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## Chicano English Variation Differentiation

### **Abstract**

Chicano English is a variety of American English commonly used in Southwestern United States in predominantly Mexican-American communities. Chicano English has been an understudied ethnolect though some previous research has been carried out by scholars (e.g. Fought 2003). Scholars have debated and questioned how much Chicano English differs from Standard English (Flores-Bayer 2017). Some scholars have claimed that Chicano English is influenced by contact with the Spanish language while others assert that Chicano English is a product of bilingual speakers. To decipher the differences of Chicano English from Standard English, I researched the following variables of Chicano English: “sh-ch” alternation, and final case (z) devoicing. “Sh” and “ch” alternation entails interchanges of the phonetic sounds /ʃ/ (a voiceless palato-alveolar fricative) and /tʃ/ (a voiceless postalveolar affricate) while the final case (z) devoicing consists of changing a voiced sound /z/ to a voiceless sound /s/. In places of articulation, the sounds /ʃ/ is produced in the alveolar ridge and /tʃ/ behind the alveolar ridge. The /z/ sound is generated at the alveolar ridge, and the /s/ sound as well. These Chicano English variables provide some insight into systematic differences and similarities with Standard English. To find the prevalence of investigate the grammar of Chicano English I analyzed pre-recorded audio interviews with Mexican-American adults in Southern Texas (Bailey 2014). Using ELAN, interview transcripts were annotated to detect the variables: the “sh-ch” alternation and the final case (z) devoicing. These variables “sh-ch” alternation and (z) devoicing are analyzed phonetically through visual

analysis of the spectrogram. I find that certain “sh-ch” (/ʃ/-tʃ/) alternations occur under certain condition environments, such as, initial-word positioning in individual words. Also, the final case (z) devoicing carries on under various phonological constraints compared to Standard English. Relating to other scholars’ previous research, it is important to emphasize that Chicano English variables are highly used systematically affected by dialects of Spanish as well as Standard English in Southern Texas.

## **I. Introduction**

In Southwestern United States, the “Chicano” community which is utilized to represent an American of Mexican descent developed an ethnodialect called Chicano English. Chicano English is a variety of English, influenced by contact with the Spanish language, and spoken as a native dialect by both bilingual and monolingual speakers (Fought 2003). Chicano English is a newly developed variety of Standard English in the past several decades (Flores-Bayer 2017). Chicano speakers speak Standard American English based on regional varieties from Texas or California, Mexican varieties of Spanish or/and Chicano English. These Chicano speakers are often raised with backgrounds commonly tracing from states across Northern and Central Mexico. For my research, I will concentrate on one of the most predominant MexicanAmerican communities, the Central-Southern Texas region. In this region, I will examine the development of Chicano English. Thus, I selected interviews conducted by researchers from University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), where Texan Chicano residents, male and female, from college students to migrant workers, respond to questions about themselves. The interviews come from the Corpus Bilingüe del Valle (COBIVA) project, which aims to “document the

Spanish and English spoken in South Texas, specifically in the Rio Grande Valley” (Christoffersen & Ciller 2024). These Texan Chicano interviewees answer in detail about their upbringing, beliefs, and social perceptions. First, I will delve into linguistic differentiation between Chicano English and Standard English, where the linguistic focus will lie in the following variables: “sh-ch” alternation and final consonant (z) devoicing. Second, I will present data from the pre-recorded audio to decipher the distribution and frequency of the “sh-ch” and final consonant (z) devoicing variables. Then I will interpret the data from all COBIVA interviewees, and analyze the variable patterns to verify Chicano English identity in Southern Texas.

## **II. Literature Review**

First and foremost, in the United States the most widely referred to ‘common language’ is Standard American English (Lippi-Green 2012). Lippi-Green claims that Standard American English is an imaginary idea. An idea that most common people can describe as “unicorn.” Lippi-Green reinforces this idea that Standard American English is a conceptualization of a “unicorn,” meaning an ideal language shared among a culture. According to Pocket Fowler’s *Modern English Usage*, Standard American English is “the term has been variously defined and heavily politicized, but essentially it is the form of English that is most widely accepted.” Standard American English is the most widely accepted language, as it is utilized in second language learners in our education. However, how much is Standard American English spoken

in all the various regions of the United States? In one dictionary, Standard American English is defined as “the English that with respect to spelling, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary is substantially uniform though not devoid of regional differences” American Webster (2009).

Standard American English can be described as unifying a certain spelling and grammar without recognition of regional language varieties. Lippi-Green reiterates that Standard American English is mainly learned and taught to speakers so that they become “educated.”

Notwithstanding, regional speakers of Standard American English or a variant of English can become accepted within their communities. These Standard American English speakers originate from all fifty states. Therefore, Standard American English can be considered “hypothetical” due to current geographical and variety differences in the United States.

