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The linguistic landscape at the U.S.-Mexico border: language contact and lexical variation in Tijuana

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ABSTRACT

This article draws on a study of Tijuana's linguistic landscape (henceforth LL), conducted from 2014 to 2019 and comprising a corpus of 2,200 digital images. The authors first introduce the key terms relevant to this paper, and then proceed to contextualize the linguistic situation in the area and analyze the co-existence of six lexical pairs found locally. The results hint at a more diverse LL where language mixing is commonplace.

El paisaje lingüístico en la frontera E.E.U.U-México: lenguas en contacto y variación léxica en Tijuana.

RESUMEN

Este artículo se basa en un estudio del paisaje lingüístico de Tijuana (en adelante LL), realizado de 2014 a 2019 y que comprende un corpus de 2,200 imágenes digitales. Los autores primero presentan los términos clave relevantes para este trabajo, y luego proceden a contextualizar la situación lingüística en el área y analizan la coexistencia de seis pares léxicos en LL local. Los resultados sugieren la existencia de un LL más diverso, en el cual la mezcla de recursos lingüísticos es común.

Introduction

The scope of sociolinguistics has been recently expanded to include ‘linguistic landscapes’ even though linguistic landscapes are as old as writing (Coulmas, 2008, p. 13). This notion refers to “the visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region” (Landry & Bourhis, 1997, p. 23) or more specifically to how “the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings combines to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration” (Landry & Bourhis, 1997, p. 25). Blommaert (2013, p. 1) defines it as “the presence of publicly visible bits of written language” that include “billboards, road and safety signs, shop signs, graffiti and all sorts of other inscriptions in the public space” in the late-modern, globalized city but it is, of course, not restricted to cities. As the number of linguistic tokens is especially high in shopping areas of cities, *linguistic cityscape* is also employed (Gorter, 2006, p. 2). Written language attests the presence of linguistically identifiable groups of people who live in multilingual environments not only in large metropolitan areas like London or New York City, but also in smaller cities like Tijuana and San Diego. In Tijuana, for instance, we can see billboards, road and shop signs in both English and Spanish, and shop signs in Japanese, Korean, and Chinese. In *Valle Verde*, one of Tijuana’s working-class neighborhoods with a strong Mixtec presence, an elementary school bears its name in Mixtec (*Ve’e Saa Kua’a*) and in Spanish (*La Casa de la Enseñanza*), roughly translated as “The House of Teaching”; it is a place where the languages of instruction are Spanish, Mixtec, Purépecha and Nahuatl, each language representing the demographics found in the area, Spanish being the second language of the different ethnic groups.

In addition, Blommaert mentions that studying the LL expands the range of socio-linguistic description from people to the spaces they dwell in (Blommaert, 2013, p. 1). The LL is also a tangible indicator of language contact, and may serve important informational and symbolic functions as a marker of the relative power and status of the linguistic communities inhabiting the area as Landry and Bourhis (1997, p. 23) propose. Besides the linguistic content, the representation of the languages is of particular importance because it relates to identity and cultural globalization, to the growing presence of English and to revitalization of minority languages (Gorter, 2006, p. 1).

But ever since Landry and Bourhis (1997) groundbreaking article, new studies have proved that the correlation between a language's visibility in public space and its vitality, between its communicative currency and an active presence is empirically no longer tenable in the face of globalized and increasingly complex landscapes (Vanderbroucke, 2015) as evidenced by the global push of English and other languages present in places where tourists have purchasing power, e.g., Chinese signs in Irkutsk, Siberia or Japanese signs on *Avenida Revolución*, in Tijuana, which reflect not only language policy but also commercial interests (Gorter & Cenoz, 2015, p. 70).

Language contact at the local interface: Some lexical pairs in a diglossic situation

A concept that may have some relevance to this work is “diglossia,” a term first used by Karl Krumbacher (1856-1909) in 1902, then by William Marçais in 1930 (Larcher, 2003, p. 49), and taken up by Ferguson in the *Word* journal, who presented it to talk about two or more varieties of the same language used by some speakers in many speech communities under

different conditions as could be the case of the standard language and a regional dialect (Ferguson, 1972, p. 232) demarcated by geographical lines. Diglossia is also used to denote widespread bilingualism within a speech community as in the case of Alsatian and French in Alsace, where each language is used in different domains (Mounin et al., 2004, p. 108). The term is sometimes loosely employed as a synonym to bilingualism (Mounin et al., 2004, p. 108) but the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe (2007) utilizes the term “multilingualism” instead, to refer “exclusively to the presence of several languages in a given space, independently of those who use them,” (Council of Europe 2003, p. 18), which means that languages coexist in the same geographical area regardless of whether the inhabitants are monolingual, bilingual or multilingual. This concept is also stripped of the “high” versus “low” variety in a situation of stability that Ferguson put forward; precisely because of that, Calvet (1993, p. 45) criticizes “diglossia” for imparting a sense of stability and for erasing linguistic conflicts: what he calls the permanent tension between the languages of power and the languages of minorities, and between registers (Calvet, 1998, p. 202). As we can see, the concept was further refined and expanded from languages to dialects, language varieties and even register.

