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THE INFLUENCE OF THE SOCIAL CLASS IN THE VERBAL MORPHOLOGY
OF CERTAIN DIALECTS OF SPANISH

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1. Data

Second-person verb forms are different in Castilian (standard) Spanish and in Latin-American Spanish. Furthermore, there are other variations in certain dialects of Spanish spoken in some regions of Latin America. In this paper the dialect spoken in Argentina and Uruguay is analysed. This dialect is called Platense because it has originated at the banks of the Río de la Plata.

In all dialects of Spanish there are two ways of addressing the second person: a) the familiar form, used for members of the family, friends, children, animals, God; and b) the formal form, used when conditions in (a) are not met. In Castilian, the familiar form uses the regular 2nd-person endings of the verb, while the formal form uses the 3rd-person endings. In Latin-American and Platense, however, the situation in the singular is the same as in Castilian, but in the plural the familiar form has merged into the formal form. The following chart exemplifies this distribution.

		Castilian		LA and Platense	
		<u>pronoun</u>	<u>agreement</u>	<u>pronoun</u>	<u>agreement</u>
sing.	familiar	tú	2 nd p. sing.	tú/vos ¹	2 nd p. sing.
	formal	usted	3 rd p. sing.	usted	3 rd p. sing.
plur.	familiar	vosotros	2 nd p. plur.	ustedes	3 rd p. plur.
	formal	ustedes	3 rd p. plur.		

Only 2nd-person verb forms are relevant to this study, so that Castilian singular and plural, and Latin-American and Platense singular forms are considered here.

An analysis of the complete paradigm for the 2nd-person singular forms in Platense reveals that there are two stress patterns according to dialectal variation. We will call these two subdialects Platense A and Platense B. The complete paradigm of verbal endings for the 2nd-person verb forms in all the dialects presented here is shown in the following table.

		indicative			subjunctive			fut	cond	imper
		pr	impf	pret	pr	impf'	impf''			
1 st c.	Cast+LA sg	as	ábas	áste ²	es	áras	áses	arás	arías	a
	Plat. A sg	ás	ábas	áste	es	áras	áses	arás	arías	á
	Plat. B sg	ás	ábas	áste	és	áras	áses	arás	arías	á
	Cast. pl	áys	ábays	ásteys	éys	árayas	áseys	aréys	ariáys	ád
2 nd c.	Cast+LA sg	es	ías	íste	as	yéras	yéses	erás	erías	e
	Plat. A sg	és	ías	íste	as	yéras	yéses	erás	erías	é
	Plat. B sg	és	ías	íste	ás	yéras	yéses	erás	erías	é
	Cast. pl	éys	íays	ísteys	áys	yérayas	yéseys	eréys	eríays	éd

	indicative				subjunctive			fut	cond	imper
	pr	impf	pret		pr	impf'	impf"			
Cast+LA sg	es	ías	íste		as	yéras	yéses	irás	irías	e
Plat. A sg	ís	ías	íste		as	yéras	yéses	irás	irías	í
Plat. B sg	ís	ías	íste		ás	yéras	yéses	irás	irías	í
Cast. pl	ís	íays	ísteys	áys	yérays	yéseys	iréys	iríays	íd	

This paper is concerned mainly with the analysis of the Platense forms, even though the other dialects mentioned above will be considered, especially the Castilian plural forms. We will start by analysing the 2nd-person singular forms of Platense B, which are more regular than the corresponding forms of Platense A.

2. Historical Development

The Platense B 2nd-person singular forms developed from the Castilian 2nd-person plural forms by dropping the person-number marker d in the imperative, and the y from the person-number marker ys elsewhere. Example:

cantád → cantá 'sing' cantáys → cantás 'you sing'

There are two exceptions to this rule: a) the final s of the preterit is deleted in general, but kept by some speakers (See FN 2); b) the ending vowel in the future is changed from e to a. Examples:

cantásteys → cantáste(s) cantaréys (→) cantarás

In both cases, the exceptional form coincides with the Latin-American 2nd-person singular form.

3. Stress Rule

The Stress-Assignment Rule proposed by Harris (1973 and 1974.a) for the Spanish verb forms is

$$(1) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \overline{TV} \\ \text{---} \end{array} \right\} \text{Stem } \begin{array}{l} C_o V C_o V C_o \# \\ (C_o V) C_o \# \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{l} (a) \\ (b) \end{array}$$

Part (a) is needed for antepenultimate-stress forms, like cantábamos, cantáramos, etc. The TV (Thematic Vowel) is needed to exclude forms like *cántemos. The stem specification is used in comparison with Chicano forms (Harris 1974.a). Part (b) - expansion - assigns stress to the majority of verb forms, which have stress on the penultimate syllable. Part (b) - no expansion - assigns stress to the few monosyllabic verb forms that exist in Spanish like dóy, dás, etc.

