

MOOD CHOICE AFTER *NO SABER SI*

IN MEXICAN SPANISH

By

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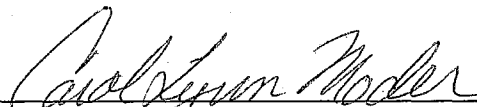
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Submitted to the Faculty of the  
Graduate College of the  
Oklahoma State University  
in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for  
the Degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
May, 1999

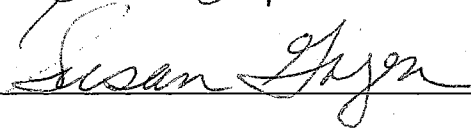
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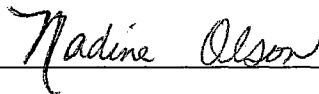
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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my appreciation to my advisor, Dr. Carol Moder, for the consistent encouragement, the constructive comments, the insightful suggestions, and the valuable recommendations which she provided me in researching and writing this dissertation, as well as for her constant patience and support during the entire course of my doctoral studies. I also am grateful for the discerning observations and suggestions contributed by the other members of my committee, Dr. Susan Garzon, Dr. Gene Halleck, and Dr. Nadine Olson.

In addition, I wish to thank Patti Sue Thoman, Head of Access Services, Oklahoma Baptist University for her assistance in obtaining Interlibrary Loan materials, and Dr. Pat Taylor, President, Southwest Baptist University, and Dr. Joseph R. Weaver, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Oklahoma Baptist University for their interest and support.

Finally, I want to express special appreciation and gratitude to my husband, Dr. Joe Hall, my mentors, Dr. Grace E. Márquez and don Francisco Márquez García, and my colleague and friend, Dr. Laura Crouch, q.e.p.d.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. MOOD IN SPANISH.....	13
Introduction.....	13
The Mood Choice Continuum.....	14
Interpretations of Mood Choice.....	16
Foundational Mood Choice Analyses.....	27
Recent Research Efforts.....	41
Existence and Extent of Variation.....	50
Variation in Mood Use in Mexico.....	56
Problems with Past Research on Mood Choice.....	60
Conclusion.....	63
III. VARIATION IN MOOD CHOICE FOLLOWING <i>SI</i> AND <i>NO SABER SI</i> .....	66
Introduction.....	66
Initial Research Efforts.....	67
Variation Studies in the 1980s.....	68
Variation Studies in the 1990s.....	71
Research Dealing with <i>Si</i> and <i>No Saber Si</i> .....	72
Grammar Texts and Variation.....	81
Mexican Spanish Speakers and Variation in Mood Use.....	93
Mood Variation Research in Colombia, Chile, and Venezuela.....	102
Mood Variation and Mexican Spanish Speakers in the United States.....	105
<i>Si</i> and Choices Other Than Present Indicative or Present Subjunctive.....	106
Mood Choice Variation and Non- <i>Si</i> Sentences.....	107
Conclusion.....	108
IV. GENDER, AGE, AND SPANISH LANGUAGE VARIATION.....	111
Introduction.....	111
Perspectives on Gender and Language.....	113
Gender and Spanish Language Studies.....	114
Gender and Variation in Spanish Mood Choice.....	124
Explanations for Female Patterns of Language Use.....	124
General Criticisms of Explanations for Female Language Patterns.....	136

Criticisms of Spanish Language Studies.....	141
General Factors Concerning Age and Language Production.....	142
Age and Spanish Language Production.....	143
Spanish Language-Age Research.....	144
Age and Spanish Mood Selection.....	146
Problems with Age-Related Studies.....	147
Conclusion.....	152
V. METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS.....	155
Introduction.....	155
Initial Research/Pilot Studies.....	157
Informants.....	163
Questionnaires.....	164
Procedures.....	170
General Results.....	172
Summary of Results by Questionnaire Section.....	178
Overall Patterns of Usage by Female Informants.....	179
Mood Choice Patterns of Female Informants.....	180
Overall Patterns of Usage by Male Informants.....	181
Mood Choice Patterns of Male Informants.....	182
Numerical Results of Gender-Based Data Found in Part I.....	183
Numerical Results of Gender-Based Data Found in Part II.....	184
Numerical Results of Gender-Based Data Found in Part III.....	185
Responses to Individual Questionnaire Items.....	186
Contrasts in Subjunctive and Indicative Production.....	188
Mood Selection, Age Groupings, and Gender.....	189
Coreferentiality.....	191
Negatives Other than <i>No</i> .....	198
Inanimate Subjects in the Subordinate Clause.....	199
Patterns of Mood Use and Age.....	200
Patterns of Verb Meaning and Mood Use.....	203
Final Vowel Patterns and Subjunctive Mood Use.....	205
<i>No Sé Si</i> and Mood Use.....	207
Unanticipated Factors.....	208
Conclusion.....	209
V. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS.....	211
Introduction.....	211
Mood Variation in Indirect Questions Employing <i>No Sé Si</i> .....	212
Non-Variationist Interpretations.....	213
Interpretations Which Tolerate Variation.....	224
Variation in Female and Male Mood Choices.....	238
Female Informants' Use of Mood.....	239

Explanations for Female Response Patterns.....	256
Female Characteristics Not in Keeping with Past Research.....	259
Mood Use by Male Informants.....	260
Explanations for Male Informants' Mood Choices.....	267
Female/Male Contrast.....	269
Age and Variation in Mood Choice and Usage.....	270
Explanations for Age-Associated Mood Choice.....	272
Mid-Range Groups.....	274
Weaknessness in the Study.....	278
Conclusion.....	282
CONCLUSION.....	286
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	299
APPENDICES.....	321
APPENDIX A--EXAMPLES OF PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE USE FOUND IN <i>TELENOVELAS</i> .....	321
APPENDIX B--PILOT STUDY #1 QUESTIONNAIRE AND TRANSLATION.....	323
APPENDIX C--SAMPLES OF PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE RESPONSES FROM PILOT STUDY #1 QUESTIONNAIRE.....	326
APPENDIX D--ROLE PLAY AND ENGLISH TRANSLATION FROM PILOT STUDY #2.....	327
APPENDIX E--OLIVET QUESTIONNAIRE, PILOT STUDY #3.....	330
APPENDIX F--TRANSLATION OF STATEMENT READ TO INFORMANTS.....	340
APPENDIX G--QUESTIONNAIRE.....	341
APPENDIX H--TRANSLATION OF QUESTIONNAIRE.....	345
APPENDIX I--SAMPLE SUBJUNCTIVE AND INDICATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES.....	348
APPENDIX J--TYPICAL VERB PATTERNS (PART I, PART II, PART III).....	352

APPENDIX K--VERB MEANINGS AND AGE.....	353
APPENDIX L--AGE GROUPINGS AND CHANGES FROM INDICATIVE TO SUBJUNCTIVE.....	354
APPENDIX M--IRB FORM.....	355

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Distribution of Informants by Gender and Age.....	164
II. Mood Contrasts by Parts.....	174
III. Indicative and Subjunctive Mood Use Per Item, Part I.....	175
IV. Indicative and Subjunctive Mood Use Per Item, Part II.....	177
V. Indicative and Subjunctive Mood Use Per Item, Part III.....	178
VI. Female and Male Indicative and Subjunctive Responses Per Item in Part I.....	183
VII. Female and Male Indicative and Subjunctive Responses Per Item in Part II.....	184
VIII. Female and Male Indicative and Subjunctive Responses Per Item in Part III.....	185
IX. Individual Items with Significant Gender/Mood Relationships.....	187
X. Highest Subjunctive and Indicative Mood Percentages by Gender.....	188
XI. Mood Divisions by Age and Gender.....	190
XII. Subjunctive/Indicative Results by Gender and Age.....	191
XIII. Coreferentiality by Gender and Mood.....	192
XIV. Potential Coreferential and Non-coreferential Responses.....	194
XV. Greatest Subjunctive/Indicative Use in Non-coreferential Sentences.....	196
XVI. Greatest Subjunctive/Indicative Use in Coreferential Sentences.....	197



XVII. Percentages of Subjunctive Mood Use in Coreferential Sentences.....	198
XVIII. Indicative and Subjunctive Use with the Adverb <i>Nunca</i> (Never).....	199
XIX. Mood Choices as Evidenced by Individual Age Groupings.....	201
XX. Age Groups and Mood Use for Each Section of the Questionnaire.....	202
XXI. Most Commonly Used Verbs and Percentages of Frequency.....	205
XXII. Categories of Vowel and Consonant Transformations in Subjunctive Verb Responses.....	206
XXIII. Gender and <i>No Sé Si</i> .....	208
XXIV. Infinitives and Other Types of Non-conjugated Verb Responses.....	209

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Spanish mood system has been the focus of an abundance of definitions, analyses, and theories, as well as the hub of decades of controversy. Despite the many studies on mood choice in Spanish which have been published, the basic question of when the subjunctive mood or the indicative mood should be used remains only partially answered (Rojas Anadón, 1979, p. 3), and the question of how the mood selection process in Spanish operates continues to be a problem that eludes all efforts at developing a comprehensive theory or even a truly viable working hypothesis, at least one which can be universally accepted by both scholars and practitioners (Navas Ruiz, 1990, p. 137).

Ascertaining specifically what determines mood choice has developed into a perpetually discussed and often perplexing series of inquiries and debates. Early models, recent models, models in keeping with the current trends of their time, and models borrowing from other models all come together to contribute to what has become a seemingly never-ending labyrinth of ideas. Theories and suppositions of how mood selection is made are almost as numerous as the authors who propose and discuss them. Coverage of the issues involved is decidedly uneven, and precisely what should be considered significant is constantly being revised. Some of the available research on mood selection and usage provides well-documented, well-detailed examinations of secondary sources and intriguing comparisons based on new material gathered directly from living language samples. Many other studies present inflexible, narrowly-focused, and fundamentally unitary views of mood choice which are characterized primarily by their

appeal to tradition and their vision of mood use as bound only and entirely by the reality (portrayed by the present indicative mood) versus unreality (portrayed by the present subjunctive) dichotomy. Much of this latter research deteriorates into diatribes against the non-prescriptive, viewing the mood selection process primarily from a position of extremes as it considers either rigid rule application or chaotically free choice to be the only available operational alternatives. Many of these studies also tend to be distinguished either by exaggeration of results, claiming explicit proof when none has been provided, by considering the detailing of peculiarities as paramount, or by general philosophizing and meandering. Still other reports of mood choice research, though often quite lengthy and brimming with particulars, seem to make their major contribution in the tracing of the history of previous studies.

An examination of the theories involved in developing mood choice paradigms indicates that among the great diversity of perspectives and wide range of assumptions underlying the positions which they represent, several specific points of divergence stand out. First, models of mood selection tend to vary in their fundamental hypotheses as to what essentially drives mood selection and use. Second, the degree of flexibility with which the particular perspective being espoused is presented, the willingness to acknowledge the existence of zones of transition where either mood might appear, is quite inconsistent among the various models. In addition, the types of source(s) from which the data used to form judgements about mood selection are taken differ markedly from one model to another. Finally, a great deal of variability is evident in the extent of quantitative analysis involved in arriving at the conclusions on which the various theories are based.

In relation to the fundamental operational principles at work in mood choice, the

extant models of mood in Spanish have been developed from a variety of perspectives, three of which represent a significant portion of the accessible accounts of research. Of these three positions, orientations which propose a process which is purely syntactic in its motivation and place primary emphasis upon matrix clause control (Bello, 1964; Gili Gaya, 1991; Ramsey and Spaulding, 1956) have traditionally been most consistently represented as the key to mood choice, with the present subjunctive mood being strongly identified with emotion and doubt expressed in the initial clause of a complex sentence, and the present indicative mood with factual presentations dominant in the matrix clause (Lipski, 1978). However, parallel to the syntax-dominant perspective, both in time and vitality, one finds researchers who doubt the preeminence of syntax, who believe that more than syntax must be involved in the process of selecting mood (Criado de Val, 1951, p. 104), and who propose formulations which staunchly maintain that mood selection is essentially governed by semantic considerations (Bell, 1980; Bybee and Terrell, 1990; Foster, 1982; Goldin, 1974; Klein, 1977; Lantolf, 1978; Terrell and Hooper, 1974). Finally, assertions which focus their interpretation more directly and steadfastly upon pragmatic concerns challenge the earlier-established positions by submitting that the use of new/old and unshared/shared information as explanatory vehicles for mood choice is a more plausible option (Blake, 1983; Guitart, 1982, 1984; Lavandera, 1974, 1975, 1983).

Upon examining the extent of tolerance for diversity found among the various approaches, it becomes apparent that arguments in support of specific points of view form a broadly defined continuum from the rigidly dogmatic to the moderately flexible. Some scholars and practitioners consider mood choice to be an invariant phenomenon (Ramsey and Spaulding, 1956), and, in general, will not grant that one mood is viable either

grammatically or communicatively in a context where the other traditionally has been considered the norm. Others concede that some degree of variation may be inevitable (DeMello, 1995), although once again the ideas presented range from reluctant acknowledgments of some lack of consistency, categorizing it as inexplicable deviation from an idealized standard, to recognition of variation in mood choice as a documented occurrence, to acceptance of variable patterns as desirable manifestations of natural language use.

When exploring the issue of data sources, one is faced once again with some measure of fluctuation both in intent and in actual procedures. Some reported studies dealing with mood choice appear to be designed primarily to celebrate the value of linguistic conservatism rather than to demonstrate any impartial effort to observe or analyze speech as it occurs in everyday life, while others couple researcher insights with some dependence upon empirical data. Only a small segment of research in the field of Spanish mood choice seems to afford a key position to exclusively natural-language-sample data. In many other of the studies forefronted in the literature which have demonstrated new insights, introduced innovative theories, and even advanced new models of mood selection and usage, author-invented examples, examples taken from textbooks, and examples and impressions recalled from memory of past conversations provide the entire, or almost the entire, basis for support of the ideas and concepts proposed.

Finally, related to this issue of where the data under consideration or the examples used to justify contentions originate is a consideration of the qualitative-to-quantitative question in terms of analysis of the data presented. Here the research not only reveals a range which probably extends further than the explorations treated in the first three areas,

but also poses problems which are perhaps more extensive in their effect upon the conclusions reached and in their implications for understanding the mood selection process in Spanish. Some proposals/theories, and their champions, furnish completely or almost completely descriptive presentations which generally relegate any goal of comprehensive coverage to an inferior status and which include a great deal of native-speaker introspection as well as primarily intuition-based conclusions. Despite efforts to justify the lines of reasoning proposed by resorting to the previously noted author-contrived exemplary support, many of these studies offer little concrete or consequential information concerning mood choice which has been sufficiently substantiated by well-documented evidence to sustain the assertions presented. Others claim a much wider usage that can be realistically presumed from the data provided and seem to have little merit beyond that of drawing attention to the overall question of present subjunctive/present indicative alternation. Thus, much of this material, though presented thoughtfully and clearly, does not seem to display any real objectivity.

At the other end of the spectrum can be found research in which unsubstantiated speculation is rejected in favor of more rigorous quantitative research, though these efforts are far less numerous. The researchers involved in carrying out these studies, often overwhelmed by the number of rules and seemingly unnecessary conditions previously considered requisite for mood choice investigation, have conceded the futility of seeking after rigid formula which dwell on prescriptive mandates, which produce over-complicated paradigms, and which center their arguments around contrived examples. Instead, they have preferred to move in the direction of sampling language as it is found in real-life contexts. However, even in some of these research efforts, one finds a general avoidance

of any concerted effort either to report or to analyze the real complexities of the mood choice process. Instead, models appear which are replete with “tendencies,” “affinities,” and “trends,” but which in the final analysis remain insight-driven, at times even leading to perspectives which seem too chaotic in their presentation to provide more than minimal clarification of the problems being addressed. Other studies appear merely to provide explanations related to subjunctive usage rather than to overall mood selection. In addition, much of the research on mood selection seems to lack sufficiently thorough experimental verification from the relevant speech community concerning the correspondences which they report, and also tends to ignore to varying degrees any potential effects of sociolinguistic variables such as age, regional origin, gender, or socioeconomic status on the conclusions drawn.

When questions arise as to whether variation exists in mood choice among Spanish speakers, once again there is a great diversity of opinion. While some researchers who attempt to gain a fuller understanding of what motivates mood choice in Spanish lament that the mood system seems to be the most difficult grammatical scheme to analyze (Criado de Val, 1972-1973; Lozano, 1975), others maintain that a certain amount of confusion is unavoidable, that the language is experiencing a time of transition in mood use where variation should be expected (De la Puente-Schubeck, 1991). Also, there seems to be little agreement as to precisely what factors might be expected to affect the choice of mood if and when variability is demonstrated. That extralinguistic considerations such as gender, age, regional origin, or socioeconomic position might be influential in mood alternations in Spanish continues to be a controversial issue, if not a point of genuine discord among researchers.

Any possible associations between the gender and/or the age of Spanish speakers and their choice of indicative or subjunctive mood in specific contexts seem especially worthy of exploration given the information recorded in the literature on how these two factors interrelate with general language production. When seeking out any relationship between gender and language, perhaps the most pervasive of the positions apparent in the scholarship is developed around the conventional notion that females are generally more orthodox in their language choices and usage than males. The contention that females tend toward an overall language usage which approaches the national standard or accepted norm more than males who belong to the same regional, social, educational, and age categories abounds in the literature on gender and language use (Frank and Anshen, 1983, p. 34). These tendencies are described by different researchers with varying degrees of assertiveness, but many arrive at similar conclusions: females tend to be more conscious of their status, to attempt to demonstrate prestige through their speech, and also to be more cognizant of any social significance which language might convey or sustain. Common arguments range from straightforward accounts of females using fewer nonstandard forms (Buxó-Rey, 1978; Cameron, 1992; Cameron and Coates, 1990; Gordon, 1994; Labov, 1972, 1990; Nissen, 1990; Philips and Reynolds, 1987; Wolfram, 1969), to reports of females adopting the prestige variants found in the speech of higher socioeconomic groups more readily than males (Chávez, 1988; Gal, 1978; Labov, 1972), to more fervent declarations that gender seems to carry more force than any other variable in predicting the use of standard language variants (Brouwer and Van Hout, 1992; Lin, 1988). Regardless of the magnitude of the focus, many scholars equate this female-associated impetus toward the use of status-oriented variants with linguistic performance which is considered highly



conservative (Gordon, 1994; Nichols, 1983).

Although it is apparent that in many studies researchers agree that females seem less likely than males to discount and/or reject what they have been taught both formally and informally, a pattern of female language innovation also emerges very early in the general literature on female-male language variation (Gauchat, 1905). In the realm of pronunciation, females have been shown to move even a generation ahead of their male contemporaries (Frank and Anshen, 1983). In other areas of language use, equally innovative female usage has also been noted. Gal (1978) reports that young females lead in changes and are much more frequent in the use of newer forms than males of the same age and all older subjects (p. 2). Labov (1990), though still adhering to the female/conservative bonding, also sees females as innovators, at least at the beginning of a new form's usage.

In terms of any effect which age might have on mood selection in Spanish, the amount of literature available for investigation is more limited. However, there are significant research efforts which provide valuable foundational material that addresses both general issues related to age and language (Floyd, 1978) and more direct connections between the age of the speakers and the language which he/she uses (Almeida, 1995; Eckert, 1984; Silva-Corvalán, 1981). Generally, scholars who study language-and-age associations ascribe innovative positions to younger speakers, and expect speakers during their later years to assume more conservative postures (Eckert, 1984).

The present research effort was motivated by the questions concerning variation in Spanish mood selection and usage, especially those choices which might be associated with the gender and/or the age of the speaker, which arose from available literature in these

three areas. It is based on the assumption that if greater understanding of contemporary linguistic production is to be achieved, it is not only prudent but also necessary to address the question of extralinguistic considerations as they relate to mood alternation and also to recognize the urgency of including statistical data and analyses of why alternations have come about and how they fit into the overall patterns of language usage (Araya Peña, 1993). It deals with variation in mood choice and use following the construction *no saber si* (not to know whether/if) in Mexican Spanish, and is concerned with any relationships which the gender or age of the speaker might have with variable patterns of mood usage. Specifically, the investigation examines the diversity of present subjunctive and present indicative mood choices made by female and male informants from different generational groups in using the *no saber si* construction. In terms of overall direction of perspective, it emphasizes the use of the most natural of language samples available, the prominence of quantification of results, and the importance of strengthening recognition of variation as a vital part of language.

Five chapters are included in the study. Chapter I presents a general survey of the Spanish mood system and introduces the question of what determines mood choice. It contains a discussion of the representative theories of what motivates mood selection and usage, along with an overview of the most frequently reviewed models of mood use. Particular emphasis is placed upon discussions of mood choice analyses prominent during the 1970s as foundational to the research which has followed them. Included in this chapter also are references to variability in Spanish mood use and speculation as to why these modifications occur. The commentaries and assessments in this chapter serve as a preface to and help to lay the groundwork for the material covered in later chapters.

Chapter II examines general representative sources of research dealing with variation in mood selection in Spanish, especially those which treat mood use following the conjunction *si* (if). It also situates the precise research issue of the choice of the present subjunctive or the present indicative mood following the *no saber si* construction within the context of variation in Spanish language production as portrayed in scholarly works in the field. In addition, it surveys the major interpretations, explanations, and recommendations available concerning the *no saber si* construction and its potential association with the mood choice issue, as well as offering express references to variation among Mexican Spanish speakers.

Chapter III focuses upon previously reported research efforts which deal with the influence of gender and/or age upon language production in general, and especially upon mood selection in Spanish. An overview of frequently postulated perspectives, trends, explanations, and interpretations of how gender and language and/or age and language are interrelated is included, along with a survey of scholarly research on gender-language and age-language issues carried out in Spain, Latin America, and among Spanish speakers in the United States.

Chapter IV describes the methodology and procedures included in collecting and analyzing the data examined in this study. In addition, in an effort to arrive at a more comprehensive characterization of any gender-or age-related associations with Spanish present subjunctive or present indicative mood selection and use and to develop a clearer overall picture of mood choice, this chapter presents the results of data gathered from responses provided in a three-part questionnaire on mood preference administered to 121 Mexican Spanish speakers of both genders and from varying age categories. Each of the

sections of the questionnaire was designed to elicit in a slightly different format the use of a verb following a form of *no saber si*. Both qualitative and quantitative questionnaire results are included.

In Chapter V, the results described in the preceding chapter are examined and discussed in terms of the validity of the hypotheses proposed, including efforts to explain both those outcomes which are in keeping with initial predictions and those which deviate from the expected patterns. Also an attempt is made in this chapter to position the understandings gained from an analysis of both the research on gender and mood choice and age and mood choice carried out in this study within the context of previous research on mood use and to gain insights into previously suggested theories of mood selection by comparing these with conclusions drawn from questionnaire data.

All examples provided as illustrations for the various theories or models reviewed in the first three chapters are excerpted from conversations which took place in various parts of Mexico between 1971 and 1998. All of the samples included were produced by adult speakers in spontaneous conversational contexts. The only exceptions to this data source are examples which are quoted directly from secondary sources.

Whatever the position taken by the researchers, scholars, and practitioners involved in the study and analysis of Spanish mood use, whether their endeavors seek to support, challenge, reject, revise, or recreate traditional views or construct innovative models which include the possible effects of extralinguistic factors on language production, the large body of literature which they have produced must be explored and carefully considered if progress is to be made toward the goal of unraveling the complexities of mood selection and use. In order to begin to confront the challenges inherent in an analysis

of mood use such as is undertaken in this research effort, the explanations and interpretations surveyed in the following chapters, both plausible and unlikely, both linguistic and extralinguistic, must be examined and evaluated carefully. The variety of conceivable options which they present dealing with Spanish mood in general, with language variation as manifested in Spanish mood alternation, and with gender and/or age considerations which might affect Spanish mood selection and use provide an indispensable substructure for the exploration of mood use following a specific construction such as *no saber si*.

## CHAPTER II

### MOOD IN SPANISH

#### Introduction

The body of research on mood in Spanish, extending from general remarks to narrowly-defined observational studies, presents an array of hypotheses, concerns, justifications, and arguments designed to shed light on precisely what mood choice is and how it functions in language use and subsequently to apply the insights gained through this process to the analysis of specific manifestations of mood apparent in current language production. Some of these inquiries, their assumptions, and their conclusions are considered feasible by many current researchers and others, although less salient in the literature, are nevertheless worth addressing if one is to develop an adequate picture of overall Spanish mood selection and use. A few of these studies contain general statements such as those which follow which have been accepted by almost all scholars as categorical: Spanish is one of the Indo-European languages which has preserved most the use of the subjunctive mood (Veidmark and Umaña Aguiar, 1991, p. 193); the frequency of use of the subjunctive mood in Spanish is higher than that of subjunctive mood use in other Romance languages (Anderson and Vilches Bustamante, 1995, p. 1). However, most of the information available in the literature on Spanish mood choice is far less clear-cut. Not only does one find great diversity in how different authors, researchers, grammarians, and practitioners regard the present subjunctive-present indicative mood contrast, but also numerous contradictions in the ideas expressed by some individual authors (Castronovo, 1990). This chapter will survey some of the most frequently examined research which

treats mood selection and use in Spanish along with the theories and models which have been developed out of these efforts. All of the examples which are provided as illustrations of the various types of analyses and perspectives are taken from natural language samples of conversational interactions among Mexican Spanish speakers.

### The Mood Choice Continuum

Some of the researchers and scholars who explore the issue of mood use in Spanish envision a strong, even rigid present subjunctive-present indicative dichotomy (Porras, 1990, p. 389), while others leave room for some gray areas of commonality and some proportion of expected variation. Ocampo (1990) and Klein-Andreu (1995) illustrate in brief the two general extremes of the mood choice continuum and provide through the presentation of their positions a suitable starting point for examining the great diversity of perspectives relevant to the question of mood choice in Spanish. Ocampo (1990) classifies the subjunctive mood as falling within the scope of probability or unreality and the indicative mood as dealing with reality. He sees little permissible variation since he believes that there are absolute categories in which the choice of mood is grammatically stipulated, leaving very little space for optionality to enter into the picture (p. 43).

In general terms, Ocampo is representative of a large group of researchers and grammarians who consider each mood to have its own specific and inviolate domain of use and are often confused, frustrated, and even outraged by the suggestion that examples such as the following be recognized, tolerated, or accepted as viable options for mood choice in everyday language. Scholars who work under the assumptions mentioned above see no alternative other than the use of the present subjunctive mood in contexts where it

traditionally has been deemed acceptable, primarily those in which the matrix clause of a complex sentence conveys doubt, emotional reaction, or volition:

*Dudan que lo puedas terminar hoy.* (doubt, present subjunctive)  
**They doubt that you can finish it today.**

*Es lástima que te caigan mal.* (emotion, present subjunctive)  
**It's too bad that they don't agree with you.**

*Insiste en que los traigan en seguida.* (volition, present subjunctive)  
**He insists that they bring them right away.**

For these researchers, the present indicative, when it appears in the subordinate clause of a complex sentence, is reserved principally for factually oriented presentations of information such as the following:

*Sabemos que lo puedes comprar en esa tienda.* (assumed fact, present indicative)  
**We know that you can buy it in that store.**

*Entiendo que te caen mal.* (assumed fact, present indicative)  
**I understand that they don't agree with you.**

*Es evidente que los traigan en seguida.* (assumed fact, present indicative)  
**It's evident that they will bring them right away.**

Consequently, for the scholars in this group, research which does not uphold these definitions of mood choice, which does not operate within the generally established parameters, or which provides examples gathered from natural speech situations which contradict the prescribed usages, poses a dilemma which remains either to be resolved or to be ignored.

generally expected usage:

*No creo que él las tenga* (present subjunctive). **I don't think that he has them.**

*No sé si me contesta* (present indicative). **I don't know whether she'll answer me.**

deviation from generally expected usage:

*No creo que él las tiene* (present indicative). **I don't think that he has them.**



*No sé si me conteste* (present subjunctive). **I don't know whether she'll answer me.**

Klein-Andreu (1995), representing the opposite perspective, maintains that the subjunctive and indicative moods should be viewed as carrying different meanings, not as arbitrary grammatical constructs. She believes that grammatical differences parallel lexical differences in that they both are indications of different meanings. Grammatical differences serve as a means by which different ideas, thoughts, and concepts may be communicated in diverse circumstances and situations: "The occurrence of the subjunctive in certain contexts, as well as its non-occurrence in others, can then be seen as a consequence of whether or not its meaning is coherent as a whole" (p. 419). The stance which she and others who lean toward an expanded view of mood use assume allows for conditions such as the following which demonstrate the use of both the present indicative and the present subjunctive mood in quite similar contexts:

*No sé si puedo decirselo.* (present indicative)  
**I don't know whether I can tell it to them.**

*No sé si pueda explicárselo.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether I can explain it to her.**

*No creo que se levanta antes de las seis.* (present indicative)  
**I don't think that he will get up before six o'clock.**

*No creo que se pongan de acuerdo.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't think that they will come to an agreement.**

#### Interpretations of Mood Choice

Aside from the inevitable problems suggested by these obviously contradictory bids to define and describe a construct so complex as mood, the necessity of designating the structure within which this mood selection operates has presented consistent challenges.

Efforts to provide a framework for mood in Spanish range from rudimentary depictions of isolated characteristics to extremely complicated models. As mentioned above, the scope of ideas on mood choice stretches from the arguments of true prescriptivists who admonish any deviation from the most unyielding of rule systems, to those of theoreticians who search out fundamental meaning, and even to those of aesthetes whose primary objection to moving away from any traditional model lies in a loss of perceived perfection. Bayerová (1994) maintains that from this plethora of assumptions, constraints, and analyses surface two basic modes of thought which attempt to interpret mood in Spanish. The first considers mood to be primarily, if not solely, a grammatical device; the second views mood as an expression of the perspective or outlook of the speaker. She also contends that, although the second position is not lacking in supporters, the majority of grammarians, regardless of their position on the conservative-innovative continuum, prefer the first perspective (p. 62).