In the Southwestern Region of the United States the Mexican-American population has increased during the past several decades (Kampara 2015). The Mexican-American community’s continued growth has led to becoming the largest minority group in 2013 counting for 17% of the U.S. population. As a result, there are more English speakers from Mexican ancestry than ever before, taking into account that in the Southwest Mexicans settled in this region prior to United States incorporating the territory from Mexico (Kohn & Thomas 2019). Thus, the Mexican-American population growth would form the term, “Chicano.” While the Chicano community settled in the Southwest region it created a local variation of English. This variation of English stems from a combination of local and regional contact from different groups, race and ethnicity. Consequently, Chicano English has emerged as a newly developed variety of

English.

### **The *sh-ch* alternation in Chicano English**

The first variable, “sh-ch” alternation, consists of similar yet different sounds respectively. /ʃ/ [ʃ] and /tʃ/ [tʃ] are both palatal sounds, in other words consonants articulated by constricting airflow between the tongue and the hard palate. The hard palate (or the ‘roof of the mouth’) is used to produce palato-alveolar consonant sounds. Scholars have theorized Chicano English evolution in the past few decades regarding “sh-ch” alternation (Flores-Bayer 2017). Previous theories in Chicano English claimed that the “sh-ch” alternation is a product of “Speaker confusion.” “Speaker confusion” relates to the variable “sh-ch” alternation when referring to bilingual Chicano speakers producing these phonetic sounds in English. According to Wald (1988), the variable “sh-ch” alternation contributes to a “stereotype” of Chicano speakers in the Southwest of the United States. This interpretation interprets Chicano English speakers’ systemic alternation of [ʃ] and [tʃ] as unpredictable and thus unsystematic (i.e. ‘mistakes’). This interpretation assumes that these speakers do not recognize the phonetic differences in their speech due to confusion when using the palato-alveolar consonants [ʃ] and [tʃ]. Flores-Bayer states that after having completed her work the “sh-ch” alternation is produced systematically (2017). According to her results, the “sh-ch” alternation is recurrent in 23% of the Chicano community in Texas where she collected data.

In addition, a secondary theory about Chicano English “sh-ch” alternation developed

known as “Spanish Interference.” “Spanish Interference” traces the feature from the variety of Mexican Spanish spoken in Northern Mexico, and argues that its presence in Chicano English comes from migrants from the region whose variety of Spanish would have influenced English in the U.S., especially in Texas. According to Herrick (1988), a Spanish variation exists in Northern Mexico where [tʃ] and [ʃ] underwent a merger (Flores-Bayer 2017). “Merging” is a feature, describing two phonemes becoming identical with one another. Herrick confirms that Northern Mexican States like Chihuahua preserve a voiceless fricative variant [ʃ] for both [tʃ] and [ʃ] sounds. In consequence, it is logical that Northern Mexican State migration to the Texan southern border could have adopted this variant. However, speculation persists on what language has influenced the other language more, that is, has Spanish influenced Chicano English? Or has Standard American English influenced (Northern Mexican) Spanish that resulted in free variation surrounding /f/ and /tʃ/ sounds? Free variation signifies that two different sounds represent identical meanings produced in the same environment, which can occur when Chicano English speakers produce the phonemes, [ʃ] and [tʃ], leading to the “sh-ch” alternation.

### **Final (z) devoicing in Chicano English**

The second variable, final consonant (z) devoicing, occurs frequently in Chicano English. In final consonant (z), devoicing often takes place when a fricative is next to a voiceless consonant and less articulation is produced in some circumstances (Holiday & Brogan 2022). In a previous study, Chicano speakers utilized the [z] as an allophone of /s/ before voiced

consonants due to “Spanish interference” (Hualde 2003). On the same token, Thompson (1975) reiterates that “Spanish interference” is a systematic feature found in Chicano English because the phonetic sound [s] occurs often where the final [z] devoicing should be expected. Despite Thompson only providing limited linguistic data he emphasizes that Chicano speakers who devoice [z] more than 25% of the time should be considered as speakers of either “Spanish influenced English” or “Spanish-influenced regional English.” Whereas if Chicano speakers devoice [z] with less than a 25% of the time, they should be considered Standard or Regional English speakers. Moreover, often final consonant (z) devoicing is perceived as a “stereotypical” feature (Bailey & Holland 2014). A “stereotypical” feature is accredited to the frequent occurrence of final (z) devoicing in Chicano English. For instance, three of the main influences on (z) devoicing take place in: pauses in following segments, voiced stops on precedent segments, and possessives. These influences occur regularly based on constraints in phonetic and prosodic environments. All in all, Bailey affirms that despite high frequency of devoicing in Chicano speakers first language it does not carry any affect in devoicing in spite of “Spanish Interference.”

