Introduction

In the realm of pragmatics and discourse-related phenomena (henceforth, *pragmatics* only), research on Spanish as a heritage language is still in the developing stage, and, as a whole, remains somewhat unfocused and inconsistent. While certain topics such as speech acts and discourse markers have surfaced in multiple studies, other areas continue to be under investigated. For the most part, the examination of the speech behavior of bilingual and multilingual speech communities from a pragmatic perspective has not developed as rapidly as the interdisciplinary fields of Interlanguage Pragmatics, involving the study of second-language learners, or Cross-Cultural Pragmatics, the comparison of two or more speech communities. Although neither field has necessarily excluded bilingual groups as a subject of study, their inclusion has not been the norm. Nevertheless, if one considers bilingual and multilingual contexts involving different languages, there has still been a steady trickle of studies over the past few decades dealing with topics such as speech acts, discourse markers, and politeness (Barnes, 2001; Blum-Kulka, 1990; Blum-Kulka & Sheffer, 1993; Clyne, 1979; Clyne, Ball, & Neil, 1991; Hlavac, 2006; Farghal & Haggan, 2006; Marti, 2006). More recently, with the increase of attention in linguistics dedicated to bilingualism and multilingualism, it is likely that pragmatic research focusing on languages in contact will continue to develop.

This chapter will attempt to synthesize a relatively disparate body of literature in a systematic fashion by applying a distinction that has been widely utilized in pragmatics. Pragmatic features are often categorized according to two different perspectives designated as *pragmalinguistic* and *sociopragmatic* (Leech, 1983). Essentially these can be considered two sides of a continuum, thus the distinction is not necessarily categorical and there are times when the two concepts intersect or overlap. Nevertheless, the pragmalinguistic end of the spectrum refers to matters of a more structural or linguistic nature, while the sociopragmatic side includes phenomena related to social norms or appropriateness. Dating back to Thomas (1983), this distinction has been used for discerning different types of errors or pragmatic failure in second-language learning. For Thomas, while pragmalinguistic failure for language learners reflects a linguistic problem, sociopragmatic failure “stems from cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behaviour” (p. 99). In spite of the convenient categorical distinction,
the overlapping nature of pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic perspectives is unavoidable. For example, if a speaker uses tú commands when usted would be more acceptable, this could be due to unfamiliarity with the appropriate social norms, which is more sociopragmatic, but it could also be attributed to confusion between formal and familiar commands, which is more of a structural concern involving pragmalinguistics. Nevertheless, for the present discussion on SHL, these two categories provide a general framework for examining a wide range of features.

From the outset, it is worth pointing out that one of the underlying assumptions of cross-cultural pragmatics may be at odds with the stance that some researchers adopt regarding SHL. As the name indicates, there is a basic understanding that different speech communities are comparable and that such comparisons can potentially yield interesting results, especially since “speech communities tend to develop culturally distinct interactional styles” (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989, p. 7). Ideally when making comparisons, one would hope that the two groups being studied represent similar backgrounds, but in reality, this criterion may be difficult to meet, particularly with heritage speakers who represent a unique set of experiences. For example, it has been pointed out that heritage speakers of Spanish use Spanish to carry out particular communicative needs in specific contexts (largely those that are informal and non-academic), have little to no contact with normative monolingual varieties of Spanish, and possess limited reading and writing skills but strong speaking and listening skills (Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Pascual y Cabo & Rothman, 2012; Valdés, 2005). Given their distinct profile, one might argue that from the outset heritage speakers will never be fully comparable to monolingual Spanish speakers. From this perspective, comparing SHL to other monolingual varieties of Spanish should be considered an analytical exercise that does not necessarily imply any of the following: 1) that heritage speakers of Spanish strive, or should strive, to speak like monolingual speakers; 2) that the monolingual variety is superior; 3) that any differences reported for SHL represent deficiencies that need to be corrected; and 4) that formal registers are more valid than informal registers, although one or the other may be more appropriate in a particular context. Nevertheless, in the real world, it is still likely that speakers of SHL, especially in some professional or academic contexts, will be expected to perform in accordance with the monolingual speech behavior or norms that are associated with a formal register. As Achugar (2003) emphasizes, creating an awareness among teachers and learners of how language and power are related, and of how different registers are considered more or less valuable, is essential for successful language socialization and effective pedagogical practices.