Locally, we can hear competing discourses and part of what these discourses comprise can also be seen in Tijuana’s LL. From the data collected, this article focuses on six lexical pairs that give an idea of what local discourses are like in a dynamic in which Spanish in Tijuana meets American English and Mexican Spanish, that is to say, the national standards taught in schools and used by the government. The first consideration is that these lexical pairs and other words are in no way treated as *calques*, *loanwords*, or *lexical* or *semantic borrowings*. Rather, they are treated as part of Tijuana’s diglossic linguistic practices. But again,

diglossia is used here to refer to two alternating terms, none of which is deemed superior as was the case when diglossia was discussed in the past (one standard, the other dialectal). Instead, we argue that the differences in use have to do with speakers' practices and choices and/or place of origin, whether they are locals, born elsewhere or born to non-Tijuanans. It is also worth noticing that this diglossic situation belongs to Spanish in Tijuana, not to two different languages as can also be the case when discussing diglossia. Rather, originally some of this alternation can be treated as *translanguaging*, which involves the deployment of entire linguistic repertoires on the part of speakers, for two reasons: one the one side, we find that some terms belonged to English and were incorporated into Tijuanans' repertoires; and on the other side, we must bear in mind that translanguaging has been extended to include varieties and registers. Unlike Spanish in the U.S., the diglossic situation described here belongs to the repertoires of Spanish speakers in the same city even if the current use is a result of translanguaging. A Tijuanan is familiar with both *tune-up* and *afinación* or with *auto partes* and *refaccionaria*. They go to *swap meets* and to *mercados*, to *abarrotes* and *mini markets* (see Figs. 33-36) The myriad of practices that such activities and places suggest are the result of the city's condition as a border city at the intersection of language contact and transborder flows of a varied nature in addition to internal migration. In the past, Tijuana was in the periphery (and arguably still is), far from Central Mexico and its centralized practices. This situation forced locals to depend on California to subsist, which in turn impacted practices, commercial, migratory, linguistic and otherwise.

The city's diverse population is due to migration, not only from abroad but also from domestic migration flows, which include people from all other Mexican regions. According to the latest census in 2010, Tijuana's population of 1.3 million comprised large numbers of

people from the following Mexican states: Sinaloa (131,834), Jalisco (85,619), Michoacán (60,163), Mexico City (59,442), Nayarit (45,440), Veracruz (44,880), Chiapas (41,521), and Sonora (35,382) (Instituto Metropolitano de Planeación de Tijuana, 2013). In sociolinguistic terms, speakers from these states belong to several dialect areas in Mexico: Northwestern (Sinaloa and Sonora), Western (Jalisco and Nayarit), Central (Mexico City), Michoacán, and Chiapas (Lope-Blanch, 2010, p.88-89), which are at least five of the ten or eleven Lope-Blanch proposes or six of the seventeen he proposed before based on lexical considerations (Lope-Blanch, 1990, p. 122). The number of dialects spoken in Mexico is contested (Lipski, 2011, p. 294; Martín-Butragueño, 2014, p. 1355) and even when linguists classify the Spanish spoken in central Mexico as one encompassing Mexico City and neighboring states, most Mexicans perceive Mexico City Spanish as a distinctive dialect (Lipski, 2011, p. 294) while some linguists also consider it a variety of Spanish on its own (Avelino, 2018).

In light of the current multilingual paradigm, i.e., translanguaging, which involves the deployment of entire linguistic repertoires on the part of speakers we decided not to use the term “codeswitching” due to three main reasons. On the one hand, translanguaging includes this so-called code switching or mixing, which renders its use unnecessary. On the other hand, codeswitching approaches keep linguistic resources apart as if they were independent concrete systems, i.e., named languages. And finally, translanguaging is better suited to analyze the LL because of its multimodality and its inclusion of language in its written form (Wei, 2017, p. 1). To illustrate the existing diglossic situation, six pairs of semantically-related nouns were extracted from the corpus for analysis. The areas surveyed include Avenida Revolución, Boulevard Díaz Ordaz, Calzada Tecnológico, and Boulevard

Aguacaliente as major thoroughfares; and Playas de Tijuana, downtown Tijuana, Mesa de Otay, La Presa, and La Mesa as major neighborhoods.

These lexical pairs are formed as follows:

- *parking/estacionamiento* (parking)
- *swap meet/mercado* (swap meet/market)
- *mini market/abarrotes* (convenience store)
- *car wash/autolavado* (car wash)
- *lavamática/lavandería* (laundromat)
- *auto partes/refaccionaria* (auto parts [shop])

The last pair is also connected to *yonke* (junk yard). I also present some other items that are found in the city, and which give account of an ampler spectrum of characteristics of Tijuana's linguistic practices.

