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PALENQUE AND ITS NEIGHBORS:
LANGUAGES AND ATTITUDES

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ABSTRACT

San Basilio de Palenque was established in the 17th century by a group of slaves who escaped from Cartagena near Colombia's northern coast. Palenquero bilinguals speak a coastal-Colombian variety of Spanish and the Afro-Hispanic creole known as *lengua ri Palenge* (LP) – referred to by its speakers as Lengua or Lengua Palenquera. Historically, negative attitudes towards LP have been pervasive in the communities surrounding Palenque. This study explores inter-community relationships and examines how local linguistic perceptions of LP might be changing. Participants from neighboring communities were asked to judge speech samples of mixed Spanish and LP speech made by Palenqueros. Furthermore, to test their level of LP comprehension, the participants orally translated LP phrases to Spanish. Qualitative analysis of the data and ethnographic interviews suggest that traditional stigmas associated with LP and its speakers have dissipated, at least at the local level. Although it is clear that LP comprehension extends beyond the borders of Palenque, more research can be done to determine the location of the LP isogloss.

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Introduction

The village of San Basilio de Palenque near the Atlantic coast of northern Colombia was formed in the late 17th century by a group of former slaves, escaped from the Spanish regional center of Cartagena. The founders of Palenque built a community and within it developed an Afro-Hispanic creole language known as *lengua ri Palenge* (LP) commonly referred to as Lengua or Lengua Palenquera. The language contains elements derived from Spanish, Portuguese, and the Central African (Bantu) language Kikongo. Some significant features of LP grammar, which have been well documented by Friedemann & Patiño (1983), Schwegler & Green (2007), and Lipski (2012), include phrase-final negation (*nu*), a lack of female gender agreement, and verbal markers (e.g. *a* to indicate past tense). Today, Palenquero bilinguals speak a coastal-Colombian dialect of Spanish and LP. Beginning around the turn of the 20th century, when Palenqueros began to work outside of the community, these bilingual speakers were hesitant to use LP outside (and sometimes inside) of Palenque; it was commonly stigmatized by non-Palenqueros who believed it to be substandard or “poorly spoken Spanish” (Schwegler, 2011). Stigmatization resulted in a downward spiral of LP usage among Palenqueros. Efforts to pass it down to younger generations abated. During the nadir of LP the language was considered endangered. However, since the 1990s, the approximately 3,500-person community has embarked on a language revitalization project in part as a result of government-instituted ethno-education programs. With contributions from visiting linguists, NGOs, and the Colombian government, Palenqueros continue to use their unique language and maintain its heritage.

Nevertheless, the future for LP as a prominent first language in Palenque is unclear (Lipski, 2012).

Current research efforts in Palenque feature linguistic inquiry, as well as investigations from other fields. The most recent publications have focused on sociolinguistic variation (Spang, 2015), genetic sequencing (Noguera et al., 2014), and a description of rituals (Pérez, 2014). Investigations have also considered psycholinguistic strategies used by Palenquero bilinguals to juggle between Spanish and LP (Lipski, 2013; Lipski, 2015), gender agreement within LP (Lipski, 2015b), and additional psycholinguistic exploration of Spanish and LP (Lipski, 2016). The majority of these studies have been contained within the geographic perimeter of the village itself. However, several ethnographic accounts have pointed to interactions between Palenqueros and their countrymen in neighboring towns and cities (Schwegler, 1998: 239; Hernández, Rubén, Guerrero, & Palomino, 2008; Schwegler, 2011: 156-158). It seems that no description of Palenqueros meeting other Colombians is complete without a comment about perceived linguistic shortcomings. Escalante's seminal publication (1954), "Notas sobre el Palenque de San Basilio, una comunidad negra en Colombia" ('Notes on San Basilio de Palenque, an African community in Colombia'), indicated that Palenqueros experienced marginalization due to, in part, their heavily accented Spanish or the mistaken assumption that LP was "broken" Spanish. This example preceded a half-century of researchers working under the assumption that stigmatization of LP pervaded regional attitudes.

Now, more than a decade into the 21st century, Palenque is no longer an isolated blip, only on the radars of a few intrepid linguists. Whereas Palenquero culture may have been trivialized by Colombians in the past, seen only when women from the town came to Cartagena to sell fruit and candy, it has been more widely disseminated in recent years. As an emerging

center of Afro-Colombian life, its dance, music, and language are broadcast across the country and the world. In 2012, during a visit to Colombia, President Barack Obama met with a delegation of Palenqueros in Cartagena led by Sebastián Salgado (Moraes, 2012). Palenque showed off its cuisine to an international audience after winning “Best Cookbook in the World” at the 2014 annual Gourmand World Cookbook Awards held in Beijing, China (Jolly, 2014). Furthermore, UNESCO has recognized “The Cultural Space of Palenque de San Basilio,” enshrining its heritage within a massive, multinational organization (UNESCO, 2005). Despite these notable changes, there has been a lack of academic research reevaluating the status of Palenque and LP within Colombia and the region.

Contemporary research has come a long way since the first ethnographic work done in Palenque during the mid-20th century. Perhaps most significantly, prominent Palenqueros have opened up to researchers about their culture and customs. Raúl Salas revealed in a 2009 interview that in this century, his fellow villagers began to *prefer* to talk to outsiders. At once, Salas suggested a movement towards modernization and comfort with outside interests, as well as a demonstrated detachment from traditional values, from back when “*to mundo era tío*” – when everyone was family (Maglia & Schwegler, 2012: 24).

Despite one resident’s fear that the traditional way of life is dissipating, evidence presented by Ferrari (2011) suggests that Palenqueros are actively engaged in maintaining their culture. Ferrari describes the supposed founder of Palenque, Benkos Bioho, as a symbol of revisionist communal memory. The research points to performances of dance and of language that reflect the town’s African roots, but might be considered new inventions. Ferrari also indicates that some historical recollections – that Bioho led the rebellion that brought the escaped slaves to Palenque – were not commonly held beliefs until recent years (Maglia & Schwegler,

2012: 57-81). These newer viewpoints, coupled with longer-lasting traditions such as the *lumbalú* (funeral songs), have contributed to the overall strengthening of shared heritage among Palenqueros.