**Pragmalinguistic issues**

The topic of discourse markers (DM) could serve as a prototypical case of what would be considered more pragmalinguistic in nature, further toward the linguistic side of the spectrum, although an analysis of their usage can also take into account sociopragmatic factors. DMs are single or multi-word units that fulfill one or more language functions in a given context, at least one of which is more procedural in nature, meaning that it conveys information about how an utterance is to be interpreted (Fraser, 1999; Fraser & Malamud-Makowski, 1996). Among the discourse markers investigated in SHL are tú sabes (‘you know’), entonces (‘so’), bueno (‘well’) and pues (‘well’).

Starting with children’s speech, one of the functions highlighted in the play discourse of Spanish–English bilinguals is that of marking register. In a study of children between the ages of 6 and 10 residing in southern California, Brizuela et al. (1999) found that, especially in stacks.
or clusters (e.g. Bueno, pues . . . ), these items were used by the children to signal the discourse associated with people of higher social status, mainly parents and teachers. Similar to the idea of associating certain DMs with a particular register, their level of mastery could be, according to the authors, at least partially determined by social class. Andersen et al. (1999), in their data collected from bilingual children in southern California, report that while the monolingual English subjects used up to three DMs together in English, the bilingual group never used more than two in Spanish. As a possible explanation for the sparser use of DMs by these Spanish-speaking children, the authors speculate that two potential factors might be their bilingualism and the fact that they pertain to a lower social class than the monolingual group. However, no significant evidence is provided to substantiate these claims other than a reference to some preliminary data suggesting that “middle-class, monolingual Argentinian children” exhibit greater use of DMs than their Chicano participants (p. 1349). These observations about the stacking of DMs signal a promising avenue of future research, within the context of speech produced by bilingual children or adults.

Given the prominence of English DMs in the Spanish of Spanish-English bilinguals, some of the research in this area overlaps with studies on code-switching or mixing. The use of English DMs such as ‘so,’ ‘I mean,’ and ‘y’know’ was analyzed in the bilingual speech of Puerto Rican adults in New York and these lexical items were found to enter originally as instances of code-switching before becoming more established over time as borrowings (Torres, 2002). When comparing ‘so’ to entonces in New Mexican Spanish, Aaron (2004) found them to be functionally similar, although ‘so’ triggered more code-switches and was used more frequently in the data corpus. Torres and Potowski (2008, forthcoming) also observed functional similarities between ‘so’ and entonces in Mexican, Puerto Rican, and MexiRican Spanish in Chicago. In the more recent study, when looking at the discourse marker production of 31 Mexican and 31 Puerto Rican individuals, they found that Puerto Ricans used significantly more ‘so’ than Mexicans, but there was no significant difference in the two groups’ use of entonces. They also reported that use of ‘so’ spiked among G2 speakers, being significantly higher than the use among the G1 and G3 speakers. In the speech of bilingual university students in Florida, Said-Mohand (2006) discovered that the three most common functions of entonces are narrative progression, cause, and conclusion. In the case of narrative progression, the author points out that many instances of this usage are equivalent to ‘and’ when linking ideas, a divergence from its most basic semantic meaning. With regard to tú sabes, Said-Mohand (2006, 2007) reported that this marker tended to perform the functions of narrative progression, conclusion, and reformulation, such as repeating or correcting an utterance (e.g. porque por ejemplo en high school, tú sabes, bueno en high school siempre existe como . . . [‘because for example in high school, you know, well in high school there always exists like’] (2007, p. 80)). None of these functions are necessarily unique to SHL, although one of the same author’s findings for como does appear to signal a non-canonical usage; namely, using it as a connector on the sentence level and to indicate a direct quote (e.g. él estaba como ‘¿qué estás haciendo?’ [‘he was like, what are you doing?’], similar to ‘like’ in English (Said-Mohand, 2008, p. 84). In this latter case, the author is careful to emphasize that there is not conclusive evidence indicating that this represents a transfer of ‘like’ from English since similar cases are also observed in the Spanish of monolinguals.