### The Prescriptive Viewpoint

Those who see mood from a primarily grammatical viewpoint, generally the prescriptive grammarians, the “listmakers” (Whitley, 1986, p. 103), tend to establish as at least part of their goals to inventory and itemize all conceivable uses of each mood. The definition of mood set forth by the Real Academia Española: the present indicative mood indicates “what is known,” and the present subjunctive mood “what is not known” (Mejías-Bicandi, 1993, p. 157) has been the hallmark of many of these explanatory models of mood use. Although the scholar-grammarians who fit into this category have always found it problematic to explain differences in indicative and subjunctive use (Powers, 1983, p. 122),

many of them still adhere to the idea of the supremacy of the canon in explaining their precept-controlled account of modal selection. The examples which follow serve to illustrate the dichotomy preferred by these scholars:

*Enedina sabe que sus hijos vuelven dentro de una hora.*

(“what is known,” present indicative)

**Enedina knows that her children will return within the hour.**

*Cuando vuelvan los tíos, saldremos a cenar.*

(“what is not known,” present subjunctive)

**When my aunt and uncle return, we’ll go out to dinner.**

In the first example, the information which is conveyed in the subordinate clause is assumed to be a fact, a certainty, while in the second, one cannot finally know when or whether the aunt and uncle will return.

#### Syntax as the Primary Motivator of Mood Choice

Generally, according to those scholars who advance this type of approach, syntax and syntax alone motivates the pattern of mood selection (Bello, 1964; Gili Gaya, 1991; Moreno de Alba, 1978; Ramsey and Spaulding, 1956). Thus, the matrix clause-subordinate clause correspondence is regarded as the sole factor of any consequence in mood choice (Terrell and Hooper, 1974), and any serious consideration of semantic constraints must be set aside, as well as any real possibility of mood choice variation occurring with regularity in the speech of an individual or a community of speakers. This traditional paradigm entails grammarians’ creating their indices of feasible present subjunctive or present indicative mood uses, a “fill-in-the-blanks” approach for some (Whitley, 1986, p. 120), and then connecting the resulting listing to the matrix-clause verb. According to their views, the present indicative mood is generally found in subordinate

clauses controlled by matrices which convey some type of affirmation (Rojas Anadón, 1979), with their grammars then allowing for subordinate present subjunctive clauses controlled by a matrix which expresses doubt or seeks to impose one person's will upon another. A trilogy of desire-doubt-emotion is also a frequently cited "quick fix" explanation for when it is appropriate to expect the present subjunctive to appear in a subordinate clause (Manteca Alonso-Cortés, 1981). The following examples illustrate this point. In both cases, the initial clause communicates the concept of the imposition of will of its agent upon the (possible, but not certain) resulting action in the subordinate clause:

*Queremos que nos expliques lo que pasó.* (present subjunctive)  
**We want you to explain to us what happened.**

*Lo que yo pienso es que esperan a que nosotros lo hagamos.* (present subjunctive)  
**What I think is that they hope that we will do it.**

In essence, this traditional prescriptive position endorses a clear-cut present subjunctive-present indicative mood dichotomy in which the present subjunctive refers to the doubtful or possible and the present indicative to what is real and certain (Manteca Alonso-Cortés, 1981, p. 17), with the mood choice of an embedded verb as the automatic reflection of the matrix clause type.

An examination of representative theories presented in syntax-based analyses illustrates further these ideas. Bello (1964) defines what he calls the common subjunctive as normally governed by expressions of doubt, uncertainty, or emotion present in the matrix clause:

*Dudamos que sea posible.* (doubt, present subjunctive)  
**We doubt that it will be possible.**

*No estoy segura de que valga la pena.* (uncertainty, present subjunctive)  
**I'm not sure that it's worth it.**

*Es muy triste que no puedan alcanzarla.* (emotion, present subjunctive)  
**It's very sad that they can't achieve it.**

Following the traditional paradigm as well, Ramsey and Spaulding (1956) argue in their often-cited text that the present subjunctive mood is governed by mental restlessness (indecisiveness), doubt, or desire in the matrix clause of the sentence, as in the following:

*Jorge no está seguro de que lo podamos hacer sin que nos ayuden los de Taxco.*  
 (indecisiveness)

**Jorge isn't sure that we can do it without the help of the people from Taxco.**

*No creo que ganen ellos.* (doubt, present subjunctive)  
**I don't think that they will win.**

*Quiere que la cantemos el domingo que viene.* (desire, present subjunctive)  
**He wants us to sing it next Sunday.**

The only acknowledgment of mood shifting made by researchers in this group indicates that any observed variation is probably connected to the use of language intended to be formal in style and is likely to appear when the speaker wishes to “emphasize contingency” (Ramsey and Spaulding, 1956, p. 413). They add that any unusual choice of mood, meaning the subjunctive where the indicative is expected, might be considered pretentious in less formal situations.

Lorenzo's (1966) point of view is typical of many who cling to the prescriptive perspective today. He argues that the Spanish of his day was surely in the midst of becoming decadent, especially if it was necessary to accept that the present subjunctive mood might be optional in contexts where it had traditionally been considered to be mandatory. The force of his statement seems even greater when one recognizes that he was not referring to the substitution of a present subjunctive form by a present indicative one, but merely to the preference for a structure which normally is expressed in the present indicative over one which is normally expressed in the present subjunctive (p. 123). For

instance, in most contexts, the choice of the present indicative *Si vamos* (**If we go**) would have probably seemed less appropriate to him than the present subjunctive *Cuando vayamos* (**When we go**).

Gili Gaya (1991) also affirms the regulating role of the matrix clause in determining mood choice and upholds the dichotomy based on the known and unknown, although he steps outside the traditional mold somewhat when he allows at least for the possibility of some degree of influence of speaker attitude as well as some stylistic variation. When it comes to an analysis of this variation, he displays some flexibility, primarily in the case of doubt expressed in the controlling matrix where he envisions a continuum from affirmation to negation with present subjunctive constructions most strongly evidenced closer to the negative end than the present indicative (p. 140). Also, he makes reference to an effect emanating from the particular level of intensity with which the speaker expresses desire as a potential effect upon mood use.

Closely related to the approaches described above, are those which rely on the conventional opposition between subjectivity and objectivity (Criado de Val, 1951; Hernández Alonso, 1894; López García, 1990; Navas Ruiz, 1990; Porras, 1990; Solano-Araya, 1982). This division is not unusual in early works on mood choice such as that of Hernández Alonso (1894), who defines the present indicative as the objective mood in which the speaker takes no personally active part in the formulation of an utterance, and the present subjunctive as the mood which allows the speaker to participate fully and subjectively in the process of expression and communication (pp. 291-295). Unfortunately, specifically what this description means is not made clear. In later representations of this type, this explicit present subjunctive-present indicative dichotomy is maintained, with the

present indicative characterized by an emphasis on objective expression of facts, and the present subjunctive by hypothetical and subjective presentation of ideas (Navas Ruiz, 1990, pp. 139-140). For the scholars who uphold this position, the present indicative mood expresses concepts from a point of view which is clearly detached, dispassionate, and unbiased, perhaps even disinterested, and the present subjunctive serves as a conceptualization of wish or desire (López García, 1990, p. 136). The generally established categories here may be further subdivided and refined by associating the present indicative with specific facts, certitude, conviction, reality, verity, and authenticity, and the present subjunctive with indecisiveness, reservation, will, and all that which is speculative (Porrás, 1990, p. 387). Solano-Araya (1982) explains the subjectivity/objectivity contrast well by asserting that when a choice of present indicative mood is made, it allows the hearer to assume that what she/he has heard is a fact to be appraised as either true or false. On the other hand, a present subjunctive verb, the hearer assumes, carries with it the assumption that the discourse cannot simply be labeled true or false, and that she/he must understand that no attempt had been made to express a fact (p. 180):

*Es preciso que Uds. estén presentes en todas las sesiones.*  
(subjectivity, present subjunctive)

**It is necessary that all of you be here for all of the sessions.**

*Prefiero que me los envíen mañana a más tardar.* (subjectivity, present subjunctive)

**I prefer that you send them to me tomorrow at the latest.**

*Esperamos que sean muy felices.* (subjectivity, present subjunctive)

**We hope that you'll be very happy.**

In the case of all three of the sentences included above, the emphasis is not upon the expression of any factual information, but rather upon the hypothetical nature of what is expressed in the subordinate clause. In the first sentence, the contention that something is

necessary does not guarantee that it will occur. The “you” in the subordinate clause may not, for whatever reason, attend any or all of the sessions. The same idea obtains in the second and third sentences as well. Whether the preferred or hoped for action will indeed take place remains yet to be determined.

#### Semantic Interpretations of Mood Choice

Most of these syntax-oriented approaches come under criticism from those who examine mood use from the second perspective (Bayerová, 1994; Bell, 1980; Bolinger, 1974, 1976; Bull, 1965; Bybee and Terrell, 1990; Foster, 1982; Goldin, 1974; Studerus, 1981; Terrell and Hooper, 1974). These scholars spurn any attempts at uniformity as unrealistic and generally unreasonable (Whitley, 1986, p. 103) and bequeath the choice of mood to factors which are associated with the range of meaning which the speaker intends to convey, without attaching it to any paradigm of matrix clause control (Whitley, 1986, p. 120), and consequently mood realizations are considered to be manifestations in syntactic form based upon semantic underpinnings without which they could not function (p. 378). Though this group of researchers is quite diverse both in philosophical and practical concerns, most of its members tend to concede that a grammatical model of some type can be helpful in sorting out various kinds of difficulties by situating particular elements in categories which make them easier to understand and by predicting regularities. However, they insist that any rigidly-interpreted assortment of rules as invariantly stable representations of linguistic reality should be rejected (Anderson & Vilches Bustamante, 1995; Bartoš, 1983; Catalá Torres, 1989; García & Terrell, 1977; Rojas Anadón, 1979; Studerus, 1995). They are willing to acknowledge that a small segment of the language



used in what one hears or reads fits into a tidy set of rules, but maintain that none of it remains neatly positioned there for all eternity. They believe that it is simpler, as well as more reasonable and practical, to admit that circumscribed, clearly demarcated categories are too illusory to be sustained given the empirical evidence available. Some even move on to search out means and procedures for including variation in studies of language use (Cheshire, 1987, p. 264). Instead of intuition-based approaches alone, examinations of real-life language use, actual life-defined practice, provide more of the evidence than is apparent among the syntax-driven approaches. All of this is to say that, in general, for these scholars, mood choice is more flexible than many traditionally-oriented grammarians are willing to admit (Rojas Anadón, 1979).

Studerus (1981) rejects the possibility of a mood choice model based on syntax alone as ineffectual: “. . . no matter how appealing a solely conceptual or solely syntactic model may seem, it will display serious inadequacies for explaining the contexts of mood usage in Spanish” (p. 97). Bayerová (1994) adds to this her conviction that purely syntactic interpretations are too simplistic to explain such a complicated and entwined concept as mood choice and that since, in her opinion, Spanish allows speakers to communicate subtle nuances of meaning by means of a large grammatical range, it seems odd to argue in favor of so limiting a model (pp. 63-64). Among other criticisms of these models of mood selection is the charge that much of the foundation for syntactical explanations of mood use comes from grammarians’ own casual to informally documented observations and their intuition as native speakers (Powers, 1983).

Even some of those who follow closely in the footsteps of the traditionalist syntax-dominant thought acknowledge that both syntactic and semantic factors are involved in the

mood selection process, and that semantic properties are often predominant (Terrell and Hooper, 1974, p. 484). Among early researchers whose studies provide the foundation for broadening the ideas associated with mood choice is Bull (1965) who states that whether or not one selects the subjunctive or the indicative mood hinges on both the linguistic composition (how the speaker chooses to verbalize the message under consideration) and the manner in which the speaker chooses to order his/her view of what constitutes reality (the essence or substance of the message itself) (p. 175). However, he also indicates that many times choices may be based on “arbitrary convention” (p. 193) rather than any concerted effort to influence or modify the intended message.

Representative of later efforts which support a semantic interpretation of mood selection is Bolinger (1974, 1976), who insists that semantic factors are the most important influences which shape mood choice. He couples the present subjunctive mood with expressions of attitude and the present indicative with providing information. García and Terrell (1977) carry the argument further and maintain that one cannot escape the fact that a multitude of competing factors influence mood choice, and that, in the case of their research, more general rejection of examples which are not in line with prescriptive grammars should have occurred were the Spanish mood system as inflexible as predicted by the formal rule systems which are considered to be standard (p. 221).

It seems then that, overall, the syntax-dominated approaches, though appealing in their ostensible simplicity, prove to be both somewhat impractical and somewhat misleading when real-life language samples are taken into consideration since they display a preference not only for exploring almost exclusively what could be regarded as educated language, but also for examining written language rather than spoken. Evidence provided

by works in the 1970s such as those of García and Terrell (1977) seems to establish clearly the groundwork for rejection of uncompromising artificial standards as determinants of mood use. The absence of empirical verification to uphold the assertions made by the scholars who take an unyielding position based upon their conviction that syntax alone governs mood selection also should call into question the reliability of at least some of their conclusions. Faced with the task of justifying their conclusions, these researchers seem able to do little more than pose theoretical arguments bolstered by intuition and contrived evidence. Perhaps the assessments made by these scholars and grammarians might be less unyielding were they to move away from author-constructed examples to explore language as it appears in everyday speech. With little to no evidence of this type being provided, a convincing argument founded upon syntactic control alone seems unlikely to be sustainable.

The overarching approach proposed by researchers who believe that mood selection is motivated by semantic factors also has its advantages and disadvantages. It is undoubtedly more expansive than that of those who insist upon the syntax-governance position since it admits both semantic constraints as the overarching construct and, at the same time, allows for syntax as a vehicle to depict the meaning which the speaker is attempting to portray. In addition, among these scholars one finds more references to the importance of empirical evidence as well as a greater degree of emphasis on flexibility and adaptability. They are not likely to claim the necessity of following rigid paradigms in order to arrive at previously drawn conclusions, nor are they prone to confront examples which contradict their position as automatically anomalous. Unfortunately, some of the same difficulties arise in their interpretations as were seen in the arguments of those who

support the supremacy of syntax. Too many examples employed in support of their various arguments and assertions are created by the researchers themselves rather than gathered from real-language data, and too many of their claims seem designed more to refute someone else's position and uphold their own than to explore the overall mood choice process.

After evaluating this general review of two treatments of subjunctive-indicative contrasts suggested by Bayerová (1994) as being the most prevalent, it seems evident that her divisions afford a practical point of departure, that an examination of syntactic and semantic approaches provides the fundamental groundwork for a study of mood choice. However, neither of these approaches furnishes a completely satisfactory explanation for mood choice and use. Thus, any consideration which includes a comparison of only these two general categories cannot suffice if one is to attempt to develop a comprehensive overview of the issue. In order to fathom the intricacies of mood choice provided by current scholars, as well as to develop an adequate impression of how arduous a task researchers face in attempting to effect a viable representation of the processes involved, it seems necessary to examine in more detail some of the specific models which have been most frequently judged worthy over the past three decades. Each of the theories, hypotheses, and proposals which has been projected as one possible or the conclusive explanation for how mood choice works in Spanish furnishes some further portion of the scaffolding for developing a broader understanding of mood selection.

### Foundational Mood Choice Analyses

In the 1970s, a series of discussions concerning Spanish mood choice analysis and

emanating from a variety of perspectives (Bergen, 1978; Bolinger, 1974, 1976; García and Terrell, 1974; Goldin, 1974; Klein, 1974; Lantolf, 1978; Lavandera, 1974; Lozano, 1972, 1975; Rivero, 1971; Terrell and Hooper, 1974) arose which set the stage for much of the research which took place during that time and which led to the development of many of the models of mood selection which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s. These deliberations and the research which accompanied them helped to expand the scope of explanations of the mood selection process to include more than debates between those who support syntactic interpretations and those who favor semantic analyses, or even among proponents within each group. Mood choice studies which probe present subjunctive-present indicative usage not just from traditional viewpoints but also from transformational, semantic, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic perspectives begin to appear (De la Puente Schubeck, 1991, pp. 18-19). Researchers develop an interest in and begin to focus upon the information content carried by an utterance, how reference is carried out, truth value and how it correlates with mood selection and alternation, and what an utterance might be assumed to presuppose or to assert (Bell, 1980).

### Lozano's Theory

Beginning early in the 1970s with an article on Spanish mood use in which he presents a new theory of how mood choice operates, Lozano (1972) rejects the traditional subjunctive model in favor of one which presents two ways of classifying the subjunctive mood. His view portrays the subjunctive as either [+optative] or [±dubitative], with the category [+optative] containing anything which implies a command, and the [±dubitative] category comprising the continuum of weak to strong expressions of doubt: "... the

subjunctive can be more accurately described if it is split into two large categories each with several subcategories . . . the concept of ‘one’ subjunctive has prevailed because of an overemphasis on surface structures with little regard to deep structures” (p. 76). For Lozano, the [+optative] category necessitates subjunctive use since it comprises the semantic notions of obligation and imposition of will. The following examples of present subjunctive use followed by unlikely present indicative forms (\*) illustrate this category:

*Es necesario que Uds. nos avisen cuanto antes.* (obligation, present subjunctive)

*\*Es necesario que Uds. nos avisan cuanto antes.* (obligation, present indicative)

**It is necessary for you (plural) to let us know as soon as possible.**

*Prefiero que tú toques el piano el domingo por la noche.* (volition, present subjunctive)

*\*Prefiero que tú tocas el piano el domingo por la noche.* (volition, present indicative)

**I prefer that you play the piano Sunday night.**

*Más vale que me obedezcan.* (volition, present subjunctive)

*\*Más vale que me obedecen.* (volition, present indicative)

**You (plural) better obey me.**

As demonstrated by the examples which follow, the [±dubitative] category might possibly prompt the use of either mood, being semantically equivalent to concepts such as indecision, uncertainty, probability, and irreality. When dealing with the concept of doubt expressed affirmatively [+dubitative], the present subjunctive consistently appears:

*Dudo que nos inviten a todos.* ([+dubitative], present subjunctive)

*\*Dudo que nos invitan a todos.* (present indicative)

**I doubt that they will invite all of us.**

However, when the question is that of negation [-dubitative], although the present indicative probably appears more frequently, either mood may occur, depending upon the degree of reservation which the speaker wishes to convey:

*No dudo que ella me trata como una hermana menor.* ([-dubitative], present indicative)

**I don't doubt that she will treat me as a younger sister.**

*No dudo que él la quiera harto.* ([-dubitative], present subjunctive)

**I don't doubt that he loves her a lot.**

Negation, then, is a key element in differentiating between the force of optative and dubitative sentences. In optative clauses, the question of negation is irrelevant. The present subjunctive will appear whether or not the matrix clause verb is negated. On the other hand, in dubitative sentences, negation of the matrix clause verb brings about present subjunctive use in some instances and present indicative in others (p. 77):

*Quieren que nos vayamos.* {[+optative], present subjunctive}  
**They want us to go.**

*No quieren que nos vayamos.* {[-optative], present subjunctive}  
**They don't want us to go/leave.**

*Exigen que salgamos de prisa.* {[+optative], present subjunctive}  
**They require us to leave in a hurry.**

*No exigen que salgamos tan de prisa.* {[-optative], present subjunctive}  
**They don't require that we leave in such a hurry.**

*No dudamos que vas/vayas.* {[-dubitative], present indicative/present subjunctive}  
**We don't doubt that you will go.**

For research carried out at this time, Lozano's ideas are as enlightening as they are surprising. Although his arguments are probably less amply developed than necessary to sustain all of his assumptions, Lozano opens the door to question models of mood choice which are so tied to the standard of learned speech that they will not admit any movement away from that norm as either an accurate or reasonable occurrence in real-life language. Especially beneficial are three points salient in his research: his recognition of the superficiality of black-white models which reject any possibility of the existence of optionality of mood selection; his emphasis on the centrality of negation with its resultant dual mood use; and his expectation that "objective data" (Lozano, 1975, p. 283) be required to sustain assertions. The fact that his model is not perfect, that every example

which his critics can invent will not fit into the [+optative]-[±dubitative] schema, should not diminish altogether the clear step toward better understanding of mood selection provided by Lozano's research. His primary problem seems to lie in his idea of what constitutes objective data. He is less inclined to present examples gathered from natural language samples than to create his own.

### Bolinger's Reaction to Lozano

Bolinger (1974) reacts to this ardent departure from prior assumptions, and although he does not deny interest in Lozano's taxonomy, he reaffirms vehemently the validity of the one subjunctive/one indicative contrast. He asserts that some expressions are often followed by a present subjunctive verb when they do not fit into either the optative or the dubitative category. He does not extol the traditional notion of syntactic governance of mood, but rather endorses an explanation which separates the two moods according to the speaker's decision to communicate only information (present indicative) or attitude (present subjunctive). In other words, he recognizes as legitimate the possibility that the speaker has some degree of autonomy in the selection of which mood to use.

Obviously, the primary value of Bolinger's arguments does not lie in his tenacity of assertion of the traditional one subjunctive model, but rather in his willingness to acknowledge even in a very limited way, and perhaps without recognizing fully its importance at the time, that some speaker election might be possible, and that what happens in real-life conversations must not be considered less important than an arbitrarily established norm. This contribution seems often to be overlooked, or at least set aside, since his principal focus, like that of Lozano, is fixed upon the syntax-semantics debate,



and since his approach, in the final analysis, is basically an intuitive one, both subjective and unsubstantiated in its presentation. His explanations tend to be founded upon invented examples, and his arguments seem at times to be weakened somewhat by the appearance that he could be playing grammar games, coming up with very infrequently used, even highly unlikely constructions to prove his points.

### Lozano's Response

In 1975, Lozano counters Bolinger's arguments by asserting once again that some syntactic constraints are inevitable, only to be followed swiftly by Bolinger's (1976) rejoinder in which he insists that mood choice has to be viewed as more than indexing. Here Bolinger provides explanations to illustrate that any pigeonholing design cannot be depended upon to show a true picture of how Spanish mood selection is played out in real-life contexts: "A grammar that creeps along a sentence from left to right and attempts to determine everything on one side from what has already occurred on the other is a fun thing to make up as an exercise in guesswork, but it is not true to life" (p. 48).

### Goldin's Model

About this same time, yet another model appears which affects how the mood selection process is perceived. The idea that mood selection might be best explained by a model based on the ideas of presupposition and reaction emerges from the research carried out initially by Goldin (1974). The basic idea sustaining this model is that each statement which a speaker makes asserts some information but is also likely to presuppose other details, and to present a subjective reaction to still others. By presupposition, Goldin

means that a fact is being acknowledged and probably commented upon by the speaker. By reaction, he simply means that the speaker includes some type of evaluative response(s). The following examples illustrate his categories:

*Me da mucha pena que no puedas venir.* (reaction, present subjunctive)  
**I'm very sorry that you won't be able to come.**

*Es fascinante que se haya atrevido a hacerlo.* (presupposition, present subjunctive)  
**It's fascinating that he has tried to do it.**

According to Goldin (1974), if the presupposition involved is affirmative, then one can expect the proposition expressed in the subordinate clause to carry with it the idea of certainty, truth, and verifiability in experience, and consequently to be expressed by means of a present indicative mood verb:

*Es interesante que la conocen.* {[+] presupposition, present indicative}  
**It is interesting that they know her.**

*Pensamos que así es.* {[+] presupposition, present indicative}  
**We think that it's like that.**

*Confío que Julio y Sara tienen sus señas.* {[+] presupposition, present indicative}  
**I am confident that Julio and Sara have his address.**

On the other hand, when the presupposition is negative or indefinite, then the opposite is assumed to be the case. The proposition is denied, rejected, or at least not accepted without some degree of hesitation or reluctance, and the present subjunctive mood appears:

*Niegan que ella lo sepa.* {[-] presupposition, present subjunctive}  
**They deny/refuse to believe that she knows about it.**

*No puede creer que él sea el culpable.* {[-] presupposition, present subjunctive}  
**She can't believe that he is to blame.**

Goldin's work has been a precursor to several similar models which appear later and, as such, serves as an another important marker in the movement away from the

assumption that rigid matrix-clause control has to play some significant role in the mood selection process. Perhaps the two most valuable contributions made by his research efforts may be found in his attempt to break with tradition and in his expanding the concept of what subjunctive might mean to allow for a more open, extended description of its potential. Goldin's ideas serve as an excellent example of Whitley's (1986) concept in which the subjunctive mood is capable of generating "shadings of truth value" (p. 125), while the indicative cannot do more than furnish factually verifiable information. A central problem with Goldin's model, and one which cannot be easily overlooked, seems to be that, although he recognizes some degree of optionality, his ideas still remain within the realm of strictly rule-governed behavior.

#### Assertion/Non-Assertion Models

Yet another set of models, those which are labeled assertion/non-assertion, continue to develop the previously cited ideas which distance themselves from the traditional understanding of mood selection as a syntax-based process. These representations are based predominantly on the assumptions that semantic factors are preeminent in determining mood choice and therefore that mood use is affected primarily by changes in meaning (García and Terrell, 1974; Klein, 1974; Lantolf, 1978; Lavandera, 1974, 1983; Rivero, 1971; Terrell and Hooper, 1974). However, in these models, researchers who advance the assertion/non-assertion claims insist that "semantics of the whole utterance, rather than of individual verbs" (Terrell and Hooper, 1974, p. 492) are requisite for true comprehension. In other words, what the speaker wants to indicate about a particular proposition affects her/his choice of mood: ". . . the choice of mood in Spanish

is directly correlated with what the sentence as a whole expresses about the truth of the proposition included in the sentence” (Terrell and Hooper, 1974, p. 484). Speakers are viewed as actors who make definite choices. A speaker’s beliefs and basic knowledge are seen as interacting with linguistic factors (Lavandera, 1983, p. 209), although she/he may be partially or completely unaware of the intuitions and insights about language involved or unable to access them on demand (Lavandera, 1974). The attitudes which determine mood choice are associated, then, with how the truth value of the proposition expressed in the sentence is viewed. The determinations implicit in the process of empowering the speaker to decide how he/she wants to express ideas or convey information include whether the speaker assumes that the sentence is true; whether, if the proposition is considered to be true, the speaker intends to comment on it objectively or subjectively; and whether, when the speaker presumes the proposition to be untrue, he/she wants to doubt its possible veracity, or try to compel it to occur (Terrell and Hooper, 1974, p. 492):

*Saben que a Victorio le gustan los camarones.* (assumed true, present indicative)  
**They know that Victorio likes shrimp.**

*Es claro que Uds. no me creen.* (assumed true, comment objectively, present indicative)  
**It’s clear that you don’t believe me.**

*Es increíble que ella no lo sepa todavía.*  
 (assumed true, comment subjectively, present subjunctive)  
**It’s incredible that she doesn’t know about it yet.**

*No es verdad que anden por allí sin que lo sepan sus papás.*  
 (assumption of non-truth, present subjunctive)  
**It’s not true that they’re going around there without their parents’ knowing about it.**

*No creen que se vaya sin verla.* (doubt, present subjunctive)  
**They don’t believe that he will leave without seeing her.**

*Quiero que las repitan todas.* (constrain occurrence, present subjunctive)  
**I want you to repeat them all.**

In this interpretation, the indicative mood is associated with both presupposition and assertion, and the subjunctive mood with their absence (Terrell and Hooper, 1974, p. 488). If the speaker utters what these researchers consider an assertion, then the present indicative will be the mood chosen, since the task-burden of the utterance will be one of reporting with some degree of objectivity. Thus the present indicative mood will appear in a sentential complement when the complement is affirmed by the matrix clause which precedes it:

*Es obvio que los quieren.* (present indicative)  
**It's obvious that they want them.**

If this is not the case, if the truth value is not either presupposed or directly asserted, then the present subjunctive mood will appear:

*Preferimos que Jorge predique el jueves.* (present subjunctive)  
**We prefer that Jorge preach on Thursday.**

When considering the possibility of mood alternation, the present indicative mood seems to be least frequently preferred in propositions which indicate volition (Lantolf, 1978, p. 211):

*Exigimos que nos rindan cuentas a como dé lugar.* (present subjunctive)  
**We demand that they give us an accounting no matter what.**

Also, according to this model, when negation of the initial clause occurs in an asserted sentence, the essential meaning of the clause is reconfigured to move in the direction of subjectivity, and the present subjunctive mood is chosen. A sentence is considered to be non-assertive when some degree of doubt in relation to the complement seems to be demonstrable, or when a subjective reaction is being portrayed:

*Es verdad que sacan buenas notas.*  
 (assertion, present indicative)  
**It's true that they get good grades.**

*No es verdad que saquen buenas notas.*

(non-assertion, present subjunctive)  
**It's not true that they get good grades.**

*Es lástima que Domitila no tenga carro.*  
 (subjective reaction, present subjunctive)  
**It's too bad that Domitila doesn't have a car.**

In essence, when one selects the present subjunctive mood to express a proposition, a decision is made not to demonstrate commitment to the truth of the proposition. The implication carried here is that the speaker wishes to indicate some question as to the truth of the proposition (Rivero, 1971). Further examples of this type schema may help to clarify more precisely how it applies to everyday language use: *Sé que ella estornuda mucho* (I know that she sneezes a lot) represents the category of assertion, and displays a present indicative mood verb in the subordinate clause. *Es interesante que ella estornuda mucho* (It's interesting that she sneezes a lot) illustrates the category of presupposition, with the verb in the subordinate clause again appearing in the present indicative mood. Finally, *No creo que ella estornude mucho* (I don't believe that she sneezes a lot) exemplifies the category which denies commitment to the proposition, and brings with it a present subjunctive mood verb.

In short, for this influential group of researchers and those who later follow a similar course, mood choice is a means of revealing speaker intentions inextricably interlaced with the degree of assertiveness expressed: “. . . the subjunctive-indicative morphology attached to every occurrence of a conjugated verb is a quick, clean instruction about the presence or absence of ‘assertiveness’ for each state” (Lavandera, 1983, p. 232). Grammatical forms become abbreviated instructional pathways to the connotations more amply developed in other portions of the discourse (Lavandera, 1983, p. 233). Mood is thus a guide for the listener, a map to understanding the thought being expressed. Use of

an indicative mood verb points toward recognition of the validity of the construct under consideration, while subjunctive mood verbs signal less certitude and conviction (Lavandera, 1983, p.232).

