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Cover Page Footnote

I would just like to say thank you to Alberto, Diana, Erin, Rachel, the DH-lab, and most importantly my family and friends for helping me in this project. I wouldn't have been able to do it without the guidance and support of everyone. ¡Los aprecio muchisimo!

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The Usage of Voseo in Social Media:

Hondurans and Salvadorans in the United States

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Abstract

Since the 1980s, changes in immigration policies and heightened political strife have led to the increase of Central American migrants in the United States. These migrants have not only diversified the U.S. population but have expanded the linguistic landscape of U.S. Spanish, through the use of *voseo* and other linguistic features. While the usage of *voseo* in Central America has been widely researched from a linguistic standpoint, few scholars have actually explored the social implications this prevalent pronoun has on Central American identity in the U.S. For Hondurans and Salvadorans who have grown up using *voseo*, they've had to develop ethnolinguistic masks through the expanded usage of *tú* and other non-native linguistic features in order to integrate into established non-*voseante* communities such as Mexican-American ones. However, while they linguistically adapt to *túteo* in the public sphere, their use of *voseo* is still rampant as seen through social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. By following and interacting with diasporic pages on social media, they are able to maintain a strong sense of familial ties and interactions while at the same time preserving their distinctive cultural expression. This ability to linguistically "switch" from *tú* to *vos* depending on their social environment, shows their adaptability and cultural fluency to navigate spaces. It also demonstrates their desire to understand their ever-evolving cultural identity as well as their fervent yearning to hold on to a piece of home.

Keywords: Anglicisms, Central Americans, Communication Accommodation Theory, Social Media, Sociolinguistics, Spanish, *Túteo,* Transnationalism, *Voseo*

Introduction

In recent years, the rise of social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram have facilitated the emergence of a myriad of online communities, bringing together a multitude of people with similar interests and backgrounds. That is, "the predominance of physical proximity as a factor for the formation and maintenance of communities has been gradually decreasing" (Castro & Gonzalez, 2009, p. 145). Of particular interest for this study are the U.S. communities formed by Hondurans and Salvadorans who are increasingly using social media to maintain their ties with their home communities not only because of nostalgia but also of the desire to bring their cultural values and forms of expression into the larger U.S. cultural landscape. These migrants, like those from other diasporas, have struggled to adapt to U.S. culture and persistently seek ways to retain their cultural pride. In order to preserve strong connections to their homelands, Honduran and Salvadoran migrants turn to online communities and social media platforms (Benítez, 2012, p. 1439).

Due to the current immigration crisis in the United States, many Hondurans and Salvadorans cannot travel frequently to their homeland. Instead, migrants must rely heavily on technologies such as social media in order to stay connected with their significant others and maintain a strong tie to their communities. According to computer scientists Luis A. Castro and Victor M. Gonzalez (2009), within the usage of social media there are two types of levels in which migrants can preserve strong connections with the diaspora: the first are those of local-

connections, which are mainly village-based. The second, and of particular interest to this study,[1] are those of macro-connections or connections that bring together people from the same nationality or ethnic group. In this type of connection, migrants are able to form and maintain communities through the establishment of successful online spaces that focus on issues or topics of collective interest. Many of these internet sites are referred to in literature as diasporic websites or pages since they connect members amongst the diaspora. These pages connect migrants with communities through ties such as people, places, and events (e.g., social events, traditions, community projects). Even more, diasporic pages mainly provide support for transnational communities which are formed by having the population of a certain region equally divided across national borders. In the case of Hondurans and Salvadorans, this fact is of great significance as many community members in the homelands still consider them as part of the community (Castro & Gonzalez, 2009, p. 145). Overall, diasporic pages enable migrants, return migrants and non-migrants to be connected to the occurrences in their places of origin which happen to be small or mid-sized bounded communities, where people usually know each other or, at least, recognize some of your background (e.g., ancestry).

There are several previous studies conducted on migrants' usage of social media, but they have mostly been focused on understanding their communicative exchanges rather than the ways in which social media is impacting the usage of language and identity (Benítez, 2012, pp. 1439-1440). Similarly, sociolinguistic and dialectological studies that explore Central American Spanish and its interaction with U.S. Spanish and the other varieties that compose it are few and far between (Rivera-Mills, 2011, p. 94). As summarized by linguist José Esteban Hernández (2002), this lack of research is due in part, "because of the difficult conditions under which

[1] Because I am analyzing user-generated content from Honduran and Salvadoran content creators in the U.S., I decided to only focus on macro-connection as most of their audience only pertains to the larger diasporic community.