Palenque's penchant for bringing its culture to audiences outside of the community has coincided with an influx of infrastructural improvements. Regional and national governments have recognized the town as a popular and unique destination for both Colombian and international tourists. In an effort to help Palenqueros and potential visitors, Colombia has invested money into Palenque that contributes to a number of municipal projects. Money also comes to the community through a deal with oil exploration interests. Since the 2000s, many concrete homes have been erected and painted to replace mud and straw structures, the main church building was razed and rebuilt, and the central plaza has been refurbished. A water treatment plant, Palenque's first, was completed in 2015.

The goal of the current research is to discover what Palenque's closest geographic neighbors perceive about LP and the people that speak it. In order to examine this issue, I obtained both quantitative and qualitative data from participants in communities surrounding Palenque. Through the lens of LP, the language typically thought to bring with it a stigma of inferiority, this research zoomed in to the most intimate inter-communal interactions and asked: 1) To what extent does identifying a speaker of LP affect the listener's attitude towards the speaker? and 2) To what extent do neighboring monolingual Spanish speakers recognize and understand LP?

Field Research

In order to glean some understanding of Palenque, its community, its language, and its surroundings, it is necessary to travel to the Colombian countryside. Some researchers stay overnight in Cartagena, commuting approximately 70 kilometers to and from Palenque during each day of their investigations. However, this tactic severely limits the amount of time spent in the village itself. Finding accommodations in Palenque, eating the local food, and breathing the fresh air add up to a more authentic and hands-on experience. A researcher who chooses to become immersed in the field stands the best chance of “collecting data in its natural environment” (Bower, 2008: 2).

Linguistic Fieldwork: A Practical Guide details the many hats a field researcher must wear: data collector, coder, sound engineer, photographer, administrator, community liaison officer, etc. (Bower, 2008: 2-4). Over the course of two weeks in May 2014, I worked with two other undergraduate students, a graduate assistant, and our highly experienced advisor, Dr. John Lipski to conduct field research in Palenque. Despite the support of fellow researchers, the study at hand would have been impossible to complete without the help of one community leader, Bernadino Pérez Miranda, who oversaw all of the logistics and prepared individual Palenquero guides. Alberto Cassiani, my personal guide and indispensable research assistant for the current research, is what Bower calls a “consultant” (130-137). The guide’s knowledge of the community and surrounding geography made the fieldwork manageable.

Living in Palenque presents additional challenges to the research process. Besides the heat and humidity, I contended with muddy streets, aggressive mosquitoes, and inexperienced

participants. Alternate walking routes had to be established; bug bites had to be ignored; experimental tasks had to be altered. Barring these few environmental hurdles, fieldwork in Palenque is a unique and worthwhile endeavor. The doors to Palenqueros' homes are always open and the prevailing attitude reflects a welcoming, hospitable culture. In a village of just a few thousand, there are not many strangers. Residents greet each other in passing with a hearty "Buenas!" or "Adiós" (colloquially here, meaning 'Hello') morning, noon, and night. A Caucasian guest sticks out in the almost entirely Afro-Colombian population, but is treated to the same warm salutations. Palenque, with its irreplicable cuisine, bucolic charm, and generous – with their time, space, and knowledge – inhabitants, is more than accommodating, even for a first-time field researcher



Figure 1. I (right, foreground) interview a participant (left, foreground) in San Cayetano. My guide (far right) and five other locals observe.

Geography

Palenque sits on foothills in the Colombian state of Bolívar. For Palenqueros the closest major city, Cartagena, is accessible via buses that leave from a stop on the highway, about 8 kilometers down the small road that leads to the village limits. The immediate surroundings host a multitude of other villages under the jurisdiction of the municipality, Mahates. My guide and I recruited participants from these sites because they represent varying geographic differences and historical relevance that could potentially correlate with attitudes toward Palenque and LP. The farthest village from Palenque included in this study is called San Cayetano. San Cayetano, situated about 20 kilometers away, has a historically close connection with Palenque, dating back to a time before highways and when a donkey path united the two towns. About 15 kilometers away is La Pista, a settlement that amounts to little more than a single dirt road occupied by Palenqueros displaced from La Bonga (a town adjacent to Palenque, evacuated by the Colombian government) in the mid-2000s. Closer still lays Malagana, practically across the street from the highway that leads to Palenque's entrance road. This town enjoys a relatively more developed infrastructure and higher population as compared to the others. Palenquito, the informal name given to the neighborhood closest to the highway, has no official status. It sits on the beginning of that entrance road, with a handful of houses and storefronts. Finally, La Bonguita is *una vereda* ('a township') within and indistinguishable from Palenque. It too resulted from the government resettling people from La Bonga. Most residents of La Bonguita did not speak LP before their arrival in Palenque.