### **III. Methods**

In the current project, I examine the language practices of Chicano speakers from Southern Texas. I concentrate on Chicano speakers that originate and/or reside in Texas (Christoffersen & Ciller 2024). One of the main reasons I chose to study a group of speakers

from Texas because of substantial past research of Chicano English usage in the respective region. My first speaker, COBIVA025, represents the male group, ages 20-25. He is a medical student from UTRGV, and resembles a group that is also bilingual and it is important to demonstrate his data to indicate that a bilingual speaker can also possess characteristics of Chicano English. This speaker comes from a Mexican background. His father is a Mexican-born Texas resident while his mother is a Texas-born U.S. citizen, which shows relation with the Chicano community. Speaker COBIVA025 would give an initial glimpse of “sh-ch” possible alternation patterns embedded in Texan Chicano speech. Also, COBIVA025 possesses occurrences of final consonant (z) devoicing, which correlates to one of the two variables to validate the speaker’s Chicano English usage.

My second speaker, COBIVA019, represents the female group, ages 20-25. She is unemployed which some college completed, and represents the monolingual speakers who possess optimal English language proficiency. This speaker has a dual nationality background: a Puerto-Rican father and a Mexican mother. One of the main reasons I selected her is because she lived in Southern Texas for 18 years out of 24, and wanted to demonstrate data and exposure of English as a monolingual speaker. She states that she does not speak Spanish or intends to speak Spanish; therefore, I wanted to investigate a monolingual speaker as well.

My third speaker, COBIVA017, represents the female group, ages 20-25. She is currently a sophomore in college. This speaker has a similar background to the first speaker (COBIVA025). However, both of her parents were born in Mexico. Her father is from



Tamaulipas, Mexico (Northern Mexico) which borders the state of Texas. Her interests related to learning languages like Italian and Greek while pursuing a profession as an English teacher. I selected this speaker to show how much influence Spanish has in a speaker when it addresses final consonant (z) devoicing specifically. Also, COBIVA017 speaker has acted as a translator to her family, which is a common practice in households where the parents speak Spanish but not English, and can demonstrate her proficiency in both English and Spanish.

My fourth speaker, COBIVA018, represents the male group, mid-40s age group. He is a retired truck driver and currently disabled. This speaker has a long time living and working in Texas, specifically in McAllen. He carries an opposite background compare to the previous speakers, that is, he has plenty of work experience. One of the reasons I selected this speaker is because he has decades of experience living in Texas, So his background and experiences will indicate or have influenced his English language development. He is bilingual in English and Spanish, but speaks mostly Spanish in his daily life.

In investigating both the “sh-ch” alternation and final consonant (z) devoicing, my process was to observe and listen to several of the Chicano speakers in audio recordings available from the COBIVA corpus collected by sociolinguists at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. COBIVA is a corpus of over 40 audio-recorded interviews, ranging from native Spanish to Bilingual Speakers from different age groups, gender, and upbringing. I focused on young adults for my selections. I chose those who spoke fluent English and whose interviews

were administered in English. To explore the frequency and distribution of the two variables, “sh-ch” alternation and final consonant (z) devoicing, I downloaded the audio files and used two programs, Audacity ("Download for MACOS," n.d.) and ELAN ("ELAN - Previous releases," n.d.) to conduct my analysis.

The first program, Audacity, is a multi-track audio editor and recorder. Audacity enabled me to record the UTRGV interviews from the corpus site into a sound file. I played the pre-audio recordings from the UTRGV website due to lack of downloading access from the sociolinguistics website. The second program, ELAN, is an annotation tool for audio and video recorder, which I used to upload my recorded sound files. I used ELAN to annotate variable occurrences via the tier function. The primary speaker would be labeled as “COBIVA” while the second tier would be “Interviewer.” Separating the primary speaker and the secondary speaker allows me to distinguish which speaker I will be concentrated on while I listen and annotate the recording. Subsequently, I created two more tiers, third and fourth, in which I mark the “sh-ch” alternations, and final consonant (z) devoicing. The third tier, “Sh-ch,” marks all possible occurrences in which /ʃ/ to /tʃ/, or /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternations are produced. For example, for words with standard /ʃ/ sounds like in “**Sh**ow”, if no alternation takes place then I marked “0 sh.” In contrast, if words like “**Sh**e” are produced with /tʃ/, I labeled this instance “1 sh.” Furthermore, if words with standard /tʃ/ sounds like in “**Ch**urch” are realized as /tʃ/ I label, “0 ch.” Contrarily, if words with standard /tʃ/ sounds like in “**Ch**air” are produced as /ʃ/ then I label, “1 ch.” For the fourth tier, “final consonant (z) devoicing,” similarly to the coding process of the “sh-ch”

alternation I mark every possible occurrence. For final consonant (z) devoicing I look for the coda position, and take into account where voicing is expected. For instance, in words like “brothers” the final (s) is expected to be pronounced like a (z) sound. If the speaker pronounces without devoicing the (z) then I mark a “0,” but if the speaker devoices I mark a “1.” After finishing COBIVA025 the recording, I repeat the coding process for the following three interview recordings: COBIVA019, COBIVA17, and COBIVA018. I then export all four interviews in “ELAN” files, and import them to a spreadsheet application for data analysis by using the “Numbers” program.