In addition to the research on DMs, the pragmalinguistic aspects highlighted in the literature on speech acts involve different types of cross-linguistic variation, or lack thereof, in the choice of strategies, formulas, or mitigators, as well as non-standard grammatical structures that researchers attribute to an underdeveloped proficiency in Spanish. In the directives produced by two young bilingual children of first-generation Mexican families residing in Los Angeles, García and Leone (1984) found that by the age of 6, the subjects demonstrated a range of
linguistic structures in both English and Spanish. However, the data showed some grammatical errors and misuse of formal and familiar commands, such as using pintelo (‘paint it’) to a sibling rather than pintalo (‘paint it’). Bhimji (2002) applies an ethnographic, discourse analytic framework to the directives used by caregivers to children in three working class Latino families in Los Angeles. She argues against the view that in families of lower-economic backgrounds, parents reduce the complexity of their language when talking to children. The directives analyzed show a wide gamut of structures, from direct imperatives to declaratives and interrogatives, often accompanied with various mitigating devices and justifications. Furthermore, the children were shown to be active participants in the interactions, responding to directives with clarification questions, verbal displays of compliance and noncompliance, and justifications when they opted not to comply. This study is relevant to the discussion of Spanish heritage speakers due to the fact that these bilingual children, who grow up to become adult heritage speakers, were immersed in a learning environment in Spanish that was found to be pragmatically rich.

Valdés (1981) and Valdés and Pino (1981), among the findings of a pragmalinguistic nature, reported a prevalence of code-switching when examining requests and compliment responses respectively in adult bilingual speech. In some cases, these switches appeared to fulfill a mitigating function. This occurred in the Valdés and Pino data, for example, when one speaker employed the politeness formula cuando quieras (‘whenever you want’) while responding to a compliment in English. In this same study the Mexican monolingual group used more politeness formula than the bilingual group, including the fixed expression muy a la orden (‘at your service’), but apart from the frequent use of code-switching and a higher incidence of tú over usted, the bilingual group exhibited similar compliment response patterns.

Dumitrescu (2005) observed the influence of English grammatical structures in the SHL spoken by university students, including calques (e.g. Gracias por un buen tiempo. ‘Thanks for a good time’) and instances of transfer (e.g. Espero hacer esto de nuevo. ‘I hope to do this again,’ when thanking a friend for dinner). Pinto and Raschio (2007, 2008) reported similar cases of non-canonical structures for requests and complaints due to English interference. To ask to borrow notes from a classmate, one heritage speaker used estaría bien si me las prestarias? [sic] (‘would it be okay if you lent them to me?’), while another asked a friend to pay up a debt with estaba pensando si me podrías pagar porque tuve una emergencia y necesito el dinero [sic] (‘I was wondering if you could pay me because I had an emergency and I need money’). Similarly, in both their complaints and requests there was some evidence of English interference in their choice of mitigators, including quisiera saber si (‘I wanted to know if’) and quisiera ver si (‘I wanted to see if’), combinations that demonstrate possible English transfer and the use of formal-sounding structures in informal contexts. For compliments and compliment responses, Yáñez (1990) found that in her relatively small data corpus collected from Chicana women, the utterances were highly formulaic in nature and syntactically similar to the structures reported for monolingual English speakers (Pomerantz, 1978; Wolfson, 1983). In conjunction with this finding, the author observed a narrow range of adjectives for complimenting, including a high incidence of bonito (e.g. ¡Qué bonito se te ve el pelo! ‘How pretty your hair looks!’).