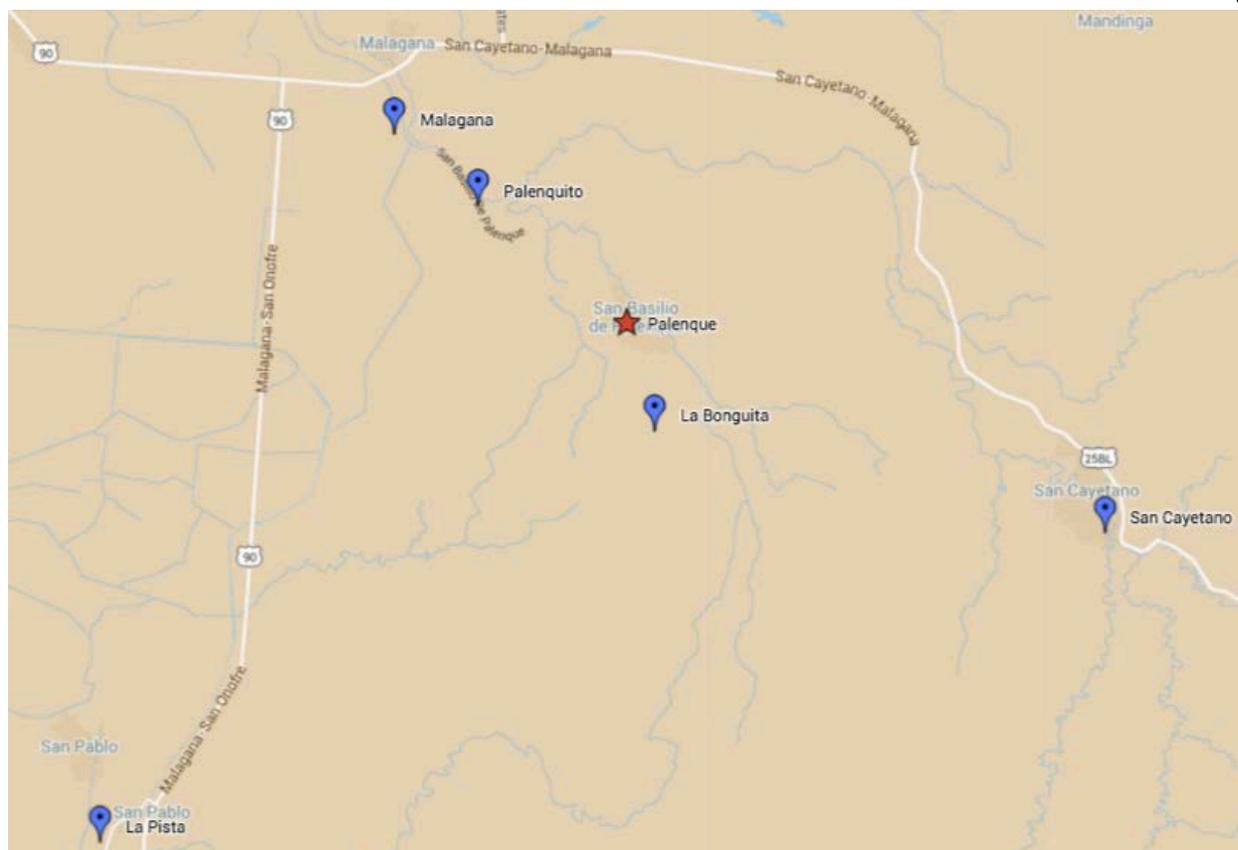


Figure 2. (Google Maps, 2016) Map of Palenque and relevant surrounding communities

Hypotheses

Attitudinal language studies have been a mainstay of sociolinguistic inquiry for decades. Linguists across the world have asked participants to judge a person based on how they speak or write. A study in Pakistan delved into what Pakistanis thought of English use in their country (Jabeen & Rasheed, 2011). Another study, this one in the United States, explored what children born in the north thought of a “typical” southern accent and vice versa (Kinzler & DeJesus, 2013). In most cases, attitudes towards a language, accent, or dialect correlate to opinions about the group of people that purportedly speak in that manner. Or, as the authors of *The Handbook of Language Variation and Change* describe: “It is perhaps the least surprising thing imaginable

that... Some groups are believed to be decent, hard-working, and intelligent... some groups are believed to be lazy, insolent, and procrastinating” (Chambers, Trudgill, & Schilling, 2008: 40).

The long-standing assumption has been that according to speakers of more standardized forms of Spanish, both Palenqueros and LP fall under the category of unintelligent or “backwards.” Afro-Colombian varieties in general are non-prestigious and people in Cartagena, familiar with Palenqueros, have regarded them and their languages with scorn. In investigating the validity of this claim, decades, if not centuries, of marginalization and stigmatization of the Palenquero people and their language should not be ignored. However, recent regional developments have influenced the ethnocultural reality on the ground. Palenqueros have been the recipient of positive attention, improved infrastructure, and cultural acclaim on a national and international scale. Through these changes, Palenqueros have been empowered to reevaluate the status of LP as a staple of their community. Even if LP does not make a full recovery as a dominant native language, its presence is now seen and heard across Palenque’s schoolyards, dinner tables, church building, and marketplaces. Language has, in part, motivated progress and modernization of Palenque in the 21st century.

This renewed sense of cultural pride has ramifications outside of Palenque as well. Some of these neighboring communities have interacted with LP speakers since at least the 1800s. Recent (unpublished) interviews suggest that a few of these towns, like San Cayetano, share cultural history and even some linguistic similarities (J. Lipski, personal communication, 2014). It is likely that Palenque’s neighbors have taken note of the shift – that they have observed the LP speech community rise from stigmatization and obscurity to relative prestige.

I hypothesized that the inter-communal dynamic in Mahates in 2014 would manifest in fewer negative reactions to LP from residents of villages nearby Palenque. In answering research

question Part One – To what extent does identifying a speaker of LP affect the listener’s attitude towards the speaker? – I expected that non-Palenquero participants would generally judge speakers of LP favorably, even if they could not understand all of their utterances. These results would demonstrate a deviation from the status quo that assumes LP is stigmatized outside of Palenque.

Research question Part Two – To what extent do neighboring monolingual Spanish speakers recognize and understand LP? – was expected to yield mixed results. I hypothesized participants would be likely to comprehend some, but not all LP, with variations depending on their social and physical proximity to Palenque. Palenqueros often travel among neighboring towns, intermittently mixing in LP (especially when speaking amongst themselves) with regional Spanish; residents from these communities also travel to Palenque, inevitably catching wind of its local language. LP and Spanish also share some unmistakable similarities, including a large swath of lexical items and some morphosyntax. I predicted the results of Part Two would confirm that some degree of LP comprehension extends beyond Palenque.