A prominent diglossic situation is that of the pair *parking* and *estacionamiento* (parking lot). *Parking*, which represents local linguistic practices as opposed to *estacionamiento* (the term in the national standard; *aparcamiento* or *aparcadero* in countries like Spain) or *parque* and *parquiadero* in Chicano Spanish (Vasquez & Vasquez, 1975, p. 62). Both alternate in Tijuana, and not only on *Avenida Revolución* but also across town. One place on *Revolución* reads “Parking and estacionamiento Parking público Open 24 hours”; here monolingual readers can access part of the sign content, what they can actually understand, while multilinguals may see a continuum of a redundant message that makes sense. Though *Parking* is a word

that has a long-standing tradition in Tijuana, it has been in recession in favor of *estacionamiento* as the city's population of immigrants from other places of Mexico has grown exponentially. Both terms are part of the linguistic repertoires of Tijuuanans, to whom it is only natural to refer to a “parking lot” either way, the same happens when they understand *parquear* or *estacionar el carro* (to park the car). Parking as a name for businesses remains in use mostly in downtown Tijuana but Tijuuanans use such sign privately, either by manufactured “no parking” signs that read “no parking” or by inscribing the words on a piece of wood, metal or cardboard or by displaying a makeshift sign as the one in Fig. 7 of such use in *Colonia Libertad*, one of the oldest working-class neighborhoods in Tijuana. Once again, national and international companies prefer *estacionamiento* (the national standard) while local, smaller businesses use *parking*. Many chains began arriving in Tijuana in the 1980s, before that most businesses belonged to local business people not outsiders (see Figs. 1-2).



Fig. 1 & 2. A diglossic situation, that of “parking” and “estacionamiento”.

And as mentioned below, some businesses appear to seek convergence. One of these businesses does so by using both *estacionamiento* and *parking* is *Estacionamiento Super 8* (as shown in Fig. 1). All of its information, the word *parking* included, is intended for Spanish speakers: what this place is doing is accommodating Tijuanaans who use either of the terms. Nevertheless, *parking* conveys its meaning to both Spanish and English-speaking customers. All of the information seen in Fig. 1 is in Spanish. In Fig. 5 we can see *Parking Revu* also addresses Spanish speakers as it reads “abierto” (open).



Fig. 3 & 4. “Parking signs” dominate the landscape. On *Revolución* and *Calle 8*.



Figs. 5 & 6 More “parking signs” from *Avenida Revolución* and adjacent *Avenida Constitución*.



Fig. 7. “Parking” is the preferred word, even at homes.

Tijuanans also language in a way that is situated, i.e., immersed in local circumstances when it comes to *swap meet* in the sense that the term and concept is found in the United States as part of the English lexicon, but not in the rest of Mexico. Indeed, Tijuana has had *swap meets* for many decades, and locals learn the meaning of this two-word noun as they grow up while outsiders usually ask its meaning. These businesses are scattered across the city in working-class neighborhoods and the term itself indexes local shopping practices

(see Figs. 8-12). The most popular in the 1980s was the one on *Avenida Revolución*, the remnants of which can be seen in Figs. 11 and 12. Since then, *Las Carpas*, 5 y 10, and *Siglo XXI* are the most popular alongside *Mercado de todos*, which is in fact a *swap meet*, and not a market in the traditional sense as used locally and throughout Mexico (*Travel Report*, 2017). Tijuana has three popular *mercados* in the traditional sense, one in downtown, one on *Boulevard Benítez*, and *Mercado Miguel Hidalgo*, the one in *Zona Río* (see Fig. 13). The goods found there are mostly groceries, foodstuffs, crafts, piñatas, candies, dairy products, kitchen equipment (including traditional Mexican items such as basalt mortars and tortilla presses) with eateries and foodstands interspersed around the market. These *mercados* are different from standardized supermarkets in various ways: they are not part of corporations but are privately owned by sellers who form a league, and the premises are divided by sections devoted to specific items. These traditional Mexican markets are the descendants of pre-Columbian Aztec markets which were hubs of social life where families could sell foodstuffs they produced and buy crafts, utensils and other items needed for daily life (de Valle-Arizpe, 2007, pp. 49-51; Díaz del Castillo, 2015, p. 159, 292; Hirth, 2013, p. 30; Reyes, 2007, pp. 53-59). Clothing, toiletries, makeup, jewelry, electronics and the like belong in a swap meet, made up by sections with individual stands and stalls. The concept of *swap meet* originated in the U.S. and was locally adopted in the 1980's. Unlike existing Mexican "mercados" (markets) in the city, *swap meets* sell the same items their U.S. counterparts sell (see Figs. 8-13 below).



Fig. 8, 9, 10 Swap meets are scattered across the city in working-class neighborhoods.



Fig. 11 and 12: The remnants of a former swap meet between *Avenida Revolución* and *Avenida Constitución* that was popular in the 1980s.