Beyond the speech act, some authors have examined oral discourse in the context of longer narrations. With the objective of studying spontaneous oral speech, Leone and Cisneros (1985) looked at how bilingual children retell stories in Spanish, and they observed different communicative strategies that the children utilized for their narratives. For example, they used English as metalinguistic comments (i.e. ‘I don’t know how to say it in Spanish’), which served as a type of ‘disclaimer’ showing a heightened awareness of their own language ability and of the expectations of the test administrators. Other strategies consisted of restart-switches (e.g. ‘one day, he . . . un día’), indicating a process of self-monitoring and an awareness of the
appropriate resources for the task at hand, and requests for confirmation, such as ¿el muchacho? (‘the boy?’), which served to trigger a response from the administrator regarding the correct-ness or appropriateness of the lexical item. The authors concluded that these strategies indicate not only a linguistic competency under development, but also an awareness of this process by the children. Another study by the same authors (Cisneros & Leone, 1993) explore the unplanned oral discourse of eight Spanish speakers living in San Antonio, Texas, although the subjects here are adult Spanish speakers learning English, hence the results are not particularly representative of SHL. The same could be said for the participants in Elías-Olivares (1995) and García Pastor (1999), where the focus is on adult Spanish-speaking immigrants. Regardless of the limited English proficiency of the speakers in Elías-Olivares (1995), who originated from a Mexican community in Chicago, they still show evidence that is characteristic of language contact, such as loanwords and calques.

While the topic of academic writing is beyond the scope of this chapter, the use of oral academic registers is relevant to the overarching topic of pragmatics. More specifically, the challenges that heritage learners face regarding academic registers can primarily be broken down in pragmalinguistic terms. Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) found that, while their bilingual subjects showed a sensitivity to register differences and an effort to adjust their speech accordingly, when compared to a monolingual group from Mexico, they struggled more to express themselves in an academic register. Their speech was characterized by a more limited vocabulary, the use of invented words (e.g. ojalamente ‘hopefully,’ arruinamiento ‘ruin,’ and mayoridad ‘majority’), and fewer strategies for organizing their discourse (e.g. por otra parte ‘on the other hand’; no obstante ‘nevertheless’). In a comparison of the oral presentations of two graduate students, one Spanish dominant and the other English dominant, Achugar (2003) documented how the English-dominant speaker relied on English to clarify and expand on the material presented in Spanish and, in general, displayed a scarcity of discursive features required to enhance and elaborate on the subject matter. In contrast, the Spanish-dominant student employed a wide range of discursive strategies to expand on the information, make connections, and adopt a more critical stance. While heritage speakers understandably struggle with both written and oral formal registers, this is an aspect of their proficiency that can be improved through consciousness-raising tasks and practice (Acevedo, 2003).

The pragmalinguistic features mentioned in this summary could essentially be reduced to lexical items, grammatical structures, or a combination of both that, for one reason or another, differ slightly from what one might observe in non-contact varieties of Spanish. In some instances, these dissimilarities merely entail varying frequencies of usage, primarily due to a lower proficiency in Spanish and only partial access to a comparable repertoire of words, expressions, and structures that a typical monolingual Spanish speaker possesses. As Lapidus and Otheguy (2005) specify with regard to grammar, most instances of contact-induced change in the Spanish of immigrants and their children tends to be restricted to alterations in the frequencies of linguistic forms. This appears to hold true for many cases within the pragmalinguistic domain as well. However, English can play a more obtrusive role in certain circumstance involving varying degrees of interference, either through calques or unconventional collocations (e.g. quisiera ver si).

To conclude this section, it may be worth mentioning that there are also a series of studies focusing on morphological or syntactic phenomena that entail pragmatics indirectly. In a number of these investigations, certain contextual factors are believed to motivate grammatical choices. This is often the case, for example, when the topics under consideration involve the use of the subjunctive or subject pronouns (e.g. Ávila-Shah, 2000; Bayley & Pease-Alvarez, 1997; Coles, 2012; Flores-Ferrán, 2002; Lapidus & Otheguy, 2005; Martínez Mira, 2009; Torres Cacoullos & Travis, 2010).
Sociopragmatic issues