Central Americans arrive and live in." Factors such as political persecution, undocumented status, and lack of access to basic social services can disproportionately affect the ways in which Central Americans are accounted for in surveys like the U.S. Census and General Social Survey. This tendency to overlook the numerical strength of the Central American population, ultimately, leads to their language and culture to be largely ignored within the U.S. context (Hernández, 2002, pp. 93–94). Despite this lack of proportional acknowledgement, obvious changes in immigration patterns,[2] have indeed revived interest not only in Central American Spanish, but on its distinguishing linguistic features such as *voseo* (the use of preference for the second-person pronoun, *vos*) (Dumitrescu, 2013, pp. 527–528; Rivera-Mills, 2011, p. 94; Hernández, 2002, pp. 93–94).

The usage of *voseo* extends far beyond geopolitical boundaries and into migrant communities in the U.S., affecting already established speech patterns and linguistic features of U.S. Spanish. Hondurans and Salvadorans throughout the U.S. reside in communities with an established Mexican-American population, in which a situation of contact within Spanish varieties occurs. It is in this context that Central Americans use linguistic accommodation strategies as a way of integrating into existing Spanish-speaking communities. At the same time, this level of accommodation presents a conflict between retaining a Central American identity while creating a sense of solidarity with community members of different ethnic backgrounds (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, p. 191). Because of this dilemma and the fact that this topic is researched very little within the realm of social media, the purpose of this study is to explore the use of *voseo* in social media, specifically from diasporic pages based in the U.S. Using a sociolinguistic framework, I explain two specific areas: the maintenance or loss of the second-person singular pronoun *vos* with its appropriate verb forms, and where maintained, its

sociolinguistic use within social domains as it relates to Central American identity. The use of the pronoun *vos* is observed in combination with the pronoun *tú* and other non-native linguistic features such as anglicisms in order to determine its level of maintenance or loss in user-generated content.

Background of *Voseo*

The term *voseo* is used to recognize a preference for the second-person singular pronoun *vos*, with its appropriate verb forms over the *tú* forms. According to Susan V. Rivera- Mills (2011), "*vos* is considered a familiar and even intimate form of address among Hondurans and Salvadorans. Even today, the use of *vos* in these countries continues to be one of the linguistic features that distinguishes this variety of Spanish from the Spanish spoken in other Latin American countries" (Rivera-Mills, 2011, p. 94). The following grammatical framework for *voseo* is proposed by Paez Urdaneta (1981) and furthered revised by John M. Lipski (1988) (Rivera-Mills, 2011, p. 94-95):

Table 1

Grammatical Framework of voseo

Tense/Mode	**1st Conjugation**	**2nd Conjugation**	**3rd Conjugation**
Present	tomás	comés	vivís
Preterit	tomastes	comistes	vivistes
Future	tomarás	comerés	vivirés
Imperative	tomá	comé	viví
Present Subjunctive	tomés	comás	vivás

Based on the paradigm above:

voseo entails a change in the syllabic stress of conjugated verbal forms, from the regular penultimate stress as in *tú* > *tomas* to the stress on the last syllable as in *vos*> *tomás*. In cases where there is a stem changing verb, monothongization, a type of vowel shift, occurs in situations like *tú*> *tienes* and *vos*> *tenés*. In the monosyllabic forms, a retention of the vowel occurs as in the *ven*> *vení* imperative. (Rivera-Mills, 2011, p. 95)

In addition to these basic morphological aspects of *voseo*, other studies have examined its morphosyntactic dimensions. For example, in *Transnacionalismo del voseante: salvadorenos y hondurenos en los Estados Unidos,* Rivera-Mills and Woods (2010), also present three types of *voseo*:

The first one is nominal *voseo* and it is the use of the pronoun *vos* with the conjugations of the pronoun *tú* (e.g., *vos tomas, vos coma, vos vives*). The second type is verbal *voseo* and it is the use of the pronoun *tú* with the conjugations of the pronoun *vos* (e.g., *tú tomás, tú comés, tú vivís*). Finally, the pronominal and verbal *voseo* is the use of the pronoun *vos* with the corresponding conjugations (e.g. *vos tomás, vos comés, vos vivís*). (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2010, p. 99)

Voseo **in the U.S.**

Voseo holds many implications for Central American identity in the United States. Lipski (1989) notes that, "once in the U.S., [Hondurans] and Salvadorans become instantly aware of the use of *vos* as an ethnolinguistic identifier of Central American origin" (Lipski, 1989, p. 106). This finding is also confirmed by Hernandez (2002) and Rivera-Mills (2011) who state that first-generation Hondurans and Salvadorans use *vos* at very high rates while also integrating the pronoun *tú* into their daily linguistic repertoire, particularly when addressing members of other non-*voseante* communities (Rivera-Mills, 2011, pp. 97-104; Hernández, 2002, pp. 100–107).

Lipski (1989) further elaborates that upon arrival to the U.S., [Hondurans] and Salvadorans are faced with one of the following incompatible options:

> The retention of linguistic and cultural identity as [Hondurans] and Salvadorans, partial or total merger with the predominant Hispanic community of Mexican origin, or the complete rejection of [Honduran] and Salvadoran identity in favor of Anglo American cultural, linguistic, and social patterns. (Lipski, 1989, p. 99)

This sociolinguistic impasse, as explained by Woods and Rivera-Mills (2015), occurs in certain social domains and situations where Central Americans and other Latinxs (Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, etc.) and Anglo-Americans come into contact. Central Americans residing in predominately Mexican and Mexican-American communities develop sociolinguistic masks either imposed or chosen, as a strategy to integrate themselves into the established community, regardless of the cost of losing their ethnolinguistic identity. Masks, in these contexts, become an accepted and even necessary linguistic approach to feel more welcomed and to establish a sense of connectedness with the larger Latinx community (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, p. 193).

The present study points to various levels of linguistic accommodation in user-generated content within diasporic pages. In interpersonal situations such as those in which diasporic content creators are involved, *voseo* can be used to convey information about in-groups and out-groups in terms of identity and a sense of belonging. Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), initially known as Speech Accommodation Theory, was first developed by Howard Giles (1975) to explain how individuals manage certain aspects of interpersonal communication. According to this model, the development or suppression of particular linguistic features in social contexts is the result of the speaker's desire to identify with or distinguish him/herself from a certain social group. At the time, this strategy was considered a distinctive feature of

socio-psychological approaches to language variation, however, over the years, other scholars have expanded and integrated it into the area of sociolinguistics (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, p. 195; Rivera-Mills, 2011, p. 96). For example, Eckert (2000) and Mendoza-Denton (2003) discuss language variation as a social act performed in different social contexts and suggest that this switch exemplifies the complex notion of accommodating social identity(ies):

> A related area in the study of identity in variation has been that of shifting and multiplying identities that are indexed in the act of speaking different linguistic varieties, whether they are different languages (code-switching) or different varieties of a single language (style-shifting). (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, pp. 195-196)

In essence, linguistic identity(ies) are so multifaceted and fluid, that researchers can no longer link one linguistic variety or feature with a specific identity. As such, the Honduran and Salvadoran experience of negotiating identity(ies) is examined, according to Woods and Rivera-Mills (2015), "as a notion of a 'pool of resources' from which members of a speech community draw the linguistic tools they need to interact with the established community and generate a linguistic act of identity in a determined social context" (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, p. 196). However, both Woods and Rivera-Mills (2015) recognize that in the process of social and community integration among Central Americans in Mexican-American communities, "linguistic and cultural assimilation may begin as an adaptation to outside pressures, but it can end up transforming in-group practices" (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, p. 196).