The Current Study

Participants

In order to investigate attitudes towards and comprehension of LP outside of Palenque, residents from neighboring towns were selected as participants. The Palenquero guide, Alberto Cassiani, was instrumental in networking and initiating contact with participants. It was stipulated that the people selected could not be fluent in LP, but all did have some exposure to the language. In order to find participants that a) lived outside of Palenque (with the exception of La Bonguita), b) were not fluent in LP and c) had some exposure to Palenqueros, the guide asked some preliminary questions to potential interviewees. Often the guide was already acquainted with the participant, at once exemplifying the closeness of networks between Palenque and its neighbors and highlighting the difficulties of obtaining a truly random sample.

Participants were then asked to complete the tasks of both experiments, first Part One and then Part Two. In total, 17 people from five different communities completed the two-part task. Furthermore, in order to determine a potential change in attitude over time, participants were divided into three age groups: 18 to 29 years old, 30 to 49 years old, and 50 years and older.

Table 1. Participant Demography

	# Participants	Proximity	18-29 yrs old	30-49 yrs old	≥ 50 yrs old
La Bonguita	2	0 km		2	
Palenquito	6	3 km		4	2
Malagana	3	5 km	1	2	
San Cayetano	4	20 km	1	3	
La Pista	2	15 km		1	1

Materials

All parts of all interviews were recorded using a TASCAM DR-05 digital audio recorder. Pre-recorded speech samples and LP phrases were played from a Samsung Galaxy Nexus cell phone; the participant listened to the recordings through Sony over-ear headphones. Most of the researcher's notes and results were taken by hand, and then digitally transcribed as needed.

Open-Ended Interviews

Each participant also answered a series of questions relating to LP and their lives as regional neighbors to Palenque. Depending on the participant, questions were asked before Part One, between Parts One and Two, and/or after Part Two. Questions varied also depending on the participant's personal history. Sample questions included: How have you been exposed to LP? Have you spent any time in Palenque? Do you have a relationship with any Palenqueros? What is your impression of the Palenque community? What is life like here in your community?

Experiment Part One

Method & Procedure

In order to address the first research question – To what extent does identifying a speaker of LP affect the listener’s attitude towards the speaker? – I adapted the matched guise technique first developed by Wallace E. Lambert in the 1960s (Lambert, 1967). Matched guise requires a great deal of preparation in advance of trial testing: stimuli must be acquired, audio clips edited, and an experimental order created. In order to test a participant’s attitude, they are asked to judge audio clips of individuals who were recorded using two languages or dialects equally well. The participants should not realize they are listening to the same person speaking. For instance, they listen to Speaker 1 speaking Language A; then, four stimuli later, hear Speaker 1 speaking Language B. After listening to each stimulus, they are asked to complete an attitudinal questionnaire. Typical matched guise judgment questions include: How well educated is the speaker? How trustworthy is the speaker? Etc. By disguising one speaker into two manners of speech, a listener’s attitudes about language use can be teased apart, as they may judge Speaker 1 differently after hearing Language A than after hearing Language B.

Here, a variation on classic matched guise experiments was used. For Part One participants listened to speech samples from six Palenquero bilinguals and then were asked to make judgments about the speaker based on the voice, language, and content of the sample. The speech samples were taken from interviews conducted within Palenque’s borders by the

researcher. Samples from three men and three women were selected. Four of the samples included no obvious LP phrases; two samples (one from a man and one from a woman) included words and phrases easily identifiable as LP.

To begin each interview, the researcher explained the investigation in basic terms, sometimes with additions and clarifications by the guide. Shortly thereafter, the researcher gave instructions for Part One: Participants wearing headphones would listen to a pre-recorded speech sample and then answer ten questions (Table 2) about the speaker in the sample immediately after it finished playing. In total, each participant listened to the six speakers and answered 60 questions.

Table 2. Part One Stimuli

A	¿Cuál es la edad de la persona?	<i>How old is the person?</i>
B	¿Qué oficio tiene?	<i>What is the person's job?</i>
C	¿Es la persona soltero(a) o casado(a)?	<i>Is the person single or married?</i>
D	...es trabajador(a)?	<i>Is the person a hard worker?</i>
E	...tiene mucha preparación escolar?	<i>Is the person well educated?</i>
F	...es sincero(a)?	<i>Is the person sincere?</i>
G	...es robusto(a) [o gordo(a)*]?	<i>Is the person robust [or fat]?</i> *Many participants asked for clarification with an alternative adjective before answering this prompt.
H	...es confiable?	<i>Is the person trustworthy?</i>
I	...es bajo(a)?	<i>Is the person short?</i>
J	...es amistoso(a)?	<i>Is the person friendly?</i>

Results

The procedures for Part One, conducted with 17 participants, yielded a wide range of responses. After transcription and coding, the data did not readily lend themselves to

comparative quantitative analyses. 17 respondents spread over five neighborhoods producing nearly 600 tokens could not be processed into meaningful, numerical results; an attitudinal trend could not be statistically asserted. However, responses to Part One were rich with qualitative data.

As may be expected when working with a population unaccustomed to formal scientific methods of inquiry – let alone speaking into an audio recorder – answers to both the demographic and experimental questions varied in length and precision. Some respondents (e.g. participants 5, 7, and 13) maintained one- or two-word answers to prompts from all six recorded Palenquero speakers. Others (e.g. participants 1, 6, 8, and 15) extrapolated more information from the short audio clips and delivered more details about speakers' professions, levels of education, etc. For example, participant 15, in response to hearing the last speaker sample, answered question E in the affirmative and provided additional input: *Sí. En Palenque la mayoría mucha preparación.* ('Yes. In Palenque the majority [are] well educated.') No participants responded with a simple "yes" or "no" (possible for questions D through J) to all questions asked.