For the last-syllable stress forms like cantáys, cantád, Harris (1974.b) proposes the underlying forms cantadis, cantadi, respectively, and a set of rules to derive the surface forms.

4. Solutions

A straight-forward solution for the Platense B forms is to postulate underlying forms with a final E that is later deleted. Even though this can be justified for some forms like the infinitive, it cannot be justified in general, and this solution must be rejected.

Another possibility for the Platense B forms is to incorporate into the synchronic description of the language the historical development of these forms. That is, we can postulate the underlying forms amatis, amati, and add, to the series of rules proposed by Harris which give amáys, amáá, the rules

$$y \rightarrow \phi / + - s \quad \text{and} \quad d \rightarrow \phi / + - \frac{11}{11}.$$

These two rules, however, are not independently justified, and this solution must also be rejected. For a more detailed discussion of these possibilities see Rivas (1974 and forthcoming).

5. Second-Person Marking

A third possibility is to take the surface endings s and ø as the underlying forms, and modify the stress rule accordingly. In order to do this, rule (1.b) should be rewritten as

$$(2) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \left\{ \begin{array}{l} [-2.p] \\ [+2.p] \end{array} \right. \begin{array}{l} (C_{\circ} V) C_{\circ} \frac{H}{H} \\ C_{\circ} \frac{H}{H} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{l} (a) \\ (b) \end{array}$$

or

(3) $V \rightarrow [+stress] / \langle [-2.p] \rangle \langle (C_o V) \rangle C_o \frac{H}{H}$

Note that the dropping of the **[+ 2.p]** specification needed in order to collapse parts (a) and (b) has no implications for the effect of the rule.

This rule, however, has to be modified to give the correct stress to the 2nd-person forms with stress on the penultimate syllable, like cantábas, cantáras, etc. This can be done using part (a) of rule (1), which gives the correct stress to forms with stress on the antepenultimate syllable, like cantábamos, cantáramos, etc., as follows:

follows:

$$(4) \quad v \rightarrow [+stress] \left/ \begin{array}{l} \left[\frac{TV}{-2.p} \right]_{St} \\ \left[\frac{TV}{+2.p} \right]_{St} \end{array} \right. \begin{array}{l} C_{\circ} V \quad C_{\circ} V \quad C_{\circ} \frac{H}{H} \\ C_{\circ} V \quad C_{\circ} \frac{H}{H} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{l} (a) \\ (b) \end{array}$$

As in rule (1), the TV is needed to exclude forms like *cántes.

Rules (4) (a) and (b) can be collapsed as follows:

$$(5) \quad v \rightarrow [+stress] / \left[\frac{\overline{TV}}{\langle [-2.p] \rangle} \right]_{St} \langle C_O V \rangle C_O V C_O \frac{H}{H}$$

The complete set of rules (3) and (5) would be

$$(6) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \frac{TV}{\langle [-2.p] \rangle} \text{St} \quad \langle C_o V \rangle \quad C_o V \quad C_o \frac{H}{H} \quad (a) \\ \langle [-2.p] \rangle \quad \langle C_o V \rangle \quad C_o \frac{H}{H} \quad (b) \end{array} \right.$$

which can be further collapsed using two kinds of square brackets," namely, $\langle \rangle$ and $\ll \gg$, as follows:

(7) $V \rightarrow [+stress] / \begin{matrix} \overleftarrow{\langle TV \rangle} \langle \rangle \\ \langle [-2.p] \rangle \end{matrix} \rangle_{St} \langle C_O V \rangle \langle C_O V \rangle C_O^{\#}$

6. Strong and Weak Suffixes

A fourth possibility is to follow the treatment that has been given to languages like Sanskrit, Greek, Russian, etc., in which the stress also shifts from the stem to the suffix in many different ways. In the noun declensions of these languages, the cases for which the stress falls on the stem are called strong cases; while the cases for which the stress falls on the suffix are called weak cases. See Kiparsky (1973) for a detailed analysis of stress patterns in Indo-European languages, and Halle (1973).

Let us call, then, strong suffixes (SS) the suffixes for which the stress falls on the stem, and weak suffixes (WS) the suffixes for which the stress falls on the ending. According to this definition, the suffixes o, ɔ (1st and 3rd p.), ɔ (imper. Cast.), n, mos, s (Cast. and LA) are SS; and the suffixes ɔ (imper. Plat.), ys, d, s (Plat.) are WS.