In considering the efficacy of this group of assertion and presupposition models, one must emphasize once again that they offer options for dealing with the complexities of mood choice which are not included in the syntax-semantics proposals and, with these options, further broaden the prospects for accepting variable mood use as a realistic option. For instance, the possibility exists that the use of the present subjunctive mood following the *no saber si* construction could seem plausible according to the non-assertion + present subjunctive argument:

*No sabemos si te interese.* (present subjunctive)  
**We don't know whether you are interested in it.**

However, as in the case of other models, some instances of confusion and inconsistency seem to be evident with this approach. One of the most apparent is the connection, if indeed one exists, between assertion and presupposition. Here the use of assertion and presupposition in a manner which seems to be so closely linked may create misunderstandings. One has to be careful to discern that, although the present subjunctive mood does appear consistently in examples of non-assertion, the use of the present indicative does not necessarily mean that an assertion is present. The example in question may be one of presupposition rather than assertion. Many clauses which employ the conjunction *si* may fall into this category:

*Si hablas con el asistente de vuelo, sabrás lo que pasa.*  
 (presupposition, present indicative)  
**If you speak with the flight attendant, you'll know what's going on.**

### Bergen's One-Rule Model

It seems difficult to deny that these various interpretations, approaches, and models, both complimentary and contradictory in their relationships to each other, provide a great deal of potentially beneficial information which moves the search for answers to what motivates mood selection in diverse directions. Bergen (1978), frustrated by all of the debates and deliberations over the mood choice issue, surveys semantic, structural, and transformational approaches to analyzing mood choice and concludes that much of the difficulty involved in explaining the process could be alleviated, or at least greatly simplified, by casting aside the multiplicity of suggestions, models, and regulations which he finds in the grammarian-generated explanations as well as the theoretical analyses of subjunctive-indicative contrast. It should be noted that what Bergen finds disconcerting is not just the number of rules, but what he considers the unproductive overlap and “circular arguments” found in much of the research: “. . . the subjunctive is used after expressions of emotion and after superlative expressions because the subjunctive is used after expressions of emotions and after superlative expressions” (p. 224). Instead of what he considers to be useless rhetoric and suffocatingly complex paradigms, Bergen favors the use of one rule for interpreting Spanish mood based on a dichotomy between objective fact and subjectivity. After encountering thirty-four rules for present subjunctive use and twenty-five possible variations within these rules, Bergen reformulates his own ideas of mood selection into one single rule which has at its core the degree of speaker commitment to the proposition being expressed.

The single criterion for the use of mood is simply that, whereas the indicative denotes that the speaker (or the actor) of the higher clause regards the proposition



expressed by the next lower clause as an objective fact, the subjunctive expresses a subjective reservation concerning the reality of the proposition (p. 221). If the commitment to the proposition is total, and an objective fact seems to be conveyed by the message, then the indicative mood is used. If reservation as to the reality of the proposition is demonstrated, then the subjunctive is chosen. Bergen insists that both matrix and subordinate clause subjunctive use can be understood by this one-rule model. In essence, he postulates that the use of the subjunctive mood means that the speaker cannot objectively state the proposition as fact (p. 221). The indicative mood is used in cases of events which are taking place at the present time, or which took place in the past, which the speaker acknowledges will take place in the future (p. 224). Thus, in the sentences which follow, the present subjunctive and the present indicative are differentiated semantically. The first example (present indicative) deals with an action which is occurring/will occur, with the subject of each clause being different, and the second (present subjunctive) with the reservation which Bergen sees as imperative for non-indicative mood use. In this case, both clausal agents are identical.

*Dile que viene.* (present indicative)  
**Tell her that he/she is coming/will come.**

*Dile que venga.* (present subjunctive)  
**Tell her to come.**

Bergen's one-rule model is basically sound if one is looking for a summative, all-encompassing, rule-governed explanation which sidesteps many of the difficult questions which other scholars find unavoidable. Unfortunately, although he furnishes an excellent survey of other models, Bergen's analysis of their operational value is less than objective. Much of what he includes in his study seems to be based more upon a need to reject the

ideas proposed by other researchers than an effort to find adequate support for his own assertions. Like many of his contemporaries, Bergen does not feel compelled actually to assess and analyze natural language in context. All of the evidence which he furnishes in support of his contentions is taken from author-constructed examples, leaving his hypothesis with no foundation other than that of the intuition-generated assumption that a two-rule model must be better than one grounded upon many rules, and that his one-rule paradigm must be superior to all others. On the other hand, Bergen's work provides a helpful clarification of the fact that mood selection and use is not simply a verb-inherent phenomenon, but rather a manifestation of a semantic feature present in the matrix clause. In addition, his emphasis upon the degree of speaker commitment as it affects mood selection moves a step ahead of many of his peers as it allows for the possibility of natural speech variation.

#### Recent Research Efforts

The challenge to find a workable model of mood choice and usage in Spanish does not end with these studies carried out during the 1970s. Many scholars in the 1980s and the 1990s, building on the explanations and models of earlier researchers, persist in developing innovative conceptualizations of mood selection. Research continues to generate valuable information and to produce an assortment of explanations built on this data. Debates and discussions tend to move away from the issue of syntax versus semantics and shift their focus to explanations based on speech acts, interpretations founded upon pragmatic approaches, and accounts which argue for the importance of extralinguistic factors as viable options for clarifying the Spanish mood choice process. In addition, the question of mood alternation in what have been considered typical mood

choice patterns, arises repeatedly and must be addressed by those who assume both traditional and innovative postures.

### Schane's Speech Act Interpretation

Schane (1995), linking the earlier-proposed idea of presupposition to speech act theory, develops his research around two concepts of presupposition: the expected concern for the truth value of the proposition expressed in the subordinate clause and the illocutionary category of the verb in this clause (pp. 360-361). He also includes the idea of the subject of the matrix clause's assuming responsibility for the realization of what is expressed in the subordinate clause: "The indicative is used whenever the subject of the matrix clause takes responsibility for the truth, fulfillment, or eventuation of the propositional content expressed in the complement clause" (p. 367). Subjunctive-associated illocutionary acts do not carry this subject responsibility, since another person might be assuming it, or since the subject does not accept the responsibility. As seen in the examples below, in the case of a directive, whether or not the stipulated action occurs is dependent on someone else's willingness to comply, not on the will of the agent of the matrix clause (p. 367):

*Dígales que no desayunen sin lavarse las manos.* (present subjunctive)  
**Tell them not to eat breakfast without washing their hands.**

*Demandan que la paguemos sin tardar.* (present subjunctive)  
**They demand that we pay it without delay.**

Schane also argues that the illocutionary categories such as assertive, commissive, declarative, directive, and expressive may be applied to mood choice: "It is in the nature of an illocutionary verb for its subject to have a particular attitude or stance vis-à-vis the

propositional content of the complement clause” (p. 372). Assertive statements which narrate or define the situation presented, commissives which obligate the speaker to do something, and declaratives which effect change by means of their verbalization carry with them indicative mood verbs. Examples 1, 2, and 3 below illustrate these categories:

1) *Es evidente que Uds. la apapachan demasiado.* (present indicative)  
**It's evident that you pamper her too much.**

2) *Sabemos que lo van a comprar.* (present indicative)  
**We know that they are going to buy it.**

3) *Prometo que lo voy a hacer sin faltar.* (present indicative)  
**I promise that I will do it without fail.**

Directives such as example 1 below, which seeks to modify the behavior of others, and expressives such as example 2, which displays attitudinal reactions, create the appropriate climate for present subjunctive mood use:

1) *Prohíbo que fumen aquí en la oficina.* (present subjunctive)  
**I forbid them to smoke here in the office.**

2) *Es lamentable que esté tan solito.* (present subjunctive)  
**It's too bad that he is so alone.**

In summary, according to Schane's interpretation, the present indicative mood is chosen when a statement asserts or recounts or presents a mental presupposition, and the present subjunctive when either doubt or reflection is expressed in relation to the presupposition (pp. 364-366).

Although the speech-act oriented interpretation has not been situated among the most frequently examined explanations for mood choice, it seems compatible with much of what current researchers who furnish natural speech examples provide as support for their ideas. The present subjunctive/present indicative division according to typical speech act categorizations also appears to be an easily accessible method for outlining the more

common choices of mood in Spanish. However, the most persistent problem with this type of explanation seems to lie in the fact that it does not easily account for some of the more complicated constructions which are not easily labeled as fitting into one of the established slots. Examples of these potential concerns are the *si* constructions, variable usages which appear in natural language samples in which both possibilities seem to be directives, assertives, etc., and constructions in which the issue of compliance is not a straightforward one. Since relatively little work has been carried out in which this approach has been used, and even fewer examples have been provided of anything other than easy fits for the established groupings, its overall usefulness seems as yet to be unproven.

### Pragmatic Interpretations

Still other researchers, attempting to throw further light on mood choice as it is developed around pragmatic lines, argue against explanations of mood as determined only by the degree of assertiveness (Blake, 1982, 1983, 1985, 1987; Guitart, 1982, 1984, 1987, 1990; Lavandera, 1974, 1975, 1983; Lunn, 1976, 1995; Mejías-Bicandi, 1993, 1994, 1998; Studerus, 1995). According to De la Puente-Schubeck (1991), mood is considered to carry its own meaning, and to have little to do with any characteristics which the matrix-clause verb might possess (p. 55). Instead, her approach presents communication as a give and take, with speakers necessarily functioning as evaluators who must review and predict listener reactions if successful interaction is to occur (Escamilla, 1982, p. 85). Speaker attitude, what the speaker assumes to be the knowledge possessed by the hearer, and the hearer's attitude are all vital components in mood selection (Guitart, 1984, p. 159).

Explanations which don't include some consideration of the speaker-hearer relationship are

rejected (Guitart, 1990). Concepts such as shared knowledge and habituality and how these affect mood use are considered to be at the core of this account as variations in mood choice revealed in natural language use are examined (Studerus, 1995). The present indicative mood appears most frequently when the information expressed in the interchange is unshared and therefore serves to provide the hearer, who needs to be informed about the message content, with knowledge heretofore unknown to her/him (Guitart, 1982, p. 60). Such is the case in the example below where one assumes that the speaker believes that the hearer does not know that Chela is getting married on Saturday:

*No cambiará sus planes el hecho de que Chela se casa el sábado.*  
(unshared, present indicative)

**The fact that Chela is getting married on Saturday does not change their plans.**

The present subjunctive mood is reserved for discourse contexts where participants already share the information entertained in the conversation and are free to operate on a more subjective plane, thus relieving the subordinate clause verb of any information-bearing role. In the example which follows, it is assumed by the speaker that the hearer is aware of the fact that the people from San Jeronimito are not going to come:

*El hecho de que los de San Jeronimito no vengán a comer nos dará más espacio.*  
(shared, present subjunctive)

**The fact that the people from San Jeronimito aren't coming will give us more room.**

When variation in mood use appears, it is explained by pointing to parallel differences in the amount of information shared by the conversational participants, speaker intentions, and/or situational context (De la Puente-Schubeck, 1991, p. 55).

Thus, for these researchers, mood selection serves as a way of revealing the speaker's intention (Lavandera, 1974), and consequently the present subjunctive-present indicative contrast is often treated as a means by which speakers express what they

perceive reality to be, a means to indicate their personal version of what is probable, what is uncertain, what is possible, or what is true (Mejías-Vicandi, 1993, p. 152). Here the indicative is the mood of knowledge and information, the mood which manifests the speaker's plan to express his/her or some other person's view of reality (De la Puente-Schubeck, 1991; Mejías-Bicandi, 1994). Subjunctive verbs represent the mood of attitude (De la Puente-Schubeck, 1991) and are those which are usually free from the task of providing information (Lavandera, 1974). In essence, Spanish mood choice, for these researchers, is conceived of as a means by which speakers may organize information which they wish to convey in a given segment of discourse (Mejías-Vicandi, 1993, p. 152).

Elaborating a similar course, Mejías-Bikandi (1994, 1995, 1998) presents four main points. First, he insists that the degree of intensity demonstrated by the speaker and how he/she wishes to present information to those who are to hear it are of prime importance (Mejías-Bikandi, 1994, p. 892). Second, he maintains that the present subjunctive mood tends to occur primarily in subordinate clauses following matrix clauses in which old information has been expressed. The following example illustrates that old information-present subjunctive connection. The fact that the cousin will accompany the addressee is assumed by the speaker to be known by his conversational partner.

*No eliminará el peligro el hecho de que te acompañe tu primo.*  
 (old information in subordinate clause, present subjunctive)  
**The fact that your cousin will go with you doesn't eliminate the danger.**

Third, he argues that when information in the matrix clause is not presumed by the speaker to be true, the verb in the subordinate clause is also likely to appear in the present subjunctive mood:

*No creo que sea necesario seguir todas estas instrucciones.*  
 (not accepted as true by speaker, present subjunctive)

**I don't think that it's necessary to follow all these instructions.**

Finally, according to Mejías-Bikandi, when the speaker creates a complex sentence in which the information in the subordinate clause is asserted by him/her to be new and/or true, the action carried out will probably occur in the present indicative mood (1998, p. 947). If one follows Mejías-Bikandi's line of reasoning, then, from the choice of the present indicative in the subordinate clause in the example below, it can be assumed that the speaker expects the fact that Enedina is not the daughter of the couple to whom she/he is referring to be new information to the addressee.

*El hecho de que Enedina no es su hija no disminuye el cariño que se sienten por ella.*

(new information in subordinate clause, present indicative)

**The fact that Enedina is not their daughter doesn't reduce the affection which they feel for her.**

The most positive contribution which Mejías-Bikandi seems to make in his efforts to comprehend the mood choice process lies in his rejection of sentence-level semantic concepts such as judgments of truth in favor of attempts to include discourse-level examinations of language. Negative aspects of his approach include the lack of clear and consistent connectedness of his examples to the ideas presented in his studies, and, the fact that, despite his insistent claims of providing "independent evidence" (1998, p. 945), he includes as support only what appear to be researcher-generated examples.

### Lunn's Theory of Relevance

Lunn (1976, 1995) expands the concept of mood selection to include the concepts which she terms relevance and non-relevance. The contention that mood in Spanish must necessarily be described as the traditional binary distinction between fact and subjectivity is rejected in favor of one which sees the difference in high (relevant) and low (non-relevant)



information value as the key to mood choice. In her analysis, a given language's mood system is thought to serve primarily as a means for speakers to judge the information value of a clause (Lunn, 1995, p. 429). Any information which is deemed relevant (carrying high information content) by Lunn's definition is usually expressed in the indicative, the mood of attention, the mood which signals the listener that notice should be taken of the information being presented (1976, p. 251). Any information which is appraised as insufficiently relevant is usually communicated in the subjunctive mood (Lunn, 1995). This information is described as conveying "low information-value" (Lunn, 1995, p. 430) and is not expected to add anything either new or true to the information which is already taken to be obvious (for other scholars, old information). Subjunctive mood use also cues the listener that less than maximum attention to the information content of the utterance is acceptable. The examples below illustrate the relevance/non-relevance idea:

*Me he dado cuenta de que ellos tienen que salir antes de mediodía.*  
(relevant, present indicative)

**I have realized that they have to leave before noon.**

*Me alegro de que te complazca.* (non-relevant, present indicative)

**I'm glad that it pleases you.**

From Lunn's insistence that speakers evaluate the quality of the tendered information when they exercise the power of mood choice comes her conclusion that the decision involved in selection of mood carries some degree of choice (Lunn, 1995, p. 431).

Lunn's work in opposition to a strict either-or present subjunctive-present indicative split is valuable in numerous ways. Her arguments for degrees of assertiveness as well as her examples of natural language production taken primarily from journalistic writing offer a constructive, worthwhile, and, most importantly, adaptable alternative which can account for some of the "exceptions" which have puzzled other researchers who

cannot fit them neatly into either of the two components based on a dichotomy.

Consequently, using Lunn's framework as a guideline, variable mood use may be viewed not only as possible but as a likely occurrence and a matter of individual selection. The negative side of her explanation is found in its vagueness, and in the difficulties which one finds in applying her model with any degree of security to specific examples which are not her own. Also, although her model uses different terms for old and new or shared and unshared information, it does not seem to vary enough overall from approaches which seek to apply these other terms to mood choice to offer a truly distinctive vision of the process.

Perhaps the most significant element found in the conclusions of these pragmatically oriented research frameworks is the linking of informative act/new information and the use of the present indicative and the absence of such a responsibility with the present subjunctive. That the speaker should be considered to take so active a part in evaluation of efforts to communicate, that her/his view of how reality operates should be considered important, and that the intensity of the relationship between conversational partners plays a central role in mood choice analysis are all notable contributions extending from these approaches. Also important in this body of research is the broadening of perspective to include discourse-level analysis, along with the ready admission of the normality of variable usages.

### Sociolinguistic Analyses

A final method for analyzing mood choice, one which takes into account the sociocultural background of the speaker, should not be overlooked. Although it is not formalized as a single model of how mood selection operates, the factors included in this

approach are often cited as influential in efforts to explain mood selection, and therefore merit mentioning before concluding the discussion of mood choice models. According to the scholars who advocate this type of analysis (Blake, 1985; Bartoš, 1987; Silva-Corvalán, 1994), sociolinguistic constraints, in addition to linguistic ones, are considered to be central to the realization of mood (Lozano and Takahara, 1987, p. 38). For these researchers, the study of internal constraints on mood variation is simply not sufficient. Extralinguistic factors must also be considered, especially in a context with as much diversity as one finds in spoken Spanish (Bartoš, 1987, p. 27). Studies which present sociocultural factors as influential in mood choice tend to view the alternation question as yet another stage in a process of modifications evident throughout a language's evolution. This particular phase is characterized by the appearance of the indicative mood in contexts where the subjunctive has been assumed to be the norm or in which either the indicative or the subjunctive might have been expected, depending on the degree of influence of the socio-cultural factors involved (Silva-Corvalán, 1994, p. 255).

#### Existence and Extent of Variation

Pervasive throughout much of the literature on mood choice and bound closely to all these models of mood usage is another important facet of the mood choice issue, the specific question of the existence and extent of variation, of substituting one mood for the other, and of the possible disappearance of the present subjunctive or the present indicative mood altogether in some contexts where it generally has been anticipated. For instance, traditionally the present subjunctive mood has appeared in complex sentences where strong emotion is expressed, but, as the second example below illustrates, the present indicative at

times appears in the same place:

*Es lamentable que no se entiendan.* (normally expected pattern, present subjunctive)  
**It's too bad that they don't understand each other.**

*Me alegro mucho de que tienen esa oportunidad.* (unexpected pattern, present indicative)  
**I'm very happy that they have that opportunity.**

Likewise, there are occasions, though admittedly fewer, when the present subjunctive appears in contexts where the present indicative is expected or demanded:

*No sabe si vale la pena.* (expected pattern, present indicative)  
**She doesn't know whether it's worth it.**

*No saben si ensayen esta tarde.* (unexpected pattern, present subjunctive)  
**They don't know whether they will rehearse this afternoon.**

*¿Quién sabe si te lo agradezca?* (unexpected pattern, present subjunctive)  
**Who knows whether he will thank you for it?**

That this variation in mood choice occurs has been documented both by researchers who accept diversity of usage as an inescapable component of natural discourse and by scholars who consider any variation at best to be a deviation and at worst to be patently incorrect. Over a period of more than 30 years researchers have reported, though at times reluctantly, that the present indicative mood seems at times to replace the present subjunctive, especially in contexts where language is generally thought to be less strictly constrained by convention (Contreras, 1963; Espinosa, 1975; Floyd, 1978; García and Terrell, 1977; Lope Blanch, 1990; Navas Ruiz, 1990; Rojas Anadón, 1979). Various explanations have been suggested for the reported variability in mood use. Some center around rule-focused schema: structure, rule, effects of violation of the rule (Borrego, 1987, p. 10). In an attempt to deal with mood alternation, this conceptualization labels as inappropriate any norm-breaching constructions, especially those in which the present subjunctive is seen as a substitute for the present indicative (p. 112). Others take the

opposite view, arguing that if one examines Spanish mood use from a discourse-level perspective, there can be no possibility of either mood's being mandatory in all the contexts delineated by many prescriptivists (Blake, 1985).

### Tolerance for Mood Alternation

With express reference to the question of acceptance or rejection of mood alternations, Veidmark and Umaña Aguiar (1991) argue that variation in mood choice seems to be a question of tolerance, of openness versus linguistic conservatism since usually the substitution of one mood for the other causes little or no ambiguity in terms of meaning. Most cases where any confusion in meaning might be conceivable, they maintain, are disambiguated by other indications in the context (p. 194). The following examples illustrate this point. In each case, the first example is the one which is cited from spontaneous speech:

*¿Será posible que nos los entreguen mañana?* (present subjunctive)

*¿Será posible que nos los entregan mañana?* (present indicative)

**Will it be possible for them to deliver them tomorrow?**

*Sugieren que lo acepta.* (present indicative)

*Sugieren que lo acepte.* (present subjunctive)

**They suggest that she accept it.**

Whether the vowel in the verb ending is *-e* (present subjunctive) or *-a* (present indicative) seems only to enhance or diminish the degree of likelihood that the objects will be delivered, not to affect the basic meaning of the sentence in any real way.

In addition, Veidmark and Umaña Aguiar (1991) find that exceptions to what have been traditional usages do not seem to bring about negative judgments in most contexts, nor is what is often regarded as uneducated usage generally stigmatized. The following

example portrays one type of usage which falls into this category, contradicting the standard pattern of usage with no apparent negative consequences. The conjunction *con tal que* (provided that) is normally considered to be one which is invariably followed by subjunctive mood use, but here it is followed by the present indicative:

*Te lo mandaré con tal que me lo devuelves dentro de ocho días.* (present indicative)  
**I will send it to you provided that you return it to me within a week.**

Support for this position also is found in earlier research. From their study of college students' attitude toward mood use variation, García and Terrell (1977) report the use of the present indicative following examples of subjectivity to be acceptable in judgments of grammaticality by both Mexican and Mexican-American informants. When Mexico City college students are asked to correct compositions written by college students who are learning Spanish in the United States, the native speakers display a high level of tolerance for most deviations from what is generally perceived as standard usage as long as the ideas being communicated seem clear to them (p. 221). Consequently, García and Terrell maintain that a general acceptance of what they consider to be small deviations from the standard is not unusual (p. 222). Lavandera (1975) concurs, stating that most mood choices carry with them neither prestige nor the stigma often associated with what are judged to be uneducated speech forms (p. 341). The following examples serve as further illustrations:

*No pienso que sea lógico.* (expected form, present subjunctive)  
*No pienso que es lógico.* (unexpected form, present indicative)  
**I don't think that it's logical.**

### Disappearance of Subjunctive Mood

The idea of not only diminished use of the present subjunctive mood but also of the

possible disappearance of this mood altogether has been proposed as well. Elaborating more fully the question of loss of clear-cut mood distinctions, some researchers maintain, at least to some degree, that in certain sectors of language where shifts seem to occur frequently, the present subjunctive mood is slowly fading from spoken Spanish (De la Puente-Schubeck, 1991; Díaz Romero, 1990; Rojas Anadón, 1979; Torres, 1989; Veidmark and Umaña Aguiar, 1991). According to most of these studies, the predominant alternation seems to be a unidimensional one in which the present indicative is increasingly used instead of the present subjunctive, even to the point of near exclusivity, in circumstances where the present subjunctive has previously been considered either obligatory or optional (Torres, 1989, p. 75). In the first of the examples in each pair listed below, and the one which is directly quoted from taped conversation, the usually anticipated present subjunctive has been replaced with the present indicative:

*Es triste que te sientes así.* (present indicative)  
*Es triste que te sientas así.* (present subjunctive)  
**It's sad that you feel that way.**

*Esperan que Ruth aprende tanto como su hermana.* (present indicative)  
*Esperan que Ruth aprenda tanto como su hermana.* (present subjunctive)  
**They hope that Ruth will learn as much as her sister.**

Díaz-Romero's (1991) work in Chile supports this idea of expanded contexts of present indicative use. She reports that, in her research among middle class children, there seems to be a slow decline in the use of the present subjunctive mood (p. 79). In studies of the process of present subjunctive loss in relative clauses and the implications of this loss for linguistic change, overall present subjunctive use is diminishing in "giant steps" from many spoken Spanish contexts where it seems possible that either the present subjunctive or the present indicative mood may be used with little effect on the meaning of the

utterance (Veidmark and Umaña Aguiar, 1991, p. 193), even to the extent that the categorical use of the present subjunctive seems difficult to guarantee in any context. Some researchers find this degree of variation not just to be surprising but also somewhat astonishing. In his critical bibliography of works dealing with the Spanish subjunctive, Navas Ruiz (1990) reports what he calls the “alarming” number of exceptions to the rules, especially evident in spoken language. Attempting to clarify further these exceptions, he postulates what he believes to be the existence of “zones of transition” between moods (p. 1829). As in the earlier examples, the first member of the pair of sentences below is the direct citation and demonstrates the substitution of the present indicative where the present subjunctive would normally have been expected:

*No conoce a nadie que los tiene memorizados.* (present indicative)  
*No conoce a nadie que los tenga memorizados.* (present subjunctive)  
**He doesn't know anyone who has them memorized.**

Additional research has demonstrated that in natural discourse in Central, North, and South America (Panama, Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Colombia, and the United States), the present indicative mood appears as a substitute for the present subjunctive in clauses of doubt where simplification seems desirable in order to avoid redundancy or eliminate what is perceived to be unnecessary. The second sentence in the following example set is the more common usage, but in order not to overemphasize what appears to them to be obvious, the speakers who are quoted below eliminate the extra doubt carried by this use of mood by at times opting for the indicative:

*No es cierto que lo traen hoy.* (present indicative)  
*No es cierto que lo traigan hoy.* (present subjunctive)  
**It's not true that they are bringing it today.**

Also, following clauses expressing emotion, the present subjunctive does not seem in all



cases to be obligatory as dictated by standard grammars, but rather dependent upon how the speaker relates to the emotion expressed (Rojas Anadón, 1979, p. 47):

*Siento mucho que no responden.* (present indicative)  
*Siento mucho que no respondan.* (present subjunctive)  
**I really regret that they aren't answering.**

In still other cases, the primary domains where the present indicative is substituted for the present subjunctive are many times those pertaining to evaluative interpretations (Floyd, 1978, p. 83):

*Se me hace que es de Rosa, pero no creo que lo saben ellos.* (present indicative)  
*Se me hace que es de Rosa, pero no creo que lo sepan ellos.* (present subjunctive)  
**It occurs to me that it belongs to Rosa, but I don't think that they know it.**

Even Steel (1985), who generally argues that the present subjunctive use is not subsiding, admits that infrequently in colloquial Spanish the present indicative is used after verbs of emotion such as *temer* (to fear), *alegrarse* (to be happy), and *lástima que* (It's a shame that) (p. 232), and directive verbs such as *mandar* (to order) and *dejar* (to allow) (p. 213). Although Steel explains that there may be cases where the present subjunctive mood is displaced by the present indicative mood, he still insists that the present subjunctive is "standard" in these instances, that counter-examples are merely vernacular usages (p. 213).

#### Variation in Mood Use in Mexico

Since variation in mood usage in Mexico has been documented for some time, surveying some explicit references to its use in Mexican Spanish which support this shift from the traditional present subjunctive mood to the present indicative offers further insights into the question of mood alternation. It should be acknowledged that there is little documentation for any shift in the opposite direction, for the present subjunctive

mood appearing where the present indicative would be normally expected, the one notable exception being the *no saber si* construction treated in the next chapter. Espinosa (1975) serves as a good starting point for dealing with the subjunctive to indicative mood shift in Mexico as he emphasizes repeatedly in his article on linguistic tendencies in Mexican Spanish that the present indicative mood seems in numerous cases to be replacing the present subjunctive in contexts where the present subjunctive was previously considered obligatory: “*Bueno, pues mientras se sabe (indicativo) si son peras o manzanas . . .*” (All right, well while it is being determined whether they are pears or apples . . .) (p. 113). Here there is an indeterminant action which normally might be expected to carry the present subjunctive, but the present indicative mood is used instead. Likewise, Lope Blanch (1990), who coordinated the *norma culta* (educated usage) project in Mexico, asserts that despite the fact that both possibility and emotion are generally strong purveyors of the present subjunctive mood, in Mexican Spanish, it is possible to find subordinate clauses following these two types of constructions which have present indicative verbs (p. 180). He believes to be relatively common, even routine, instances which demonstrate that in cases where not only possibility but also doubt or fear are expressed, the present indicative mood verbs appear, even though prescriptive grammarians insist that they be invariably in the present subjunctive (p. 55).

#### Explanations for Variation in Mood Use

Without constraining the scope of application so sharply as to treat this variability in mood usage both in Mexico and the rest of the Spanish-speaking world as merely superficial, and without ignoring the empirical realities of the mood choice dilemma, all

these patterns of differentiation and contradictory results apparent in the literature on mood choice and usage cannot be overlooked or pushed aside as unfathomable. A consideration of relevant explanations for why any variation in mood selection exists provides a point of departure for attempts to deal realistically with the dilemma. Some of these suggestions and proposals are linked closely to models of mood choice; others have a few points of common contact with these interpretations; still others stand apart from previously projected explanations. Vacillation on the part of the speaker on a case-by-case basis has been suggested as one possible answer. Here variation is seen as a product of and therefore dependent upon the emotions of the individual speaker (Rojas Anadón, 1979, pp. 47-48). Another view of variation in mood choice is that it serves as a way for a particular speaker to assert the degree of distance from the information which he/she perceives to be appropriate to the context at hand. If a speaker wishes to distance himself/herself in terms of experience from the idea(s) being presented, there is a strong inclination toward present subjunctive mood use. If, on the other hand, the speaker views the idea(s) as proximal to his/her experience, the present indicative mood is more likely to occur (Rojas Anadón, 1979, pp. 40-41). A third explanation deals with what is termed “contigüidad modal” (**modal proximity**) (Rojas Anadón, 1979, p. 42). In this case, it is suggested that variation in subjunctive and indicative use might not be due to anything more than the proximity of like modal usage’s offering an unconscious cue as to choice. For instance, in a sentence such as the following, the use of the present subjunctive in the second verb (*pueda*/present subjunctive) might possibly be related in some indistinct way to the use of this same mood in the first verb (*vaya*/present subjunctive), since the verb which follows *reconozco* (I **recognize**) would normally be expected to appear in the present indicative mood instead of

the present subjunctive:

*Espero que vaya* (present subjunctive) *con nosotros, pero reconozco que no lo pueda*  
(present subjunctive) *hacer sin el permiso de sus abuelos.*  
**I hope that he is going with us, but I recognize that he can't do it without  
his grandparents' permission.**

### Tolerance for Variation

Two other aspects of mood selection are also worth mentioning at this point. The first has to do with native speaker tolerance for variation in present subjunctive and present indicative use, and the second with what might possibly be occurring at the same time that variation seems to be evident. Low acceptance of variation in mood usage has been tied to the idea of familiarity and therefore regular association with certain constructions in either the present indicative or the present subjunctive (Veidmark and Umaña Aguiar, 1991). Constructions such as the following represent instances in which present subjunctive usage is so frequently heard in everyday communication that a present indicative verb used in its stead might be judged anywhere from odd to vaguely inappropriate to completely unacceptable:

*Haré lo que sea para ayudarte.* (present subjunctive)  
**I will do whatever is necessary to help you.**

*Haz lo que quieras. No me importa.* (present subjunctive)  
**Do whatever you want. I don't care.**

*No quiero que te vayas, abuelito.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't want you to go, granddad.**

In addition, Blake (1987) postulates that when there is a linguistic change in progress, even though it may be as yet an undocumented or even an unnoticed process, what once was obligatory in certain contexts may no longer be so unyieldingly invariant (p. 358).