In general, respondents reacted positively to all stimuli, regardless of whether or not LP was included in the speech sample. However, the following results demonstrated that LP usage did lead participants to believe a speaker was uneducated at a rate greater than speakers who spoke only in Spanish. 7 of 17 participants answered affirmatively to E ('Is the person well educated?') for every speaker. Only 26 out of the total 102 participant judgments about education level stated "*no tiene mucha preparación escolar*" ('poorly educated'). LP was contained in 2 out of every 6 speech samples. 44% of judgments for samples containing LP indicated speakers were poorly educated, whereas for Spanish-only samples, participants judged

16% of the speakers as being poorly educated. This disparity was perhaps the most profound difference in judgments motivated by speakers using LP.

Three questions of personal character could be combined to glean an aggregate view on what participants believed about the speakers. The results of these judgments indicated that participants felt nearly all speakers possessed positive personality traits, regardless of what language they spoke. ‘Is the person a hard worker (D), sincere (F), and trustworthy (H)?’ 12 of 17 participants described every speaker sample as hardworking, sincere, and trustworthy. Only 9 responses included a negative judgment of any one speaker with regard to D, F, or H (and those responses came from only 5 participants). Of those 9 judgments that could be considered a “bad impression,” less than half were of speakers who used LP in their sample.

C, G, and I, the questions of stature and marital status, produced few notable answers. All 102 tokens for “friendliness” came up positive. Jobs named by participants answering question B ranged from domestic caretaker (*ama de casa*) to farmhand (*campesino*), and from traditional food-selling occupations (*vendedor* – usually for women) to academic endeavors (*estudiante* or *profesor*). There appears to be no connections between these jobs and the speaker’s use of LP. Finally, question A (‘How old is the person?’), meant to elicit age-graded responses from the participants (i.e. the more the speaker used LP, the older the speaker may have seemed), did not do so.

The vast majority of participants responded positively. Regardless of physical or social proximity to Palenque, participants reacted positively to hearing their neighbors speak the region’s Spanish and to when that dialect was mixed into samplings of LP. Respondents’ ages did not make a significant difference in their responses either; although, this variable was challenging to account for since 70% of the participants fell within the 30 to 49-age range.

Perceived education levels of LP speakers elicited more negative responses from participants, but a majority did not discriminate based on the language's use. Despite a smattering of "no's," participants overwhelmingly responded to LP and its speakers as friendly, sincere, and trustworthy people, casting no aspersions on their language or village.

Experiment Part Two

Method & Procedure

Part Two of the investigation addresses the following question: To what extent do neighboring monolingual Spanish speakers recognize and understand LP? Instructions for Part Two were given immediately before the task began. Participants listened to a series of 16 pre-recorded LP phrases and translated each into Spanish to the best of their ability. The stimuli were authentic LP phrases, but enunciated by the speaker (community leader and educator, Bernadino Pérez Miranda) in a slow, clear manner, atypical to LP speech. Each phrase targeted specific lexical, morphological, phonological, or syntactic elements in LP. (The complete stimuli for Part Two can be found in Appendix A.)

Results

As in the case of Part One, the results of Part Two did not provide adequate data for quantitative analysis. 16 responses each from 17 participants yielded 272 translation attempts of LP into Spanish. Not all LP phrases were translated fully, or in some cases at all. Some participants did not respond to some prompts. It is also worth noting that during the first few

phrases, some participants misunderstood the directions and answered the questions (in Spanish) instead of translating.

The most accurate translations came from numbers 4 (*¿Ajaá, kum'o ta po akí?* / 'Hello! How are you all doing here?') and 15 (*Platika utere á ngatá toító.* / 'All of your money has been spent.'). 10 of 17 respondents provided an accurate translation (or at least a paraphrasing) of the common Palenquero phrase (4). Similarly, 13 of 17 respondents navigated the phrase containing the LP present perfect tense; while many did not use the same tense in their translation, they did accurately relay the crux of the meaning (15). For phrase 15, here is an example of a near perfect translation from participant 2: *Ha gastado toda la plata.* ('(S)he has spent all of the money.'). Here is an example that uses the incorrect mode from participant 10: *La platika están gastado todita.* ('They are spending all of the money.'). Finally, from participant 14, the following is an example of a paraphrased translation that maintains the meaning and the mode of the original phrase: *La platika que yo sé ha gastado todita.* ('I know that the money has been totally spent.')

By far the two most challenging phrases for participants were 13 and 14. Only 1 out of 17 responses to *Bó á miná mí nú* ('You didn't see me.'). picked up on its use of post-verbal negation. 7 respondents said nothing. For number 14, the following phrase, *Pagrino kombilesa mi ten burú nú.* ('My friend's godfather doesn't have any money.'). zero participants could comprehend the final, negating "nú," and furthermore, very few rearranged the subject and its modifier (*Pagrino kombilesa mi*) into an appropriate Spanish order: *El padrino de mi amiga* ('My friend's godfather'). The following example, from participant 5, is a typical incorrect response to phrase 14: *El padrino es amigo mío.* ('The godfather is my friend.')

More participants comprehended the negation in phrase 7, *Í akoddá nombre d'ehe mujé aola nú.* ('I don't remember the name of that woman now.'). which was not meant to directly test

knowledge of *nú*. Most participants also accurately translated *akoddá* to *recuerda* ('remember'). 9 of 17 responses included some kind of verbal negation. Participant 1's response is an example where *nú* was not understood, but *akoddá* was: *Sí se acuerden nombre de la mujer*. ('Yes, they remember the woman's name.'). Participant 8 provided one of the most accurate translations of the phrase: *Ahora no recuerden el nombre de la mujer*. ('Now they don't remember the woman's name.'). This response, like all but 4 of translations, did not include the correct subject pronoun *yo* ('I').