In relation to that, Tijuana is indeed a city of contrasts and its binational and bicultural traits can be seen in Fig. 9 the name of the *Swap meet* is *Lázaro Cárdenas*. Cárdenas is a highly respected national hero whose name alone is drenched in Mexican tradition as one of the greatest historical figures of Mexican nationalism. The term may be English in origin but the syntax is that of Spanish as its denomination indicates (*Swap Meet Lázaro Cárdenas*).

At the same time, we can observe that local linguistic practices are in force in spite of customary nationalism which would enforce linguistic purism or at least normativity in regard to what the national language is. By using *swap meet*, a term whose origin has to do with local shopping practices and the practice of border crossing, locals express themselves free of normativity and its dictates. In contrast, *Mercado Miguel Hidalgo* (Fig. 13) bears the name of one of the most revered figures of Mexican Independence (*Miguel Hidalgo*). The name of this place and its naming as a speech act reveal discursive practices and performativity that relate to patriotism and nation-making, of *mexicanidad* (Mexicanness) imbued in tradition.



Fig. 13 Traditional Mexican markets bear the name “mercado.”

These examples can inform us, on the one hand, about the linguistic practices of the creators and the kind of speakers they are, and on the other, of a probable tendency to gravitate towards normativity. A car wash that opened recently calls itself *Autolavado Glamour*. It is highly probable that the owners know that the term with the longest standing locally is *car wash* but opted for *autolavado* to distance themselves from other businesses that preceded them, and in doing so, from local practices. The fact that they call their business *Glamour* also

speaks of a certain pretentiousness as the word is associated with French and sophistication; though the word is of English origin, it came into Spanish via French (*Diccionario de la lengua española*), and has even retained the French pronunciation to some extent as such dictionary evinces in the two forms it lists (*glamour* and *glamur*); at any rate, the name sounds posh though it is hard to think of a car wash and what such business entails and conjure up glamorous images. This pull towards normativity is also demonstrated by a laundromat in *Las Huertas* neighborhood (see Figs. 14 and 15 below), which until 2017 was called *lavamática*; as of 2018, management calls it *lavadero*, and the two big signs that read *lavamática* are gone, but not other signs (e.g., the “no-parking” signs).



Figs. 14 & 15: A laundromat that went from “lavamática” to “lavadero,” shunning the locally used term in an apparent effort to standardize local Spanish. The same business in 2017 (left) and in 2019 (right).

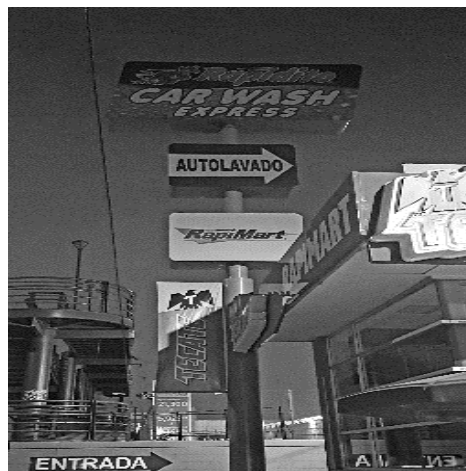
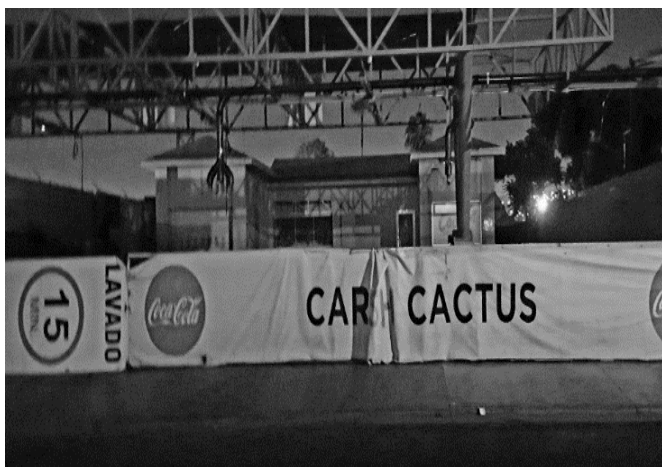
Local linguistic practices are also represented by the words *minimarket* (also mini market) and *abarrotes*, while the latter is also supranational. *Minimarket* gives account of the transborder flows that characterize the Tijuana region, a place where people come and go and pick up a word or two in another language. Language contact between English and Spanish results in the alternation of such pairs and at times with various spellings the way

multilingual signs work elsewhere: the main difference is that in the pairs observed in Tijuana, the alternation is between different registers indexing locality or a national standard (see Figs. 33-35). *Mini-market* is used in the sense of mini-mart and convenience store, but these businesses are in no way franchised markets such as the ubiquitous *7-Eleven* or *Oxxo* convenience stores. Some of these businesses *Mini market Viva Tijuana* are located within walking distance from the international border (San Ysidro Port of Entry) but the vast majority are disseminated across town. More recently, the word *mart*, synonymous with market is also found as *Mini mart la 4*, and in combination as in *Rapimart*, formed by the shortening of Spanish “rápido” (quick, fast) and “mart.” The spelling of the first is not hyphenated as it is in English.