## Problems with Past Research on Mood Choice

Such a large body of research presented in so many relevant models on so complicated a question as Spanish mood choice and usage cannot be without problems. Conclusions reported by researchers for several decades show that many difficulties continue to be only partially addressed. Some of the reports of mood shifts do only that; they fail even to initiate a discussion of why or how the changes might be occurring. Also, many of the examples of variation mentioned in the literature are by-products of research into other issues, not in-depth examinations which focus on mood selection. When attempts at formalizing investigations have been made, often judgments of grammaticality rather than examinations of subject-generated language have been the primary means of obtaining data.

Many scholars agree that inconsistencies in, questions about, and objections to past research remain unaddressed. Presentations of these problems range from criticisms to condemnations and vary also from general remarks about mood-related studies to specific suggestions for future research. Two of these concerns seem particularly important because they highlight problems which are inherent in much of the accessible research on mood choice and variation: the lack of real-language data as the basis for conclusions postulated by researchers and the overemphasis upon educated speech rather than the language of interpersonal communication.

### Absence of Real-Language Data

In her study of syntactic change in South American Spanish, Rojas Anadón (1979) bemoans the frequent gaps which she finds in explanations of the use of mood in informal

oral communication, and cites the differences in oral usage and grammatical prescription as particularly troublesome. She argues that the neat paradigms created by traditional grammarians are inadequate as a basis for examining mood use, that the issue must be explored from a variety of viewpoints if any genuine attempt is to be made at developing an understanding of how mood choice works in spoken language (p. 1). She also maintains that the lack of precision in some of the language used in defining mood sometimes seems to create a degree of abstraction which obscures rather than illuminates the issues involved.

### Overemphasis on Educated Speech

Bartoš (1983) also chooses to emphasize the necessity of distinguishing the prescriptive norms which are generally founded upon an idealization of how a language should be spoken and the *norma culta*, the actual spoken language of the educated:

Claro está que la norma prescriptiva, la norma modelo, es soporte de la unidad del idioma, pero las realizaciones concretas del habla distan generalmente mucho de este ideal y, si observan algún modelo, es antes bien la norma culta vigente en tal o cual país” (It is clear that the prescriptive norm, the normative model, serves as support for the idea of one unified language, but the concrete realizations of speech produced generally differ greatly from this ideal, and if you observe some model, it is apt to represent the speech patterns of the educated which are in force in some country or other) (p. 28).

Along the same line, Catalá Torres (1989) addresses the issue of restrictions placed on language by designated or self-appointed authorities in her article on prescription and intuition. She argues that an authority-expert-specialist who attempts to fix arbitrary

strictures on language use will, without doubt, be out of step with the language which is actually used (p. 64).

### Revision and Cataloguing

Added to these two criticisms is a series of suggestions which underscore still other defects often found in studies of mood choice. First, for many years scholars have suggested that the history of the study and analysis of Spanish mood selection and usage has been characterized too frequently by a type of cataloguing which sometimes has been arbitrary and almost always has been seriously restricting (Rojas Anadón, 1979, p. 9), that many of the points of conflict concerning subjunctive and indicative use in Spanish among traditional grammarians have to do with nothing more than labeling and classifying (Terrell and Hooper, 1974). The concern here is that many studies, be they serious scholarly endeavors or superficial treatments of mood selection, finally offer little more than a renovated version of what has been assumed to be suitable or proper for decades. Related to this charge is the question of whether much of the research on mood choice has produced theories which are truly new, regardless of what labels are affixed to their conclusions, or whether studies of mood choice have sometimes led primarily to restating many of the same theories found in traditional textbooks (Foster, 1982, p. 134). Takagaki (1984), in his article on subjunctive as a marker of subordination, laments yet another predicament, arguing that many analyses treat mood in Spanish as though it represented one harmonious pattern, as if it were a massive undifferentiated whole (p. 248). In this case again, the fundamental dilemma lies in the inability of the researchers to move into an exploration of truly new territory for fear that they will lose sight of what has been

regarded as inviolate. Porras (1990) re-emphasizes the initial dilemma, that despite all the studies of the subjunctive, whatever type they may be, no genuinely acceptable explanation for mood choice has been proposed. He cites oppositions which are absolutist in nature, ill-supported conjectures, and overall vagueness of descriptions as among the more pressing problems (p. 392).

### Procedures for Gathering Data

Moving into the realm of methodology, impressionistic data-gathering procedures, lack of data-supported assertions, as well as meager to inadequate attempts at statistical analysis often are cited as issues of further concern. Justifications for these criticisms comes from arguments that there exists “little rigorous empirical data on modal usage in Spanish” (Escamilla, 1982, p. 97) and that not enough research on language structure has been carried out which adheres to satisfactory standards of statistical analysis (Nissen, 1990, p. 23). Rojas Anadón (1979) argues that the methodologies often employed in analyses of the present subjunctive-present indicative distinction are less than satisfactory because they tend to cite only examples which support the theories proposed by the researchers, at times obfuscating the broader picture. He adds criticisms such as rigidity of perspective and procedures, one-sidedness of approach (partial analysis of components as opposed to whole sentence analysis).

### Conclusion

These criticisms, concerns, and questions lead to what remains as the primary tasks of mood choice research. Despite the great strides toward understanding the complexities



of mood alternation which past research efforts represent, the debate lingers, recommences, and extends itself into both new and old territories. Today's scholars persevere in serious and conscientious efforts to explore, build on, and expand this knowledge afforded them by their predecessors. One can argue that the choice of present indicative may be seen as a demonstration of several attitudes or conceptualizations: that the speaker views what is being expressed as general knowledge, as a choice made which precludes doubt (Lavandera, 1975), as the unmarked mood, and as the mood choice for portraying "plain reality" (Blake, 1985, p. 170), or as the mood which simply introduces a proposition which is true (Tsoulas, 1995, p. 293). On the other hand, the present subjunctive can be called the marked mood, the guidepost to point the listener toward a recognition that whatever is being communicated does not necessarily predict a direct, forthright description of reality (Blake, 1985, p. 170), or as the mood which is necessary when the speaker simply does not accept the indicative as sufficient for the purpose(s) of the discourse (Lamíquiz, 1982, p. 16). Nonetheless, problems arise for many scholars when the grammatically-based model is carried what in their opinion is too far and judged to be the only possible way of viewing, explaining, and understanding the way language works (Delbeque, 1992, p. 6). Even though earnest attempts to avoid categorical descriptions have been made with some success, and "idealized intuitions about language" (Cheshire, 1987, p. 275) have been increasingly avoided when attempting to understand the mood choice process, no one has arrived at a truly satisfactory definition of mood in Spanish (Bayerová, 1994, p. 62). Perhaps an appreciation of Studerus' (1981) metaphor for the Spanish subjunctive as still a "twilight zone" (p. 97) might help to urge researchers to work toward realizing the final of the exigencies assessed as vital to mood choice

research: that the lack of studies dealing with the language used in daily life regardless of whether it is considered to be in agreement with “what the academic tradition says is so” (Staubach, 1971, p. 333) persists as a critical issue. Coupled with this charge to develop a new and more comprehensive sense of understanding of mood choice as it operates in non-idealized language is a call for research and scholarship which recognizes as valid present indicative use where present subjunctive has been the norm and the present subjunctive where present indicative is expected, without automatic invalidation of the meaning or structure of the sentence (Rojas Anadón, 1979, p. 63).

Taking into account this overall portrait of mood choice and use in Spanish, both the many strengths of the theories, explanations, and models which have been proposed and continue to be developed, and the dilemmas yet to be resolved, one area of concern seems to surface repeatedly. It seems prudent at this point, after having reviewed the most frequently cited research in this area, to move from an examination of general aspects of the subjunctive/indicative issue to an in-depth treatment of the variation in mood selection which has led to much of the controversy among the scholars who are concerned with the question. The exploration of significant research dealing with language variation as well as some of the specific characteristics of variation in mood use in Spanish found in the next chapter should lead to an improved understanding of how the mood choice process works in Spanish.

## CHAPTER III

VARIATION IN MOOD CHOICE FOLLOWING *SI* AND *NO SABER SI*

## Introduction

Bartoš (1987) summarizes what he perceives to be the linguistic situation in Latin America as “*un mundo en imprevisible transformación político-económica, socio-cultural y . . . también lingüística*” (a world in the midst of unforeseeable politico-economic, sociocultural, and . . . also linguistic transformation) (p. 35). That language variation is extensive in the Spanish-speaking world can no longer be questioned (López Scott, 1983, p. 10), nor can the idea that novel forms are constantly evolving (Cassidy, 1986, p. 210). In this chapter, research which deals with variation in language production, both in its general manifestations and its specific expressions in Spanish will be examined. Special attention will be given to studies which explore examples of variation in mood choice and use following the conjunction *si* and the *no saber si* construction.

Beginning with the variation studies which deal with Spanish available by the 1970s, one finds two trends which are readily apparent in most of the reported research. First, the primary focus of these studies tends to be either phonological or morphemic variation. Research which deals with either semantic or syntactic factors as influential on variation in Spanish language use is infrequent (Goldin, 1975, p. 26). Second, most of the research defines variable rules as those which in a particular sociolinguistic, stylistic, or linguistic environment obtain at times and at other times do not apply. In addition, during these years, two important points are brought to the forefront of general studies of Spanish-language variation. The first of these considerations is made up of three

interrelated parts: that variation is characteristic of all speakers (García and Terrell, 1977); that native speakers of a given language display inconsistency in their language production (Lipski, 1978, p. 934); and that any single-pattern model of language use must be rejected. The second consideration stresses that researchers should recognize the influence of extralinguistic factors such as gender, age, attitude, and local origin on language variation among Spanish speakers (Lavandera, 1974, 1975; Powers, 1983). In essence, social variables begin to be taken into account in some studies of Spanish language variation; structural explanations alone come to be seen as insufficient to explain grammatical variation and change (Lavandera, 1975, p. 341).

#### Initial Research Efforts

Some important initial research dealing with variation in the Spanish mood system is also carried out during this time. Many of these studies both increase the knowledge base available on mood selection issues and serve as a catalysts for later efforts to comprehend mood choice in Spanish. Dalbor's (1969) research is a prime example. He analyzes data gathered from questionnaires designed to study mood use and sequence of tenses, as well as the mood contrasts themselves. The number of indicative responses which he reports in contexts where subjunctive would be expected reaffirms the existence of variation in mood use, whether predicted or not. Lantolf (1978) also provides an early impetus for later scholarship. He investigates mood usage among Puerto Rican speakers, concluding that the mood system which he is examining is far from static, and predicts that the mood selection process in Puerto Rican Spanish might be in the midst of a process of change.

## Variation Studies in the 1980s

Where mood choice fits into the general scheme of variation becomes more apparent by the 1980s. The number of studies which acknowledge that variation in Spanish usage is widespread is increasing by this time, and, with this expansion, comes the recognition that variation in mood choice can no longer be considered speculation, but rather a well-established fact (Torres, 1989). Research which emphasizes to a greater extent than earlier studies the influence on mood selection of pragmatic factors, cultural factors, extralinguistic factors, or a combination of any of the three is becoming more common. Once again, each of these perspectives not only adds to the information stock, but also facilitates future investigations into Spanish mood selection. Escamilla (1982) represents well the position of many scholars and researchers who deal with variation at this time as he argues that there are several basic assumptions which should be taken into account when examining natural speech. First, he maintains that variation is intrinsic to all language production, rejecting as idealizations rather than representations of natural speech any arguments which submit that speech production can be fixed, undeviating, or completely uniform. Second, he insists that variable speech is not erratic, that regular patterns emerge when natural speech is examined. Finally, he argues that, when conclusions are drawn concerning a certain type of variation, they are not always broadly applicable across languages (p. 225).

### Pragmatic Research

Representative of the studies which emphasize pragmatic factors as possible determinants of mood choice is Blake (1982). He reports that for Mexico City Spanish

speakers, variation is a quite common occurrence (p. 17), claiming that variation in present subjunctive use (here in nominal clauses) has been documented not only by those carrying out pragmatic research but also by traditional grammarians (p. 170). He examines the speech of both children and adults in Mexico City, concluding that mood variation is essentially dependent upon the situational context involved and emphasizing the importance of both speaker intention and shared information. With reference to speaker intention, Blake (1983) also concludes that a great measure of subjectivity is involved in mood selection, especially in the sense of determining the degree of strength with which an attitude toward a particular proposition is expressed (p. 22). In dealing with the amount of information held in common by conversational partners and connecting it directly to the attitudinal stance of the speaker, Blake (1983) argues that when information is shared, the speaker feels less constricted and consequently more free to communicate whatever attitude he/she deems appropriate. This expanded outlook leads to more frequent appearance of the present subjunctive mood, hence rejecting the possibility of complete uniformity of usage. Most of the variation which he encounters deals with mood alternation following verbs of attitude or doubt of the type found in the following examples:

*No nos gusta que hables así de los maestros.* (attitude, present subjunctive)  
**We don't like for you to talk like that about the teachers.**

*Nos da mucho gusto que quieras ayudar con la despedida.* (attitude, present indicative)  
*We're really glad that you want to help with the farewell party.*

*No piensa que sea tan metiche.* (doubt, present subjunctive)  
**He doesn't think that she is so nosy.**

*No creen que ella puede ganar.* (doubt, present indicative)  
**They don't believe that she can win.**

### Culture and Variation Studies

The relationship between culture and language variation is illustrated by Woolard's (1985) research in Catalonia (Spain). She argues that one will find repeated variation, even in what appears to be the most homogeneous of societies (p. 738). Working with language samples produced in Catalonia (Spain), Woolard speculates that the influence of local norms on linguistic output, known to be quite strong during both the Franco (1939-1975) and post-Franco years, was affirmed once again in her research. She also stressed that variation in language use should never be considered inconsequential or a less-than-faithful reflection of what transpires in "real" life (p. 738) and that both solidarity of local relationships and status within the local community play some role in language usage.

### Extralinguistic Factors and Variation

That extralinguistic factors such as gender, age, social class, and community associations serve as determinants of mood instability in Spanish, also receives wider acceptance during the 1980s (Alonso, 1989; Chávez, 1988; Escamilla, 1982; Rissel, 1981). That this variability in mood selection does not merely stem from a process of loss of the present indicative-present subjunctive dichotomy as the Spanish language is in the midst of change, but that it also is strongly influenced by sociolinguistic factors comes to be an important component of understanding how the mood choice process works (Blake, 1982, p. 21). For example, both Rissel (1981) and Chávez (1988) examine gender-related associations with language production. It should be noted, however, that most of the studies during this decade which deal with the consequences of social influences on variation remain in the domain of phonology (Kroch, 1989).

## Variation Studies in the 1990s

In the 1990s, researchers begin to search for solutions to or at least recognition of many of the problems which plagued earlier efforts to understand language variation in Spanish. They attempt to formulate clearer and more precise working definitions of terms such as variation and to define more precisely how to identify the variables necessary to interpret and better comprehend what language variation means in particular contexts and in specific cultures (Serrano, 1994, p. 37). Also, some researchers begin to argue that phonological variants, although prevailing as the focus of many of the studies in which linguistic variables are correlated with social ones (Araya Peña, 1993, p. 93), do not seem to stratify groups as sharply as do grammatical variants (Chambers, 1992, p. 181). Other researchers of the 1990s underscore that fact that variation in mood use occurs alongside variation in speaker intentions, situational context, and degree of information shared by the speaker and the hearer (De la Puente-Schubeck, 1991, p. 55). In addition, current scholars who deal with variation in the use of Spanish reemphasize the rejection of any notion of invariant uniformity:

*. . . la idea más bien romántica de una lengua única, homogénea y común a todos los miembros de una comunidad lingüística debe ser abandonada por respeto de los hechos: de ninguna área geográfica, de ningún grupo sociológico se obtiene jamás un muestrario completamente homogéneo . . .* (the rather romantic idea of a unique, homogeneous language common to all members of a linguistic community should be abandoned out of respect for the facts: a completely homogeneous sample cannot ever be obtained from any geographical area, from any sociological group) (Delbeque, 1992, p. 7).



## Research Dealing with *Si* and *No Saber Si*

This body of research, both past and current, establishes the foundation necessary for exploring specific areas of variable mood use which seem to appear with some regularity in everyday exchanges in Spanish. A general overview of research on both *no saber si* and the conjunction *si* as it stands alone helps to develop the context essential for examining and analyzing any variable usages which appear in current mood use as it is associated with these forms.

From the most prevalent questions addressed in the literature which specifically situate the conjunction *si* and/or the construction *no saber si* in the context of studies of Spanish mood selection and variation, two general categories of concerns emerge. First, researchers treat the issue of whether variation in mood choice exists at all following these constructions. Based upon studies which provide examples of variation in mood use consistently present in natural language, as well as upon their own judgments of appropriacy, some scholars agree that both the present indicative mood and the present subjunctive mood are appropriate, especially following *no saber si* (DeMello, 1995; García and Terrell, 1977; Lavandera, 1975, 1983; Terrell and Hooper, 1974; Studerus, 1990); others disagree, maintaining that only the present indicative is permissible, except for rare exceptions (Bosque, 1990; Foster, 1982; Lotito, 1975; Ramsey and Spaulding, 1956). Second, if scholars acknowledge that variation in mood selection does occur in these instances, the question of appropriate context(s) arises. Here researchers attempt to isolate the precise circumstances where and when the present subjunctive mood may be acceptably substituted for the present indicative and vice versa. To endeavor to examine, analyze, and answer these questions is a colossal task, fascinating in its complexity. It has absorbed

researchers for over four decades and continues both to engross and bewilder many scholars today.

An examination of the work of those who have studied mood choice variation in Spanish in some detail reveals common bonds as well as contradictory results and radical divergence in conclusions when dealing with both *si* and *no saber si*. The scholars who carry out research on mood choice in Spanish and who attempt to account for any patterns of variation which they discover, the theoreticians who seek to analyze and classify mood alternation in Spanish, and the practitioners who try to develop explanations which will clarify mood-related issues for themselves and for non-native speakers of Spanish offer distinct perspectives on the selection and use of mood following the conjunction *si* and/or following constructions which include forms of *no saber si*. Most of their ideas, assumptions, theories, and speculations may be characterized as fitting somewhere on a continuum marked by three fundamental positions.

The first of these categories is made up of the more traditional scholars, many of whom tend to hold the most unyielding position. In general, these researchers allow only for the possibility of present indicative mood use after *si* and/or *no saber si* in a present-time context, and in varying degrees assert prescriptive rules based on this assumption (Bosque, 1990; Foster, 1982; Ridruejo, 1990). If they find themselves faced with the necessity of acknowledging the existence of *si* or *no saber si* followed by the present subjunctive, they tend to offer explanations which seek either to minimize the import of such constructions, to insist upon awkward stipulations such as allowing present subjunctive use when speakers' family origins lie in certain regions in Spain (Galicia, Asturias), or when the form is considered by them to be a fossilized one, or when they

believe that the speaker means *whether* instead of *if*. For example, Foster (1982), in his analysis of internal contradictions and the Spanish subjunctive mood, insists that in modern Spanish *si* must be followed by the indicative mood in the present time contexts (p. 135). However, he acknowledges that forms such as “*No sé si lo pueda hacer* (present subjunctive)” (I don’t know whether I can do it) occur at times in ordinary usage, but argues at the same time that these are “fossilized forms” and have little to do with overall mood choice (p. 135). These stipulations seem at best somewhat arbitrary and at worst unsubstantiated except by native speaker intuition and/or casual observation. Some even try to explain away the existence of such structures altogether.

The remaining two positions, in varying degrees, move away from traditional and uncompromising stances toward a more flexible perspective. The second of the three groups includes most of the researchers who profess what might be termed a cautious-moderate outlook (Bergen, 1978; Espinosa, 1975; Fente Gómez, Fernández Alvarez, and Fejóo, 1981; Klein-Andreu, 1995; Porto Dupery, 1991). Most of these scholars are inclined to acknowledge that some variation occurs in mood choice following *si* and/or *no saber si*, but as the exception, sometimes quite a rare exception, to the norm. The third cluster is made up of those who take the most innovative, unconventional stance (DeMello, 1995; Goldin, 1974; Lantolf, 1978; Sánchez, 1972; Studerus, 1991). They propose, or at least accept, that variation in mood choice after *si* and/or *no saber si* should not be considered an isolated phenomenon.

In order to understand as fully as possible the force of these interpretations, explanations, and recommendations, it is helpful to bear in mind that those studies which refer to the conjunction *si* alone and those which deal with the *no saber si* construction

should not necessarily be considered identical, though they cannot be completely separated due to the intertwining of the two in the presentation of many explanations. Some researchers admit variation in the second category but not in the first, with far more comment and clarification also appearing concerning *no saber si*. It is also useful to recognize that, in some of the research on *si* and/or *no saber si* and mood choice, the concepts and ideas presented are those of grammarians and scholars who publish their views and suggestions in a textbook format, and others are those developed by researchers who present their ideas in other types of books, dissertations, or journal articles.

### The Traditional Perspective

In examining available research which deals with the conjunction *si* and mood choice and usage, one finds that the numerous authors who fit into the first category, whose analyses are generally based upon traditionally delineated patterns of usage, and who usually introduce, comment on, and support their ideas based primarily on native-speaker intuition and literary citations, generally expect to see no variation at all in the use of the present indicative mood following *si*. If they anticipate exceptions, they tend to categorize them as inappropriate aberrations. Some of these scholars and grammarians tend to address the issues directly, offering a variety of reasons for their rejection of the present subjunctive following *si* (Bosque, 1990; Escamilla, 1982; Foster, 1982; Ridruejo, 1990), while others (Bergen, 1978; Espinosa, 1975; Fente Gómez, Fernández Alvarez, and Fejío, 1981; Klein-Andreu, 1995; Porto Dupery, 1991) at times temper their positions somewhat by including qualifiers such as “normally” or “usually” in their statements of unique present indicative use (Solano-Araya, 1982, p. 120).

Escamilla (1982) notes that his informants avoid both present and present perfect subjunctive mood use following *si* with “near perfect regularity” (p. 159). He explains that this avoidance seems to be in keeping with the fact that present subjunctive forms are “taboo” following *si* in prescriptive grammars (p. 159). Ridruejo (1990) states his view even more forcefully. He argues that in what he considers to be standard Spanish, constructions employing the present subjunctive mood after *if* are non-existent (p. 362). Bosque (1990) calls these same constructions ungrammatical (p. 17), citing two examples as unacceptable: “*Depende de si María llegue a tiempo o no* (present subjunctive)” (It depends upon whether or not María arrives on time) and “*Si Pepe esté en lo cierto* (present subjunctive)” (If Pepe is right) (p. 17). Porto Dupery (1991) affirms that, for him, it seems to be pointing out what surely must already be apparent to indicate that the present indicative mood should be used following *si* (pp. 252-253).

#### The Cautious-Moderate Viewpoint

Still other scholars, though agreeing in essence with those who admit only the present indicative mood after *si*, express their ideas within less rigid parameters, some hinting at, some directly admitting the possibility, if not the probability, of mood variation, and some providing examples of the variation which they perceive to be operant, especially when a form of *no saber* precedes the conjunction *si*. Bergen (1978), though seemingly reluctant to assume that any alternation in mood choice exists following *si*, tries to explain why the conjunction works the way it does, and, by this effort, reduces somewhat the posture of rigidity assumed by other traditional scholars in discussing the question. He states that when *si* is followed by a present indicative verb, it conveys the meaning

“assuming that” (p. 233) in the sense that the statement which follows is to be accepted as a fact. The implication, then, is that the use of the present subjunctive mood would convey a different meaning.

Fente Gómez, et al. (1981), in their comprehensive analysis of the Spanish subjunctive, list as the norm only the present indicative mood as a possibility following *si*, going so far as to state categorically that the present subjunctive mood never is acceptable in this context, but soften their normally prescriptive stance somewhat when they concede that in unusual cases following *No sé si* the present subjunctive does sometimes occur: “*No sé si vaya* (present subjunctive)” (I don’t know if he is going) (p. 68). Likewise, Porto Dupery (1991), who normally takes a firm position of indicative mood dominance following *si*, grants the existence of exceptions following the verbs *saber* (to know) and *dudar* (to doubt) when a first person singular subject is employed (p. 125). Espinosa (1975) moves a step further and acknowledges the possibility that both the present indicative mood and the present subjunctive mood may follow *si*, depending on the message to be imparted. He sees the present indicative as merely expressing a consideration of two possibilities which are generally governed by external conditions, and the present subjunctive as communicating a quality of reluctance or doubt. For Klein-Andreu (1995), mood choice as it relates to *si* is explained by the notion of “likely conditions” (p. 423). She contends that, when one wishes to convey this type of presumed probability, the present indicative not the present subjunctive should be the mood of choice. However, she grants that at times *si* does occur with forms other than the present indicative when a choice is implied and the conjunction carries the meaning *whether* rather than *if*: “*No sé si tomaré café hoy* (future indicative)” (I don’t know whether I will drink

coffee today) (p. 429). From her example, it is apparent that she defines other forms as other forms of the present indicative mood rather than widening her vision to include the present subjunctive. Even Lotito (1975), whose basic stance is that the present subjunctive mood never should follow the conjunction *si*, acknowledges in a footnote that some dialectal variation exists in Spanish mood choice (p. 91).

Rojas Anadón (1979) seems to fit into several of the groups which are being categorized in this section, but perhaps her conclusions are best reported at this point, since she finds what she considers to be sufficient reason not to acquiesce to those who claim that the present subjunctive may be used with regularity following *si*, with redundancy being the primary source of her objections. Her stated purpose in studying Spanish mood use is to examine the differences in what is assumed to be standard present indicative and present subjunctive mood usage and what actually appears in spoken language (p. 3). Based on her findings, Rojas Anadón argues that the use of the present indicative mood seems for her informants to be obligated by the fact that *si* carries with itself so much indefiniteness and unreality that to choose the present subjunctive mood would appear to be both repetitious and excessive. Her informants, judging sentences either to be completely acceptable; unacceptable, but used; or completely unacceptable (p. 30), indicate lower acceptance of the present subjunctive mood than the present indicative following the conjunction *si*. She reports only two examples in which she considers the use of the present indicative mood after *si* not to be as high as she might have assumed (58% and 47%), and in both cases she believes that the choice of the present subjunctive mood is an aberration, selected in order to establish more firmly than usual the uncertainty being portrayed by the conjunction *si* (p. 58).

### The Variationist Position

The scholars who fall into the most unconventional and innovative of the categories of conclusions concerning mood choice and who concede the possibility of some mood alternation following the conjunction *si* do so with reference almost exclusively to the *no saber si* construction. They provide helpful information overall, though many do not venture beyond the realm of speculation as to why the variation in mood usage which they report seems to occur, and others merely choose to cite casually gathered examples rather than to include data from studies specifically designed to explore associations between mood choice and *si*. It is not uncommon to find among these researchers and grammarians accounts of their findings in this area presented merely as straightforward, fundamentally unelaborated reports, with little conjecture as to what seems to motivate the use of a variable form, who uses it, when or where it is used, or what restrictions are placed on its use:

*En el habla de ciertas regiones (por ejemplo México) se permite el presente de subjuntivo tras la frase no sé si {No sé si me conozcas (present subjunctive) en vez de No sé si me conoces (present indicative)} {In the speech of certain regions (for example México) the use of the present subjunctive is permitted following the phrase I don't know if (I don't know if you know (present subjunctive) me instead of I don't know if you know (present indicative) me} (Studerus, 1990, p. 41).*

Floyd (1976) simply reports that when two of her informants choose to use *no saber si* in a present-time setting, one prefers to use the present indicative mood, and one is unsure whether the present indicative or present subjunctive seems more appropriate (p. 138).

Goldin (1974) reports both formal and informal findings which support the idea that



variation in mood choice is not just permissible but also a regular occurrence. However, he does add, by way of explanation, that he has received informal accounts that when *si* serves as the equivalent of *whether*, and conveys what he calls “indefinite presupposition” (p. 300), the verb which follows it may appear in the present subjunctive mood. He cites “*No sé si pueda* (present subjunctive)” (**I don’t know whether I/she/he can**) to illustrate this assumption.

Other researchers clarify their interpretations by offering somewhat more detailed information. Sánchez (1972) reports occasional present subjunctive use in contexts where present indicative is the usual form, all of these following *No sé si*. Her explanation for the irregularities is that the substitution of subjunctive for indicative is facilitated by the fact that there are areas where the present indicative-present subjunctive dichotomy is imprecise and where some degree of wavering between the two should be expected (p. 86). Along with a tendency to choose the present indicative mood following clauses of doubt and negation where present subjunctive mood would be usually anticipated, she reports that there is a tendency to expand the use of the present subjunctive to new domains such as following *No sé si* in “*No sé si venga*” (**I don’t know whether I will come**) (p. 57). A similar treatment of the *no saber si* construction, this time with more elaboration as to when variation might be expected to occur, appears in the Lantolf’s (1978) intergenerational study of Spanish in the United States. He sees mood choice as dependent upon speaker attitude, upon whether or not he/she experiences internal ambiguity in relation to the information conveyed. The assumption in his study is that the younger speakers, whose mood use displays greater variability than that of their elders, may be more linguistically sensitive to this indecisiveness.

Working from a slightly different perspective, Fernández Álvarez (1994) centers his comments on the recurrent question of how to deal with the previously mentioned *if/whether* dichotomy, viewing this issue as fairly simple to explain except when the *no saber si* construction is involved:

*Cuando si equivale al inglés (whether), lo que normalmente sucede en las interrogativas indirectas . . . , el verbo dependiente va en indicativo. El caso excepcional ya mencionado es 'no sé si' + presente de subjuntivo (When si is equivalent to the English whether, which normally occurs in indirect questions . . . the dependent verb appears in the indicative. The exceptional cases already mentioned is no sé si + present subjunctive) (p. 117).*

The quandary which researchers face here is, not only whether to accept the *if/whether* explanation, but also how to determine when a given speaker intends to express the meaning *if* and when he/she wants to convey the meaning *whether*. Self-reported evidence, almost always the sole source of data available to address this issue, brings with it a whole new set of problems. In addition, the speakers who report which of the two conjunctions they intended in a particular instance almost have to be Spanish/English bilinguals in order to understand the English *if/whether* distinction well enough to make an appropriate choice.