Excluding outliers (accurate translations ≤ 2 responses, i.e. phrases 3, 5, 13, and 14), 42.6% of the total translations from all participants were accurate. The most challenging language elements to understand and translate from LP to Spanish were tense, mode, and negation. Participants often translated sentences in the simple past tense into the present and vice versa; others missed the LP marker for future tense (*tan*) and delivered a translation in the present. Some participants neglected the conditional mode, like with phrase 9: *Maana é tanba...* ('Tomorrow she would...') and used the near future tense. The language elements most readily navigated were vocabulary and subject pronouns. Many of the correctly translated words were Spanish cognates, vernacular familiar to any Spanish speaker in the area, e.g. *ñeke* ('rum') and *platika* ('money'). Some vocabulary words, such as *tekko* were more tests of pronunciation; i.e. *terco*, the Spanish word for stubborn, due to LP phonological rules, would lose its /r/.

Qualitatively, from open-interview questions and from the participants' demonstrated ability to comprehend and translate LP in Spanish, it is evident that at least some knowledge of LP extends beyond the borders of the village. The degree to which non-Palenqueros can understand and use LP varies, just as is it does for residents of Palenque proper. Very few non-

Palenqueros can converse in LP; however, when it is isolated in phrases, many can comprehend LP well enough to translate it into Spanish.

Discussion

Attitude Changes and Partial Comprehension

LP remains in use today, both inside and out of Palenque. Many Palenqueros who once shied away from speaking their proprietary creole now embrace it as an indispensable part of their community's cultural fabric. As Palenqueros continue their language revitalization efforts – teaching LP in schools, hosting conferences on creoles, writing the Colombian constitution in LP, etc. – towns surrounding Palenque will interact more with the language. Members of these neighboring communities often have close ties with Palenque. Residents of places like San Cayetano and Malagana, some of who participated in this study, have family in Palenque, have lived there for a period of time, or do business there. The social connection and economic cooperation among these towns contributes to a heightened level of language contact between LP speakers and monolingual Spanish speakers. As a result, demonstrated by the current research, local attitudes towards LP speakers are largely positive and nearby monolinguals comprehend LP to some degree.

Excluding four exceptionally difficult phrases, participants accurately translated nearly half of the LP samples into Spanish. Faced with the same task, and without any training, a bilingual Palenquero could likely produce a natural translation that would communicate material

from the source language in the target language. Language contact between LP and Spanish, facilitated by Palenqueros themselves during interactions with their neighbors, has shaped the way that Spanish is spoken in the area. The current study shows that although monolingual Spanish speakers may not realize they have some communicative ability in LP, they do possess a measurable knowledge of the creole language.

Part One of this study demonstrated an overwhelmingly positive attitude from Palenque's neighbors towards LP users. The most notable exceptions to the good will were found during the open-ended interview questions. One participant from Palenquito expressed frustration that Palenque received so much assistance from the government. Another participant, Mariana from La Pista, described her life as "*duro, muy duro*" ('hard, very hard'). Displaced from La Bonga, Mariana resented having to travel to and from Palenque each day to make ends meet; she echoed the voice of other La Pista residents, disheartened that their lives were uprooted and relocated to a dirt road on a barren patch of land. Nevertheless, these complaints were not targeted towards Palenqueros. In fact, Mariana considers herself Palenquera (and performed excellently on the translation tasks). Most negative feedback during the interviews pertained to governmental intervention; some residents from surrounding communities may begrudge Palenque's apparent preferential treatment.

It is ironic that the some of the only ill feelings related to LP emerged from the perception that the language earns Palenqueros some privilege, rather than ridicule. Nevertheless, LP use did motivate a disproportionately high number of "poorly educated" judgments; some locals must maintain their belief that a person who speaks LP has not had adequate schooling. Still, Palenqueros are largely looked to as neighbors and friends. Some participants applauded Palenque for embracing its culture and sharing it with outsiders. Overall, evidence indicates that

the link between Palenquero culture and community development in Palenque has not gone unnoticed, and that within Mahates, LP is not stigmatized.

Results from this study complement work done by eminent Palenque researchers such as Morton, Schwegler, and Lipski. These developments also contribute to the larger body of sociolinguistic scholarship, pioneered by researchers like Labov and Lambert, extending inquiry about language and attitudes to the Colombian countryside. Determining how attitudes towards LP have changed helps form a more nuanced understanding of how Palenqueros and their neighbors construct their own linguistic and cultural identities.

Language Revival in the United States: Gullah

Language marginalization is a reality encountered by many speech communities. One situation in the United States bears resemblance to the evolving story of LP. Along the southeastern coastline, a group known as the Gullah people (or Geechee) continue to speak an English-based creole, also called Gullah. Much like the Palenqueros, the Gullah trace their history back to the early American slave trade (Maxwell, 2006: 959-963). As the plantation economy of coastal South Carolina expanded, African slaves comprised a vast majority of the area's population. On swampland and the Sea Islands, Gullah culture developed and solidified. Great numbers coupled with strong community ties allowed the Gullah language and other traditions to survive past the Civil War era and well into the 20th century. The community lived cohesively in relative isolation until the first bridges were built from the mainland to the South Carolina and Georgia Sea Islands in the 1920s. Outside influence, catalyzed by land development, threatened Gullah cultural distinctiveness. By 1980, on Hilton Head – one of the

most prominent Gullah islands – white residents outnumbered blacks five to one (959-963).

Many Gullah criticized public school curricula for “deemphasizing the history and culture of the Gullah people.”



Figure 3. (Otterbourg, 2014) Map of Gullah Region

Despite modernization in the region, the Gullah language remains in use today. Gullah was primarily lexified by English, but a measurable amount of its vocabulary can be traced to the Mende, Vai, and Fulani languages of present-day Sierra Leone and Liberia (Turner, 1969). Modern Gullah may be comprehensible to a monolingual English speaker, but when spoken, it retains its Caribbean cadence. Perhaps the biggest difference between Gullah and LP are the number of users: “In 1993, William A. Stewart, a linguist at the City University of New York, estimated that 250,000 Sea Islanders still spoke Gullah and at least a tenth of this number spoke no other language” (Maxwell, 2006: 959-963). Nonetheless, other research from the 1990s

suggested that, “because of the social stigmas and the rapid commercialization of the islands that once helped to preserve it” Gullah was in danger of disappearing (“Gullah language,” 1995).