Another pair that alternates is that of *lavamática* and *lavandería* (laundromat). The first term is again local (there are a few occurrences in nearby Tecate and Ensenada) whilst the second is supranational (see Figs. 28-31). These laundromats are mostly located in working class neighborhoods where people who cannot afford a washer go or in shopping centers where the clientele is mostly working class. We even find an apparent effort at convergence and inclusiveness as the owners of *Lavamática Libertad* decided to display “lavamática” in big letters, and “lavandería” in a smaller sign with smaller print. It seems the owners were aware of an existing situation of diglossia and decided to deliver signs that all Tijuans could understand (see Figs. 30 and 31). If we search Google Maps by entering either word, results come up mixed (see Figs. 32). From observation, I can deduce that dialectal levelling (the reduction in the number of realizations of linguistic units found in a defined area [Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004, p.24]) is in progress and although *lavamática* used to be the only word

found a couple of decades ago, with immigration from other places of Mexico, *lavandería* has gained territory in the LL. Time will tell whether one of the terms disappears r

A *car wash* is also called in two different ways in the city (see Figs. 16-19). Most car wash businesses are named either “car wash” or “autolavado” but as with laundromats, auto parts shops, mechanical shops and parking lots some businesses seek convergence by using both nouns that refer to the same thing (see Figs. 16 and 17). The landscape only reflects the speakers’ way to name such a place. *Rapidito Car Wash Express* also seeks inclusiveness as it seeks to suit its signs to customers’ linguistic repertoires. In bigger print on a larger sign we can see “car wash” and on a smaller sign positioned below “autolavado;” both can be rendered as “car wash” in English but the differences lie in who uses either of them. As mentioned elsewhere, Tijuans have used “car wash” for generations while newcomers bring “autolavado” with them. Though located on *Vía Rápida Oriente*, where traffic is heavy and the clientele possibly middle-class, this practice of adapting to customers’ linguistic preferences is also seen in *Colonia Buenavista*, an impoverished neighborhood, where a car wash favors the term “car wash” but also displays *autolavado* on a smaller sign, as if the sign creators were aware that newcomers call it that (see Figs. 16 and 17).



Figs. 16 & 17. Two car wash businesses seeking convergence by also displaying “autolavado”.



Figs. 18 & 19 Alternation of “car wash” and “autolavado.”

Rapidito Car Wash Express comes across as a playful sign and example of translanguaging (see Fig. 17). The noun *car wash* has been in the locals’ repertoire for generations while *express* is a common word internationally and *rapidito* is either an adverb in the diminutive or in Mexican slang a quicky. The way the words are arranged is at odds with both English and Spanish for both adjectives are placed on either side of the noun (*car wash*). First, “*express*” also conveys a sense of fast movement or delivery, and in that sense, its use in Spanish

is very similar to that in English as in “envío express,” and in addition, very similar to what “rapidito” can also convey in Mexican Spanish in general; therefore, a redundancy of meaning is created through words that belong to different registers, colloquial (*rapidito*) and formal or even commercial (*express*). In addition, the use of *express* also reflects either English usage or Mexican Spanish use as it is the case of courier services and money transfers (e.g. *envío* or *servicio express*, *dinero express*) where it has increasingly replaced *urgente*. The *Diccionario de la lengua española* only lists “expres,” with that spelling.

Businesses in the automotive industry such as junk yards, auto part stores, and mechanical shops can be divided into two groups: small privately-owned businesses and chains. Linguistic practices seen between these two groups also differ as small businesses represent linguistic practices with a local touch while corporations favor the national standard. In Fig. 20 we can read that this business carries parts for “autos, van y pick up” to refer to vehicles that have similar names in English, whereas in the *Diccionario de la lengua española* we find *furgoneta* or *monovolumen* for *van* (locally realized as [ben] or [ban]), and *camioneta* for *pickup*. The way *pickup* (pickup truck) is separated as if it were the phrasal verb may also be a trait of local linguistic practices. Similarly, locals use *clutch* instead of *embrague* to name the “clutch”, and words like *brecas* and “frenos” to refer to *breaks* alternate, as well as *troca* and *camioneta* for truck. *Troca* has also been documented in U.S. Spanish (Galván, 1996, p. 200) in North-eastern Mexico (Elizondo-Elizondo, 1996, p. 292), in states other than Baja California in Northwestern Mexico, which includes Sonora, Sinaloa, and Baja California Sur (Gaxiola-López, Gómez de Silva & Zazueta-Manjarrez, 2007, p. 181-182; Ibarra-Rivera, 1989, p. 44; Sobarzo, 2006, p. 241), and generally in Northern Mexico (Santamaría, 1992, p. 1088).