#### Grammar Texts and Variation

At the same time that all these researchers labor to resolve concerns associated with mood choice, authors of grammar texts are struggling with similar issues. Almost all of these texts, as well as other works which have as their primary focus the explanation of

mood use to non-native speakers, also provide some sort of explanation of mood choice. Many make some reference to the *si* construction and mood alternation as well. These interpretations, descriptions, and recommendations on mood selection tend not to vary in basic philosophy according to the level of proficiency of the target group, and they generally follow essentially the same pattern of philosophical division in perspective as the information provided in journal articles and other scholarly sources: traditional, moderate, unconventional.

### Invariance

That only the present indicative mood may appear following the conjunction *si* is either explicitly stated or implied by many of the traditional textbook grammarians who have published texts during the past 40 years. In other texts, no explicit explanation dealing with mood choice after *si* is provided, but all examples which appear in the explanatory comments are in the present indicative mood (DeMello, 1995, p. 557). Samples of explanations from texts beginning in the late 1950s provide an idea of the kind of information which has been readily available since that time concerning mood choice following *si*. Ramsey and Spaulding (1956), traditionally one of the most frequently consulted texts on Spanish grammar and one which has served as the model of prescriptive standard usage for over forty years, approaches the question of mood choice after *si* by contrasting the use of *si* followed by an infinitive and the use of *si* prior to a conjugated verb. They state quite simply that if *si* introduces a clause, the present indicative mood should appear as the verb which follows it, and that *que* (**that**) is the purveyor of present subjunctive mood (DeMello, 1995, p. 557).

Moving to another established reference text, Solé and Solé (1977) in their work on Spanish syntax refer to the use of the conjunction *si* as an expression of options, perhaps best analogous to the English *whether*. They go on to assert the position which seems to typify most textbook explanations for the following two decades in terms of what is judged permissible in mood choice following *si*: that *si* introduces a presentation of alternatives which must necessarily be followed by the present indicative mood, even when the expression preceding *si* implies a great deal of uncertainty (p. 182). When variation is presented as a possibility, as in Vargas Barón (1988), once again qualifications often eliminate the present subjunctive mood as a possible option. Here his instructions to students learning Spanish warn that care must be taken when using the conjunction *si* because, although the verbs which follow it vary according to the particular circumstance involved, the variation is either contained within the parameters of the indicative mood or involves the use of an infinitive. He lists several examples to illustrate his point, two of which contain a *no saber si* construction. The first has a first person singular subject which is followed by an infinitive rather than a conjugated verb in either mood. The second once again has a first person singular subject in the initial clause, this time with a third person singular future indicative verb following *No sé si*: “*No sé si reír*” {I don’t know whether to laugh (infinitive)} and “*No sé si lo hará*” {I don’t know whether he/she will do it (future indicative)} (p. 138). He does not mention any possibility of present subjunctive mood use following either construction.

Knorre, Dorwich, Glass, and Villareal’s (1993) currently popular text is illustrative of works published during the 1990s which carry forth a similar position. They contend that any time that *si* is followed by a present-time verb, the indicative mood should be

chosen (p. 519). Cantelini Dominicis and Reynolds (1994) also sum up well the thoughts of many of their predecessors when they state that any clause which begins with *if* and which is followed by a verb not judged to be a direct expression of irrealty will not require the present subjunctive mood (p. 161). Iglesias and Meiden (1995) state directly that if the conjunction *si* is to be interpreted as meaning *if*, then no present subjunctive form may follow it (p. 327). Anderson and Vilches Bustamante (1995) take essentially the same stance when they assert that clauses which are introduced by *si* serve as prompts for the imperfect subjunctive, but never for the present subjunctive (p. 122). More recently still, Olivella de Castells, Guzmán, Rush, and García (1998), assume a parallel position as they state that when the future or present indicative appears in the matrix clause, then the present indicative should be used in the subordinate *if* clause (p. 428).

Other authors agree with this general idea, but choose to assert their aversion to the use of the present subjunctive after *si* more forcefully. One of the most direct references to the inadmissibility of the present subjunctive mood following the conjunction comes from Lotito (1975), who states that *si* should not ever be followed by the present subjunctive (p. 91). In her suggestions to teachers who might find it necessary to attempt to explain mood choice to non-native speakers of Spanish, she strongly asserts: “The investigator’s own experience suggests that a little dramatisation, such as ‘Si is never, never, never, never, nunca, nunca, nunca, jamás followed by the present subjunctive’ is helpful . . .” (p. 91). Haro, Sigler and Bennett (1990) are almost as forceful in their never-governed insistence that, although the subjunctive may appear in an adverbial clause which is introduced by *si*, it will always be the imperfect subjunctive, never the present (p. 251).

Avoidance of the issue of present indicative versus present subjunctive use

altogether allows other text authors to instruct learners on when to employ the imperfect subjunctive, alluding to present subjunctive use or non-use only as an afterthought.

Medina (1998) charges learners to use the imperfect subjunctive in a *si* clause which expresses a speculative position or a contrary-to-fact assertion, and not to use the imperfect subjunctive “if the clause refers to a possible present or future situation” (p. 297). He then follows the explanation with examples of the present indicative preceded by *si*.

### Tolerance of Exceptions

A sort of transitional position between those text authors who find the idea that on any occasion a present subjunctive form after the conjunction *si* must be non-standard (Anderson and Vilches Bustamante, 1993; Cantelini Dominicis and Reynolds, 1994; Iglesias and Meiden, 1995; Knorre, et al., 1993; Olivella de Castells, et al., 1988; Ramsey and Spaulding, 1956; Solé and Solé, 1977; Vargas Barón, 1988) and those who assume a less rigid posture (Borrego, Asencio, and Prieto, 1987; DeMello, 1990; Lunn, 1995; Soto, 1974) has been set up by a few other grammarians across the years (Alarcos Llorach, 1987; Butt and Benjamin, 1988; Ramussen, 1995; Steel, 1974; Studerus, 1990). Some of these scholars remain faithful to their original position of invariant usage, but nevertheless cite a few exceptions. They form part of the moderate category primarily because they admit, with greater and lesser degrees of direct support, that variation in mood choice following *si* does occur. Although for the most part they agree that the present indicative mood is the favored choice in an adverbial clause introduced by *si*, they concede that in certain cases the present subjunctive mood may appear. Some offer little or no explanation as to what

these cases are or as to why this variation occurs, other than pointing to the region(s) where it seems most likely to appear, while others attempt to clarify the mood choice process as it evolves following *si*.

Even some early researchers and grammarians who otherwise take what seem to be intractable positions on mood choice overall, relent somewhat when faced with the need to explain repeatedly documented mood alternation after *no saber si*. In Bello's 1964 grammar, a reworking and updating of a 19th century text, *no saber si* constructions are recognized as allowing for somewhat expanded parameters of mood selection, though little in the way of evidence is offered to sustain the ideas which are introduced. Bello explains that use of the present indicative mood affirms any fact presented in a statement, and that use of the present subjunctive mood casts doubt upon the same fact. Even the previously cited Ramsey and Spaulding (1956) text, adhering to the traditional position of the present indicative mood following *si* in their in-text example: "*No sé si vendrá* (future indicative)" (I don't know whether he will come) (p. 474), and leaving the possibility of present subjunctive usage to those verbs which are introduced by *que* (that): "*No sé que venga* (present subjunctive)" (I don't know that he will come) (p. 474), makes one reference in a note (p. 474) to the possibility of the present subjunctive mood being used after *si* when *whether* is the intended meaning. They add that this type of construction occurs infrequently and that when it is used, the uncertainty level of the proposition is raised considerably. Both their examples here come from literary texts, the first from Venezuela and the second from Spain: "*Quién sabe si la necesite* (present subjunctive) . . ." (Who knows if he needs it . . .) from *Canaima* by Rómulo Gallegos, and "*Soy de otra raza, no sé si diga exquisita o gastada y vieja* (present subjunctive)" (I am from another race, I don't

know whether to say an exquisite one or one which is spent and old) from *La sirena negra* by Emilia Pardo Bazán (p. 474).

Soto's (1974) ideas provide later illustrations of a more moderate point of view. He describes the use of the present indicative mood in *si* sentences as necessary any time that, given the condition under consideration, there exists a reasonable degree of certainty that some act will occur (p. 296). Hence he opens the door slightly to a wider range of options for mood variation, but stops short of actually offering any explanation or even suggestion of what other possibilities might exist. Another frequently cited text which presents, though perhaps reluctantly, a moderate position is that of Butt and Benjamin (1988). For these authors, the only context that affords the possibility of the present subjunctive mood following the conjunction *si* is one in which the speaker wishes to have his/her style labeled "formal literary" (p. 338), and in which some form of the verb *saber* (to know) precedes the conjunction. They reiterate that the *no saber si* plus a present subjunctive construction is rarely predicted, but that occasionally examples such as "*No sé si sea cierto* (present subjunctive)" (I don't know if it's true) instead of "*No sé si es cierto* (present indicative)" (I don't know if it is true) (p. 338) will appear in native speaker speech.

Steel (1985) elaborates his explanation more fully, specifying *no saber* as one of the verb phrases which may be followed by either the present indicative or the present subjunctive mood. Also, in discussing when the infinitive may replace the subjunctive, he mentions that the subjunctive may be used following *si*, though the example which follows indicates that he is probably referring to the imperfect subjunctive (p. 231). He does point out, however hesitantly, that "there are a few other cases where the replacement of a standard indicative or infinitive by a subjunctive verb is possible" (p. 231), but he does not



elaborate further. Under his category of colloquial subjunctive uses, Steel also includes a substitution of the present subjunctive mood for the present indicative following affirmative belief, and negative expressions of knowledge (pp. 233-234), and in his listing of vernacular usages, he cites the example “*No sé si diga que en cuanto a pintar no tiene que envidiar a nadie* (present subjunctive)” (**I don’t know whether to say that in reference to painting he doesn’t have to envy anyone**) (p. 234). Studerus (1990) also follows this pattern. He states in his *Temas gramaticales* that, even though the preferred form remains the present indicative mood following *si*, in some parts of the Spanish-speaking world, in particular in Mexico, that the *no saber si* construction might be followed by the present subjunctive. Nevertheless, he does not leave his readers without a counterexample in which the present indicative mood appears after *no saber si* (p. 40).

Alarcos Llorach (1987), in his study of Spanish functional grammar, adds another dimension to the explanations and constraints for mood choice after *no saber si*. Following the same pattern as others among his colleagues, he states that present subjunctive constructions such as *No sé si venga* (present subjunctive) (**I don’t know whether I’ll come**) are at times used when the infinitive construction *No sé si venir* (infinitive) (**I don’t know whether to come**), in his opinion, would be expected, but also pronounces quite emphatically that the subject of both the matrix verb and the dependent clause must be identical before the present subjunctive mood can be a possible choice. Otherwise, he believes that the present indicative, the future indicative, the imperfect indicative, or the conditional is obligatory. For him, the infinitive is simply an ellipsis where the verb *debo* (**I should**) has been omitted. Thus, he provides the multi-option example: “*No sé si venir/vendrá/venía/vendría* (infinitive/future indicative/imperfect indicative/conditional

indicative)” (I don’t know whether to come/she will come/she was coming/she would come) (p. 335), omitting completely the *No sé si venga* (present subjunctive) (I don’t know if she will come) alternative.

Ramussen (1995), in addressing examples from literary sources, provides support for some of these same ideas, while disagreeing with others. He submits that after *si*, present subjunctive forms are possible, though not likely to occur. He concedes, however, that some examples do exist of present subjunctive use following *si* when the subject of the two clauses are not identical (p. 86). Also, he ventures further than many of his contemporaries in trying to explain how mood choice works as he sets up certain stipulations which he claims must be in force before any alternate use is permissible: *saber* as the preceding verb; generally, non-coreference of subjects of the matrix and the subordinate clause; origin in Spain from some dialect other than the standard Castilian (usually Galician or Asturian); and more likely to occur in Latin America (p. 86).

#### Acceptance of Variation

Those who might be called unconventional text authors are less numerous, and it is often difficult to distinguish their ideas from those of authors in the moderate camp, since some will fit into each of these categories on certain issues. Where such texts do exist, perhaps the most notable characteristic which at times distinguishes them from similar works is their reference to actual language usage, rather than the idealizations typical of the explanations provided by the more traditional grammarians. Borrego, et al. (1987) argue that in *no saber si* constructions, the verb in second position (in the subordinate clause) is usually in the present indicative mood, although they admit also that both the infinitive and

the present subjunctive can be found in both classical and modern texts. They add that these substitutions may not be acceptable to all speakers. They refer to *No sé si* as the most typical manner in which to introduce indirect questions in which the speaker is thinking about what to do or considering possibilities prior to choosing a plan of action. An additional comment suggests that one may find either an infinitive or the present subjunctive mood following such constructions (p. 112). Examples provided to illustrate these questions include: “*No sé si vaya* (present subjunctive) *o no* {*si fuera* (imperfect subjunctive) *o no, si ir* (infinitive) *o no*}.” (I don’t know whether or not I’m going/might go/to go) (p. 117). With this sentence they illustrate a range of possibilities, first the present subjunctive, then the imperfect subjunctive, and finally the infinitive.

DeMello’s (1990) *Español contemporáneo* is also a good illustration of this type of text, though here his ideas are still more traditional than those found in his later work (see DeMello, 1995). His understanding of the relationship of *si* constructions and mood choice lead him to state that *si*, when it means *if*, should not be accompanied by the present subjunctive mood except at times following *saber* expressions which convey either negation or doubt, such as *no saber si* (not to know if) or *¿Quién sabe si?* (Who knows if?) (p. 298). Here one finds a glimmer of recognition of the possibility that actual everyday usage might form a significant part of the mood choice picture. DeMello illustrates his position as follows: “*No sé si vengan* (present subjunctive) {*vienen* (present indicative)/*vendrán* (future indicative)} *Enrique e Hilda*” (I don’t know if Enrique and Hilda will come); and “*¿Quién sabe si tales cosas siquiera existan* (present subjunctive) {*existen* (present indicative)}?” (Who knows whether such things even exist?) (p. 298). Even though his work seems to portray a more open position on mood selection, he still

places present subjunctive usage after *si* in the category of an option, and does not choose to make any kind of judgment as to when this choice might/does occur.

A few other scholars and grammarians look for answers to the mood variation following *no saber si* in usages particular to certain dialect areas. Woehr (1977) relates Lope Blanch's observation that while a Spaniard will tend to use the future indicative or an infinitive following a *no saber si* construction, a Mexican speaker is more likely to select the present subjunctive if the structures under consideration are what he calls "oraciones interrogativas dubitativas" (interrogative questions expressing doubt) such as "*No sé cómo lo diga* (present subjunctive)" (**I don't know how I'll say it**) (p. 74) (Lope Blanch, 1953, p. 74). Here the use of *como* instead of *si* is of interest and requires some explanation. The conjunctions *que* (**that**) and *como* (**how**) have traditionally been associated with present subjunctive use, with this mood preference being linked to the degree of uncertainty implied by both. For some speakers, a possible connection, or perhaps even a parallel, might exist with the *si* conjunction and the use of *que* or *como*.

In yet another attempt to explain Spanish mood choice, Lunn (1995) connects the issue of regional dialect usage and the variation which accompanies mood choice. She provides samples of speech such as the following which encompass a variety of Latin American dialects: "...when a conditional sentence is introduced by *no sé* 'I don't know,' the following verb appears in the subjunctive, e.g. *No sé si pueda* (present subjunctive) 'I don't know if I can'" (p. 434). By way of clarification, she states that despite the fact that Spaniards find the usage to be strange, it is "widespread in America" (p. 434). Although this wide-group designation appears to provide comprehensive patterns of usage, it also brings with it all the problems inherent in such a broad selection of subjects and calls into

question whether her conclusion is stated somewhat more forcefully and with fewer qualifications than such a general statement of common usage should allow. Nevertheless, the evidence which she furnishes to support her ideas merits consideration. True to her overall perspective on mood use, which includes the idea that a general pattern of non-assertive constructions allows for subjunctive use, she argues that in the case cited above, “denial of knowledge” (p. 434) together with the *si* conditional conjunction moves the speaker toward the present subjunctive.

Other researchers also base their explanations for mood choice following *si*, at least in part, on the idea of regional variation. They assert, with some qualification, that the present subjunctive after *si* does at times occur, but add that it is not typical. They see any documented variation as primarily a product of regional differences. Alarcos Llorach (1987) argues that present subjunctive use following *si* generally appears as an outgrowth from non-Spanish (non-Castilian) roots, citing Galician and Asturian speakers as two possible sources. Once again resorting to dialect variation as part of his explanation, Fernández Álvarez (1994) argues that the use of the present subjunctive following *si* appears infrequently (p. 115), but that some Asturians (Spain) and/or Galicians (Spain) use “*No sé si venga* (present subjunctive)” (I don’t know if I’m coming) instead of “*No sé si venir* (infinitive)” (I don’t know whether to come) and like constructions (p. 48). Líbano-Zumalacárregui (1985) disagrees. He insists that the use of the present subjunctive mood after a *si* construction is not an Americanism, but that it also appears in Peninsular Spanish usage, citing the following Peninsular example to support his contention:

*No sé si ya se pueda ver, porque hasta poco no permitía el Instituto de*

*Arqueología que se entrara todavía* (present subjunctive) (I don’t know if it can be

seen as yet, because until a short time ago the Institute of Archaeology still didn't allow anyone to enter) (p. 122).

Overall, both scholars and grammarians who veer away from a posture of invariance and thereby forge a path toward greater understanding of how mood choice varies in natural language, fall short of arguing their positions in a completely convincing manner. Many of them appear satisfied with definitions which are too vague to be applied by other researchers, supply examples which seem to have been accumulated haphazardly, and frequently neglect any reference to sociolinguistic influences. In addition, data to back up speculations are often meager, if not absent altogether. Furthermore, qualifications as to what may occur in the process of mood alternation are sometimes issued as lone statements, unaccompanied by explanations as to why they are imposed. Readers are left to wonder whether these prerequisite conditions are merely arbitrary assumptions or perhaps even necessities which arise in support of a particular theory. It is difficult to accept even speculations which seem to be well-thought-out and logically presented without more substantial evidence which is directly connected to real language data than is routinely available.

#### Mexican Spanish Speakers and Variation in Mood Use

After having reviewed these analyses of general representative sources of research dealing with Spanish mood alternation and *si*, as well as explanations for the findings reported in these studies, it seems appropriate to move on to examine more closely the relationship of mood and *si* among speakers of Mexican Spanish, where there is more explicit support reported for the use of the present subjunctive following *no saber si* and

where the information supplied contains both more examples and more well-developed explanations. According to Bayerová (1994), since the mid 1960s in Mexico, there has been a steady interest in the study and analysis of both tense and mood in Spanish (p. 61). This consistent attention has manifested itself in many ways, including so strong an acceptance of mood variation that, from the 1970s, some renowned scholars such as Moreno de Alba (1975, 1978) and Levy Podolsky (1983) do not even mention directly the use of the present indicative following *no saber si* as a probable choice in mood delineation when they make reference specifically to Mexican Spanish (De Mello, 1995, p. 566).

### Early Research

In most available studies of both Mexican and Mexican-American Spanish speakers conducted in the 1970s, and in some earlier research as well, this expanded view of the mood choice question is apparent. Early in what would be his numerous studies of Mexican Spanish, Lope Blanch (1953) states that the prescriptions laid down by the Real Academia Española (Spanish Royal Academy) concerning present subjunctive usage are not always followed even in Spain, much less in Latin America. He explains that in Mexico the verb in the subordinate clause might appear in either the present indicative or the present subjunctive mood when two basic criteria are met: the time under consideration must be future, and the subject of both the matrix clause and the subordinate clause must be the same. With the examples which he presents, in which the subjects of both clauses are identical, “*No sé si salga* (present subjunctive)” and “*No sé si saldré* (future indicative)” (I don’t know whether I will leave) (p. 74), he seeks to illustrate his hypothesis that the agent of the matrix clause must be in control of the act being carried out in order

for the present subjunctive to be the operative mood. According to his interpretation, in the case of the present subjunctive verb in the previous example, whether or not the leaving takes place is dependent only upon the speaker/agent, who has not yet firmly decided. In the present indicative example, the act is not assumed to be under the direct governance of the speaker/agent. Here Lope Blanch notes once again that in cases where this variation in mood choice in everyday usage is found, the future indicative seems to be the preferred form in Spain, while in Mexico the present subjunctive is used more frequently, and either form, according to his judgment, should be considered grammatically acceptable.

#### Research During the 1970s and 1980s

The *Cuestionario para el estudio de la norma culta lingüística de las principales ciudades de Iberoamérica y la Península Ibérica* (1972), the instrument used to gather information for one of the largest available data sources dealing with Spanish, provides further details on mood choice and *si*. Alleyne (1975) describes the *norma culta* (educated speech) studies portion of this project in Latin America as a major undertaking whose primary purpose was to characterize educated speech in urban setting throughout Spanish-speaking Latin American countries. It was limited to what was considered at the time to be the habitual speech of the middle class in both spoken and written modes. Informants, 600 per city, were selected for uniformity of occupational, educational, and family backgrounds as well as travel and other cultural experiences (p. 181). With specific reference to Mexico, Lope Blanch (1986) reports that the *norma culta* project there comprised 420 hours of recordings, 32 of which were selected for transcription, with verbs being the most frequent category of study. In this questionnaire, one instance of the *No sé si* construction



is included as a question, with a choice of three possible replies: present indicative, future indicative, and present subjunctive: “*No sé si viene* (present indicative)/ *vendrá* (future indicative)/*venga* (present subjunctive) *más tarde*” (I don’t know if he is coming/will come/is coming later) (p. 87). The fact that the present subjunctive mood is included as an option at all demonstrates that it was at least a predictable variant at that time, possibly even an expected one, either for certain dialect areas or in certain linguistic or situational contexts. No explanation of why or how variants are chosen is offered in the *Cuestionario*.

Continuing the reference to Spanish as it is spoken in México, Moreno de Alba (1975, 1978) serves as an example of a researcher who reverses what he considers to be the general rule of usage for many of his more conservative contemporaries. Referring expressly to Mexican Spanish, and contrasting primarily present subjunctive, future indicative and infinitive use after *no saber si*, he seems to view the present subjunctive as the norm in clauses following *No sé si* and to allow for the present and future indicative as alternative possibilities rather than expecting that they will be the usual usages. He goes so far as to state not only that the present subjunctive is a possibility after *no saber si*, but also that it may be considered obligatory, leaving the strong impression that he expects his readers to be surprised if the present subjunctive mood does not appear following the construction. By way of explanation, he appears to attribute variation in mood selection principally to semantic differences. He believes that, in general, Mexican speakers use the present subjunctive mood following *si* when they wish to communicate doubt and the infinitive when they wish to show hesitation or irresolution (DeMello, 1995, p. 566-567). In addition, he argues that the present indicative or the present subjunctive might at times occur in what seem to be identical contexts (1975, p. 254). Of the seven examples which

he provides (1975) to illustrate what he calls the “libre alternancia de formas indicativas y subjuntivas” (free variation of indicative and subjunctive forms) (1975, p. 249), four deal with *No sé si*: “*No sé si estuvo aquí el año pasado* (preterite indicative)” (I don’t know whether he was here last year); “*No sé si haya estado aquí* (present perfect subjunctive)” (I don’t know whether he has been here); “*No sé si venga a la fiesta* (present subjunctive)” (I don’t know whether he will come to the party); and “*No sé si vendrá a la fiesta* (future indicative)” (I don’t know whether he will come to the party) (1975, p. 249). The two instances of present subjunctive use (present and present perfect) are not cited as exceptions, but rather seem, in keeping with Moreno de Alba’s later work, to be presented as examples of common everyday speech. Also, the absence of an example of *No sé si* followed by the present indicative seems illustrative of his belief that it should not be regarded as the normal pattern of usage.

In additional illustrations of what he considers to be customary usage among Mexican speakers, Moreno de Alba (1978b) provides further support for his conclusions, apparently satisfied that the percentage of present subjunctive use in this research is sufficiently high for him to regard its frequency as assumed. He reports that in his group of 40 informants who were asked to select their preference for present subjunctive or present indicative in the sentence “*No sé si esté* (present subjunctive) \* *está* (present indicative) *enfermo*” (I don’t know whether he is ill), 67.5% choose either future or present indicative and 32.5% present subjunctive (1978b, p. 135). In the case of “*No sé si sea* (present subjunctive) \* *es* (present indicative) *esto lo que pide*” (I don’t know whether this is what he is asking for), 55% prefer the present indicative and 45% the present subjunctive (1978b, p. 135). He also includes a future indicative/present subjunctive contrast: “*No sé si cante*

(present subjunctive) / *no sé si cantará* (future indicative)” (I don’t know whether he will sing) (1978b, p. 135), here stating that in a case such as this one, most Mexican speakers prefer the present subjunctive.

### Saber and Mood Choice

Perhaps the best introduction to later works dealing with the *no saber si* mood choice coupling in Mexican Spanish comes from Levy Podolsky (1983). He takes a slightly different approach to analyzing mood alternation by centering his discussion around the verb *saber*. After studying complement distribution in Mexican Spanish, he concludes that the verb *saber* should be considered an exception to the general pattern of mood use with the conjunction *si* so adamantly upheld by many scholars as invariant. He explains that *no saber si* allows for three possibilities when the speaker is attempting to express ideas such as “I don’t know whether or not I’ll go”: “*No sé si vaya o no*” (present subjunctive); “*No sé si iré o no*” (future indicative); and “*No sé si ir o no*” (infinitive) (p. 91). Therefore, in the case of *si* with *saber*, he believes that both the indicative and the subjunctive are acceptable. In addition, he adds “o no” (or not) at the end of the *no saber si* verb sequences, using this phrase as an aid in illustrating his contention that the verb *saber* necessitates an exception:

*Pero el caso de saber, casi podríamos decir que su negación normalmente requiere este tipo de completiva, pues con que hay algunas restricciones: Sé que vienen* (present indicative) \* *No sé que vengan* (present subjunctive) \* *No sé si vengan* (present subjunctive) { **But the case of to know we could say that its negation normally requires this type of complement (subjunctive), since with that there are some**

restrictions: I know that they are coming (present indicative) \* I don't know that they are coming (present subjunctive) \* I don't know whether they are coming (present subjunctive)} (p. 91).

In other words, he is arguing that any negation of *saber* which is followed by a conjunction, be it *si* or *que*, allows for the possibility of present subjunctive use. Two points here seem worthy of note. First, the “or not” phrase which Levy Podolsky (1983) at times includes in his examples is conspicuously absent from many of the examples provided for information, clarification, and explanation of mood choice by other researchers, and would appear to correspond to a certain extent to the explanation which is often put forth informally by some researchers as well as self-reported accounts by bilingual native Spanish speakers when they are asked why the present subjunctive has appeared in their speech or someone else's when they themselves argue that it is never used after the conjunction *si*. This explanation hesitantly acknowledges that the present subjunctive mood could be used “sometimes” if the speaker means “I don't know whether or not.”

### Research in the 1990s

DeMello's (1995) work on mood choice provides additional strong evidence for the use of the present subjunctive after *no saber si* in México. He concludes that the present indicative following *No sé si* in Mexican Spanish is used “only rarely” (p. 566). Garnering this information from the *norma culta* corpus gathered in Spain and throughout much of Latin America in the 1970s, he reports a total of 445 instances of *no saber si* use. With specific reference to the Mexico City data, he reports that 65% (11 of 17) of the time there, the present subjunctive was found following the *no saber si* construction. He

assumes the present indicative mood to be the norm in the other three cities where he found mood alternation after *no saber si* and with which he compared México's mood choice patterns. Results for Bogota show 33% present subjunctive use following *no saber si* (13 of 39), with the Caracas corpus displaying 17% (6 of 35), followed by Santiago de Chile with 5% (3 of 58). In the other cities studied in the *norma culta* project (Buenos Aires, Havana, La Paz, Lima, Madrid, San Juan, and Seville), no present subjunctive forms appeared following *no saber si* (p. 559).

In addition to the *No sé si* construction examined by most other researchers, DeMello analyzes mood selection following *¿Quién sabe si?* (**Who knows if/whether?**), a phrase which he believes expresses “implied negation” (p. 569). All examples of present subjunctive use after this expression were produced by Mexican informants. He also refers to and/or provides samples from the *norma culta* data exemplifying the use of other forms of *no saber si* constructions, 16 of 18 of which are in the present indicative mood: *No sabe si* (**He/She doesn't know whether**) (6); *No sabemos si* (**We don't know whether**) (3); *No sabíamos si* (**We didn't know whether**) (3); *Tampoco sé si* (**Neither do I know whether**) (1); *Ni siquiera sé si* (**I don't even know whether**) (1); *Desconozco si* (**I am unacquainted/unfamiliar with whether**) (1); *Yo no sabía si* (**I didn't know whether**) (1); *Yo tampoco sabía si* (**I didn't know either whether**) (1); and *sin saber si* (**without knowing whether**) (1). Of the two non-present indicative forms, one, *No sabemos si* (**We don't know whether**), is followed by the present subjunctive and one, *Ni siquiera sé si* (**I don't even know whether**), by the modal future. The first of these was found in the Bogota corpus, and the second in the Madrid data (p. 570).

The examples which DeMello provides from Mexican Spanish are varied in terms

of the verbs which follow the *no saber si* construction, their appearance in declarative, interrogative, or exclamatory constructions, and the particular form of *no saber si* which introduces them: “*No sé si la repitan* (present subjunctive)” (I don’t know whether they will repeat it) (p. 561); “*No sé si pueda o no pueda, porque nunca lo he intentado* (present subjunctive)” (I don’t know whether I can or I can’t because I’ve never tried to do it) (p. 561); “*¿Quién sabe si él, ‘todopoderoso,’ casándose, cambie?* (present subjunctive)” (Who knows whether he, all powerful, getting married will change?) (p. 569); “*¿Quién sabe si Dios me lo conceda!* (present subjunctive)” (Who knows whether God will grant it to me!) (p.569). He also reports a very high instance (82%) of coreferential subjects in the *No sé si* data from the Mexico City corpus (p. 561).

Disagreeing with Moreno de Alba (1978a) as to what factors govern the mood selection process involved in these examples, DeMello rejects any semantic explanation as less than complete, if useful at all (p. 567). His preferred schema centers around an overall contrast of indicative and non-indicative (subjunctive and modal conditional), rather than accepting any subjunctive-indicative dichotomy as satisfactory. In his model, DeMello interprets indicative as characterized by “ignorance, lack of knowledge” and non-indicative as “doubt, uncertainty” (p. 567). He admits that he cannot account for Mexican Spanish within the scope of his general rule, but he seems to think that for Mexican speakers the contrast, instead of present subjunctive/present indicative, must be subjunctive, expressing doubt, and future or conditional indicative, both expressing indecision (p. 567).