Social Identity Theory as proposed by Tajfel & Turner (1979) must also be considered when examining varieties in contact. As summarized by Woods and Rivera- Mills (2015), "social identity is constructed based on out-group and societal perceptions; as such, identity becomes a social construct as expressed by out-group observations and perceptions of linguistic

output and societal participation" (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, p. 196). Furthermore, in relation to Spanish-speakers, linguistic peer pressures might occur if certain linguistic features such as *voseo* are viewed as displeasing or deviant from what can be perceived as the ideal Spanish variety present in the community. Thus, this kind of linguistic peer pressure to assimilate to a more accepted Spanish engenders an identity conflict in which Hondurans and Salvadorans in the U.S. develop ethnolinguistic masks to seek out-group acceptance and evade linguistic discrimination. At the same time, linguistic peer pressure can sometimes lead to linguistic insecurity among the Central American community with the use of *voseo* in contact situations that are predominantly Central American in origin (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, pp. 196-197). The present study will now explore the sociolinguistic experiences of Hondurans and Salvadorans in social media.

Methodology

Data from the present study was collected through user-generated videos in diasporic pages within Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube to investigate the sociolinguistic experiences of Hondurans and Salvadorans in the United States. Twenty-five videos of either live-stream or published video content were collected and transcribed from a number of macro-level diasporic pages that were searched with key words such as: "Hondurans in the U.S.," "Salvadorans in the U.S.," "Salvadoreños en los Estados Unidos," and "Hondureños en los Estados Unidos." Additionally, there was a total of five Honduran and seven Salvadoran content creators observed. The videos represent a convenient sample and they were chosen based on a series of characteristics: 1) content creators needed to have a significant influence with at least 10,000 followers, 2) the video had to be in between thirty seconds and a minute, 3) the content of the

video could not be scripted or be based on an impersonation and needed to be in real time or at least improvised, and 4) they had to be almost exclusively in Spanish.

Once the videos were collected and transcribed, a text analysis software called Maxqda, which provides a user-friendly method of displaying the co-occurrence of two types of aspects within the same segment, would be used to calculate the nominal, verbal, and pronominal and verbal frequencies of the pronouns *vos, tú* and other non-native linguistic features like anglicisms. Additionally, six social domains of family, friends, work, social events, and other context were chosen in order to observe in what situations content creators would use specific linguistic features.[2] This was done in order to deepen the sociolinguistic understanding of what happens in social media and offer a panoramic view of the use and trend of the linguistic features. Something that should be noted is that these samples are only a conceptual representation of what is actually occurring in diasporic pages as it is small and not entirely random. Furthermore, the lack of female voices in social media[3] becomes evident as most video content that I collected were by male-identifying figures. It is my hope that follow-up studies will focus on gathering data from this population.

Results and Discussion

In this section, I analyze the nominal, verbal, and pronominal and verbal frequencies of *voseo* and *túteo*, along with any other non-native linguistic features, within user-generated videos. Table 2 shows the number of instances a linguistic feature was being utilized based on social domain. Figure 1 illustrates the proportion or percentage of each linguistic feature used by social domain. While I could have chosen to just use Table 2 for my analysis, I decided to make

[2] In other words, if the content creator talks with a friend or talks about a friend, it would be counted as one social domain. There is no distinction since doing so would nullify my results due to the sample size. Additionally, no intersectionality of social domains is done since it would skew the frequencies.
[3] There was only a total of 3 females figures in my sample of content creators.

these frequencies into proportions because I believed it would be easier to visualize and understand the discrepancies that exist between how a linguistic feature is used versus when it is used and on what basis. This line of questioning, ultimately, allows me to provide a more in-depth analysis of the linguistic innovations and psychological repercussions that occurs among Honduran and Salvadoran communities in the U.S. and in social media. The following section will now provide a three-part discussion on how Hondurans and Salvadorans use *vos*, *tú*, and other non-native linguistic features on social media.