Rules (2) and (4) can be rewritten, then, as

$$(8) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \frac{\text{---}}{\text{TV}}]_{\text{St}} C_o V C_o V C_o]_{\text{SS}} \# \quad (a) \quad (=4.a) \\ \frac{\text{---}}{\text{TV}}]_{\text{St}} C_o V C_o]_{\text{WS}} \# \quad (b) \quad (=4.b) \\ \text{---} C_o V C_o]_{\text{SS}} \# \quad (c) \quad (=2.a) \\ \text{---} C_o]_{\text{WS}} \# \quad (d) \quad (=2.b) \end{array} \right.$$

or

$$(9) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \frac{\text{---}}{\text{TV}}]_{\text{St}} \langle C_o V \rangle C_o V C_o \langle \rangle]_{\text{SS}} \# \quad (a) \quad (=5) \\ \text{---} \langle C_o V \rangle C_o \langle \rangle]_{\text{SS}} \# \quad (b) \quad (=3) \end{array} \right.$$

Note that the dropping of the WS specification needed in order to collapse parts (a) and (b), and parts (c) and (d) has no implications for the effect of the rule. The final rule is

$$(10) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \frac{\text{---}}{\text{TV}} \langle \rangle]_{\text{St}} \langle C_o V \rangle \langle C_o V \rangle C_o \langle \rangle]_{\text{SS}} \# \quad (=7)$$

7. Lax Vowels

A fifth possibility is to follow the treatment of noun stress rules in Spanish, in which antepenultimate stress results from marking a vowel with an abstract feature, and making the stress rule sensitive to this feature. Harris (1969) proposes the rule

$$(11) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \text{---} (C_o (\check{V} C_o^1(L)) V) C_o \#$$

where the symbol $\check{V}$ represents a feature-marking on the vowel that does not receive stress. Historically, these were lax vowels, and we will keep using this terminology, even if it has no synchronic meaning. The substructure $C_o^1(L)$ is due to the fact that only one consonant (or no consonants) plus an optional liquid can be in this position. We can assume that this restriction, as many other restrictions on the possible combinations of segments, can be established at the level of canonical patterns for syllable structure, and write rule (11) as follows:

$$(12) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \rightarrow ((C_{\circ} \check{V}) C_{\circ} V) C_{\circ} \#$$

If we say that verb forms like cantábamos, cantáramos, etc., are stressed by the same rule as the nouns are, we can say that the tense/mood markers ba, ra, etc., are actually bă, ră, etc.

Both systems of rules: 2nd-Person Marking (6), and Strong and Weak Suffixes (9), can now be rewritten as follows:

$$(13) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \langle \overline{[-2.p]} \rangle C_{\circ} \check{V} \langle C_{\circ} V \rangle C_{\circ} \# \\ \langle \overline{[-2.p]} \rangle \langle C_{\circ} V \rangle C_{\circ} \# \end{array} \right. \quad (a)$$

and

$$(14) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{---} C_{\circ} \check{V} \langle C_{\circ} V \rangle C_{\circ} \langle \rangle_{SS} \# \\ \text{---} \langle C_{\circ} V \rangle C_{\circ} \langle \rangle_{SS} \# \end{array} \right. \quad (a)$$

Note that the partial specifications TV and Stem have been eliminated from the stress rules.

Since nouns are [-2.p], or, at the present moment, are SS, then the Noun and Verb stress rules can be collapsed in both systems as follows:

$$(15) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \langle \overline{[-2.p]} \rangle (C_{\circ} \check{V}) \langle C_{\circ} V \rangle C_{\circ} \#$$

and

$$(16) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \text{---} (C_{\circ} \check{V}) \langle C_{\circ} V \rangle C_{\circ} \langle \rangle_{SS} \#$$

There is, however, a problem. Consider pairs of nouns/verbs like the following: cómputo/compúto, cálculo/calcúlo, etc. In order to get the right stress in these nouns, we have to postulate underlying forms with a lax vowel in the penultimate syllable, that is, compúto, calcúlo, etc. Since there is no reason to suppose that this vowel is non-lax in the corresponding verb form, we have to assume that the verb form has the same lax vowel in the underlying form as the noun has. Therefore, stress rules (15) or (16) assign the wrong stress to these types of verbs, namely, *cómputo, *cálculo, etc.