Starting with speech acts, in addition to the pragmalinguistic aspects summarized earlier, research on this topic has also emphasized sociopragmatic phenomena including levels of directness or formality and different types of sociolinguistic variation. Walter (1981) carried out a study on the requests of Spanish–English bilingual children, primarily from Puerto Rican origin, with a focus on the effect of setting, topic, and gender. The data were collected by using puppets to elicit requests from children between the ages of 7 and 11. Two significant findings were that the factors of setting and sex of the addressee triggered varying levels of deference in the requests. For example, in a scenario that involved selling cookies, the bilingual children were less deferential when directing their requests to males than to females. While Walter (1981) worked with elicited data, García and Leone (1984) used naturalistic data to investigate the directives produced by two bilingual children (ages 4.5 to 6) in southern California. The authors show that these two children used a variety of directives in their dominant language (Spanish for one, English for the other), with a preference for direct imperatives and no politeness markers with peers and siblings, and for indirect requests and inferred strategies (e.g. ‘Teacher, where do I get mine?’) with adults and other children when they seek special favors. Furthermore, the children’s performance was influenced by contextual factors such as the setting and the status of the addressee. For instance, the girl participant was more verbally aggressive with her siblings at home than with her classmates at school. The fact that both Walter (1981) and García and Leone (1984) found notable differences due to setting and the addressee’s status or sex underscores the sensitivity that bilingual children develop from a young age. In a comprehensive study of eighth-grade students in a dual immersion school in Chicago, Potowski (2007) includes sociolinguistic appropriateness as one of many testing measures. Subjects were assessed though written and oral tasks, targeting both formal and informal requests. When compared to a group of L2 Spanish students and another of Spanish-dominant recent arrivals, the heritage speakers were more similar to the latter group in that they received high ‘difference scores’ in the language used in formal situations versus that used for informal situations. In other words, unlike the L2 students, in both their written and oral requests the heritage speakers demonstrated a perceptible sensitivity to the difference between formal and informal registers.

Cashman (2005, 2006) delves into some questions regarding the potentially conflictive side of verbal interaction; namely, impoliteness and disagreement. In her 2005 study, she applies a conversation analytic approach to explore how three bilingual children manage disagreement, how they perform stereotypical male or female talk, and whether or not code-switching plays a role in managing their interaction. For the first question, Cashman observed the tendency in the children to aggravate their disagreement moves. For example, one exchange contains a threat plus an increase in volume in the move ‘I’m gonna DESTROY YOU,’ while another sequence includes the insults puto and menso. Regarding the second research question, Cashman found that stereotypical male and female strategies were employed, but not necessarily by the corresponding gender. Such an example occurred when one of the girls used the aforementioned insults in an aggravated opposition move. Overall the contributions produced by girls were not always of a collaborative nature, going against the female stereotype. For the last issues, code-switching played a role in helping the children manage their disagreement, such as allowing them to change affiliation between interlocutors or move from disagreeing to justifying.

Based primarily on Culpeper’s (1996) model of impoliteness and Spencer-Oatey’s (2002) concept of rapport management, Cashman (2006) investigates the impoliteness strategies, and reactions to them, in the spontaneous verbal interaction of 22 second-grade bilingual children. The children employed strategies such as name-calling and ridicule to attack their interlocutor’s face.
The children also threatened their peers’ equity rights, the desire to be treated equally by others, by producing directives to impose on their interlocutor (e.g. *ya te callas tú también, no te metas ‘be quiet already you too, don’t butt in’), as well as threats (e.g. *o te voy- doy una cachetada ‘or I’ll- I’ll slap you’). The participants also threatened their peers’ association rights, the belief that one is entitled to interact with others in accordance with the given relationship, by using silence and other verbal resources to disassociate themselves from the group. Regarding their reactions to impolite behavior, which contribute to co-constructing impoliteness, they ranged from not responding to countering both defensively and offensively.