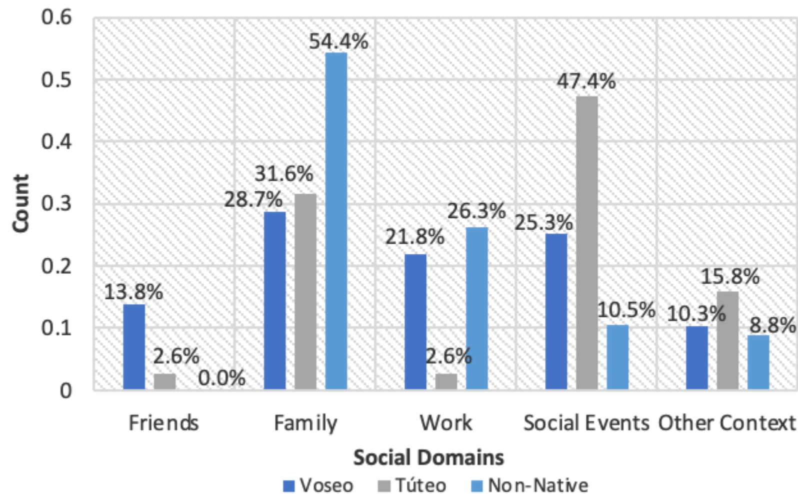
Table 2

Frequency of Linguistic Features by Social Domains within User-Generated Content

Social Domains	Voseo	Túteo	Non-Native
Family	12	1	0
Friends	25	12	31
Work	19	1	15
Social Events	22	18	6
Other Context	9	6	5

Figure 1

Proportion of Linguistic Features by Social Domains within User-Generated Content



Using Túteo and Other Lexical Items as an Integration Strategy

Upon arriving in a new Spanish-speaking community in the United States, especially in areas where Central American presence is not firmly established, Hondurans and Salvadorans demonstrate a transition from *vos* to *tú* and other non-native linguistic features. This linguistic adjustment occurs as a means of intentionally seeking integration with the established Latinx community. In the case of Honduran and Salvadoran content creators in diasporic pages, they are reflecting this transition in domains where they are trying to reach out to a larger Spanish-speaking audience. As seen in Figure 1, the social domains of social events and family are seen with the highest usages of *tú* at 47.4 per cent and 31.6 per cent respectively. In fact, it is used at disproportionately higher frequencies than *vos* in at least one of these categories. A reason for this transition happening is that Hondurans and Salvadorans may be trying to find ways to integrate themselves into the predominate non-*voseante* communities by establishing a sense of solidarity and communal acceptance though linguistic familiarity. For example, verb conjugations such as, *vayas* or *despediste*, clearly illustrate how content creators are adopting

and expanding the use of the pronoun *tú* as they are deliberately leaving out the identifiable syllabic stress of *voseo*:

Efrain: "…*Vamos a estar en Maryland. Eh, tal vez ahora en la noche o mañana. Así que despediste de la gente Manuel*" (GomezTV, Salvadoran, Social Events).

'We going to be in Maryland. Eh, maybe tonight or in the morning. So, say goodbye to the people Manuel.'[4]

LuisFarjardohn: "*Inscribirte. Aquí, en la descripción del vídeo, te dejo el link para que te vayas y te inscribas ya y le avises a todos tus amigos*" (LuisFarjardohn, Honduran, Social Events).

'Sign up. Here, in the description below, I will leave the link so you can go and sign up now and let all your friends know.'

Returning to Giles's CAT (1975), the desire of many Hondurans and Salvadorans to blend into non-voseante populations, specifically Mexican-American ones, encourage them to attempt to acquire ways of speaking that are generally associated with Mexicans. In order to achieve this goal, they must shed the linguistic trait that most readily identifies them as Central Americans. This act of seeking out-group acceptance and recognition by adjusting to new and different social norms and behaviors in unfamiliar environments may have psychological implications that affect one's self-worth (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, p. 195; Rivera-Mills, 2011, p. 96). In the case of one content creator by the name of Salvyboy_7, this aspect was observed when he was expressing his frustration for what is known as linguicism among

[4] In order to have a more comprehensive discussion of the interviews, I included an English translation of them. These interviews were translated and written by me in order to preserve cultural expressions.

Salvadorans and Mexicans. Linguicism refers to the intragroup relationship within a minority group, where instead of establishing solidarity and working together towards cultivating a higher quality of life, individuals or groups who are at the same socioeconomic level, try to put each other down as a means of self-advancement and self-preservation through linguistic prejudice and discrimination (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, pp. 201-202). Such was the case when Salvyboy_7 expressed his frustration:

Salvyboy_7: "*Es por demás, o sea, ya me aburrí de mencionar la palabra maje en todos mis putos videos. Estos hijos de la gran mil puta no van a entender que la palabra maje es de nosotros, los salvadoreños, wey es del mexicano"* (Salvyboy_7, Salvadoran, Other Context).