Although DeMello’s study furnishes more helpful information referring directly to *no saber si* than is found in most other sources, its results are based on a small number of examples of the construction (149) in the four countries where any variation in mood

choice is present. Also, his percentages of use when unaccompanied by the precise number of tokens involved might be confusing, especially in the case of México where only 17 examples were reported. Such broad generalizations as he appears to offer based on so few tokens seem questionable without further investigation which includes more substantial statistical support. Yet another possible difficulty with DeMello's results should also be mentioned. The fact that the language samples which he analyzes are more than twenty years old, with no efforts at updating or comparing them with more recent samples might be cause for concern if one mistakenly assumes the data to be the equivalent of current usage patterns.

#### Mood Variation Research in Colombia, Chile, and Venezuela

Since instances of variation following the *no saber si* construction provided by editors of or researchers using as their data bases the *norma culta* projects in Chile, Colombia, and Venezuela situate their examples within a greater amount of context than is found in many other studies of mood variation in Spanish, it might be useful to examine also some of their examples, recognizing once again that the language production involved is not necessarily typical of today's speech. In Chile, the country which provides the most documented instances (58), though the lowest percentage of usage of present subjunctive after *si* (5%), Rabanales and Contreras (1990) found only three instances of present subjunctive use following *si* in their portion of the *norma culta* project carried out in Santiago. All of these examples have first person singular verbs in the matrix clause. “*No sé si me escape alguna especialidad* (present subjunctive)” (I don't know whether I'll manage to avoid some specialty) (p. 222); “*No sé si usted esté de acuerdo* (present

subjunctive)” (I don’t know whether you agree) (p. 235); and

*Decía hace un momento que Borges era como un individuo en una crisis intensa; a mi modo de ver, la crisis de Borges - no sé si en esto sea excesivamente subjetivo para analizarlo - es la crisis del hombre que está profundamente capacitado . . . para vivir y que se ve limitado por factores externos* (present subjunctive) (You were saying a moment ago that Borges was like an individual in the midst of an intense crisis; from my perspective, Borges’ crisis - I don’t know if in this I’m too subjective to analyze - it’s the crisis of a man who is deeply capable . . . of living and who sees himself being limited by external factors) (p. 295).

These examples are of particular interest since they deal with *escapar* (to escape), *estar* (to be), and *ser* (to be) in the present subjunctive, verbs which seem to appear only rarely other sites. Also, the first two of the three examples do not display coreferential subjects, and in the third quotation the question of opinion and the present subjunctive mood comes into play. Furthermore, the subjunctive verb in the third example appears in a parenthetical comment, also uncommonly found among examples used to illustrate mood selection.

Otálora de Fernández and González (1986) in their contribution to the *norma culta* study of speech in Bogota (Colombia) also found a few examples of the present subjunctive (13) used following a *no saber si* construction. Typical of these usages are the following:

*Doctor, ¿entonces el plan aquel de las ciudades dentro de las ciudades que, pues, por épocas como que tiene bastante resonancia, pero no sabemos si lo lleven a cabo, sería una solución* (present subjunctive) (Doctor, then that plan of the cities inside the cities that, well, for ages has been well enough understood, but we don’t know if they will carry it out, it would be a solution) (p. 133);



*hace en la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, m . . . es una cosa muy solemne, acaba uno el examen y lo hacen retirarse. Le dicen tenga la bondad de retirarse porque el jurado va a deliberar* (present subjunctive) (That, I don't know if you know, is done in the School of Arts and Sciences, em . . . it is a very solemn occasion, one finishes the test and they make him leave. They tell him, please leave because the jury is going to deliberate) (p. 165); *Pero si hay que tener la . . . la . . . eh . . . suficiente generosidad para pensar (o yo no sé si eso se pueda llamar generosidad, no creo, yo creo que se puede llamar más bien concepto del deber y responsabilidad), . . .* (present subjunctive) (But yes it is necessary to have the . . . the . . . uh . . . enough generosity to think (or I don't know if that can be called generosity, I don't think so, I think that it is better called one's concept of obligation and responsibility) (pp. 239-240); *No sé si estas muchachas se atrevan a repetirlo enfrente de sus padres, pero si lo hacen enfrente de sus padres es verdaderamente lastimoso que no haga corrección fuerte y enérgica para detener esta ola de . . . de vulgaridad, como X decía* (present subjunctive) (I don't know if these girls dare to repeat it in front of their parents, but if they do it in front of their parents it's really a shame that they don't correct them once and for all in order to stop this wave of . . . of vulgarity, as X was saying) (p. 478).

In the first example, there are three points which should be noted. First, the subject of the matrix clause is not the first person singular as found preceding most other examples of the subjunctive, but rather the first person plural. Also in the first example, the agent in the matrix clause and that of the subordinate clause are not identical. Finally, the present subjunctive use in this example is located in a parenthetical statement. In the second example provided by Otálora de Fernández and González, the two subjects once again are

not coreferential, and the subordinate clause is once again parenthetical, and this comment is directly addressed to the hearer. The third example is also interesting in that the subordinate clause not only is not coreferential but is also an impersonal construction, and the subject of the parenthetical subordinate clause is expressed. The final example repeats the pattern of non-coreferential subjects.

Finally, one of the examples of the six furnished by Rosenblatt (1979) in the Caracas (Venezuela) portion of the *norma culta* endeavor should be noted:

*eso es . . . mundial . . . mente conocido y pero . . . el salto del tordito sí es una cosa más específica nuestra, yo no sé si sea de Caracas, porque . . . el tordito es un ave que a . . . que es muy . . .* (present subjunctive) (That is . . . known . . . worldwide and but . . . the *salto del tordito* ( a kind of bird) yes it's something more specifically ours, I don't know if it is from Caracas, because . . . the *tordito* is a bird . . . that is very . . . ) (p. 508).

Again the two subjects are not identical, and the verb *ser* (to be), which has not occurred in textbook examples with any frequency, appears, this time in an aside.

#### Mood Variation and Mexican Spanish Speakers in the United States

Research parallel to much of that represented above has also been carried out among Mexican Spanish speakers living in the United States, with final results leaning strongly toward mood variation. Sánchez (1972) cites examples of present subjunctive to present indicative variation in mood usage as a regular pattern among Mexican Americans. She describes her informants as both tending to choose the present indicative following clauses of negation where the present subjunctive would be usual, and expanding the use of

the present subjunctive to what she considers new domains, one being after *no saber si*: “*No sé si venga* (present subjunctive) (I don’t know whether she/he is coming)” (p. 57).

In a more recent study of Los Angeles Spanish, Silva-Corvalán (1994) echoes these ideas as she addresses mood choice as it manifests itself in a primarily Mexican population. Based on her data, she concludes that the present indicative-present subjunctive alternation is best characterized as one founded on meaning differences apparent in the two moods (p. 264), rejecting any clear-cut reality/unreality dichotomy. She views mood choice as an issue affected by a positioning of the particular verb along a continuum of assertion to non-assertion in the mind of the speaker instead of acknowledging any measure of prescriptive control on the part of the matrix clause expression. She lists “*No sé si hable* (present subjunctive) (I don’t know whether I/he/she will speak)” as an example of the uncertainty with which a speaker is faced in portraying what for him/her is reality. Of her 393 tokens in this category in her study, 78 appear in the present subjunctive (p. 265).

#### *Si* and Choices Other Than Present Indicative or Present Subjunctive

Also important in examining and understanding the relationship of *si* and mood choice, and connected to details of this association in Mexico and other Latin American countries, is the topic of verb selection following *si* when neither the present indicative nor the present subjunctive is chosen. In the *norma culta* corpus, there are no uses of the imperfect subjunctive after *No sé si*, and DeMello’s (1995) anecdotal reports of his other research offer similar information. He notes, however, two instances of present perfect subjunctive used following *no saber si*, one from Mexico City and one from Bogota:

“*¿Pero quién sabe si lo haya simplificado?* (present perfect subjunctive)” (But who know

whether he has simplified it?) and “*Yo no sé si haya llegado a adquirir esas propiedades* (Present perfect subjunctive)” (I don’t know whether he has managed to acquire those properties) (p. 565). He also reports the use of both future and conditional as frequent after *No sé si*. These two tenses account for 27% of the overall number of cases examined (93 cases of future and 27 of conditional). Many of these future examples are not used to express future time but as modals to indicate probability (p. 562).

In comparing the present indicative, present subjunctive, and modal use following *No sé si* in Mexico City, Bogota, Caracas, and Santiago, DeMello (1995) reports 80 uses of present indicative (53.69%), 33 of present subjunctive (22.15%), and 36 of modals (24.16%) (p. 566). The figures for Mexico City, which had the largest percentage of present subjunctive (65%), with only 1% present indicative, and 29% modals, were based upon only 17 tokens. As stated earlier, eleven of the 17 were present subjunctive (p. 566).

#### Mood Choice Variation in Non-*Si* Sentences

Finally, a brief inquiry into research which reveals patterns of mood choice variation in instances other than those following *si* might also be beneficial to consider. In his 1958 article, Lope Blanch not only demonstrates that the present indicative is at times substituted for the present subjunctive in expressions which show possibility, but also argues that this reversal of normal prescriptive expectations should not surprise those who are attuned to common, everyday speech (p. 385). Sánchez (1972) maintains that Spanish speakers often deviate from what is perceived to be the established norm in conversation, substituting the present indicative for the present subjunctive: “especialmente en los casos de verbos de negación o duda, a pesar de que también existe la tendencia de ampliar el uso:

*No sé si venga* (present subjunctive)” (especially in cases of verbs of negation or doubt, in spite of the fact that a tendency also exists to increase subjunctive use: I don’t know if I’ll come) (p. 57). Blake’s (1982) findings are in agreement with the last part of Sánchez’ claim, reporting present subjunctive use in place of present indicative following some assertive matrices such as *Es obvio* (**It is obvious** - 31%), *creer* (**to believe** - 36%), and *Es seguro* (**It is sure** - 62%) (p. 20). Torres’ (1989) study of mood variation in temporal clauses reveals subordinate clauses dealing with future time such as “*cuando vamos a Puerto Rico* (present indicative) (**when we go to Puerto Rico**)” instead of the expected “*cuando vayamos a Puerto Rico* (present subjunctive)”. She tries to explain this alternation by pointing to different situational contexts, along with how the level of probability of the actual completion of the action might appear to the individual speaker (p. 73).

### Conclusion

In considering the overall results of all the studies, it is apparent that researchers have sought explanations for the enigma faced when examining and analyzing mood variation, but still struggle to find a definitive resolution to the many difficulties which continue to arise. Some authors seem certain that their position is the only viable option, while others continue to puzzle over the idiosyncratic nature of the question. Nonetheless, based on the arguments, the data, and the opinions found in the research on mood choice and *si*, and attempts to answer the questions originally posed by researchers and constantly reevaluated since that time concerning this connection, two basic conclusions can be outlined. First, there are still scholars and grammarians who maintain that there are few if

any regular patterns of variation following *si*, and that when the odd present subjunctive use appears in this context, explain it as a quirk, an isolated deviation. Their reasons for this stance are many: that the conjunction *si* already expresses sufficient uncertainty and thus does not require further expression of doubt (Rojas Anadón, 1979); that the use of the present subjunctive following *si* is prohibited in prescriptive grammar and therefore speakers will not choose it (Escamilla, 1982); that present subjunctive use following *si* is simply ungrammatical (Bosque, 1990); that the use of the present subjunctive mood following *si* is nothing more than an inexplicable fossilized form which has continued to be used by a few speakers (Foster, 1982); or that any time that *si* means “if,” the present subjunctive is not appropriate (Iglesias and Meiden, 1995).

On the other hand, those researchers who acknowledge the existence and/or appropriacy of variable forms also recount, generally with some degree of overlap, a variety of explanations for their perspectives: that present subjunctive mood use following *si* shows the speaker’s lack of resolve (Woehr, 1977); that present subjunctive use following *si* reveals speaker doubt as opposed to speaker hesitation or irresolution (Moreno de Alba, 1975, 1978); that the verb *saber* creates an environment for exception and therefore permits present subjunctive use when it is paired with *si* (Levy Podolsky, 1983); that the mood variation is due to the regional origins of one’s family (Lunn, 1995; DeMello, 1995); or that mood variation is at least in part due to the existence of gray areas of usage where speakers constantly vacillate between the two moods (Klein-Andreu, 1995).

The conclusions which these researchers and scholars have drawn from their studies of variation in mood choice and use following *no saber si* have, for the most part, been

reported in general terms. Even those who deal with specific groups of speakers, tend to account for their findings by describing the group(s) as a unit. In other words, research dealing with variable use of the present indicative and the present subjunctive in the same or similar contexts has quite often examined and analyzed available data without direct reference to any specific divisions or categories of speakers within a given speech community. In order to clarify more precisely the extent to which mood choices vary among individual groups, the examination of reported findings concerning the gender and the age of the speakers whose language demonstrates variable patterns of mood use found in the following chapter should help to refine and develop the question of how mood selection operates.

## CHAPTER IV

## GENDER, AGE, AND SPANISH LANGUAGE VARIATION

## Introduction

Much of the research concerning gender and age which has been reported in the past twenty-five years has shown that both are factors which influence language variation (Almeida, 1995; Cameron, 1992; Cedergren, 1973; Eckert, 1984; Eisikovits, 1981; Lakoff, 1986; Muse, 1980; Rissel, 1989; Serrano and Almeida, 1994; Tannen, 1994). These analyses, far more abundant in treating gender than age, offer data from a wide variety of contexts, with conclusions ranging from superficial remarks, in which the scope of application is sharply constrained, to precisely-chronicled, well-thought-out observations which provide sound insights into the empirical realities of gender and age differentiated patterns of language use. The body of research on gender and language and/or age and language specific to Spain and Spanish-speaking regions of the Americas affords opportunities to examine the interplay of social and linguistic factors in order to determine the extent to which the documented evidence reveals the role each plays in influencing language choices. This chapter will survey and comment upon some of the most prominent of these gender-and-age-associated research efforts as they are potentially associated with language production and attempt to establish a foundation for the examination of these two factors as they relate to the use of *no saber si* and mood choice in Spanish.

Studies of gender and language are wide-ranging, both geographically and philosophically. Early research into female-male language differences deals almost exclusively with those features which are restricted to one gender or the other, rather than



focusing efforts on differences which are gender-preferential in nature (Holmes, 1991, p. 207). Where this research does focus on frequency of use rather than exclusivity, it situates gender-differentiated speech precisely where it has remained, at least stereotypically, for five decades: in the traditional paradigm in which differences in female-male usages are generally explained by the idea that females are more linguistically conservative than males. Females are depicted as clinging to conservative patterns, standard or superstandard usage, and polite, deferential forms, and are even characterized at times as possessing a “gender-related predisposition to language prestige” (Chávez, 1988, p. 3).

More recent research endeavors in this area emphasize the idea that gender exerts a steady and consonant influence on language production, and that females tend to surpass males in launching and preserving changes which aim at the accepted standard, either national or local, depending on which carries the greater prestige (Holmes, 1991, pp. 208-212); that females tend to be more conservative in their language choices, especially in formal language use; and that females generally display a greater range of styles than males. In addition, females’ reactions to speakers who employ prestige-bearing forms are in general more emphatically positive (Berk-Seligson, 1984, p. 419). From this somewhat contradictory picture of gender-associated language, one may conclude that females are at the same time more inclined toward innovation, toward acceptance, even initiation of new forms, and also more orthodox and prone toward moderation and restraint (Eckert, 1984, p. 223). It is not surprising to find that the study of gender differences in language production has been proclaimed one of the most important research issues in contemporary language studies (Cameron, 1992), even if it does at times present scholars with the sense

that they are “stepping into a maelstrom” (Tannen, 1994, p. 3).

### Perspectives on Gender and Language

Since the 1950s, and especially in the past twenty years, gender and language studies have received far more attention than before that time, with research on how and why females and males seem to use different language forms increasing in quantity, moving somewhat in focus away from previous studies which had generally considered male-generated patterns to represent the established norm, and concentrating considerable efforts upon analyses of precise and often subtle morphological, lexical, syntactic, or phonological distinctions (Holmes, 1991, p. 207). Even though scholars have not arrived at any single recognized theoretical scaffolding sustaining precisely what female or male language is (Simkins-Bullock & Wildman, 1991), several broad perspectives have been acknowledged by researchers as essential to the understanding of how gender differences interact with language. First, at least in language spoken in the Western world, differences in female-male language use are not usually marked by sex-exclusive patterns, but by differences in amount or context of usage (Brouwer and Van Hout, 1992; Lybrand, 1982; Rissel, 1981). Second, gender differences as they are manifested in language usage do not stand alone, nor are they absolute. They tend to be co-influential with other non-linguistic factors and to operate on a continuum of strength of effect (Rissel, 1989). In addition, if language is assumed to be part of a community-centered perspective, then when female or male language use is the topic of investigation, the community within which these groups are living often may be the focus of study as well (Nichols, 1983, p. 64).

## Gender and Spanish Language Studies

Until quite recently, research involving both Spanish language production and gender has been scant, probably due, at least to some extent, to the “relatively late awakening of feminism” (Nissen, 1990, p. 12) in many parts of the Spanish-speaking world. This belated interest in language and gender correlations is further explained by the fact that, when and where gender concerns have been recognized as important, other issues associated with basic human rights have been seen as more pressing than language-related questions (Nissen, 1990). Studies which treat the issue of age and language use remain both small in number and limited in scope.

A review of the Spanish language-gender research encompasses explanations based on investigations of varying aspects of language use, ranging from analyses such as those dealing with final consonant deletion (Cedergren, 1973; Fontanella de Weinberg, 1973), aspiration of final consonants (López Chávez, 1977), and /r/ assibilation (Perisinotto, 1972; Rissel, 1989), to *para* (**for**) reduction (Lantolf, 1978) and pluralization of *haber* (**existential there is/are**), to the effects of age and gender on politeness phenomena (Milán, 1976), to the impact of age on the use of prestige variants (Almeida, 1995). A survey of some of the most salient of these studies dealing with gender and age as they relate to Spanish language production, together with an examination of overall trends and patterns outside the Spanish-speaking realm, should help to provide a framework for determining what motivates the processes which determine mood choice in contemporary Spanish.

### Early Investigations of Gender and Language

Results of most of the initial studies dealing with Spanish-speaking countries tend

to be quite impressionistic, anecdotal, and unsubstantiated statistically, consistently reporting that females' speech moves along a scale from cultivated to hyperbolic. Lida's (1937) report on female speech production in Spanish during the Renaissance includes the expected conservatism as one of the earmarks of female speech, and goes on to explain this moderation as closely linked to the lack of easy or frequent access on the part of females to vernacular speech and their consequent tendency to maintain the language which they originally acquired (cited in Nissen, 1990, p. 22). Griera's (1923) *Atlas linguistique de Catalunya* (Spain) even excludes females altogether as informants, assuming that their world view is limited to the home domain, their stamina is less than that of males, and their ability to respond adequately to questions is hampered by their emotions (cited in Nissen, 1990, p. 12).

Research in Spain during the 1950s and 1960s again indicates that females seem predisposed to endorse the standard variants established by the Real Academia Española (Spanish Royal Academy) and to demonstrate far more linguistic conservatism than their male contemporaries. Badia Margarit (1952) praises Aragonese females for the conservative posture which he regards as an aid in their task of guarding the purity of the language. In Salvador's (1952) studies of aspiration and elision of final /s/ and neutralization of final /r/ and /l/ in Vertientes y Tarifa, he describes females as holding to traditional Castilian pronunciation, the prestige variant, while males in his study are portrayed as innovators in the use of local forms, adopting new Andaluz phonological forms. He calls his results an "ejemplo vivo de retraso femenino" (living example of female backwardness) (p. 24). For Salvador, there seems to be little doubt that females are more linguistically conservative than males (Nissen, 1990, p. 17).

During this time also, female Spanish speakers are shown as seeking prestige outside the national norm by adhering to local forms when these variants are held in higher esteem by the community group to which they belong. Alvar (1956) finds that in studies of variation in the use of /s/ and /d/ and the contrast of /ll/ and /y/, females display more orthodox tendencies in their maintenance of variants as well as their retention and continuing production of some archaic local vocabulary forms. He reports that, in general, females remain tied to the old, local usages, which in their community function as markers of status, perhaps due to a lack of contact with any generalized contemporary Castilian. Males, on the other hand, are described as advancing in /s/ elision and exhibiting more innovative propensities overall. He is not, however, as adamant as some of his contemporaries about female conservatism, since his female informants in Puebla de don Fadrique display a tendency toward ready acceptance of any neologisms to which they might be exposed, regardless of the obvious clash of the new forms with the old. Offering basically the same picture of the gender-language relationship, Balmori (1962) reports that not only do females express themselves by means of more conservative speech, but that their speech is less complex than that of males as well. He also judges males to be more capable of adapting to the unexpected or at least to anything which is outside their general range of experience.

Unfortunately, most of these studies employ only the simplest of statistical analyses, base their conclusions on data gathered from a very small number of informants, and choose to omit any evidence which contradicts the initially suggested research hypotheses. In addition, the language which they use to report findings is quite subjective. Added to these considerations is the challenge faced by many of the researchers of this time that

techniques for data collection are much more in keeping with male expectations for interactional patterns than those to which females are generally accustomed. Salvador (1952) helps to confirm yet another of the problems apparent in these early studies, that of the anecdotal nature of much of the data on which opinions are based, as he admits that his conclusions stem from general observations (p. 23).

### Research on Gender and Language in the 1970s

Fortunately, more recent research dealing with language and gender presents an expanded picture in terms of techniques for collecting information as well as the interactional procedures evident in the data gathering processes. However, few of the characterizations of female speech presented in previous studies are radically revised. Results from studies carried out during the 1970s, not only in the Spain but also in other areas where Spanish is spoken, continue to provide information which is quite similar to that of earlier Spanish-language studies. Nissen (1990) reports that during this time public awareness of female-male issues was heightened by pioneering works on sexism in Spanish such as Suardíaz (cited in Nissen, 1990) and García Meseguer (cited in Nissen, 1990) who sought to reproach the Real Academia Española for its patently male orientation (pp. 12-13). Works which deal with the influence of gender on phonological usages begin to appear from various parts of the Spanish-speaking world. Interest arises in the questions of which variants carry prestige, which are likely to be stigmatized as uneducated speech, and which mark a speaker as using antiquated speech forms. In one of the most prominent of these studies, Buenos Aires females from a wide range of social classes maintain the prestige carrying word-final /s/ in both spontaneous conversation and reading, whereas

males of the same social class display marked elision (Fontanella de Weinberg, 1973). These females are also portrayed as generally more careful in pronunciation than males and far surpass them in producing standard formal-style variants, thus creating an aura of prestige in syntax, vocabulary and phonology (p. 58). In another study, females in Panama City exhibit a similar usage configuration in that they are less advanced than males in elision of final /s/, a variant which is often stigmatized there as belonging to the speech of those with little formal education (Cedergren, 1973). Again in results of /s/ aspiration, where this represents a move away from the standard, this time in Sinaloa (Mexico), patterns emerge in which females adhere to traditional language usage while males are the consistent innovators (López Chávez, 1977). Even in studies where females lead in change such as Perissinotto's (1972) research on /r/ assibilation in Mexico City, the change tends to be a move toward the standard. In the case of research into gender and Spanish usage among United States residents, Lantolf (1982), in his study of gender and *para* (for/in order to) reduction, reports that males far exceed females in the nonstandard use of *pa'*. Females again remain considerably more prone toward constancy in their use of the authority-oriented variant (p. 174).

#### Research on Gender and Language in the 1980s and 1990s

In general, later studies in Latin America, Spain, and the United States offer more carefully charted analyses of gender and language usage, provide broader, more well-developed commentaries on the findings reported, and attempt to explain conclusions in more detail (Alba, 1990; Cepeda, 1990; Gutiérrez, 1992; Lantolf, 1982; López, 1983; López Morales, 1983, 1992; Navarro Correa, 1992; Rissel, 1981, 1989; Samper Padilla,

1990; Sanou de los Ríos, 1982; Williams, 1983). Although these analyses tend to report outcomes which parallel prior research, it is useful to examine a cross section of them in order to reemphasize their connectedness to the original thesis that females are indeed more conservative and traditional in their speech.

Samper Padilla's (1990) research in the Canary Islands serves as a good example as he reaffirms the much-reported pattern in which females display an array of conservative linguistic forms, far surpassing males in the use of the /d/ status-invoking variant (p. 271). In Navarro Correa's (1992) study of the effect of social factors on variation in pluralization of *haber* (existential there) in Valencia, males opt for the nonstandard plural more frequently than females (p. 100). Almeida's (1995) study in Santa Cruz de Tenerife leads to this same conclusion concerning the functions of females and males in phonetic transformations. Females, especially those from the upper and middle sociocultural classes, are very prestige-oriented, and establish a communicative scheme designed to indicate their status. Females in the lower sociocultural classes often follow suit by modeling their language production on that of the upper-class females. Males consistently trail females in the displacement of the vernacular variant by one which is viewed by the wider society as standard (p. 230).

Results from Rissel's 1989 study of /r/ assibilation among 12 to 22 year olds in San Luis Potosí (Mexico) also typify much of the research carried out at this time among Spanish speakers. They show that males, overall, display less assibilation than females, and that the more traditional the attitude of the females, the greater the degree of assibilation which they display, even to the extent that the assibilated /r/ becomes a gender marker, as well as a marker of prestige. Rissel also reports that when a change has been initiated by



females, males of the same group often reject the variant due to its feminine association, as do males belonging to other social groups if their views lean toward the traditional in gender-role delineation (p. 282). Her conclusion is two-fold: that even those females who maintain the traditional attitudes of their communities may be active participants in language change, evidenced by the high degree of assimilation demonstrated by those in her group of informants, and that females overall favor prestige forms (p. 316).

In a more recent study of sex, class and velarization among Spanish-speaking adolescents in Madrid, Turnham and Lafford (1995) hypothesized that the young females would not use more of the non-velarized prestige variant, but rather would display a pattern of movement toward the speech patterns of their male peers. This theory was based upon the liberation-oriented posture assumed to be typical of young females in post-Franco Spain (after 1975). They believed that this presumption of “relaxed adherence” (p. 315) to traditional conservative or ultra-conservative standards on the part of females was justified due to reports that they were already using more *tacos* (rough language) and other forms associated with vernacular speech than had been characteristic of Spanish females during the thirty years of Franco’s regime (pp. 314-315). However, the researchers’ original hypothesis was not confirmed except in “isolated cases” (p. 335). They report that in their conversation with Madrid’s high school students a greater percentage of usage of the prestigious implosive /s/ in female speech and a very low percentage of the often-stigmatized velarized /x/ appear. Thus they conclude that many of the apparent changes are merely superficial and without sufficient substance to initiate new patterns of language use. Young female Madrid residents still display primarily conservative linguistic tendencies: “Spanish women as a whole will continue to serve as normative linguistic

models in all social strata . . .” (p. 336).

A recurrence of the same theme appears in a variety of other studies among Spanish speakers. Research such as López Morales’ (1992) inquiries in Puerto Rico and Sanou de los Ríos’ (1982) study in San Juan (Argentina) present further characterizations of female conservatism as well as female avoidance of speech which marks one as uneducated.

Yielding results similar to those of earlier researchers, these studies describe females as consistently positioned toward the careful end of the pronunciation continuum, while males remain far behind in preciseness. Likewise, in the Dominican Republic, results of gender-language research characterize males as demonstrating a steady pattern of more vernacular and less prestigious use of language than females (Alba, 1990). In other research on /s/ aspiration, males produce more examples of aspiration and deletion of final /s/ than females in both Puerto Rican and Cuban Spanish, a definite move toward the vernacular (Terrell, 1995, p. 263) since the retention of /s/ is linked to the prestige dialect of the *norma culta* (educated speech) and therefore clearly associated with cultivated speech (Lipski, 1994, pp. 225-229).

Cepeda’s (1990) results from her study of /s/ usage in Valdivia (Chile) show still other patterns of differentiation in language use along gender lines, though not as marked as in some of the other American research efforts. In this study, when differentiation is found, females consistently uses the more prestigious form (p. 236). Rey (1994) in his study of social correlates of the use of *you* in Colombian Spanish also concludes that females are more conservative in their speech production than males, and by way of explanation, suggests that perhaps differences in female and male language usage is partly affected if not determined by the prescribed gender roles found in Latin American society

(p. 292). It seems apparent from many of these analyses that, if all other extralinguistic factors seem to be more or less comparable, males find themselves trailing behind females not just in the area of careful pronunciation, but also in careful vocabulary usage and attention to syntax.

Nevertheless, the fact that some of the evidence on female language points away from the standard should not be overlooked. For example, in Williams' (1987) study in Valladolid (Spain), females surpassed males in loss of velar consonants, a move away from the prestige form. Her hypothesis is that this change parallels concurrent changes in the role of females in Spanish society (p. 137). Serrano (1990) uncovers the same pattern in his research in the Canary Islands (Spain). He sees no evidence that females display more conservative tendencies than males (p. 760). These researchers continue to caution that automatic assumptions of female usage consistently being closer to what is considered to be the national standard should not be accepted as irrefutable (Allen, 1988, p. 149).

In numerous studies dealing with Spanish, both early and recent, evidence also surfaces in which females lead in change (Alturo and Turell, 1990; Alvar, 1956; Gutiérrez, 1992; Holmquist, 1985; Perissinotto, 1972; Rissel, 1981, 1989). A close examination of examples from some of this research provides more specific illustrations of this tendency, especially when the transformation moves steadily in the direction of the standard variant. Perissinotto (1972) maintains the females are "centros de difusión" (centers of diffusion) (p. 76) for the prestigious /r/ variant in Mexico. In Rissel's (1989) study of /r/ assibilation, once again in Mexico, the earliest changes seen are in the speech of females (p. 271). Hill (1987) reports that in modern *mexicano* (*náhuatl*) females are inclined to be more conservative than males and to display more tendencies toward innovation when a change

in progress is being examined, especially if the change is a move in the direction of more standard speech as defined by the wider speech community (p. 158). She also adds another dimension to the argument when she suggests that females may fail to adopt the norms which have been created and maintained by males because of a lack of opportunity to embrace them, not because they find more formal standard forms of speech to be inherently appealing. Adding another example from outside the realm of pronunciation, Gutiérrez (1992) in his study of the extension in usage of the verb *estar* (to be) in Michoacan (Mexico) reveals that the innovative uses of the verb originate primarily with the females in the community (p. 110). Although these innovations deviate from the current norm for the region, the move which they undertake is toward a non-stigmatized, generally-accepted prestige form for the society at large (p. 139).