Moving on to adult speakers, Pinto and Raschio (2007, 2008) highlight the hybrid nature of the requests and complaints in their SHL data. Participants employed request strategies in Spanish that were less direct than the monolingual Spanish speakers from Mexico, more in line with the Anglo-speaking preference for indirectness. For complaints, the bilingual participants demonstrated some similarities to the native English-speaking group, including a propensity for supplying their complaints with multiple forms of mitigation. Nevertheless, these same heritage learners also employed a percentage of complaints with zero downgraders that was comparable to the Mexican monolingual group. Overall the authors found that the heritage learners in these two studies represented the *inbetweenness* of SHL, especially when considering both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of speech act production. Given this quality of indeterminacy that is prevalent in SHL, researchers may choose to focus their attention on one or more of the three possibilities mentioned in Pinto and Raschio (2008): (1) how and when SHL resembles monolingual Spanish; (2) how and when SHL resembles monolingual English; and (3) how and when SHL distinguishes itself from either monolingual Spanish, monolingual English, or both.

In a partial replication of Pinto and Raschio’s (2007, 2008) work, Finestradt-Martínez and Potowski (2016) administered discourse completion tasks to a total of 85 speakers and incorporated four additions: (1) third-generation speakers; (2) scenarios involving refusals; (3) scenarios in both Spanish and English (for the bilingual participants); and (4) scenarios with varying degrees of power, distance, and imposition between the imagined interlocutors. The authors reasoned that the most pragmatically indirect and mitigated responses would be used when social distance and imposition were high, but familiarity was low, and the opposite would happen when interlocutors were separated by low social distance and the degree of imposition was low. Results showed that all groups of speakers preferred indirect strategies (indirectness and hints) over direct strategies, but there were significant differences between the four groups. In particular, the monolingual Mexicans made the least use of indirect strategies, while the monolingual English speakers used the most. The bilinguals used increasingly more indirect strategies with each increasing generational group. In addition, bilinguals were more indirect when responding in English than when responding in Spanish. For bilinguals, then, indirectness increased in this order: G2 Spanish < G2 English < G3 Spanish < G3 English.

Gutiérrez-Rivas (2008, 2011) looks at the requests produced by three generations of Cubans and Cuban Americans living in Miami. In her 2008 article, the author emphasizes the preference of first-generation speakers to use positive politeness strategies, (e.g. *me hace falta que me des una mano en esto ‘I need you to give me a hand with this’), with friends and strangers. In contrast, among the findings reported in the second publication is the tendency for third-generation speakers, especially women, to approximate English-speaking norms of using more indirectness when requesting, including asking questions rather than affirming, apologizing, and employing more verbose strategies in general. This study supports the idea that pragmatic acculturation takes place over time and that politeness norms of the predominant culture begin to seep in. In another study dealing with performing complaints in English and Spanish, Elias (2013) reported that a group of second-generation, Mexican American bilinguals displayed a slightly
higher preference in Spanish for establishing solidarity with their interlocutor. In English, the participants were more focused on showing respect for the other. The author concludes that the subjects seem to demonstrate “two separate pragmatic systems in dealing with the act of complaining” (p. 64), although these systems clearly entail extensive overlap.

Dumitrescu (2005) described cases of sociopragmatic infelicities with regard to heritage speakers violating the norms of politeness. The author attributes such infractions to the unawareness of, or perhaps insensitivity to, the use of registers. This occurred, for instance, when subjects employed informal expressions (e.g. *Ahí te wacho / Simón*) in the context of a service encounter, which in some contexts might suggest a higher degree of familiarity than the situation would normally involve (p. 394). Arellano (2000) utilized a multiple-choice questionnaire to investigate the request preferences of a mixed group of monolingual and bilingual farmworkers in California. The results signal an expected tendency toward higher levels of indirectness and mitigation when directing requests to an authority figure. A predictable relationship was also found for requests involving a higher degree of imposition, which, relatively speaking, are more likely to be performed with less direct means.

The extended speech event of leave-taking in the context of a Mexican American family in Los Angeles is the subject of García (1981). The author identified four phases of interaction, initiation, preparation, joking interchanges, and final leave-taking, which she describes as uniquely Mexican American given the dynamic nature of the talk exchange (e.g. verbal overlapping, simultaneous interchanges, and loud voices), the use of Spanish and English with nonstandard features (e.g. *¿Ónde está Juan* “Where is Juan?”), as well as switching between Spanish and English names (e.g. *Elena/Helen, Consuelo/Connie*, etc.). It should be pointed out that the lengthy and dynamic nature of leave-taking is certainly not specific to Mexican American communities, hence the degree of uniqueness here is relative and surfaces in García’s study due to the cross-cultural comparison to Anglo norms.