Fig. 20, A “yonke” sign displaying local uses.



Fig. 21 (right), an auto parts shop, also displaying local usage.

The LL around town evidences the linguistic practices of sign creators who have adopted words of American English origin in their repertoires. Long-standing terms (originally loanwords and calques) from American English have existed for decades in the area and have since become part of Tijuana's linguistic repertoires. The border characteristics of Tijuana, and Baja California, lent themselves to a closer contact between locals (many of whom were transborder residents) and Californians and Arizonans, and whose practices, linguistic and otherwise, led to the creation of terms that were in dissonance with echoes from Mexico City, the distant capital, where standard Spanish is still the norm. Baja California was a territory, not a state, for an extended period due to its scarce population (1824 to 1952) and its inability to subsist on its own unlike states (Gobierno del Estado de Baja California, 2018); as a result, the local population developed closer ties with their Californian neighbors in terms of trade, migration, transborder mobility and ensuing linguistic contact. In fact, Tijuana's economic growth has been propitiated by its border location (Alegría, 2009, p. 79), and its establishment as a town was due to economic forces arisen from tourism

from the U.S. (Griswold del Castillo, 2016, pp. 34-35). One apparent reason (besides proximity to the U.S.) for the use of terms of U.S. origin related to certain domains such as the automobile industry is the bundle of practices locals engage: the majority of border residents who own a car own a vehicle of U.S. provenance, that is, not made or sold in Mexico and usually a used car unlike the ones sold at local dealerships. Local buyers include sellers who deal in used vehicles, who own or work for junkyards, autoparts shops and the like, in addition to citizens who buy directly in neighboring California and Arizona.

Baja California has been a *zona libre* (free zone) since 1939 (Taylor-Hansen, 2000, p. 64), which means that it has enjoyed preferential duty on certain imported goods that promote development in the area. The free zone started with Tijuana and Ensenada in 1933 to help local communities survive the hardships of frontier life made worse by the Great Depression that affected not only the U.S. but also neighboring Mexican states. Tijuans and Baja Californians in general had to rely on vehicles and auto parts of U.S. provenance which led to translanguaging as things had to be named. A Chrysler dealership selling brand-new vehicles (domestic and otherwise) was not established in the area until 1961 in neighboring Mexicali (Autoproductos, n.d.), almost a hundred years after Tijuana was founded. A closer look at local circumstances both synchronically and diachronically can shed light on the innumerable practices that take/have taken place and cause(d) local linguistic practices to emerge. Pietikäinen et al. (2011), for instance, examine the historical aspect of the Arctic LL by identifying traces of different (historical, political, economic, legal and social) processes that have shaped it. A look at history and economy could shed light on how the concept of “swap meet” was taken from neighboring California as Mexican Spanish *mercado* did not match what a *swap meet* embodies, and before most supermarket chains arrived in the state.

To this day, we find several swaps meets and a few *mercados* in the traditional Mexican sense that co-exist and fulfill different customers' needs.

The evidence collected during my study shows many of the above-mentioned terms in actual use. One remarkable instance of differing practices between Tijuans and people from southern Mexican states such as *chilangos* (people from Mexico City) is a series of terms related to the automobile. Lexical sets range from *auto parts* to a lexicon related to motor vehicles. We thus find collocations like *pedir un raite* (to ask someone for a ride) more commonly than *pedir un aventón*, and *poncharse una llanta* (to have/get a flat tire) that illustrate different linguistic practices found in the area; also, vehicles are named *4x4* (*cuatro por cuatro*), *jeep*, *trailer*, *minivan*. Also, street cars in neighboring San Diego County are called *trolley* ['troli]). Parts bear English-sounding names such as *clutch* (realized as [klotʃ]), and *mofle* ['mofle] (from English “muffler”). The word *junkyard* was phonologically adapted to “yonque” or “yonke” while in other places across the Spanish-speaking world the equivalent is *depósito de chatarra*, *chatarrería*, *desguace*, *deshuesadero* or *basurero automotriz*. Locally, the use of the word has been extended to refer to anything or anybody old or no longer useful in the sense of “piece of junk” as in “*es un yonque*” (it’s a piece of junk), to an old vehicle no longer useful or nearly useless (*tiene un yonque por carro/(s)he drives a piece of junk*) and even to old, overweight and ugly women (*esa vieja es un yonke/that is an old, ugly fat lady*), and has lexicalized as a verb (*yonquear*, *yonkear*) meaning “to discard, to throw away something old and/or useless” (Martínez, 2007, p. 170). This term, at times disparaging and fraught with ageism and sexism, exemplifies the differences between local linguistic practices and those seen elsewhere in Mexico: Tijuans adapted the word phonologically closer to the English word: the /o/ in