Other prominent examples of female speakers leading in language change when the shift is toward either a prestige-bearing form or when there exists a possibility of aiding the speaker in movement into a higher social class, or both are reported by Holmquist (1985). In his often-cited examination of the effects of extralinguistic factors on the Spanish spoken in Ucieda, he lists gender as one, though not the only, determinant of non-traditional language use, with non-traditional meaning a move in the direction of the national standard by circumventing local usages which define speakers as obviously rural (p. 202). He believes that societal constraints, not merely gender, motivate differing language usages (p. 200). Alturo and Turell (1990) provide another useful example as they report that in their study of variation and the use of Catalan, females lead in both changes from above and from below the level of speaker consciousness when these changes are substitutions of standard Catalan for local variants (p. 25).

## Gender and Variation in Spanish Mood Choice

Research also has shown that variation in Spanish mood choice may be linked to the gender of the speaker. This idea that gender should be considered a possible determining factor in mood choice in Spanish has been affirmed over several decades by studies which concentrate on subjunctive/indicative use (Alonso, 1989; Lavandera, 1975; Serrano and Almeida, 1994). Most of these studies have dealt with the loss of the present subjunctive mood. It has been suggested that when patterns of mood usage shift such that the present indicative comes to be the usual choice in previously present subjunctive-dominant contexts, patterns of differing female-male language usage may also develop (Veidmark and Umaña Aguiar, 1991), with females remaining loyal to the more prestigious form. In such dissimilar settings as Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain (Serrano and Almeida, 1994) and Tijuana, Mexico (Alonso, 1989), most of the traditional variants found were produced by females (present indicative in the matrix clause-present subjunctive in the subordinate clause instead of present indicative in the matrix clause-present indicative in the subordinate clause). When this substitution occurs, males seem to be more accepting of the exchange overall than females unless the new form is not one which provides positive social status.

### Explanations for Female Patterns of Language Use

All of this information furnishes an ever-expanding vision of mood choice and the factors, both linguistic and non-linguistic, which might influence it. Throughout the various studies and presentations of theories, it is difficult to avoid the question of why so much evidence should point toward females as preservers of the standard. It seems

especially important to seek answers to the question of why this should be the case given the fact that explanations, criticisms, reassessments, and rejections of how and why females tend to be more conservative in their language use fit into so many disparate molds. Each one approaches the issue of gender-associated language use from a somewhat distinctive point of view, at times compatible and at other times resulting in rather strident clashes with other perspectives. Thorne and Henley (1975) see broad distinctions in these studies as they divide them into two categories: those which regard female language as affected and effected by male societal dominance, and those which view female language as essentially deficient. Within these guidelines, one finds typical accounts of the gender-language alliance which include several key interpretations: versions which explain gender-linked language variation in terms of needs for achieving greater security in conversational interactions; portrayals of female status seeking; explanations which highlight male dominance and female powerlessness and social marginality; interpretations which argue that dissimilarities in female and male language appear to be due to socialization and the ensuing contrasts in subcultural values and norms which arise from this process; studies which deal with the influence of economic conditions within a community of speakers; and descriptions which center upon the roles which social networks play in determining language usage.

#### Search for Security in Conversation

The first of these explanations is characterized by relating any self-consciously proper use of language on the part of females to the concept of strength and control, of females existing in a male-dominated world where they are limited in their access to

security and where they must consequently find a way to achieve recognition and overcome their real or perceived insecurity. This type of model, which presupposes that females need “remediation” in order to come up to male standards of linguistic achievement, is often termed “female deficit theory” (Henley and Kramarae, 1994, p. 384). According to this account, because of their sense of separateness and of detachment from the mainstream, females can find no easily effective or practical linguistic way to project potency, but instead look to a compensatory language scheme resorting to language which radiates indecision, apprehension, even triviality (Breister, 1986, p. 5).

In such a conceptualization, as a result of socialization which is either environmental or segregational in origin, females display less force, intensity, and strength in the language which they produce (Lakoff, 1973; McMillan, Clifton, and McGrath, 1977). Through use of standard language forms, they attempt to equilibrate somewhat the power balance without running the risk of aggressively affronting their conversational partners. Within this paradigm, female speech is described not just as indirect, self-conscious, and closer to the norm, but also as uncertain, tentative, and deferent (Crosby and Nyquist, 1977; Lakoff, 1973, 1986; Tannen, 1994). Lakoff (1986) lists characteristics which she regards as features of female language. Included in these are a frequent use of adjectives which present feelings, an aversion to non-standard usages, a tendency to use hedges and other devices which point to indecisiveness, and a fondness for the use of euphemisms (p. 407). The attenuating mechanisms here serve as a method to sidestep possible needs for confrontation, while the intensifiers attempt to demonstrate increased emphasis. Lakoff (1986) also concludes that females and males do not necessarily express themselves in the same way, that these different modes of expression are in the realm of

acceptability, not grammar, and that female language is generally more emotional, and more conservative than that of males (p. 414). In addition, females viewed according to this interpretation tend to emphasize primarily relationships, while males tend to dwell more on contexts of dominance, skill, and superiority (Hamilton, 1992, p. 242). Females, then, are seen as rapport builders who create an appropriate ambience, perhaps at the same time projecting what appears to be insecurity. Males, on the other hand, are viewed as information sources who seem secure in their roles as speakers and who are less interested in the overall success of the speech situation than in trying to express exactly the message which they want to convey and, by so doing, hold on to a dominant position in the conversation (Tannen, 1992). In other words, males are not so concerned that all participants feel comfortable or satisfied with the interchanges. As Thorne, Kramarae, and Henley (1983) explain: “. . . women tend to be defined by their relation to men . . . while men are given autonomous and varied linguistic status” (p. 9).

### Status Seeking

A second view of the question of female and male language also has authority as an integral component. Here disparities in male and female speech production are thought to center around the idea of female status seeking, with status being defined as a keen awareness of the importance of social position and any social ramifications which might accompany certain types of language use patterns (Cameron and Coates, 1990; Serrano and Almeida, 1994). This account of the gender-language relationship postulates that differences in operative language use are by-products of social structure which are motivated primarily by social apprehensions on the part of females. It also accentuates the



role of female status seeking and efforts to conjure up social prestige as the driving forces behind female linguistic sensitivity and consequent zeal for the standard (Trudgill, 1983). This uncertainty as to how to achieve coveted social-hierarchy aspirations leads females to cling to the standard.

Several possible explanations are offered for this seeming female need to attain status: their disproportionate role in child care contexts, seen not only as forcing them into the mold of standardbearers of the language to the next generation of speakers, but also as isolating them at times from the mainstream in which status-gaining options are provided; their overall lack of confidence as to the precise position which they can expect to achieve in the established universal social framework; and their traditionally being evaluated by others based on their appearance rather than their actions (Trudgill, 1986, p. 400). The two gender groups are assumed to respond to factors which are in opposition to each other, females to more overt, normative markers of prestige and males to more covert versions of status seeking, as females display a heightened consciousness of how they are viewed by others and carry this awareness into their language choices (Wolfram and Fasold, 1974). Therefore, proponents of this perspective find the use of standard or prestige language forms to be a perceived positive step in females' gaining their sought-after social stature. They argue that females, who have less control in the material domain, reach out toward the bases of power which are available in the symbolic domain (Labov, 1972, 1990; Trudgill, 1972). In other words, females, it is presumed, count on certain kinds of figurative representations to attest to their ranking in the realm of strength, effectiveness, and authority since often they must claim less overall command of their physical world (Labov, 1990, p. 214).

### Gender and Prestige

In a somewhat similar vein, Angle and Hesse-Biber (1981) argue for the “Gender and Prestige Preference Theory.” This explanation proposes that the prestige which is assumed to accompany socioeconomic prosperity attracts females to what they call “anticipatory socialization” (p. 450), and consequently to a model of language use which to them seems more proper and decorous. In this construct, the language of those who seem more prosperous is imitated in order to diminish the emotional, if not the financial gap between the groups, and in its wake, brings an approach to communication which is more overtly standard than otherwise might be anticipated (pp. 449-450).

### Uneven Distribution of Power

A third representative explanation for female-male language use dissimilarities centers around the basic power relations which exist in society, and affirms that females are not as uncertain or acquiescent in the traditional sense as many would believe (Holmes, 1984). For many scholars, female conservatism is not regarded as an acceptable explanation for gender-associated language differences. Instead, the primary thrust of this argument suggests that language-based gender differences increase when power is unevenly distributed between genders (Eckert, 1989, p. 256). The conservatism which many studies attribute to female language, according to this perspective, has to do with this social distribution of power, but not so much with efforts to become upwardly mobile as with maintaining self-esteem when confronted with situations of powerlessness. Thus, in many instances, standard speech is equated with politeness as a device for saving face. The need for self-esteem in social contexts provides the necessary impetus to move females

toward standard usage and helps to preserve the language forms from this category. According to this perspective, females, when placed in interactions where they experience a sense of powerlessness, use standard speech structures as a means for maintaining self-regard while at the same time being aware of and sensitive to the need for respect of those with whom they speak. Their concern for the other person, it is argued, causes females to express themselves with greater caution than males for fear of losing the level of cooperation which they seek (Coates, 1989). Their language, then, becomes part of an effort toward preserving, or even repairing, the “welfare of the relational complex” (Aikio, 1992, p. 59). Males, on the other hand, are depicted here as foregoing this concern for others for a more informational-instrumental-task-oriented approach to language use (Deuchar, 1988).

#### Distinctive Modes of Communication

A fourth view of how gender influences the use of language spurns as overly pessimistic and patently negative the interpretations which focus on depictions of female subordination and/or inauthenticity compared to male dominance, and argues that there is no justification for any assumption of females’ demonstrating inferior sociolinguistic competence (Chambers, 1992). This proposed explanation of female-male language differences is similar to analyses of cultural relations, especially those in which disparate cultures in contact often misunderstand each other. Females are presumed to have perceptions, backgrounds, experiences, and needs which are not the same as males, to have their own directions of discernment, communication, and integration (Henley and Kramarae, 1994, pp. 387-389). Any notion which implies, much less advocates, making

amends with one's master by linguistic means is rejected, and in its stead an explanation with female subcultural values and self-esteem at its core is proposed. The concept of some vision of a gender-separate circle of language use and of females standing as prototypes of their own singular mode of language is substituted for any hint of female inadequacy as an underlying construct (Freed, 1995). The focus here is not upon who has control of whom but rather upon the concept of differences, upon the perception that what is distinctively female is authentic in and of itself, and upon highlighting the positive aspects of whatever female language is and will be (Brouwer and Van Hout, 1992; Coates, 1989). Along similar lines, other studies point out that males do not have to be the sole source of a society's norms, that females set their own standards, and that their less-to-lose posture when nonconformity is their preference might lead females to become a strong impetus toward language change (Hill, 1987, p. 159).

#### Economic Circumstances

A fifth account of language-gender interaction comes from analyses of constraints brought about by economic factors (Chávez, 1988; Gal, 1978; Holmquist, 1985; Lybrand, 1982; Nichols, 1978; Valdés-Fallis, 1978; Williams, 1983). Transformations in females' societal circumstances, along with their desire to leave behind any negative images and progress on their own toward what they view as prestige, provide an explanation for female-male differences in language use (Holmquist, 1985, 1987; Williams, 1983). Here the driving force of the argument comes from language change initiated by females who, for financial or other self-improvement motives, imitate the language of another group of speakers, thus both introducing new forms into their local community and, at times,

rejecting older, provincial forms in favor of those advanced by a wider societal context. In support of this position, Nissen (1990) argues that female-male differences in language usage are often due to “socioeconomic, sociodemographic or socio-psychological factors” (p. 22), or to other anticipated or assumed occurrences like marriage, finding employment outside the local setting, or increased freedom of general-life options.

Gal (1978), in her previously noted work with German-Austrian bilinguals, provides further evidence as she describes females from her study, who as they renounce peasant life and embrace the language of the marketplace in an effort to refute their peasant status, are more advanced than males in the shift from Hungarian to German (p. 1). She also argues that sociolinguistic categories need to be recognized more clearly as social constructions and that the centrality of the interrelatedness of prestige, gender, and language as they are created and worked out in each community of speakers be upheld (1992, p. 154). Along these same lines, Nichols (1978) reports that in her research among Afro-Americans in South Carolina, females tend to initiate usage of linguistic features from the society which surrounds their local speech community when this adoption of the more prestige-associated variables is to their advantage in seeking and maintaining employment.

Moving into the Spanish-speaking world, Williams (1983), working in Valladolid (Spain), describes similar patterns, with females displaying more prestige variants in their speech as well as innovations consonant with the modifications in the role of females in Spain at that time (Nissen, 1990, p. 18). Other researchers confirm basically the same point. Lybrand (1982), in her study of gender and language differences in an Andalusian (Spain) agro-community, reports that the weakening and finally the collapse of traditional gender-defined boundaries may lead not only to females entering the world of work but

also to female-initiated speech changes. Holmquist (1985) reports similar outcomes in Cantabria (Spain) where once again females adopt more prestige forms, not because of any inherent female or male tendencies toward certain prescribed linguistic patterns, but from strong desires to move away from what they consider to be estrangement and isolation from the wider society (p. 200). His evidence indicates that those who are actively engaged in and satisfied with local rural life tend to employ /u/ in word-final position, and those who seem to be making an effort to separate themselves from the rural designation and seek out means of assimilation with the wider society tend to use the Castilian /o/. Those who reject the local in favor of the national, thus favoring the prestige variants are primarily females.

### Network Connections

A final group of researchers, who disagree with the female-conservative juxtaposition altogether, marking it as an oversimplification, look for answers to female-male language differences without the need to label either gender as more traditional. One of these approaches situates gender-linked patterns of variation once again within the social context in which the speakers live, but rejects any association of diverse female-male patterns in language use as being due to female attempts to mark status or garner prestige. Instead, an interpretation which has social solidarity as its basic construct is suggested as the most feasible (Milroy, 1981, 1989, 1992). Since this explanation positions females as possible bearers of the standard, but also as potential purveyors of the vernacular, depending on the configuration of their network connections, there is little need to issue judgments which claim that females are predictably closer to the standardized norm. On

the contrary, whether a female or male uses more standard or vernacular forms is seen as dependent upon the degree of integration into the social networks of the local community which a given speaker experiences, gender considerations notwithstanding (Milroy & Margrain, 1980, p. 44). Individual language patterns can be analyzed in relation to the group to which the person belongs. In this view, gender-determined language variation stems from speakers' needs to distinguish who they are among the ever-increasing possibilities for group alignment: "Some elements (phonology) are tied closely to both sex and network, some may be associated more closely with female than male networks, others more closely with male than female networks, apparently regardless of their function as sex markers when the network variable is not considered" (Milroy, 1981, p. 167). The tighter-knit the network, the stronger the likelihood of maintaining vernacular norms. Since more loosely-constructed social groups generally have less probability of controlling linguistic norms, those who belong to such groups often deviate from local patterns. When a given community's gender roles are constructed in such a way that either females or males as a group tend to come into contact with a broader range of people, variants taken from the group with which they interact often appear in their speech (Milroy and Milroy, 1985; Milroy, 1992). Generally, if females operate under different and broader geographical and employment circumstances than the males in their community, as in the case of Milroy's study in Ballymacarrett (Ireland), they tend to demonstrate not only greater social mobility, but also more variety in the linguistic patterns at their disposal (Milroy, 1981). Other researchers who argue a similar position conclude that females seem to be more aware of group membership than males and that they tend to develop a keen consciousness of their group affiliation, their sense of belonging, of being set apart from others whether it be

defined by gender, age or social class association (Serrano and Almeida, 1994, p. 388).

### Other Possibilities

Though not developed as formal, detailed explanations, several other factors which have been submitted as possibly affecting female-male language differences also bear mentioning. The possibility that when female informants are confronted with male fieldworkers, they may consider the interview context to be more formal and less convivial than males who participate in the same study has been suggested as potentially impacting gender differences in language production (Trudgill, 1986, p. 396). This is especially considered to be problematic if the female informants involved in the interviews have had little experience in the world of work outside their homes. Another proposed influence of gender on language use deals with females' purposes or aims for the language which they produce. It has been proposed that these basic intentions might differ from those of their male companions (Trudgill, 1986, p. 398). An avoidance by females of what they judge to be vernacular speech because they fear its automatic association with masculinity is yet another suggested determinant of more conservative speech (Trudgill, 1986, p. 401). Two other conceivable explanations should also be noted. Angle and Hesse-Biber (1981) suggest that young females' disposition toward strong identification with teachers might set up early habits of linguistic traditionalism which are absent in the linguistic patterning of young males, who are much less prone to this type of role model identification and imitation (p. 455). Allen (1988) concurs, arguing that females, in general, are less likely to "depart from the precepts and counsel of the schoolroom and textbook" (p. 176).



## General Criticisms of Explanations for Female Language Patterns

Any one of these analyses of gender differences and their effects on language use is necessarily complicated by a multiplicity of other considerations which come into play to a greater or lesser extent at various points as these theories, approaches, opinions, and lines of reasoning arise, remain under discussion for a time, and move out of the limelight. It is not surprising that numerous researchers have pointed out several overarching problems, or obstacles which they perceive to be sufficiently notable as to affect the conclusions which have been generated by speculations about gender and language use. Some of these appraisals have to do with a lack of precision in creating operational definitions of terms, while others deal with the empirical data on which conclusions are based, question the efficacy of male-based norms, or react to the “culturally constructed notion” (Freed, 1995) on which some of the research is based.

### Definitions of Terms

In relation to impreciseness of definitions, some critics argue that the distinction between the terms *sex* and *gender* has not always been well clarified, and that the question of whether the term *gender* or *sex* is most appropriate for pairing with studies of language use has not been taken as seriously by many researchers as should be the case. They argue that, in general, the term *gender* seems to be the preferred form, since it points to a social category whereas *sex* refers to a biological one (Freed, 1995, p. 11). Gender-based female-male societal roles which establish modes of viewing the world are seen as the most likely agents in affecting both language usage and linguistic changes, while *sex* roles seem less direct in their relationship to linguistic behavior (Brouwer and Van Hout, 1992; Eckert,

1989). These scholars see no unbiased evidence that biological sex as a classification suffices for the study of language differences, nor that language differentiation is connected to biological sex in any “clear and simple way” (Labov, 1990, p. 219). For them, social roles presumed to be appropriate and taken on by females and males serve as a much more appropriate point of reference (pp. 205-206). One problem with this argument lies in the difficulty of adequately constructing a set of categories, divisions, or parameters for what comprises gender in specific instances in specific contexts. These critics argue also that what many studies have attempted to do is simply divorce the biological from the sociocultural in so far as it is possible to accomplish such a separation given the obvious interconnectedness of the two. In addition, some researchers claim that various studies have used the two terms interchangeably regardless of what roles are established and how these roles are acted out in a particular community. Thus, the primary difficulty seems to be that gender differences, despite their extremely important relationship to roles carried out in specific communities, might be subsumed under the more overtly observable category of sex (Chambers, 1992; Eckert, 1989). Still another concern in this area stems from the often-accepted assumption that what the term gender refers to is constant in all societal contexts (Freed, 1995, p. 8).

Another definitional problem cited in the literature is that of exactly what is seen as constituting linguistic conservatism. A single definition of the designation “conservative” might be difficult to sustain since in many cases it seems to depend upon the researcher’s individual perspective rather than any one intelligible operational definition. In addition, as Cameron and Coates (1991) state, females should not “always and everywhere” (p. 22) be considered to remain closer to the standard in their speech production. In general, females

are often labeled linguistically conservative if they consistently use standard forms. This description may hold for middle class females, but it has been seriously questioned as a viable definition for those in working class settings (Cameron and Coates, 1991, p. 14). Since gender roles are prone to vary in different social contexts and at societal levels, other factors such as mobility must also be considered crucial in defining differences in patterns of female and male speech (Chambers, 1992).

### Polarization

Another criticism leveled at language and gender studies concerns the assumption that females and males are linguistic opposites, with each group proceeding to communicate with a vastly dissimilar code (McConnell-Ginet, 1980). Although this issue has been addressed to a certain extent in some of the proposed explanations for female language production, it is important to note once again that some critics still argue that it is vital to recognize that almost all major explanations for how females use language seem covertly sexist and to argue that no deficit model of gender-linked language differences should be considered viable. Prestige explanations seem to fall into this category of unacceptable explanations since they tend to recognize male-oriented norm bases. Otherwise, there would be no need to explain that female speech differs from that of males. Here critics call for an acceptance of only those representations of the language and gender link which emphasize non-value-assigned differences, which study and evaluate the precise conditions under which females live, which endeavor to learn more about female subculture in general, and which recognize that social class membership is at the present time essentially male defined (Cameron and Coates, p. 148-149).

### Scarcity of Data

Yet another stratum of criticism stems from what some reviewers believe to be a paucity of empirical data and the accompanying heavy use of introspection found in some of the published gender-language studies. As previously indicated, the overarching problem with many of the very early gender-language studies is the small number of informants, coupled with a lack of statistical rigor. Impressionistic evaluations are sometimes presented as if they were based upon statistically-significant empirical evidence, and such basic information as number of informants is at times missing or omitted until the end of the reporting of results. This laxity, critics claim, could lead readers to assume erroneously that the conclusions which are presented are based upon a much larger sampling than is the case. Assumptions founded on overgeneralizations of contexts which are not sufficiently broad so as to offer adequate bases for conclusions seem too frequent also (Freed, 1995). For example, the documentation for the assertion that females are more conservative and are prone to use more forms common to upper-echelon socioeconomic groups than males is much stronger for phonology than other types of variation (Philips and Reynolds, 1987, pp. 71-72), but this argument is often generalized to various other areas of female language. Another problem which should be included in this category is one of emphasis. Generally, when the data presented in a given study tends toward the impressionistic, there is an accompanying bias toward a characterization of female-exclusive language features. On the other hand, when more well-developed statistical analyses are involved in the research process, frequency of occurrence of certain language features produced by one gender or the other is more likely to be the focus (Nissen, 1990, p. 19).

### Overgeneralization of Conclusions Across Cultures

The idea that conclusions drawn from studies of British and United States Anglo groups as necessarily valid representations of female-male language use in other cultures which do not operate out of a Western world view has also been called into question. The argument is that if gender is a concept which is culturally determined, then assumptions made concerning the “literate class-stratified societies in Western Europe or their former colonies” (Philips & Reynolds, 1987, p. 71) cannot be assumed to be constant in their manifestations from one society to another, or even from one ethnic group to another (Freed, 1995). The criticism here is based on the belief that how gender interacts with language might be strongly affected by a particular society’s organizational and operational structures and therefore should not be presumed to demonstrate universal characteristics (Philips and Reynolds, 1987, p. 71).

Others scholars rebut with the argument that, although the idea that gender roles are culture specific and should indeed be taken into account in evaluating research conclusions, it should also be noted that evidence for female-male language differences collected outside the United States and England, at least in terms of standard language usage, has not been gleaned from merely a narrow set of resources, not just urban, not just Western, and not just industrial (Eiskovits, 1981; Gal, 1978; Holmquist, 1985; Labov, 1990; Lin, 1988; Milroy, 1986, 1989). Proponents of this position argue that there is much to be learned from the non-Western studies of gender and language. Examples such as Sherzer’s (1987) research among indigenous societies in Panama (Kunas) and Chile and Argentina (Araucanos) provide an excellent and instructive overview of how gender and language differences are operative outside Western cultures, here neither middle class nor

Anglo. Other research such as Brown (1993) in her study in Tenejapa (Mexico) among members of the Mayan community serves as a reminder that gender should not be considered uni-faceted. The data which she reports from this research indicate that the language produced by her female informants is more indirect than that of the males whom she observed, with females expressing greater tact, respect, courtesy, prudence, caution, and moderation unless the situation appears to be one in which their reputation is in peril (pp. 157-158). Keenan (1974) also treats gender-associated language in her report of research among the members of a Malagasay community. She describes females there as both more frank and more abrupt than their male counterparts. In further research outside Western cultures, Lin (1988) lists gender as the largest single variable in use of standard consonants in her study of Taiwanese Mandarin, with females leading in the production of prestige forms.

### Criticisms of Spanish Language Studies

With specific reference to some of the major criticisms of Spanish-language studies, Nissen (1990) laments the overall dearth of analyses in Spanish or about Spanish speakers as they interact in communicative contexts (Nissen, 1990, p. 23). He also finds the research data which deals with Spanish language and gender “difficult-to-delimit” (p. 15). As support for his criticism, he points to the bibliography (1990) which he assembled, in his opinion the first of its kind dealing specifically with Spanish, which appears fifteen years later than similar compilations in English (p. 15). In addition, it is possible that some of the studies dealing with Spanish language and gender may not specify as clearly as seems necessary the regional dialect parameters of the usage(s) under consideration (Nissen,

1990, p. 12).

### General Factors Concerning Age and Language Production

Leaving the research on gender and moving to studies dealing with age as it affects language production, one finds that, although there can be little doubt that age-related influences bonded to language bring with them the potential for impacting speech production, there is far less available material which addresses these specific issues as directly or in as much detail as is accessible concerning gender and language. Much of the general information on age as it might impact language use focuses on issues which are perceived as impediments which hamper or even prevent adequate treatment of the question. When approaching the question of age and its conceivable influences on language production in Spanish, several factors which account for the diminished availability of resources should be taken into account, either because they serve to limit the number of overall studies available or the productivity and usefulness of those studies which do deal with the issue. First, a large portion of the research which examines age-language issues in Spanish has to do with bilingual speakers, and generally does not facilitate understanding of studies outside that area. Most of these efforts are generational analyses of the language of bilinguals and as such must of necessity include the influence of a second language. Consequently, the conclusions drawn about language usage do not necessarily obtain in most monolingual contexts the way they might if the groups under consideration were not separated so decisively by amount and degree of second language contact. Second, age-language studies have not garnered the appeal of gender-related research in the public domain, and have been at times, as have those dealing with other

language groups, considered to be merely a sideline, rather than central to interpreting and understanding significant issues (Hamilton, 1992). Therefore, when age is chosen as a variable to be studied in Spanish-language research, it is often accorded only the briefest of explanations in the discussion of overall results, if it is not overlooked altogether. Third, a large portion of research on language and age in Spanish addresses the process of language acquisition, or examines the language of very young children, once again providing interesting and valuable information, but furnishing little in the way of data pertaining to adult language use-age analyses. Finally, much of the current general literature on age and language, as well as that dealing with Spanish, points out what researchers consider to be serious and as yet unresolved problems in dealing with age as a variable, rather than presenting statistical analyses of what might be age-related language production (Eckert, 1984, 1993; Hamilton, 1992).

#### Age and Spanish Language Production

Nevertheless, it has been demonstrated that language-age considerations, whatever the reason for their reduced numbers when compared to those dealing with gender and language, do indeed affect Spanish language production and usage. In examining the research which leads to this conclusion, one finds that general accounts of age-associated influences on language range from very tentative speculations that age might possibly be related to language production and variation (Floyd, 1978, p. 85) to accounts of direct correlations between linguistic change and age (Eckert, 1984, p. 223), with the majority of studies addressing the question of which age group tends to initiate a shift when this change is in the direction of a prestige-carrying variant. In her study of the distribution of



pleonastic clitic use in Spanish, Silva-Corvalán (1981) reports what has become typical of research in many other areas, that the speakers in her study are stratified into two distinct groups (p. 335) and that these groups correlate with both age and gender, with males producing more examples of the non-standard than females (p. 339). Much of the research reveals that an inverse correlation exists between espousing and/or incorporating linguistic change and age (Eckert, 1984, p. 223). Some researchers also conclude that as speakers move into the age bracket in which they begin their professional lives, their linguistic production moves toward a more conservative posture (Eckert, 1984, p. 228). Eckert (1984) also speculates that retirement from professional life has an impact on one's linguistic production: "... insofar as linguistic correction is spurred by participation in normative social roles, one might expect the changes in social role participation associated with retirement and old age to be accompanied by changes in linguistic orientation" (p. 229). In addition, research conclusions indicate that a kind of "age-set solidarity" (Eckert, 1984, p. 229), a conservative linguistic behavior which escalates with increased age, may account for a portion of the magnified orthodoxy demonstrated by older speakers. Also, it seems logical that the oldest members of a speech community will have acquired as native the most conservative dialect still in use by their group (Eckert, 1984, p. 229).

### Spanish Language-Age Research

An examination of some of the specific research which reports age-generated influences on Spanish-language production, variation, and change reveals a variety of age factors which possibly might affect speech output. Some of these effects are tied to gender as well as age, while others stand alone in their impact. A number of these studies, in both

Latin America and Spain, point to specific areas in which age influences language production. A few other studies have shown that older speakers are more innovative than younger ones. Still others have demonstrated that younger speakers display a tendency to embrace changes more readily (Almeida, 1995; Cedergren, 1973; Holmquist, 1985; Muse, 1980; Rissel, 1981; Sanou de los Ríos, 1982; Veidmark and Umaña Aguiar, 1991).

Among those studies which indicate that younger speakers tend to initiate language change is Almeida's (1995) research on the use of /c/ among residents of Santa Cruz de Tenerife (Spain). In this investigation, generational influences are statistically significant in terms of prestige. Younger females are the first to make the change to the prestige variant, with the greatest number of instances of the new form found in this group and the fewest recently initiated variants in the group of older males. Both younger and older females are more open to the possibility of abandoning local, vernacular forms than are men in their same categories (pp. 233-234). In her research in Panama, Cedergren (1973) reports this same type of pattern. Younger speakers in her study tend to favor linguistic change more than those in the older age ranges. Following a similar pattern, Rissel (1981), studying assibilation in Mexico, sees the strongest tendency toward assibilating /r/, a move toward the prestige variant, demonstrated by 16-32 years olds and by females overall. In yet another study, this time of language change among bilingual speakers in Tontontepec (Mexico), Muse (1980) reports that females 35 years old and under are more likely to use Spanish, the prestige variant, rather than the local Mixe, in all areas of their lives than are those females who are over 35 years of age. Likewise, in Spain, Holmquist's (1985) research ties females' lead in avoidance of the dialectal /u/ to age as well as gender and socioeconomic pressures (p. 202). Veidmark and Umaña Aguiar (1991) offer a possible

explanation for the younger generation's use of newer forms or for their continuing to use two competing forms:

*. . . tener que decidirse crea la posibilidad de equivocarse . . . A la vacilación de cada generación de hablantes se suma la de la siguiente, hasta que el cambio logra consumarse.*

(. . . to have to decide creates the possibility of making a mistake . . . The wavering between possibilities of each generation of speakers is added to that of the following, until a change is brought about) (p. 201).