Before compiling results I based my data on theory and linguistic research for both the “sh-ch” alternation and final consonant (z) devoicing variables. Firstly, in “sh-ch” alternation, Universal Linguistic Theory supports that languages that have only /tʃ/ sounds tend to add languages the /ʃ/ sound eventually, which can be found in Chicano Spanish and Northern Mexican varieties (Penfield & Ornstein 1985). Throughout the selection process, UTRGV speakers that hold a background in Northern Mexican States were likely to be influenced by the /ʃ/ sound in the lexicon of both Spanish and English. Thus, Northern Mexican Spanish influencing Chicano English could be accurate. From a linguistic perspective, certain words lean to sustain “sh-ch” alternation. For instance, in terms of lexical frequency the word “**she**” and “**chair**” are the most words representative of “sh-ch” alternation (Edwards & Dvorak 1975). Secondly, in final consonant (z) devoicing, the systematic feature of “Spanish Interference” is where the phonetic sound (s) often occurs when Chicano speakers utilize the final consonant (z)

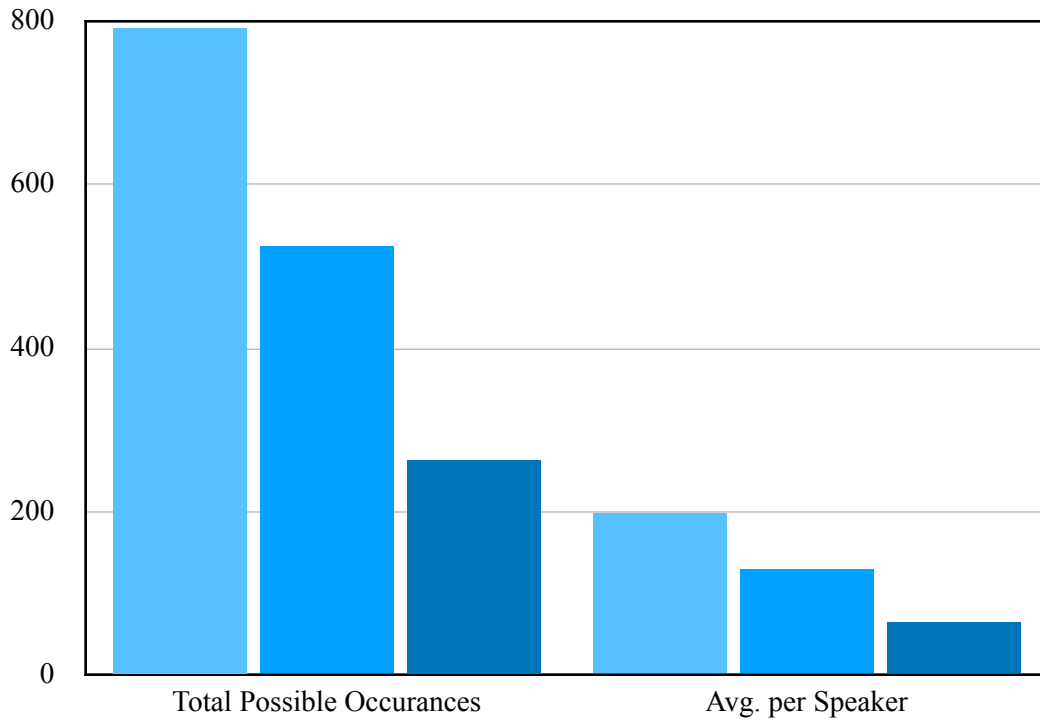
devoicing (Hualde 2003). From a linguistic view, devoicing often takes place when a fricative is next to a voiceless consonant and when there is less articulation in some circumstances (Smith 1997). Also, devoicing occurs regularly in pauses in following segments, voiced stops on precedent segments, and possessives.