'It's just too much, I mean, I am just tired of mentioning the word *maje* in all my fucking videos. These motherfuckers aren't going to understand that the word *maje* is ours, Salvadorans, *wey* is of Mexicans.'

Salvyboy_7: "*O decimé vos, ¿en dónde gran putas has escuchado a un mexicano hablando como salvadoreño*" (Salvyboy_7, Salvadoran, Other Context)?

'Or you tell me, in what fucking place have you heard a Mexican talk like a Salvadoran'

Depending on the degree to which the in-group majority (in the case of the "Other") expresses intraethnic attitudes, it may create an uncomfortable linguistic environment where discrimination might be present. Because of this environment, Hondurans and Salvadorans are constantly finding themselves adapting to linguistic patterns different from their own as a means of lessening the psychological and social repercussions of linguicism within the Spanish-

speaking community. They not only have to expand their use of *tú*, but they have to incorporate certain Mexican lexical items such as *wey* instead of the more common *maje*[5] in Central American Spanish. The most noticeable adjustment, however, entails limiting the use of *vos* while adapting *tú* and other non-native linguistic features due to the influence of Mexican-American Spanish and the need to clearly communicate within accepted social norms (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, pp. 200-203).

The Influence of English

In addition to their linguistic attempts to blend into the already established Spanish-speaking community, Salvadorans and Hondurans also experience anglicisms within Mexican-American Spanish varieties, and these also reflect linguistic accommodation. As Lipski (1989) states, “the entire question of anglicisms and the English influence in Mexican and Mexican-American Spanish is of special relevance in the linguistic acculturation of [Hondurans] and Salvadorans in the United States” (Lipski, 1989, p. 109). For Hondurans and Salvadorans who arrive at very young age, the overall maintenance of the Central American variety may decrease, especially as they are more exposed to anglicisms and the Mexican-American variety. This becomes evident in the high frequencies of non-native linguistic features in the social domains of family and work with a 54.4 per cent and 26.3 per cent respectively. Certain words and phrases such as, *watcha* or *este es mi flow,* illustrate just how influential English is in the maintenance of linguistic features in Spanish-speaking communities. Hondurans and Salvadorans, without doubt, seek to maintain their cultural traditions as seen by the usage of lexical items, but the pressure of becoming American unfortunately outplays these efforts (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, pp. 204-

[5] *Wey* and *maje* both mean dude in Mexico and Central America.

205). The degree of linguistic insecurity felt by them contributes to the suppression of their Spanish for a more Anglo-American English:

"Salvyboy_7: *Pero es que ese es mi flow, es mi flow bebe.*

Mamá: *Es que, si se quiebran el pico, te la quebrás vos….*

Salvyboy_7: *Pero es que mami yo tengo mi propio flow. Cada quien tiene su propio flow. Cada quien tiene su propio flow. Este es mi flow…What*" (Salvyboy_7, Salvadoran, Family).

'Salvyboy_7: But that is my flow, it's my flow, baby.

Mom: So, if they bust their mouth, you too going to bust your mouth?

Salvyboy_7: But mom this is my own flow. Everybody got their own flow. Everybody got their own flow. This is my flow…What?'

Efrain: "*Watcha, como va esa casa in the back maje…Con todo"* (GomezTv, Salvadoran, Work).

'Watch, how that house is going in the back *maje…* With everything'

Transnational Connectedness and Identity

As mentioned in the previous two sections, Hondurans and Salvadorans are increasingly using *tú* and other non-native linguistic features as a way to gain social acceptance and integration. In some cases, they even mask and suppress their usage of *vos* with the hope that by changing their linguistic repertoires they will create a sense of Latinx solidarity. Nevertheless, the acquisition of these masks regarding Honduran and Salvadoran identity develops into an internal conflict (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, pp. 205-207). A conflict that revolves around

inner versus outer projection with respect to which linguistic norms and patterns to display in varying social domains. As observed in Figure 1, a significantly high rate of *vos* can be found in very specific social domains such as family, work, and social events with their frequencies being 28.7 per cent, 21.8 per cent, and 25.3 per cent respectively. Granted, in all of these domains *vos* may not be the prevalent linguistic feature, but it still exists at such a high rate that it becomes evident that Hondurans and Salvadorans are not only accommodating but they are also trying to maintain their Central American identity. For instance, the following phrases show just how Hondurans and Salvadorans are using *vos* in order to affirm Central American traits, values, and customs:

LuisFarjadohn: "*Ya que mi Maratón no me pudo dar el regalo que yo quería, que era el pase al final, vos me podés ayudar a comprar el regalo que yo quiero*" (LuisFarjardohn, Honduran, Social Events).