[ˈjonke] has a phonetic realization closer to /ʌ/ in /'dʒʌŋk/ 'junk' than the /u/ in /'junke/ 'yunke' as the word is used in neighboring state Sonora, in cities like Hermosillo, San Luis Río Colorado and Ciudad Obregón. There it appears the word was taken from English spelling, therefore adopted from written sources, whereas in Tijuana, it seems to have been taken up in a phonological context, i.e. in live interaction. Additionally, the word *auto partes usadas* is also used in Ciudad Obregón and Mexicali to refer to a *junkyard*. A *yonke* is different from a dealership on two accounts: it sells used auto parts from totaled vehicles unlike a dealership where besides new and used vehicles, brand-new auto parts are sold: both the vehicles and auto parts sold there have names that embody the national standard whereas the auto parts (and names of vehicles) at a *yonke* represent local linguistic practices. That is to say, that at the auto parts section of a dealership you order a *puntal* while at a *yonke* you request a *strut*. The same can be said of various other auto parts. *Yonkes* were originally set up out of necessity for a border region distant from Mexico's major industrial cities; they were modelled after junk yards found across the border in California. Though the middle class moved on to buy brand-new vehicles at local dealerships, *yonkes* are still a necessity for less-affluent Tijuans (See Figs. 20-21). In lexicographic works, the word has entries in dictionaries of Chicano Spanish and slang compiled in California, Baja California and in Ciudad Juárez, another major Mexican border city in the state of Chihuahua. *El libro del caló: The dictionary of Chicano slang* lists *yonque* as "junk; anything old" (Polkinhorn, Velasco, & Lambert, 1984, p. 65), which is also listed in *the Regional dictionary of Chicano slang* with that spelling and as *yonke*, the orthography observed in Tijuana, and translated as "junk, junk yard" (Vasquez & Vasquez, 1975, p. 80). Interestingly enough, the former bears in its title *Chicano slang* but

data was primarily gathered binationally along the U.S.-Mexico border in the San Diego/Tijuana and Calexico/Mexicali areas. Spanish spoken in Tijuana or in Mexicali is in no way Chicano Spanish but a variety of Mexican Spanish.

The lexical items we can still find in Tijuana seem to indicate that when immigrants arrived in the first half of the 20th century they did not know terms in Spanish for so many things that have names similar to those in English; their situation was much like that of Anglo settlers in the frontiers of the New Spain when they learned from Spanish-speaking horse handlers words like *lasso*, *lariat*, *bronco*, *mustang*, *ranch*, *rodeo*, *stampede*, and *corral* (McCrum, MacNeil & Cran, 2003, p. 275): as frontiersmen dealing with Indians and Mexicans they spoke pidgin English using phrases like *long time no see* and *no can do*. In the past few decades, companies whose linguistic practices include the standard register have established branches in Tijuana; in addition, Mexico City, Monterrey and Central Mexico are a common point of entry for international corporations that adopt the terms utilized there; speakers moving into the city from that part and others in Mexico also bring terms of Standard Mexican Spanish with them in addition to those used in their own dialect. The co-existence of various Mexican Spanish dialects seems to point to koinezation but further studies are needed to confirm this. In the meantime, various forms that have been in use locally alternate with imported forms from out-of-state thus forming a diglossic situation (See also Figs. 22-25 for some example of alternation that have to do with automotive vehicles, services and auto parts).

In addition, though some of the terms found here can be heard in U.S. Spanish and in the practices of bilingual speakers of Spanish and English in the U.S. the terms observed in the local landscape are not found in the U.S LL. What we find in the U.S. is *junk yard*, without

any Spanish translation or adaptation. In addition, we will not find the diglossic situation found in Tijuana in which the alternating terms belong to the *very same* linguistic repertoire of Spanish-speaking Tijuuanans (e.g., *lavamática/lavandería*, car wash/*autolavado*, tune up/*afinación*) whereas in the U.S. the English terms monopolize the LL regardless of the demographics of an area, i.e., a term like *afinación* is not represented in the landscape, let alone a diglossic pair of that nature.

As for the naming of an auto parts business as “Autopartes (usadas)” or “auto partes,” this use seems to reflect local practices, possibly of Tijuana-born speakers; we thus find a family-run small business as opposed to regional, national or international chains, which prefer the national standard to state their business (*Autozone Refacciones*, *Refaccionaria del Valle*). The national standard imposes itself but only with bigger companies, and also differs from other varieties of Spanish, in which we might hear “repuestos” or “tiendas de recambio” (see Figs. 26 and 27). *Napa Auto Parts* brought their own linguistic practices with them: they present themselves as *NAPA Auto Parts* in Tijuana and in nearby locations and as *NAPA Auto Partes* (in Spanish) in other 15 Mexican states where they operate. Similarly, *Carquest Auto Parts*, which operates in California, ventured into Baja California, and still keeps its name as in the U.S.