This problem can be solved by observing that in Spanish verb forms, as opposed to nouns, the stress can never fall to the left of the rightmost root vowel. Since this is a basic difference between the stress rules for nouns and the stress rules for verbs, we can make the corresponding part of the general stress rule sensitive to this difference, as follows:

$$(17) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \langle \overline{[-2.p]} \rangle C_{\circ} (\langle + \rangle C_{\circ} \check{V}) \langle C_{\circ} V \rangle C_{\circ} \langle \rangle_V \#$$

and

$$(18) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \text{---} C_{\circ} (\langle + \rangle C_{\circ} \check{V}) \langle C_{\circ} V \rangle C_{\circ} \langle \rangle_{SS} \langle \rangle_V \#$$

8. Summary of Solutions

The following chart gives a summary of the solutions presented in this paper.

	Cast (sg + pl)	LA (sg)	Plat (sg)
2 nd -Person Marking:	[- 2 pers plur] in rule	no modification	[- 2 pers] in rule
SS and WS:	ys] _{WS} and d] _{WS}	no modification	s] _{WS} and ø] _{WS} (imper)

in both solutions: for all dialects T.V. specification is required.
in the rule.

Lax Vowel: for all dialects, instead of the T.V. specification, introduction of lax vowel in the tense/mood markers bă, ră, sě, (rě), stě, rő;
and Verb rule collapsed with Noun rule.

9. Chicano

In Chicano Spanish, the 1st person plural subjunctive has retracted the stress, from the penultimate syllable to the antepenultimate syllable; that is, instead of cantémos, we have cántemos. Harris (1974.a) proposes that, in order to account for this shift of stress, the T.V. is deleted from the stress rule, as follows:

$$(19) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \left\{ \begin{array}{l} - C_o]_{St} C_o V C_o V C_o \# \quad (a) \\ - \quad \quad \quad C_o V C_o \# \quad (b) \end{array} \right.$$

Then, the form cantémos will be stressed cántemos by (a), while the form cántamos will be stressed cantámos by (b). It is here where it is necessary to have the $]_{Stem}$ specification in the rule.

Under the Lax-Vowel solution, we can obtain the same results by saying that the underlying form of the subjunctive markers e/a have a lax vowel, i.e. ě/ă. Therefore, we obtain the subjunctive form cántemos in the same way as we obtain forms like cantábamos. This would be a generalization carried over to this tense/mood marker ě/ă from all the other tense/mood markers of this sort, which are already lax, namely, bă, ră, sě, stě, rő.

10. Platense A

The only difference between the Platense A forms and the Platense B forms is the stress of the 2nd person singular of the present subjunctive, namely, cántes for Platense A, and cantés for Platense B. At first sight, this looks like an insignificant distinction. One could say that Platense A is like Platense B in all forms except this present subjunctive form, in which case Platense A behaves like Latin-American. Nevertheless, this retraction of stress from the Platense B form occurs in exactly the same tense/mood form as in the

Chicano case. The stress rule for Platense A, then, equivalent to Chicano rule (19) is

$$(20) \quad V \rightarrow [+stress] / \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \overline{\langle TV \rangle} C_o]_{St} \langle C_o V \rangle C_o V C_o \langle \rangle_{SS} \rangle_{\#} \text{ (a)} \\ \text{---} \langle C_o V \rangle C_o \langle \rangle_{SS} \rangle_{\#} \text{ (b)} \end{array} \right.$$

Therefore, the form cantes]_{WS} will be stressed cántes by (a), while the form cantas]_{WS} will be stressed cantás by (b). This allows us to keep the same suffix s]_{WS} for the 2nd-person through the entire paradigm.

Under the Lax-Vowel solution, the laxing of the subjunctive tense/mood marker will give the correct form cántes, but the incorrect form *cántemos. It is interesting to note that there is a tendency in stressing the 1st person plural subjunctive with the retracted stress, as in Chicano; but this occurs in free variation with the standard form, and is preferred for certain verbs, but not for others. Much more research is still necessary in the study of this apparent transition between two stress patterns, and the Lax-Vowel solution cannot give a completely satisfactory answer to the current situation in this dialect.

11. State of the Art

The only serious criticism made to the amazingly detailed, precise and ingenious solutions worked out by J. Harris for the Spanish verb morphology is the abstractness of the underlying forms and the number of rules necessary to derive the surface forms; many of which are independently motivated, but some of which have some ad-hoc status.

The methods proposed in this paper, on the other hand, permit underlying forms almost identical with surface forms, and a general stress rule that assigns the right stress across dialects with almost no intermediate derivations.