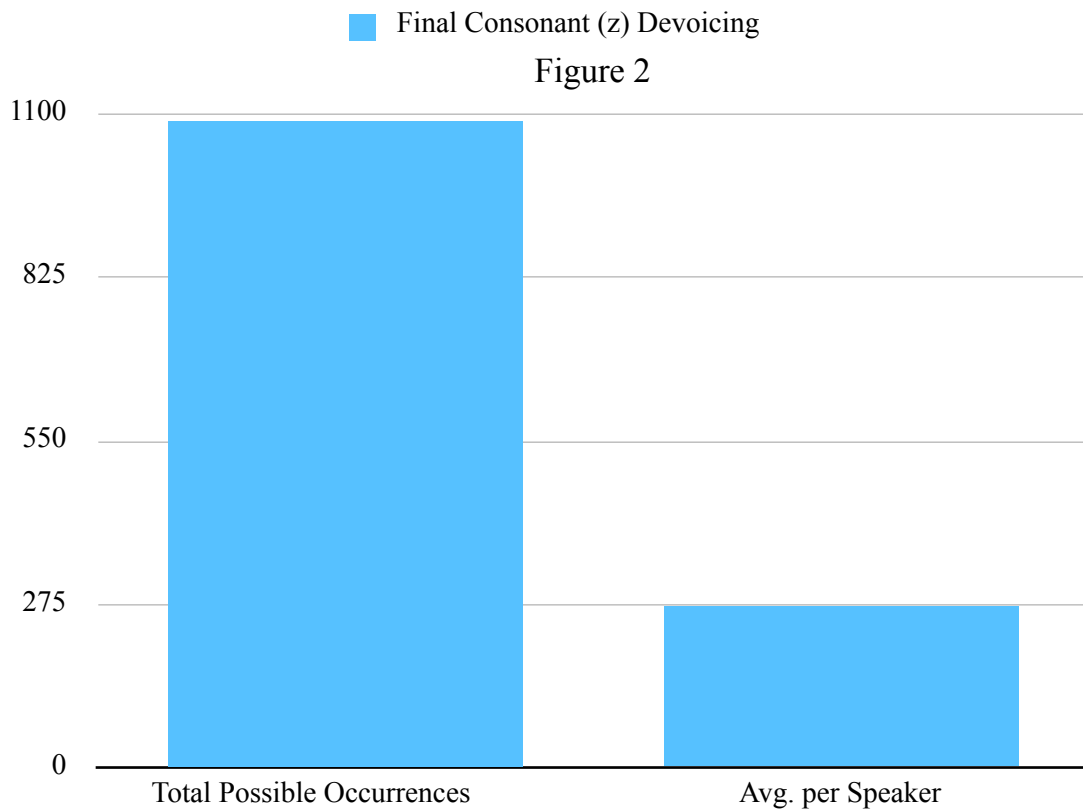
#### **IV. Results**

I analyzed my data from a lexical perspective, first compiling my results from /tʃ/ to /f/ then /f/ to /tʃ/, and lastly the final consonant (z) devoicing for each of the four COBIVA speakers (Christoffersen, K. & Ciller, J. 2024). Below are two figures (Figure 1 & 2) that gather the total possible occurrences for “sh-ch” alternations and final consonant (z) devoicing followed by the average per speaker.

■ "Sh-ch" Possible Alternations    ■ /ʃ/ to /tʃ/    ■ /tʃ/ to /ʃ/

Figure 1





Firstly, speaker COBIVA025 is a bilingual 21-year-old male UTRGV medical student. After compiling this speaker's results, there are a total of 188 possible occurrences for /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ and /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternations. For /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternation there are 142 possible occurrences while for /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternation there are 46 possible occurrences. Speaker COBIVA025 expresses a /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ often with the pronoun, “**She**.” The speaker utters the word, “**She**” repeatedly as evidence that it is the most utilized word in “sh-ch” alternation (Edwards & Dvorak 1975). Additionally, he uses lexical stressed words “**Shocking**” and “**Shocker**” respectively of which are expected to have a

standard word-initial /ʃ/ sound, but instead he produces a /tʃ/ sound. The verb, “share” is pronounced using a standard /tʃ/ sound in the the word-initial position, proving to be the most common occurrence in /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternation. The speaker voices a lexical unstressed word, “researching” as an indication of a /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternation, where the /tʃ/ standard sound is expected. The word “researching” is produced with a /ʃ/ sound despite not being one of the most common words in alternations. Further in the COBIVA025 interview, the verb, “watch” is uttered a few times in subsequent sentences. First indication is found in “He watch,” a lexical stressed word, then “he’s watching” a lexical unstressed word followed by a lexical stressed word, “Watched” in which alternation occurs before a voiced consonant “d.” For the final consonant (z) devoicing, the speaker, vocalized a possible total of 287 occurrences. The speaker utilized devoicing 88 times throughout his speech. In his speech, the most common devoiced word was, “was,” which is not surprising when taking into account where the devoicing takes places, that is, before a voiceless consonant, “t” (Smith 1997). Also, an adverb, that preceded a voiceless consonant was, “as.” Lastly, there was final consonant (z) devoicing in verbs like “is,” “comes,” and “goes” that preceded both voice and voiceless consonants and vowels.

Speaker COBIVA019 is a mono-lingual unemployed 24-year-old female. After gathering her results, there are a total of 211 possible occurrences for /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ and /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternations. For /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternation there are 111 possible occurrences while for /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternation there are 100 possible occurrences. This speaker did not demonstrate any considerable evidence of /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternation except in a few instances. The speaker articulated the adjective, “sure,” in

which the expected standard sound, /ʃ/ was replaced by the /tʃ/ sound. Commonly, the alternation occurs in word-initial position, and is a lexical stress word. Similarly, she pronounced the pronoun, “**She**,” in a couple of instances, which confirms again the most frequently used /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternation word (Edwards & Dvorak 1975). In contrast, there were no /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternation occurrences in her speech. For the final consonant (z) devoicing, she articulated a possible total of 290 occurrences. The speaker devoiced on a limited basis. She uttered the adverb, “as,” precedent to a voiceless consonant, “t”. Also, she revealed devoicing in the word, “was,” but this time before a voiced consonant, “y.”