The existing research on singular second-person subject pronouns, *tú, usted*, and *vos*, covers different geographical areas within the U.S. Among the issues investigated are usage patterns, situational variation, and generational differences in how these pronouns are used. Among the studies carried out in the Southwestern region of the U.S., Brown (1975) utilized questionnaires to examine which pronoun, *tú* or *usted*, was preferred by Mexican American students at the University of Arizona when addressing their parents and found that twice as many of the subjects reported using *usted*. However, since the 1970s when Brown’s study was implemented, second-person pronoun usage has continued to evolve. Jaramillo (1990) carried out a study with Spanish-speaking adults in rural New Mexico and identified two general domain clusters: *tú* informal, including nuclear family and friends, and *usted* formal, encompassing the realm of ceremonial family, employment, and low and high status professionals. The author concludes that usage patterns in this particular community, while similar to other Spanish-speaking populations, trend toward the conservative. This tendency surfaces in *compadrazgo* interactions between the godparents and parents of a child, with a high incidence of reciprocal *usted* (88%), and when subjects address their godparents, which usually prompts non-reciprocal *usted* (96%). In another study in the same geographical area, Jaramillo (1995) found that two groups, adults over 51 and those with less than eight years of education, reported a higher rate of interactions with reciprocal *usted*. Jaramillo’s observation that *tú* is gradually encroaching on contexts traditionally reserved for *usted* is consistent with the trend observed in other parts of the Spanish-speaking world.

Using a data corpus comprised of the speech of Salvadorians in Houston, Texas, Schreffler (1994) considered the fate of the three pronouns *tú, vos* (*you* informal), and *usted* among second-generation speakers in contact with English and other varieties of Spanish. As might be
expected, the use of *voseo* has diminished as *tuteo* has become the preferred option for informal address, the consequence of extended contact with Mexican Spanish and the higher prestige associated with *tú*. Sigüenza-Ortiz (1996) collected data in eastern Los Angeles and observed that for English-dominant speakers, *tú* appears to have virtually displaced *usted*, leaving it as the exclusive second-person singular pronoun, even for addressing people in first encounters, a context in which the Mexican-born participants in the study prefer *usted*. Another finding in this study reveals the importance of conversational setting given that all participants reported using a higher incidence of *usted* at church than at home.

Gutiérrez-Rivas (2010) examines the use of *tú* and *usted* in the context of requests produced by second- and third-generation Cuban Americans in Miami, Florida. Among the notable findings of this study are the fact that some participants combined both *tú* and *usted*, whether it be pronouns or verb forms, in a single utterance (e.g. *disculpe y perdóname* ‘sorry and excuse me’). In some cases, the author attributes this inconsistency to a lack of language proficiency, while in other cases she finds this to be a strategic approach to show both respect (with *usted*) and solidarity (with *tú*). The speakers in this study, especially those from the third generation, do not shy away from using *tú* in contexts involving distance between the interlocutors.

One of the general conclusions regarding the study of second-person subject pronoun usage in SHL is the encroachment of *tú* on territory once reserved for *usted*. This probably reflects a combination of factors, including contact with English and the ongoing universal trend, both in Spanish-speaking communities and in other languages, that favors informality over formality (Carrasco Santana, 1998; Fairclough, 2001; Marín, 1972). Once again, direct contact with English may be accelerating tendencies that are also occurring in other varieties of Spanish.