The cost at which this is done is a) for the Second-Person Marking case, the introduction of person-number features in the stress rule; b) for the Strong and Weak Suffixes case, the introduction of two types of suffixes; and c) for the Lax Vowel case, the introduction of two types of vowels.

A detailed study of these alternatives applied to the entire verb paradigm, with a study of the possibility of independent motivation for the features proposed in this paper is being made by Rivas (forthcoming).

12. Possible Advantages

A summary of some of the advantages that have not been mentioned above of the analyses being proposed in this paper is sketched in what follows.

Besides the 2nd-person plural forms in Castilian and the 2nd-person singular forms in Platense studied above, all dialects of Spanish have other oxitone verb forms. They are: a) the infini-

tive, ex.: cantár; b) the 1st and 3rd person singular of the preterit, ex.: canté, cantó; the future, ex.: cantaré, cantarás, cantaréys, cantarán.³

Harris (1969) proposes a) for the infinitive, the underlying form cantarE, and an E-deletion rule that is used also for the oxitone nouns that fall into that category; b) for the preterit forms, the underlying forms cantaI and cantaU, and a series of rules that derive the surface forms; c) for the future, the underlying internal structure of the form [[cantarE]e], [[cantarE]as], etc., and cyclic application of the stress rule, with deletion of all but the rightmost stress.

The application of the methods proposed in this paper can account for all oxitone verb forms in the same fashion, that is, by introducing weak suffixes for the 1st and 3rd person singular of the preterit, and for the r of the infinitive. Furthermore, this r_{WS} can be considered as the same suffix that generates the future and conditional forms. This would explain why future forms are, as the infinitive, forms with last-syllable stress.⁴ Moreover, if the marker of the conditional ia is represented with +iā+, we can explain why the stress falls always on the i.

The apparent irregular oxitone nouns like mamá, café, etc., and the oxitone nouns for which Harris (1969) has proposed an underlying structure with an E, like cantór, canción, etc., can be treated as cases of weak noun suffixes. The regularities in consonantal patterns at the end of most oxitone nouns can be removed from the interaction between rules and underlying forms, and be assigned to the level of canonical patterns for syllable structure. See Rivas (forthcoming) for a detailed treatment of the matters discussed in this summary.

13. The Social Situation

Platense B is the dialect that has historically originated from Castilian. It is the most widespread subdialect of Platense. Castilian is the literary language in the Río de la Plata area, so that it can be considered as the literary subdialect of Platense. Platense A is a variant of Platense B for which the stress has retracted in the 2nd person singular of the present subjunctive. It is spoken in general by "more educated" people. It could be categorized as spoken more prominently by the middle and upper classes, while Platense B would be spoken more prominently by the lower class.

The question that arises is why this retraction of the stress happened. The form with the retracted stress - cántes instead of cantés - coincides with the Latin-American or Castilian form. In Platense B there are only three forms that are different from the literary language. These are the 2nd person singular of the present indicative - cantás -, the present subjunctive - cantés - and the imperative - cantá -. It seems that the pressure from the literary language has influenced Platense B to the point of developing the subdialect Platense A.

If the change from Castilian to Platense B had been only a shift in the stress of certain verb forms, as it is suggested by the Second-Person Marking theory, then pressure on Platense B to recreate the literary language would have deleted the 2nd-person specification in the rule, and all the Castilian forms would have been obtained immediately. This has not happened, however.

If the change from Castilian to Platense B has been a reclassification of the suffixes s and o for 2nd person singular from a strong suffix to a weak suffix, a possible process under the Strong and Weak Suffixes theory, then pressure on Platense B to recreate the literary language would tend to modify the stress rule in such a way as to produce a stress pattern as close as possible to that of Castilian.

This can be done, as was pointed out in section (10), by dropping the Thematic Vowel in the pertinent part of the stress rule, giving as result the Platense A forms.

Furthermore, the change from Castilian to Platense B of a suffix from strong to weak can occur without any modification of the stress rule if Castilian has already weak suffixes, as the 2nd person plural forms ys and d, and maybe all the forms with stress on the last syllable mentioned in section (12).

These considerations support the plausibility of the existence of strong and weak suffixes, and give an explanation for the development of Platense A.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 tú is used in Latin-American, and vos is used in Platense.
- 2 Some speakers add an s to the 2nd person singular form of the preterit, i.e. ástes, ístes, in all dialects.
- 3 The 1st person plural form of the future is cantarémos, which is not an oxitone word.
- 4 The 1st person plural form of the future would be an exception to this case. This is a common situation in other languages with mobile stress patterns, in which a particular suffix can never bear stress. This seems to be the case of the suffix mos.

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