Speaker COBIVA017 is a bilingual 21-year-old female UTRGV sophomore. After collecting her results, there are a total of 284 possible occurrences for /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ and /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternations. For /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternation there are 220 possible occurrences while for /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternation there are 64 possible occurrences. She did not enunciate any of the words in either /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ or /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternations. On the other hand, this speaker articulated a possible total of 375 occurrences for final consonant (z) devoicing. Speaker COBIVA017 devoices in nearly half of the possible occurrences. She pronounced a couple of frequent words which were “is,” “she’s” and “was.” The verb “is” is devoiced in multiple environments. The speaker devoiced “is” before voiceless consonants and vowels, and with reduced articulation (Smith 1997). For instance, when the subsequent word “so” follows “is,” the speaker devoiced. Also, she devoiced the spoken word, “she’s” regularly before voiced consonants, and several instances before pauses



(Bailey & Holland 2014). Last of all, the speaker expressed “was” before both voiced and voiceless consonants.

Speaker COBIVA018 is a bilingual 44-year-old male migrant worker. After compiling his results, there are a total of 108 possible occurrences for /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ and /ʒ/ to /tʒ/ alternations. For /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternation there are 53 possible occurrences while for /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternation there are 55 possible occurrences. Speaker COBIVA018 uttered many instances from /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternation. The most frequent word and pronoun was, “**She**,” which validates the most common /ʃ/ and /tʃ/ alternation (Edwards & Dvorak 1975). Also, another word that this speaker pronounced was the verb, “**show**.” He utilized this word in different forms, “**shadow**” and “**shadowing**” were the last /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternation pronounced respectively. For the /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternation, the speaker uttered only one word, the noun, “**channel**” in his speech. Moreover, the speaker devoiced the final consonant (z) several times out of 134 possible occurrences. The most common devoiced word was, “**because**,” which was uttered before a voiceless consonant. He also pronounced the word, “**years**,” a few times that came before a pause; and the speaker devoiced the word, “**goes**” before a vowel.

## **V. Discussion**

The COBIVA speakers’ analyzed here support the hypothesis of prevalent Chicano English systematic patterns in Texas. The first variable, “Sh-ch” alternation, totaled 791 possible occurrences providing me with enough data to validate previous studies. What were the systematic patterns that were commonly found in my COBIVA speakers? First, the 526 set of /ʃ/

to /tʃ/ possible alternation occurrences provided me with a large enough sample size of the following patterns. For instance, the Standard English /ʃ/ sound was commonly alternated to the /tʃ/ sound in the word, “**she**.” The word, “**She**” contains the /tʃ/ sound in word-initial which was the most frequent pattern in this alternation (Flores-Bayer 2017). Although my selected COBIVA speakers’ uttered uncommon words like “**sure**” and “**shadow**,” they repeatedly alternated /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ in the word-initial position. Next, the /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternation tallied 265 possible occurrences from which the word position became less predictable. For example, one of the more utilized alternating words were “**Watch**.” Unlike the /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternation, this /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ sound alternation takes place in the word-final position occasionally. Also, other another word that /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alteration occurred at word-initial was “**channel**,” which demonstrated the word position unpredictably in this alternation. Previously, I estimated that /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternations would occur in the middle of the words or word-final, but none of the speakers identified any words. The /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternations were higher in amount compared to /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternation. Thus, /ʃ/ to /tʃ/ alternation word frequency appeared systematically in word-initial. In contrast, the /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternation did not reveal any straightforward systematic patterns.

The second variable, final consonant (z) devoicing, totaled 1,087 possible occurrences among all four COBIVA speakers. This significant amount of data surpassed my initial expectations. What systematic patterns were identified in final consonant (z) devoicing? First, among the four COBIVA speakers, one of the most frequent words was “**was**.” The word “**was**” was devoiced before a voiceless consonant. Also, other third person singular words like “**comes**”

and goes” were also devoiced before voiceless consonants (Thompson 1975). In addition, on voiced consonants another final consonant (z) devoicing systematic pattern identified was before less articulated enunciations and pauses. For instance, when the COBIVA speakers utilized the word “is” on many possible devoicing occurrences they produced no articulation in their pronunciation. Some of the words that followed “is” were voiceless consonants “s.” It was common for the COBIVA speakers to skip the (z) sound to pronounced the “s” sound of the subsequent word (e.g. “She is sometimes”). In other words, final consonant (z) devoicing occurred commonly before voiced or voiceless consonants, before a pause, and with less articulation, which contributed to systematic patterns.