Whatever the future holds for Gullah, its longevity will be helped by efforts from both the Gullah people and activists across the country that work to increase public awareness of their cultural traditions. In 1985 the town of Beaufort, South Carolina began an annual Gullah Festival; in 1989, *In Living Color*, a dance-theater piece about Gullah culture on Johns Island, South Carolina premiered on a New York City stage. A 1992 film called *Daughters in the Dust* featured Gullah in its script and brought perhaps the greatest national recognition for the Gullah people (Maxwell, 2006: 959-963). This positive media attention has coincided with an influx of tourism to Gullah areas; many Gullah people have embraced the outside interest. Emory Campbell, a former Gullah teacher and current tour guide on Hilton Head remarked that preserving the Gullah way of life is “is going to require a lot of work, a lot of sweat, and a lot of cooperation” (Otterbourg, 2012). With regard to their language, this sentiment is echoed among Palenquero activists.

Future Directions for Research

As is often the case with research in the field, time-tested experimental methods are not always directly transferable from the lab to real-life situations. Within Palenque’s borders, Palenqueros have grown accustomed to linguists and have proven willing and capable of metalinguistic reflection. I designed an experiment that assumed Palenque’s neighbors would possess a similar level of familiarity. However, from early conversations it became clear that because communities surrounding Palenque have not received the same attention from outside

researchers, they have virtually no experience participating in experimental tasks. Thus, the methods were adjusted to best serve residents in La Bonguita, Palenquito, Malagana, San Cayetano, and La Pista.

Originally, Part One required participants to judge speakers on certain attributes using a Likert Scale from 1 to 4: *1, completamente; 2, bastante; 3, algo; 4, en absoluto* ('1, completely; 2, a lot; 3, somewhat; 4, not at all'). The first participants consistently responded with words rather than numbers and nearly always provided a binary (*sí* or *no*) judgment, instead of one on the predetermined scale. As a result, I adjusted the instructions, omitting the explanation of the Likert Scale and simply asking for a response. Without this numerical range it was more difficult to determine nuances of attitudes through individual judgments; however, most participants included candid, qualitative remarks regarding speakers. Additionally, the "guise" part of the modified matched guise required participants to remain unaware that the samples (and the guide) were from Palenque until the end of Part One. However, most participants immediately recognized either the speakers' intonations as being Palenquero (even when speaking Spanish) or the guide, Alberto Cassiani, as a Palenque resident.

A separate procedure that tested how well a monolingual Spanish speaker with *zero* exposure to LP or coastal-Colombian Spanish would have been a useful addition to Part Two. The results of this control could be compared to the comprehension levels demonstrated by the current study's 17 participants in order to determine how much of their translation abilities could be attributed to proximity to Palenque and how much are due to their first-language Spanish skills.

This reevaluation of attitudes towards LP and determining local levels of LP comprehension were effective as a pilot study. To truly gauge how Colombians (as well as other

South Americans who interact with Palenqueros) perceive LP and its speakers today, research would have to be extended beyond the municipality of Mahates. The next logical step would be to investigate the large community of Palenqueros living in nearby Cartagena. Then, other Colombian cities with sizable Palenquero populations – Barranquilla and, to a lesser extent, Valledupar – would make worthy research locations. Research in these cities and the neighborhoods contained therein would pose other challenges not encountered in Palenque. For instance, many Palenqueros reside outside of Colombia; they have found jobs throughout cities in Venezuela, sometimes in regions considered dangerous compared to Palenque. Conducting research in these areas would assume additional risk, particularly for scholars visiting from foreign universities. Nonetheless, data acquired from interviews and experimental tasks in other communities with Palenqueros would be useful not only in answering how far LP comprehension extends, but, more importantly, it would shed light on how LP is used outside of Palenque – if it is surviving at all in less homogenous, more urban settings. From an investigation with a wider scope, future researchers will develop a more complete understanding of LP's status as a stigmatized, normalized, or neglected language.

Conclusion

Oftentimes from a pilot study such as this one more questions are raised than answered. For instance: Do any communities outside of Palenque consistently use LP in their everyday lives? Would those communities' members understand a Palenquero speaking fluent LP? How will physical changes in Palenque affect its neighbors? Who in Colombia may still harshly judge an LP speaker? Further investigation into those areas of research is necessary to better

understand LP and its environs. Nonetheless, this study's two-question, five-town approach to reevaluating attitudes towards and comprehension of LP evidenced clear changes in the region. Besides some skepticism about levels of education, judgments of speakers who used LP in Part One were largely positive. Palenque's neighbors demonstrated that they see the town and the people who speak its unique language as equals – trustworthy, sincere, and gainfully employed. Part Two showed that with varying degrees of accuracy, members from communities surrounding Palenque can hear LP, interpret its meaning, and translate it into Spanish.

Although Palenque may never completely revive LP to primary language status, the community's success in revitalizing LP has undeniably impacted the town. This study concluded that changes in Palenque have reverberated across the municipality of Mahates. Neighbors who claimed that they could not understand LP proved they could at least partially comprehend it. Those same neighbors judged LP speakers with generally positive attitudes, suggesting the region has warmed to Palenquero culture and language.