'And since my *Maratón* couldn't give me the gift I wanted, which was to go into the finals, you could help me by buying the gift I want.'

"La tía Maria: *Hijueputa, pero esta jodido, vos. Esto cuesta y duelen las pantorrillas.*

Hija de Maria: *Tiene que hacerle una hora*.

La tía Maria: *Nombre, vale verga, no. Mejor no me harto tamales y no hago una hora*" (La tía Maria, Salvadoran, Family).

'Aunt Maria: Damn, but this is hard, you. It is difficult and it hurt your calves.

Daughter of Maria: You got to do it for an hour.

Aunt Maria: What, this suck, no. I rather not eat *tamales* and not do it for an hour.'

As illustrated above, linguistic features such as *voseo* and other lexical terminology like *hijueputa*, *jodido*, and *nombre* are integrated with cultural perspectives and practices in order to serve as a strategy to maintain cultural and linguistic inheritance and legacy. The concept of cultural mourning in this context speaks to the linguistic features and topics that content creators are using to remind themselves of their Central American culture. Cultural mourning, as Woods and Rivera-Mills summarize (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, p. 207), occurs when individuals are able to mourn their object loss in a way that prevents derangement. Derangement, in the context of this study, refers to the loss or suppression of Central American cultural expression, memory, and connectedness. The creation of transnational identities among Hondurans and Salvadorans in diasporic pages arises as a response to potential derangement of identity in communities where products, practices and beliefs do not represent their homeland. Content creators are fully aware of how *vos* is a distinguishing feature of Central American identity and try to use it extensively whenever they have the chance of discussing topics revolving history, language, traditions, and gastronomy. Interestingly enough, almost all content creators examined in this study seem to use social media as a way of maintaining transnational ties with Honduras and El Salvador by referring to national events as well as communicating with other content creators in Central America. This technological communication plays a role in the maintenance of certain linguistic features as it allows for a transnational connectedness that offers access to the Spanish variety of Central America (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, pp. 207-209). Maintaining Central American identity in Mexican-American communities may be seen as arduous work, but despite the

difficulties in retaining certain traditions and ties, content creators continue to express a rich and vivid cultural pride.

Conclusion

In non-voseante communities, specifically Mexican-American ones, Hondurans and Salvadorans develop ethnolinguistic masks as a strategic approach to facilitate integration into the established Latinx community. *Voseo* acts as a distinguishing feature of Central American Spanish that allows Hondurans and Salvadorans in the United States to establish a sense of solidarity. But it may also be suppressed to achieve out-group recognition from other Spanish-speaking communities. Content creators in diasporic pages confirmed the use of *voseo* to varying degrees as an affirmation of Central American identity, but they also showed how they have expanded their use of *tú* and other non-native linguistic features to create a sense of solidarity in the larger Latinx community. In spite of this linguistic accommodation in social media, Hondurans and Salvadorans continue to maintain an intrinsic connectedness with the Central American diaspora through preserving linguistic and cultural practices. Studies of Central American Spanish in the U.S. have focused primarily on Salvadorans, which is why additional research needs to be conducted regarding the Spanish-speaking experiences of other Central American communities (e.g. Costa Rican, Guatemalan, and Nicaraguan) in the U.S. It is my hope, as it was for Woods and Rivera-Mills (2015) as well, that this initial study will create an awareness of linguistic innovations and psychological repercussions of linguicism that occurs in U.S. communities that experience Spanish varieties in contact. A research void also exists regarding the intersection of cultural identities among Central Americans in the U.S. Lastly, I hope to encourage further studies regarding the Central American sociolinguistic experience in

social media, as it remains an understudied yet fruitful area of investigation within studies of Spanish varieties in the U.S. (Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2015, pp. 209-210).

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