outside the SOUTHWEST. We now turn to the present era with the CSWM. In order to support our assertion that USMS has expanded out of the southern U.S. border region, we compare the CSWM data with those of Espinosa (1914), a historical form of USMS, and Bills and Vigil (2008), a form of USMS from the Southwest region. In Table 1, the CSWM items are listed in column 1. In column 2 they are identified as to their class, either as a borrowing or as a semantic extension of a commonly used Spanish form, e.g. *aplicación* < ‘application for a job’, *vs. solicitud* in other varieties of Spanish. We then indicate with a check mark (✓) who documents the items in other historic moments or in other regions of the U.S.: in column 3 Espinosa (1914), and column 4 Bills and Vigil (2008).

Additional items that do not appear in Bills and Vigil’s (2008) atlas but are equally drawn from NMCOSS data were provided by Bills to the authors. Additionally, there are items in the Bills and Vigil column that appear neither in their atlas nor in the additional NMCOSS data (the entire NMCOSS recordings have yet to be transcribed). A double check mark (✓✓) in that column indicates that these are items that Villa, a native New Mexican, can anecdotally assert are common in New Mexico. The importance of including this anecdotal evidence is that the county in which he resides, Doña Ana, borders Mexico, and is therefore one of the earliest settings of contact between USMS and post-annexation Mexican migration. By contrast, the furthest northern county represented in the CSWM data, Okanogan, borders Canada. Thus, the data presented in Table 1 cover the entire U.S. West from one international boundary to the other.

In columns 5 and 6 we note if the CSWM items occur in the *Diccionario de anglicismos del español estadounidense* (Moreno Fernández 2019) and the *Diccionario de americanismos* by the Real Academia Española (RAE 2019b). The Moreno Fernández and RAE collections are somewhat problematic in that they cover the entire U.S., and not just its western region. However, we include those sources as they document the common use of the items in U.S. Spanish, and indeed they are so common that

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2 Our thanks to Dr. Garland Bills for sharing this very important resource with us.
they have now been entered into the RAE’s dictionary, which is intended to cover the Americas. We only include items from the RAE that are explicitly identified as being used in the U.S. The exceptions, which are identified only as a ‘voz inglesa’ by the RAE, are marked with a dagger (†); we include them as, anecdotally, they are widely used in USMS. This last source documents the fact that these items are now recognized internationally.

These data show that a number of the items used among Mexican origin workers in a state bordering with Canada have a long history in USMS, as proven by their inclusion by Espinosa. The fact that Bills and Vigil include many of these items shows that the dynamics of contact with English in USMS have continued to evolve since the time when Espinosa collected his data. Therefore, this comparison demonstrates that, regarding the lexicon, features found in the 19th and 20th centuries in a border region with Mexico are also found in the 21st in a border region with Canada. Indeed, these features have embedded themselves deeply enough in USMS that they are recognized in other regions of the Spanish speaking world, alongside widely used terms such radio, televisión, Internet, and guglear.

5. Conclusion. In his preliminary analysis of data from the dialectal survey of New Mexican and Southern Colorado Spanish, Bills (1997) established a difference between the ‘traditional’ dialect and the ‘Mexican’ Spanish increasingly spoken in the border area. However, by 2008, Bills and Vigil’s assessment of the relationship between the Spanish of Mexico and that of New Mexico left little room to doubt that both varieties should be considered part of the same macro-dialect, one with unmistakably Mexican roots:

First, New Mexican Spanish is demonstrably an extension of Mexican Spanish. Second, the many divergences between Mexican and New Mexican Spanish reflect a long history of less than quick-and-easy communicative interaction. And third, both New Mexico and Mexico are regions of dynamic language change (2008:212).

In this article, we have provided a historical outline of the sociodemographic contacts that have given rise to the connections pointed out by Bills and Vigil, including its recent spread to areas in the western U.S. outside the Southwest or border region. We have also traced the emergence of dialectal markers in the form of lexical influence from English over the past one hundred and fifty years in a sequence of historical corpora that reflect various sociolinguistic and historical samples of USMS.

While this study only presents data from a small number of sources and only focuses on lexical data, it is a first step towards approaching the study of so-called Southwestern, border or otherwise Mexican origin Spanish in the U.S. from a broader regional perspective, encompassing all of the western region of the U.S. As a matter
of fact, the demographic predominance of Mexican immigration over other groups of Hispanics in as many as 40 out of 50 states (U.S. Census Bureau 2011:9) and the frequent interactions between Hispanics with Mexican speakers are likely to support the spread of elements of USMS well beyond the strict confines of the western U.S. Which features of USMS become favored in this geographical spread, and how they will fare in the Spanish of future generations in the face of widespread pressure for Hispanics to become monolingual in English remain questions for future research.

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Villa
Department of Languages and Linguistics
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, NM 88003
[dvilla@nmsu.edu]

Sanz-Sánchez
Department of Languages and Cultures
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383
[isanz-sanchez@wcupa.edu]