Appendix A

Part Two: Stimuli

	<i>LP Sentence</i>	<i>English Translation</i>	<i>Element</i>
1	Nombre mi hwe Juana.	My name is Juana.	vocabulary (irregular verb)
2	Casa hwe ngande .	The house is large.	vocabulary (prenasalized stop)
3	¿Ké í tan ablá bo ?	What are you going to say?	subject pronoun
4	¿Ajaá, kum'o ta po akí ?	Hello! How are you all doing here?	common phrase
5	Él'á komblá pekáo.	(S)he bought fish.	past tense
6	I á ten mucho fe.	I have much faith.	subject pronoun
7	Í akoddá nombre d'ehe mujé aola nú.	I don't remember the name of that woman now.	vocabulary (verb)
8	Pueblo andi í nasé, asé ñamá San Barbara.	The town where I was born is called San Barbara.	syntax
9	Maana é tanba bae bukálo.	Tomorrow she would be going to look for it.	conditional mode
10	Kuandí monasito á yega andi pos'ele, el'á kombetsá ku mam'ele.	When the boy arrived at his house, he spoke with his mother.	past tense
11	Ñeto Fauttina hwe un monasito mu tekko .	Faustina's nephew is a very stubborn boy.	vocabulary (adjective)
12	Kuand'ó ké miní , tré mí ñeke.	When you come, bring me some rum.	vocabulary (verb)
13	Bó á miná mí nú .	You didn't see me.	post-verbal negation
14	Pagrino kombilesa mi ten burú nú.	My friend's godfather doesn't have any money.	adjective word order
15	Platika utere á ngatá toító.	All of your money has been spent.	present perfect tense
16	¿Kumo suto ase salurá jende ri Cartagena?	How do we greet the Cartageneros?	subject pronoun

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ACADEMIC VITA

DANIEL MAGERMAN

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Education

The Pennsylvania State University Schreyer Honors College, University Park, PA **May 2016**

Honors College Scholar and Paterno Liberal Arts Fellow

- Made Dean's List every semester
 - Bachelor's of Philosophy in Linguistics; B.A. in Spanish; minor in Jewish Studies
-

Academic & Research Experience

Research on Bilingualism, Colombia and the Netherlands

Aug 2013 – Present

Undergraduate Researcher

- Designed experiments on bilingualism in order to collect linguistic data in Palenque, Colombia through the Penn State Discovery Grant, with advising from Dr. John Lipski
- Learned from experts and analyzed my data at Radboud University in Nijmegen, the Netherlands through the Partnerships for International Research and Education (PIRE) grant
- Presented results at: The Young Scholar Speaker Series (February 6, 2014). Radboud University LinC (June 25, 2014), PSUxLing (October 3, 2014), and the Center for Language Science (November 7, 2014)

National Conference for Peer Tutoring in Writing (NCPTW), U.S.A.

Nov 2013 – Nov 2015

Presenter and Group Leader

- NCPTW 2015 in Salt Lake City, UT:
Presented on strategies for handling particularly challenging students in a writing center.
Organized travel and secured funding for nine student presenters from Penn State.
- NCPTW 2014 in Orlando, FL:
Presented on the nuances of body language before, during, and after writing tutorials.
Organized travel for six student presenters from Penn State.
- NCPTW 2013 in Tampa Bay, FL:
Presented on the emerging topic of translingual hybridity.

SPAN 497A, Cuba

May 2015

Embedded course in the Department of Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian

- Participated in a two-week tour of Cuba, including Havana, Bayamo, and Varadero
- Studied at the Center for José Martí Studies, learning about Cuba through the life of its most important statesman
- Selected to represent Penn State and speak at the Center's graduation ceremony

KIVUNIM: New Directions, Israel and Internationally

Oct 2011 – Jun 2012

International Student and Traveler (after graduating high school and before entering college)

- Explored the culture and Jewish heritage of countries on three continents: Israel, Greece, Bulgaria, Morocco, Germany, Czech Republic, Hungary, Denmark, England, the Netherlands, India, Spain, Portugal, and Turkey
- Studied in college-level classes in Hebrew, Arabic, Civilization and Society, and Perspectives on the Middle East

Professional & Internship Experience

Penn State Writing Center, University Park, PA **Jan 2013 – Present**

Writing Center Coordinator and Peer Writing Tutor

- Created and facilitated developmental meetings for peer tutors
- Worked with Penn State students looking to improve their writing in the Writing Center

Boaz Dvir Films, University Park, PA **Jan 2016 – Present**

Grant Writer, Intern

- Wrote grants that aim to raise \$350,000 for production, post-production, and outreach
- Researched funding opportunities for feature documentary, *Cojot*
- Provided feedback on drafts of scripts, rough cuts of films

United Nations Education Science and Culture Organization, University Park, PA **May 2015 – Present**

UNESCO Summer Fellowship

- Published a white paper entitled, “Fostering Citizen Diplomacy: How Individual Conversations Drive Cultural Understanding”
- Conducted original research regarding international communication
- Worked under UNESCO Chair Dr. Mark Brennan

Learning Edge Academic Program (LEAP), University Park, PA **Summer 2015**

Mentor

- Mentored a group of 12 incoming international freshmen during the six-week summer session
- Organized and implemented creative programming designed to build relationships among my mentees as well as acclimate them to Penn State and the United States

Congregation Brit Shalom, State College, PA **Aug 2012 – May 2015**

Seventh Grade Teacher

- Implemented creative, engaging methods to teach about Jewish history and current events
 - Designed and executed lesson plans for the oldest class, the seventh grade
-

Leadership & Volunteer Experience

Global Engagement and Leadership Experience, Howard, PA **Feb 2015 – Present**

Student Coordinator and Alumna

- Created and facilitated session on international understanding for 35 participants
- Joined the full-time professional staff in selecting qualified participants and planning events
- Participated in the February 2015 2-day global leadership retreat

English Writing Tutor, University Park, PA **Jan 2016 – Present**

Volunteer and Paid Tutor

- Volunteered 2 hours per week to tutor student with both visual and auditory impairments
- Worked 3 hours per week tutoring student through the professional tutoring firm, PSU KnowHow

JST 012U, Archaeological Tour of Israel, Akko and Jerusalem **Sep 2013 – May 2015**

Embedded Trip Teaching Assistant

- Official assistant for Dr. Ann Killebrew during the nine-day embedded trip in December, 2014
- Served as the cultural tour-guide for the other undergraduate students on their first trip in the country
- Member of the March, 2014 Distinguished Honors Faculty Program archaeological tour of Israel