Similarly, in the case of *tune-up* and *afinación*, a regional chain like *Mercado de Refacciones MR* favors the use of *afinación* while smaller businesses in accordance with local linguistic practices use *tune-up* (see Figs. 22 and 23). A shop also seems to seek convergence and lists both words, *afinacion and tune-up* (see Fig. 25). In their website they actually list both *refacciones and autopartes*. Branches in both Baja California and BCS, and in neighboring San

Luis Río Colorado. Refaccionaria del Valle also operates in the same locations in the same three bordering states. *Mercado de Refacciones MR* presents itself on its website as an “Empresa 100% mexicana” (a 100% Mexican company”) and also displays a Mexican flag next to that phrase as a way to convey a sense of nationalism.



Fig. 22: Performing translanguaging: This image presents a common lexical situation in small businesses in Tijuana. We can see “clutch,” “tune-up” and “fuel injection” mixed with “frenos,” “suspensión” (sic.), and other terms; all part of local linguistic practices.



Fig. 23: In contrast, a chain prefers to use “afinación” in place of “tune-up” or “tune up” as in the above picture.



Fig. 24- A business showing a common local use of an automotive term.



Fig. 25. Another diglossic situation.



Figs. 26 & 27. The national standard at play

Physical proximity to the U.S. and distance from the Mexican metropolis influence not only practices in general such as those pertaining to the social order but also those related to commerce, trade, migratory flows, and culture; in turn, these practices also influence the way local linguistic practices take place. Continuing internal migration from other parts of Mexico has resulted in the alternating lexical terms discussed here where the local meets national linguistic practices, where a local dialect interacts with other Mexican dialects and

is also influenced by General American, and International English, a composite of the features of English which are easily understood by a broad cross-section of native and non-native speakers (Modiano, 1999, p. 27) that global corporations use in the most diverse markets around the world.

Language has also become a mobile resource which has resulted in linguistic practices that draw on multiple sources and modalities as people come and go. As a consequence, we find in Tijuana a richer, more diverse LL than ever before where language mixing is commonplace, and an immigrant koiné dialect may arise as different Mexican Spanish dialects are shared in an increasingly more complex urban environment. The existing diglossic situation of alternating Spanish synonymous terms, regardless of their etymological origin, seems to point in that direction.



Figs. 28 & 29 “Lavamática,” a local term, and “lavandería” from the Mexican national standard alternate.



Figs. 30 & 31. A “lavamática” seeking to accommodate differing linguistic practices as different frames display both diglossic terms. The same place with two, and with only one term on different dates.



Fig. 32. Google Maps has adapted to diglossic situations: Entering “lavamática” or “lavandería” produces mixed results.



Figs. 33 & 34. A “minimarket” still open (left). To the right, proof that the term has been around for a while locally, a former minimarket on *Boulevard Benítez*.

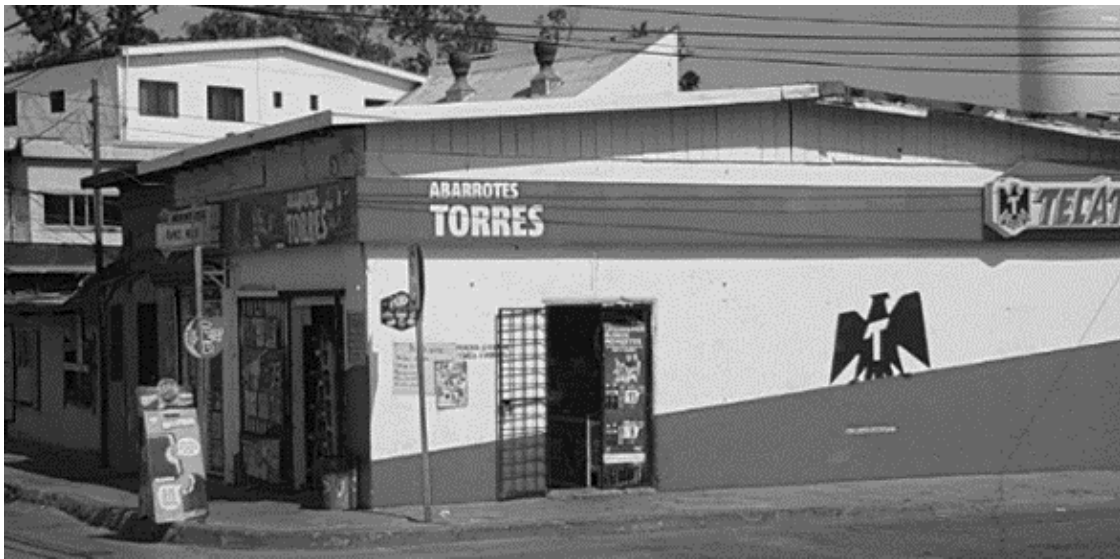


Fig. 35. “Abarrotes”, the term used to refer to a family-run small convenience store still shows vitality in many parts of the city.



Fig. 36. Local usage of “mart” in yet another word for “convenience store.”

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