The two variables, “Sh-ch” alternation and final consonant (z) devoicing represent a turning point in Southern Texas Chicano English. What type of representation does the Chicano ethnodialect reflect in the lives of the selected COBIVA speakers. One of the representations that associates with one of the bilingual speakers, COVIBA025, is community persistence (Avineri 2015). According to Aveneri (2015), the “language gap” breaches language ideologies between poverty-stricken and affluent families. Avineri (2015) discusses the stigmatization of low-income and racialized communities effected in their language ideologies. For instance, speaker COBIVA025 represents community persistence through language ideology. This bilingual speaker mentions in his interview crucial interactions between his English language development with Anglo-American English speakers. He confesses in his COBIVA interview the challenges he has faced in mastering both English and Spanish. Precisely, in regards to his

English the speaker's English language expectation is to properly communicate in English to Anglo-Americans. Language ideologies play significant roles in generations of families seeking to establish themselves within their communities. COBIVA025 expresses the purpose of mastering these languages like Spanish and English. In addition, taking into account that Mexican-born parents tend to instill both a wide range of Spanish and English lexicon with the purpose of passing these languages to their future children. Speaker COBIVA25 insists that he does not intend to speak broken Spanish or English, and no "Spanglish" which is perceived to be deficient and associated with low-educated Chicano residents. Although "Spanglish" is often confused to be part of Chicano English, bilingual speakers are capable of speaking Chicano English perfectly.

Additionally, the "sh-ch" alternation in mono-lingual speaker COBIVA019 hints at a certain language ideology. According to Bell Hooks, society imposes in our lives with an "oppressor" language (Hooks 2014). Hooks claims that an "oppressor" language represents the upper class of a society, in which others need to observe in order to elevate and or blend into the upper class. In relation to speaker COBIVA019, there are two languages she has certain knowledge - English and Spanish. These "oppressor" languages like English and Spanish have been imposed in North American societies. However, the "oppressor" language she chooses revealed her inclination in the hierarchy of "oppressor" languages. Despite both English and Spanish considerably "oppressor" languages in the Americas undoubtedly English has overtaken

Spanish in speaker, COBIVA019. For instance, speaker COBIVA019, expresses that she will only speak English even when Spanish is spoken to her directly. Although Chicanos may belong to a different race, they are obligated to speak English more than Spanish. The “oppressor’s” language is associated with Standard English, and it is no mystery this speaker opts to utilize English in the United States. For many Chicanos, the Spanish language represents their cultural identity yet they view both English and Spanish beneficial for their families’ prosperity. Speaker COBIVA019 looses with Spanish language yet her noticeable Chicano English characteristics can become accepted in a pre-dominant Chicano community.

Moreover, bilingual speaker COBIVA017 consistently utilizes final consonant (z) devoicing. Her desired profession as an English Teacher can expedite this variety of English. According to Flores and Rosa, they are various approaches to language diversity (Flores & Rosa 2015). They articulate reasons to critique a standardized national language. A standardized language fortifies certain privileged groups and thus Standard English should not be the only acceptable language. Can Chicano English stabilize itself in a diverse United States? Speaker COBIVA017, has the opportunity and platform to overcome some negative stigmas like “improper” English speakers or English “learners.” This speaker expresses close ties to her family values, which builds strong support. This strong support leads to a battle against outside influences. In terms of in the education field, speaker COBIVA017 will be challenged to follow a privileged Standardized American English due to pressure from education institutions and the social acceptance of a different variety of English. All in all, as an educator she can succeed if her school district take on additive approaches to language learning, which can facilitate

inclusivity to solidify Chicano English for younger generations.

## **VI. Conclusion**

In sum, Chicano English identity is noteworthy through the usage of the two variables, “sh-ch” alternation, and final consonant (z) devoicing. The COBIVA interviewee data validates the previous research of these Chicano English’s two variables. The first variable, “sh-ch” alternation exposes the systematic alternation occurring in word-initial while the /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ alternation can take place in either word-initial, middle, or word-final. The “sh-ch” alternation is a systematic pattern regularly utilized in spoken speech while final consonant (z) devoicing uncovers a greater variety of condition environments. The COBIVA interviewees show that final consonant (z) devoicing occurs commonly before voiced and voiceless consonants, pauses, and minimal articulation. However, there is less predictability where this variable will consistently take place in each of the COBIVA speakers. Moreover, in a social perspective, COBIVA speakers expressed community persistence. Most notably speaker COBIVA025, who affirmed his language ideology through sticking with family values against negative second language stigma. In contrast, speaker COBIVA019 sides with the most dominant “oppressor” language English over Spanish while ignoring considerable access to Spanish through family native Spanish speakers. Nonetheless, speaker COBIVA017 takes the mantle as the example to contradict Standard American English by collaborating via the education field. In other words, the “sh-ch” alternation and final consonant (z) devoicing is a linguistic identity in Chicano English because of its uniqueness in Southern Texas, engrained in the Mexican-American community. Further

research will be essential to establish Chicano English status as a de facto language in the Southwest. I believe that Chicano English can eventually become mainstream in Southwestern United States through the next generations to come.