**Concluding remarks**

From a historical perspective, pragmatic changes to the Spanish of the U.S. are not necessarily a recent occurrence. Evidence of early pragmatic change is documented in a study of letters written in California and New Mexico during the 19th century (Balestra, 2008). During this period, the forms of address employed in letters underwent modifications due to contact with both the English language and Anglo culture, evolving from more elaborate and deferential openings (e.g. *Mui señor mío y venerado amigo* ‘Distinguished sir and venerated friend’) to less verbose alternatives that are more in sync with current day uses (e.g. *Querida Julia* ‘Dear Julia’). While pragmatic changes themselves are not new, the attention dedicated to investigating them in present-day SHL is relatively recent and is still in the early stages of development.

As noted earlier, besides obvious cases of English intrusion through code-switching and/or lexical borrowing, contact with English often acts on developmental tendencies or changes that have already manifested themselves in the Spanish language (Silva-Corvalán, 1994, 2001). For this reason, distinguishing between externally and internally induced change is often impossible (Montrul, 2012). It should also be emphasized that on a global level, subtle English influence on Spanish can be more indirect and ubiquitous, acting through different channels of multimedia such as film, television and social media. Within the realm of pragmatics, the result can be a situation in which Anglicized expressions (e.g. ¡Correcto!; ¡Dame un respiro!; ¡Olvidalo!) are preferred in translations over those that would be more conventionalized alternatives in Spanish (Gómez Capuz, 2001). From this perspective, direct contact with English in Spanish-speaking communities in the U.S. can be considered an intensification of the contact that occurs on a more global level. As such, the difference between contact and non-contact varieties of Spanish is not necessarily a categorical distinction.
The drawbacks that one can attribute to the body of literature on pragmatic phenomena in SHL, beyond its relatively limited lifespan and erratic development, have been described previously (Pinto, 2012). Among these are the shortage of studies that incorporate comparative and/or truly comparable data in monolingual Spanish and L1 English, the lack of follow-up studies, the need to combine both quantitative and qualitative analyses, and the predominant focus on speech production over reception/interpretation and perceptions. This latter topic requiring the elicitation of heritage speakers’ perceptions of different aspects of their speech behavior can provide enlightening evidence about their own learning and interactions (e.g. Marijuan, 2015). This is one promising avenue of research that will surely be explored more thoroughly in the future.

It is also worth pointing out that the wide-ranging nature of pragmatics as a field of study inevitably leads to multiple strands of research developing in multiple directions. Especially when compared to the investigation of SHL in formal linguistic or psycholinguistic studies, where there have been some underlying theoretical assumptions about the nature of language acquisition, pragmatics has lacked an analogous set of guiding principles. One could identify, perhaps, the general aim of looking into the nature of language contact, and more specifically, the influence of English in SHL and the consequences of this contact when speakers possess a less developed proficiency in Spanish. However, this exploratory goal does little to narrow the scope of research.

The pragmatic domain of language, as Blum-Kulka and Sheffer (1993) note, may be the first area to be affected in contexts of intense contact with a second language. The permeability of pragmatics in contact situations may be due to a variety of overlapping causes. One likely cause is the fact that the pragmatic component of a given language largely comprises the appropriate use of lexical items and therefore does not involve deep structural issues. For instance, while SHL in the U.S. tends to show English lexical influence either through code-switching, borrowing, false cognates, or calques, these lexical substitutions are relatively superficial and can be incorporated with ease. Another reason that pragmatic aspects are easily affected in contact environments is that pragmatics encompasses variable and loosely defined prescriptive rules or norms. That is, at least when compared to morphosyntax or phonology, sociopragmatic norms are not as easily accessible or as easy to articulate due to an unlimited potential for contextual fluctuation. In spite of dialectical variation, one can still consult prescriptive rules for the subjunctive, verb conjugations, or pronunciation, but establishing the prescriptive norms for something like requesting or complaining is less straightforward. Even the choice between tú and usted involves competing variables such as age, distance, power, status, and setting, and there is no concrete formula that yields the correct option for any given interaction. One might even say that no two linguistic encounters are ever exactly identical, thus speakers are constantly faced with the need to evaluate each situation independently. Within a particular dialect, this vagueness surrounding the prescriptive standards for pragmatic-related phenomena in the collective conscious of the corresponding speech community makes the realm of pragmatics more susceptible to language interference.

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