## Appendix

Speaker's information	
Speaker's ID	COBIVA025
Place of birth	Brownsville, TX
Place where s/he was raised	Brownsville, TX
Year of birth	1998
Last grade level completed	Currently in university
Where education took place	Brownsville, TX - UTRGV
Years in the US	20
Years in RGV	20
Current neighborhood	Amatista Dr.
Previous neighborhood(s)	Amatista Dr.
Current profession	Academic Tutor
Desired profession (students)	Emergency Physician
Profession in birth country	-
Household yearly income	17,000
Number of people in the household	6
Parents' languages	Spanish
Mother's profession	Health Care Provider /Self Employed
Father's profession	-
Mother's educational level	High School
Father's educational level	High School
Mother's birth place	Brownsville, TX
Father's birth place	Loreto, Zacatecas
Languages other than English and Spanish	-
Sex	Male
Ethnicity (self)	Mexican American
Phenotype	Male, with brown hair and eyes, "poquito moreno"
Religion	Christianity



Political affiliation	Independent
Close family in Mexico (or anywhere else)	Matamoros, Tamaulipas
Frequency of visits to Mexico (often, occasional, rare, none)	rare
Visitors from Mexico (often, occasional, rare, none)	none
Married? (L used with spouse)	No - Single
Spouse's ethnicity	-
Spouse's L1	-
Children?	-
L used with children	-

Speaker's information	
Speaker's ID	COBIVA019
Place of birth	Elizabeth, NJ
Place where s/he was raised	Harlingen, TX; Winterpark, FL
Year of birth	1993
Last grade level completed	Freshman College
Where education took place	Elizabeth, NJ; Harlingen, TX; Kingsville, TX
Years in the US	24
Years in RGV	18+
Current neighborhood	Harlingen, TX; Filmore Ave.
Previous neighborhood(s)	Harlingen, TX
Current profession	Unemployed
Desired profession (students)	Speech Pathologist
Profession in birth country	Unemployed
Household yearly income	14,000
Number of people in the household	3
Parents' languages	English and Spanish
Mother's profession	Retired CNA
Father's profession	Disabled
Mother's educational level	High School
Father's educational level	Vocational School
Mother's birth place	Mexico
Father's birth place	San Juan, Puerto Rico
Languages other than English and Spanish	None
Sex	Female
Ethnicity (self)	Hispanic
Phenotype	Brown
Religion	Christian
Political affiliation	Libertarian

Close family in Mexico (or anywhere else)	Odessa, TX; Elizabeth, NJ
Frequency of visits to Mexico (often, occasional, rare, none)	Rare
Visitors from Mexico (often, occasional, rare, none)	Rare
Married? (L used with spouse)	No
Spouse's ethnicity	N/A
Spouse's L1	N/A
Children?	None
L used with children	N/A

Speaker's information <sup>1</sup>		COBIVA017
Speaker's ID	COBIVA017	
Place of birth	Harlingen, TX	
Place where s/he was raised	San Benito, TX/ Matamoros, Mexico	
Year of birth	1996	
Last grade level completed	Sophomore in College	
Where education took place	University	
Years in the US	21	
Years in RGV	21	
Current neighborhood		
Previous neighborhood(s)		
Current profession		
Desired profession (students)	English Teacher	
Profession in birth country		
Household yearly income		
Number of people in the household		
Parents' languages	Spanish	
Mother's profession	Home health services (Provider)	
Father's profession	Garage door installer	
Mother's educational level	Middle School	
Father's educational level	High School	
Mother's birth place	Puebla, Mexico	
Father's birth place	Tamaulipas, Mexico	
Languages other than English and Spanish		
Sex	F	
Ethnicity (self)	Latina	
Phenotype		
Religion		
Political affiliation		

Close family in Mexico (or anywhere else)	
Frequency of visits to Mexico (often, occasional, rare, none)	Often
Visitors from Mexico (often, occasional, rare, none)	Rare
Married? (L used with spouse)	

Speaker's information	
Speaker's ID	COBIVA018
Place of birth	Dallas, Tx.
Place where s/he was raised	McAllen, Tx.
Year of birth	1970
Last grade level completed	All High school and Some College
Where education took place	McAllen, Tx.
Years in the US	46
Years in RGV	45
Current neighborhood	Kingwood Estates
Previous neighborhood(s)	La Hermosa (South Side McAllen)
Current profession	Disabled
Desired profession (students)	
Profession in birth country	
Household yearly income	36,000
Number of people in the household	5
Parents' languages	English; mainly spanish
Mother's profession	Housewife
Father's profession	Labor worker
Mother's educational level	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Father's educational level	Highschool Dipolma
Mother's birth place	Kansas City
Father's birth place	Lagos De Moreno, JL Mexico
Languages other than English and Spanish	n/a
Sex	Male
Ethnicity (self)	Hispanic
Phenotype	
Religion	Catholic
Political affiliation	Republican

Close family in Mexico (or anywhere else)	Aunts, uncles, and cousins
Frequency of visits to Mexico (often, occasional, rare, none)	None/ Rare
Visitors from Mexico (often, occasional, rare, none)	Occasional
Married? (L used with spouse)	Yes/ Veronica Ramirez
Spouse's ethnicity	Hispanic
Spouse's L1	
Children?	3
L used with children	Step Children (3)

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