#### Age and Spanish Mood Selection

The occasional study may also be found dealing with age and mood selection in Spanish. These investigations tend to support the hypothesis that younger speakers initiate change and move away from prescribed patterns of usage. Several researchers have cited age as one of the most important extralinguistic factors affecting mood choice, with the younger generations choosing present indicative in many instances where their elders tend to use present subjunctive. In general, this should mean that the older generation is adhering more directly to the traditional, standard usage, while the younger group moves toward a more relaxed posture which more readily embraces innovation. Supporting this perspective in his work with Puerto Rican speakers' use of variable constraints on mood, Lantolf (1978) specifies age as one of the determinants of mood choice. In the speech community which he studied, for younger speakers, present indicative use seems consistently greater than present subjunctive where the subjunctive mood would be the normally anticipated choice (p. 383). Serrano and Almeida (1981) in their study of

indicative-subjunctive variation in the past also found that the most traditional forms were maintained by females and older speakers (p. 383). Research carried out in Argentina by Sanou de los Ríos (1982) reveals comparable results. Her findings demonstrate that with increased age, there is also an increase in the use of careful forms (p. 159).

In summary, research seems to demonstrate that older speakers are often associated with the maintenance of generally accepted language forms, with the more traditional of two co-existing variants, and with a greater overall awareness of which forms remain at the conservative end of the language continuum. Younger speakers, on the other hand, tend more frequently to be identified with innovation, with a greater disregard for the assumption that a given form must invariably be used in certain contexts, and with less concern for any consequences associated with language change. However, age-related research which contradicts the hypothesis that age affects Spanish language usage is not altogether absent from the available literature. Studies such as Sánchez (1993) from her examination of verb usage in Argentina offer evidence that age has no significant influence in the choice of any variants which are frequently used there (p. 34).

#### Problems with Age-Related Studies

As suggested earlier, the problems which critics continue to highlight in relation to the study of age and language in general should not be overlooked or considered to be inconsequential. Even though most of these dilemmas are so complicated that it is not reasonable to expect immediate or facile solutions, efforts made by scholars to raise the consciousness of those who deal with age-language issues in relation to the potential impact of these concerns have been earnest and consistent. Some of the criticisms deal

with gaps in knowledge or gaps in entire areas of research efforts; others refer to more specific issues related to carrying out, reporting, and drawing conclusions about the research undertaken or to definitional problems, especially in studies dealing with older speakers. Critics do not call for a total halt to age-related studies as they are presently constructed, nor do they foresee, much less require, that previous studies concerning age be judged invalid. They do, however, believe the problems and considerations which they discuss to be significant enough obstacles to provide challenges for future research as well as to merit serious consideration by those who analyze and study this research. A brief overview of four of the areas most frequently mentioned in their commentaries illustrates some of these issues.

#### Insufficiency of Chronology Alone

The first of the difficulties, repeated throughout the literature, stems from the idea that chronology alone is insufficient to explain such a complex concept as age (Eckert, 1984; Hamilton, 1992). Eckert (1984) laments the large number of studies which deal only with biological age and presume it to be a suitable or even adequate classification for sociolinguistic research. She disagrees with categorizing all people over sixty as belonging to the same group, arguing that some of them are still active in the workplace, some semi-retired, and some assuming new roles and responsibilities after having abandoned their former professional roles. Other researchers join her in asserting that life circumstances, cognitive capacities, and ever-changing historical contexts must also be taken into consideration if the impact of age is to be truly understood (Hamilton, 1992). For instance, both local and wide-ranging historical changes could possibly affect only those people who

are quite young, or they might impact to a greater or lesser degree the entire speech community (Eckert, 1984, p. 220). The need for attention to life stages (school, work, marriage, retirement), not just years, is yet another task perceived as necessary in order to assume a coherent and logical approach to the question of age and language (Eckert, 1989, p. 246).

### Difficulty in Defining Age Brackets

A second general difficulty which some critics cite is that of defining appropriately what is meant by categorizing speakers in one age range or another. The fact that generational relations are not easily identifiable for all social groups is not always taken into consideration, they argue. Different outcomes might conceivably proceed from research that acknowledges that some primary-contact speech groups are quite homogeneous in age, while others are quite heterogeneous (Eckert, 1984, p. 230).

### Scant Material on Older Speakers

Another often-cited dilemma centers around the material or lack of material available on the language production of older speakers. This problem is especially perplexing due to the accompanying difficulty of obtaining such information. As noted in relation to the Spanish studies, some of the research on language and age also treats the age component as an aside, rather than considering it a primary focus of the research (Hamilton, 1992). This seems frequently to be the case in studies which deal with older speakers. For instance, in much of the research on language, gender, and aging which Hamilton examined, there exists a propensity to utilize language as a means to achieve

another goal such as determining female-male differences on “substantive issues” (p. 242), or has little or nothing to do with language production. In addition, Hamilton claims that there is little precise research available on language and gender as it relates to age. In reviewing the research which is accessible for study, she mentions three types of information: data from experiments carried out by psycholinguists, data gathered from natural conversational contexts, and data excerpted from recounting stories of life experiences or autobiographies (p. 242), all of which could offer researchers an abundance of opportunity for analysis if care were taken in how the material is collected and evaluated.

That there is not a large amount of data available on these older speakers and language, and that what does exist has less than an adequate amount of detailed information about their language is reaffirmed by Eckert (1984, pp. 229-230). She reemphasizes that erroneous assumptions may be made that elderly speakers might not possess adequate mental capacities to participate as fully as younger speakers in the linguistic changes which surround them. Because samples of speech from older speakers are often hard to secure, many times age ranges which are too all-inclusive and broadly defined are used to stand in place of what would probably be much more explicitly delineated for younger speakers (p. 231).

#### Problems with Data-Gathering Techniques

Finally, the process involved in data gathering emerges as a significant concern. Hamilton (1992) suggests that researchers should look more at female-male language differences throughout all stages of life. She fears that a pattern has been established in

which those who study language and aging will simply try to obtain more participation from speakers at the older end of the continuum instead of seeking out informants who will be likely to demonstrate sufficient diversity of life experiences. She also fears that researchers will not address adequately the individual differences which appear among these informants due to attitudinal, physical, and mental circumstances as well as differences in interactional patterns (pp. 243-244).

Another caution which Hamilton recommends deals with how to collect data from older speakers. She submits that problems are likely to surface in several areas. First, researchers may face difficulties due to both memory limitations, attention spans, and selection of task, since many typical elicitation devices are at least somewhat academic in orientation or require a great deal of abstraction, and many of the older informants are perhaps too far from the time when this type of activity was part of their routine to be as comfortable as younger speakers in participating in the tasks necessary for the research projects to be carried out successfully (p. 245). In addition, she submits that it might seem an easy explanation when researchers find older speakers to differ in linguistic performance to assume that they are merely inferior in some way to members of younger age groups (p. 246). Also, the fact that many researchers might possibly be operating from an outlook outside the sphere of understanding of the older informants who participate in the study could create problems in interpretation of results, especially in terms of stereotyping: "One linguistic form or communication strategy may have a very different social meaning for an older individual than it has for a younger one" (p. 246). She suggests that researchers take into account where informants are in their life experiences, since this realization necessarily leads to a consideration of whether the same things matter to an older informant which



seem to be of great importance to a younger one, whether older informants might be more open to some things than younger informants, and whether they might be more vulnerable to others.

### Conclusion

No real agreement exists on many of the issues connected to gender-and-age linked language use, but certain ideas and assumptions are generally considered to be common to the arguments. A few investigators both in the areas of gender and age research in Spanish argue that they can find little or no support for the contention that females are more linguistically conservative than males or that age has a notable impact on language production (Sánchez, 1993; Serrano, 1990; Williams, 1987). However, most researchers agree that there is little or no question of in-born gender or age-associated sensitivity to the standard or the superstandard. Most scholars also agree, with widely differing degrees of intensity, that gender and age have some effect on language choices; that females generally tend to produce more examples of prestige forms than males; that females maintain contact and strive to cement ties through their interactions (Aikio, 1992); that female speech reveals patterns of uncertainty with a preference for deferential careful speech, while males concern themselves more with point-blank assertions (Simkins-Bullock and Wildman, 1991); and that older speakers customarily maintain usages which are designated as standard or careful with greater frequency than younger speakers. Some scholars go so far as to maintain that even when gender-role differences are not clearly delineated, females favor the standard (Chambers, 1992). However it is recounted, that females and older speakers display stronger preferences for standard forms, manifest a keener awareness of

social prestige in their linguistic choices, and avoid stigmatized variants is a recurring theme zealously reported and staunchly defended by many researchers.

An exploration of the literature which examines the gender and the age of speakers who form part of the language produced by a given community of speakers, like that which examines general mood choice or language variation, provides another important component in establishing the foundation for research into how mood selection operates in Spanish. The literature which investigates the concept of mood in Spanish provides the groundwork for understanding the theories involved in mood choice. A survey of pertinent research on language variation helps to develop a necessary understanding of the processes at work in mood alternation. An overview of studies which deal with language and gender or language and age supplies a third necessary segment for completing the foundational structure essential to initiating the research on the relationship between gender and/or age and mood use following *no saber si* which will be reported in the following chapter.

An exploration of any associations between gender and mood selection and use among Mexican Spanish speakers also seems especially important for several reasons. The first and most obvious of these can be found in the recurrent theme in the literature on gender and language in which the gender of the speaker is considered to be one of the most influential social factors in studying language variation (Eckert, 1989; Trudgill, 1986). The second justification is less directly apparent in studies which deal with language, but definitely present in much of current research concerning gender roles in Mexican culture, where long-established models of male control and assumptions of male standards as unique are shown to be changing in contemporary Mexican society, with women moving into traditionally male-dominated spheres of education and professional activity

(Heusinkveld, 1994, pp. 41-43). Although many Mexican females continue to designate who they are in terms of their relationship with males, they seek out ways, often roundabout, and sometimes baffling, to counter if not directly defy the total male orientation inlaid and overlaid in their cultural schema (Heusinkveld, 1994, pp. 46-47). Whether these factors are linked in some way to female-male mood production is worth serious consideration.

Since age concerns have rarely been considered in the previous research projects dealing with Spanish mood choice, whatever information might be gleaned from examining any interrelationship between the two areas also seems to be relevant both to discerning the patterns which appear to operate in Spanish mood selection and usage and to the evolution of an understanding of the place of these as components in the larger picture of mood alternation. In addition, age, when treated as a component of general Spanish-language studies, has often been considered as an auxiliary or accessory to the primary focus of the research being undertaken. As merely an *asidé*, its potential for providing beneficial information has not been adequately explored. Finally, the contradictions which exist within the small body of information which deals with age and Spanish usage need to be addressed in order first to determine more precisely whether age has any valid association with overall Spanish language variation and then to assess more conscientiously the questions of which age group is indeed the most prone toward innovation, whether the older speaker-traditional and younger speaker-unorthodox couplings are accurate or faulty portrayals of native speaker language production.

## CHAPTER V

## METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

## Introduction

The research carried out in the study described here was conducted in order to investigate three principal questions concerning mood choice and use among Mexican Spanish speakers: whether variation exists in mood selection and usage among speakers of Mexican Spanish; whether differences exist in female and male patterns of mood selection; and whether differences exist in patterns of mood choice among members of different age groupings. In addition, the research was concerned with discerning any trends found in these patterns which might offer insights into what might motivate any gender-related or age-related associations with mood choice.

Specifically, this investigation examined diversity of present subjunctive and present indicative mood choices made by female and male informants from different generational groups when the construction *no saber si* (not to know if/whether). The specific research hypotheses were that Mexican Spanish speakers would produce both the present subjunctive and the present indicative moods in indirect questions following *no saber si*; that female and male informants would display different patterns of mood selection and use, with females producing a greater number of non-traditional (present subjunctive) verb responses; and that variation in mood choice and use would also appear when responses provided by age-graded groups were examined, with younger speakers leading in the production of the present subjunctive (innovative) forms. In short, this study sought to demonstrate that the mood system which is operative in Mexican Spanish is neither a fixed,

uniform whole, nor a tightly constructed binary distinction, that variation in mood choice and use is more than an isolated phenomenon, and that both female and male adult speakers from varying age brackets are involved in the process of variation.

Before proceeding further, it is important to clarify that the indirect questions mentioned above are declarative statements which carry the force of interrogative ones (Schiffrin, 1994, p. 30):

*No sé si sus achichincales vengan o se queden.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether his lackeys are coming or staying.**

They display neither the syntactic nor the intonational patterns normally expected of questions, and in Spanish generally occur either following the conjunction *que* (**that**) or the conjunction *si* (**if/whether**). Those indirect questions which employ the *que* are confined to instances in which direct questions would also be possible. In addition, when *que* introduces the subordinate clause of the indirect question, it is assumed that the present subjunctive will not appear. When *si* introduces the clause, some researchers admit that, under certain circumstances, the present subjunctive is possible (Plann, 1985, p. 270). The following two examples illustrate more precisely the indirect question construction:

*No sé que vendrán.* (future indicative)  
**I don't know that they will come.**

*No sabemos si salgan con la suya.* (present subjunctive)  
**We don't know whether they will get their own way.**

Any lack of uniformity in present subjunctive-present indicative use following the *no saber si* construction in indirect questions is of particular interest in developing a more comprehensive understanding of mood choice in Mexican Spanish since the use of the present subjunctive mood following the construction is generally prohibited by prescriptive grammarians (Ramsey and Spaulding, 1956); since the present subjunctive mood after *no*

*saber si* appears only as the rarest of exceptions, if at all, in many Spanish language dominant cultures (DeMello, 1995); and since the use of the present subjunctive following *no saber si* is disallowed as a possible conscious alternative by many Spanish speakers for whom it is a verifiable choice in usage (DeMello, 1995).

#### Initial Research/Pilot Studies

The groundwork for this project came from three different studies, each of which examined variability in mood use in Mexican Spanish. The first of these was made up of two separate investigations. The initial exploration compared variation in mood use following *no saber si* in the scripts of 45 half-hour episodes of *Felipe Reyes* (1964), a Mexican *radionovela* (radio serial), and videotapes of 28 one-hour episodes of the *telenovelas* (television serials/"soap operas") *De frente al sol* (1993), *Los parientes pobres* (1993), and *Valeria y Maximiliano* (1993). In addition, a less formal follow-up assessment was carried out by examining 20 hours of videotapes from a more recent *telenovela*, *Lazos de amor* (1996) in order to ascertain whether the same patterns of usage remained in place.

*Felipe Reyes* aired twice daily, once in the morning, and once in the evening from 1967 to 1973. The content of the *radionovela* episodes changed periodically according to the context in which the hero was positioned to solve the dilemma at hand. Dialect usage varied from what was regarded as standard Mexican middle class speech to what was seen as typical of rural peasant conversational exchanges. Actors and actresses were all Mexican nationals, most of whom were experienced in the radio industry. *Radionovela* scripts were not memorized; all monologues, dialogues, and conversations were read directly from the material provided by the author, with cast members making no

modifications or adaptations of their own.

The *telenovela* episodes also varied in content and physical setting, taking place both in Mexico City, once again attempting to replicate the Mexican middle class in language usage, and in rural areas of Veracruz and Guerrero, imitating the dialects typical of these areas. These episodes aired only in the evening in the seven o'clock to nine o'clock time slots. Actors and actresses in the *telenovelas* of necessity were required to memorize large amounts of dialogue in short periods of time and had to make their way through a scene regardless of whether they remained completely faithful to the script as originally written for their particular parts. It was not possible, then, finally to know in the case of the *telenovelas* whether the words spoken were in reality those of the program's author(s) or those of the person playing the part.

The probable audience for both the *radionovela* and the *telenovelas* was primarily adults of all ages, both female and male, with females comprising a larger portion of the morning audience. Both the professional and the working class public were expected to form part of the listening and viewing audience, with working class members probably more prone to consistent participation.

Results of these initial analyses were not as meaningful as had been expected since no examples of the present subjunctive following the *no saber si* construction were found in the *Felipe Reyes* scripts. All 29 instances of the *no saber si* construction were followed by the present indicative. In the three *telenovelas*, a quite different picture emerged, with 16 (43%) of the 38 verbs following *no saber si* appearing in the present subjunctive mood, even though prescriptive grammar would indicate that the present indicative is the only acceptable option. All of the tokens were spoken by characters representing the middle

class. Consequently, the originally planned direct comparison of mood use after *no saber si* between the *radionovela* and the *telenovelas* failed to provide any useful information other than that mood alternation appeared in the more recent, televised, more spontaneous format and did not appear in the older, author-scripted, radio broadcast context. The most arresting tendencies which surfaced from this limited study came from the number of non-traditional examples of mood use (present subjunctive in lieu of present indicative) following *no saber si* which occurred in female speech in the *telenovelas* and, to a lesser extent, in the language of the youngest speakers of both genders featured in the programs. Female cast members provided 21 (56%) of the 38 verbs which appeared following *no saber si*, and 11 (69%) of the 16 present subjunctive verbs. The follow-up study of mood use after *no saber si* in *Lazos de amor* yielded similar results, with 12 (56%) of the 23 verbs which followed a *no saber si* construction being present subjunctive. Of these 12 present subjunctive mood verbs, female characters supplied 7 (58%). Examples of present subjunctive use following *no saber si* in the *telenovelas* are provided in Appendix A.

After having evaluated the media-generated data, a supplementary examination of native-speaker mood choices was conducted with a convenience sample of 18 participants, 10 females and 8 males ranging in age from 18 to 47. Since the *no saber si* construction appears so infrequently in natural conversation, it seemed necessary to construct some type of elicitation instrument in order to obtain sufficient data. These questionnaire format which was chosen required each informant to complete two series of open-ended sentences. The first of the sets comprised a group of 15 statements five of which contained the *no saber si* construction, and the remainder some form of either *saber* (to know), the conjunctive *si* (whether/if), or both. The second part of the questionnaire was made up of



ten incomplete sentences and drawings to guide vocabulary choices. Eight of these statements included *no saber si* in the matrix clause, and the remaining two contained the conjunction *si*. All items on the questionnaire were created by the researcher for use in this study. A copy of the questionnaire and an English translation are included in Appendix B, and sample responses in Appendix C. Although outcomes must be interpreted with caution, analyzing mood divisions within individual gender groups indicated male language production following *no saber si* to be only 8% subjunctive, while female output was 28% subjunctive.

A second preliminary study of the *no saber si*-mood use association was carried out in the United States among 24 Hispanic university students between the ages of 18 and 25, who were participants in informal off-campus social gatherings. Eleven were female, and 13 were male. This time the research examined from the onset any possible gender-related influences. Data for the study were obtained by three methods. First, an audiotape was made of informant interaction during a forty-minute game which required the use of *No sé si* (I don't know whether/if) + verb. During this game, participants were divided into two teams and provided with cards on which were listed three "prohibited words" which could not be used to describe the drawing which was also on the card. The task at hand was to make team members guess what was in the drawing. Each effort to elicit an answer from team members had to begin with *No sé si*, thus necessitating the choice of either an indicative or a subjunctive mood verb in the subordinate clause which followed. The second method for data collection was a fourteen-item role-play in which each informant was given a questionnaire which simulated a written job interview in which all questions were designed to be answered beginning with *No sé si*. The third source for data

gathering was a series of 12 open-ended sentences intended to measure the use of *no saber si*+verb with other matrix-clause subjects in addition to the first person singular.

Appendix D provides a copy of the role play instrument, accompanied by an English translation.

Results of this research indicated that females in the study employed the present subjunctive more frequently after *no saber si* than did the male participants. However, Chi-square analyses performed on the data resulted in statistics which showed no significant relationship between gender and present subjunctive/present indicative use either for the game response data ( $X^2 = .171$ ) or for the completion sentences ( $X^2 = .488$ ) when taken as individual sets. However, results of Chi-square tests conducted on the questionnaire responses indicated that the relationship between gender and mood selection for the role play portion of the study was a significant ( $X^2 = 16.511$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\Phi = .220$ ), though relatively weak one, and that the same was true for the combined oral and written data ( $X^2 = 21.700$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\Phi = .181$ ).

Once again, though results from the study provided some useful information, there were important questions and concerns which were either avoided or left unsatisfied both in terms of the group of informants and the elicitation of responses. Among these can be noted the small size of the group which provided the data and the fact that the language samples came from an intact and quite homogeneous group. In addition, subjects from other age groups, who were not in the midst of a liberal-arts-oriented curriculum, and who knew each other and the researcher less well might have generated more diverse samples. In terms of the responses which informants provided in the various tasks, the data gathered from the oral component offered little information as to mood choice, perhaps due to the

almost total lack of context surrounding each verb usage, and the role play questionnaire, which generated the most helpful data, was, despite all efforts to make the interaction seem natural, the most artificial of the tasks. In addition to being invented constructions, the sentences provided for the completion task, the format which seemed to offer the most helpful samples of natural language, did not serve to create as relaxed an atmosphere for eliciting spontaneously produced uncontrived responses as was desirable.

As a final precursor to the present study and an effort to determine whether the projected questionnaire format itself was an adequate means of securing the desired information on mood use following *no saber si*, questionnaires designed to elicit verb choice following the construction were administered to two groups of informants. In order to test the appropriacy of the individual items included in the instrument, respondents were asked to complete three separate parts of the pilot questionnaire. This questionnaire was an effort to combine what seemed to be the most helpful features of the games cards, the open-ended sentences, and the role play task used in the previous pilot study with the addition of a preference exercise. A copy of this trial questionnaire and an English translation, are available in Appendix E. All of the 36 of the informants came from a convenience sample of Mexican Spanish-speaking participants in meetings at Olivet Spanish Mission in Oklahoma City. Twenty-eight were female and 8 male. They were all adult native speakers, ranging in age from 23 to 68.

Overall results based on the data gathered from this group of informants were not especially informative in terms of gender and mood choice associations since there was such an imbalance in the number of female and male participants. However, results did confirm that females lead in present subjunctive usage following *no saber si*. Females

produced 38% of their verbs in the present subjunctive mood, while males had a 12% present subjunctive, 82% present indicative split. Perhaps more useful to the present study was another facet of the data obtained from the Olivet group. Results from examining the sample by age divisions, more evenly balanced than gender, demonstrated that the youngest speakers furnished more present subjunctive tokens than did those in the older three age groups, data which aided in the formation of the age-related hypothesis for the present research. Also, in general, information obtained from the results of these preliminary applications of the questionnaire confirmed that the use of a written instrument of this type could serve as a satisfactory method of elicitation of the data necessary for the planned research, and also led to modifications of details in the original instrument, in terms of overall simplification of the instrument, in terms of modification of some of the items which were selected for use in the final questionnaire, and in terms of elimination of several specific items altogether.

### Informants

The data for the present study were taken from language samples provided by the written questionnaire responses of 121 Spanish speakers from 8 of the 31 states in the Mexican Republic. The sample included both females and males from varying age categories. Thirty were from the Distrito Federal (Mexico City), 24 were from the state of Mexico (Toluca), 16 each were from Coahuila (Saltillo) and Veracruz (Córdoba, Fortín de las Flores, Xalapa), 13 were from Jalisco (Guadalajara), 10 each were from Durango (Durango) and Nuevo León (Monterrey), and 2 were from Tamaulipas (Ciudad Victoria). Such diversity of regional origins was considered important, although not vital, to the study

in order to insure a sample in which all informants were not closely tied to each other. With one exception (Fortín de las Flores, Veracruz, with a population of 16,000), all of the cities included in the sample were metropolitan areas with populations of 150,000 or greater. Table I illustrates the gender and age distribution of the 62 female and 59 male informants.

TABLE I  
DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMANTS  
BY GENDER AND AGE

Female	Male
18-25 years old 17 (14%)	18-25 years old 15 (12%)
26-35 years old 13 (11%)	26-35 years old 14 (12%)
36-55 years old 19 (16%)	36-55 years old 16 (13%)
55+ years old 13 (11%)	55+ years old 14 (12%)
Total: 62 (52%)	Total: 59 (48%)

All of the informants had grown up in México, and had spoken Spanish all of their lives. One was born in Canada to Mexican parents, but had lived in México since infancy and spoke only Spanish. Most of the participants still lived in the same state where they were born.

### Questionnaires

The questionnaires were made up of three separate parts, each presented in a

format designed to elicit the use of a verb following some form of *no saber si* (not to know if/whether). All three sections required some type of sentence-completion task, with the level of guidance provided decreasing with each part. The questionnaires were administered in a variety of small gatherings in cafes, parks, classes, homes, and churches, with informal church groups providing the largest number of contributions (52%). Both females and males were present in all contexts except one of the home and one of the church groups, with only males present in the home and only females in the church. All age groups were not represented in each setting in which the questionnaires were administered, but at least two of the age categories were found in all contexts. In a few cases, there was a mixture of geographical origins within a given group of informants responding to the questionnaire, but most of the time all participants in one setting were from the same region.

Most of those who administered the questionnaires were either missionaries or college-age children of missionaries who maintain permanent residency status in México. Two United States college professors, one traveling and one teaching in México, and a Mexican author distributed and collected the remainder of the questionnaires. All of those who served in this supervisory capacity were fluent Spanish speakers, and explained the purpose of the questionnaire carefully to informants prior to their agreeing to participate in the study. At no time were the informants advised that they were being asked to produce examples of subjunctive or indicative mood use. The information which they received stated that the questionnaire was part of a study of Spanish as it is spoken in México, that its only purpose was to solicit information connected to everyday Spanish language usage, that no opinions or other personal information would be necessary to complete it, and that

the results of the data gathered by means of the questionnaire would be used only to complete a doctoral dissertation at a university in the United States. An English translation of the statement which was read to informants appears in Appendix F.

Totaling the three sections, each questionnaire allowed for a possible 28 replies per informant, providing a potential data pool of 3,388 responses (females: 1736; males: 1652) were all available blanks completed with either one present subjunctive or one present indicative verb each. Appendix G provides a copy of the questionnaire in Spanish, and Appendix H its English translation.

### Description of Part I

The first of the questionnaire sections is made up of eight incomplete sentences, seven declarative and one interrogative, each accompanied by a line drawing. Based upon the experience provided in both the open-ended sentence exercise in the first of the initial studies described above, and the game task of the second of these research endeavors, and substantiated by the Olivet group's responses to the pilot questionnaire, it was assumed that providing some type of facilitator at the beginning of the questionnaire might reduce awkwardness in approaching the task, help to expedite less laborious sentence completion, and thereby emphasize to informants that they were both competent and accomplished enough to handle the overall task well without resorting to textbook-like responses. The drawings were not expected to elicit the use of particular verbs, much less a particular mood; they were merely provided to ease the burden of creativity for any informants who either might have felt more comfortable with some type of general guidelines at the beginning of the questionnaire, or who might have felt inadequate to the task of generating

completely novel constructions. It was anticipated that responses in Part I would provide a general backdrop for those to be supplied in the remainder of the questionnaire. This section was also expected to be instrumental in determining any relationship which might exist between mood and coreferentiality since all eight of the statements here contained non-coreferential matrix and subordinate clause subjects. The only instructions given for this part were to complete each sentence using the drawing as a guide.

In order to determine whether coreferential agents in the matrix and subordinate clause are requisite to any use of the present subjunctive mood following the *no saber si* construction, three of the sentences in Part I begin with the first person singular subject in the matrix clause, *No sé si (I don't know if/whether)*, each with a third person singular subject in the subordinate clause (1, 3, 5). One of the statements in this section begins with a third person singular subject, followed by an open slot for the agent in the subordinate clause (8), with the most logical subject being either third person singular or third person plural. In two other sentences, impersonal constructions [*Es difícil saber (It is difficult to know)/No se puede saber (One can't know)*] precede the subordinate clause to be completed (4, 7), each time with a third person singular subject used before the clause to be completed. The remaining statement is initiated by the negative *nadie (no one)*, followed by a third person plural subject in the subordinate clause (6). The one interrogative sentence included in this part has *quién sabe (who knows)* in the matrix clause, and a third person plural subject in the second clause (2). All of the drawings depict either one person (1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8), two people (6), or a group of people (2). It was assumed that informants would produce responses with some connection to the persons and actions pictured, thus necessitating a response in either the third person singular or the



third person plural.

### Description of Part II

The second section of the questionnaire presented informants with ten short conversations, all excerpted, and some slightly adapted, from recordings made of spontaneous conversations in México (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10), or taken verbatim from current Mexican television programs (3, 8, 9). The specific dialogues/conversations were selected for three reasons. First, they contain the *no saber si* construction, an occurrence which is not used with a great deal of frequency in available samples of completely spontaneous language. Second, they include a variety of topics and do not limit informants to a narrow set of language options. Finally, both genders are represented. The incomplete conversation format was selected for this part of the questionnaire since, in addition to employing language which should be familiar to informants, it provided some additional context surrounding the *no saber si* constructions. All of the scenarios in which the blanks to be completed are embedded are simple and should not seem out of the ordinary to most Mexican informants. Topics for the conversations include travel plans, location of people and items, personal opinions, simple requests for information or explanation, and expressions of anger. Participants portrayed in the conversations are simply labeled *hombre (man)*, *mujer (woman)*, or *niña (little girl)*, except in the case of item 8, where the terms *esposa (wife)* and *esposo (husband)* are used. The fictitious conversational participants whose response was to be created by the informants represent both genders (7 adult females, 4 adult males, and a female child). The gender balance in the dialogues/conversations is roughly based upon the average amount of female/male participation found in the accessible language samples. Three of the dialogues are marked

for future time (1a, 2a, 5), and five of the others suggest location (2b, 6, 7, 9, 10). Some type of question is included in nine of the ten conversations, with the other dialogue built on exclamatory expressions.

Eight of the items in Part II are dialogues (1, 3-8, 10), and two are conversations among three participants (2, 9). All range in length from two to five lines. Eight of the dialogues or conversations require the addition of only one element (3-10), and the remaining two have two blanks for informants to complete (1, 2), providing a total of 12 possible slots for completion if only one verb is supplied per blank. All of the matrix clauses in this section of the questionnaire are initiated by the *No sé si* construction. The preference displayed for use of *No sé si* in the initial clause is due primarily to the arguments in the literature on mood choice which state that, if any variation is to occur in mood usage following *no saber si*, it will appear only following a first person singular matrix clause subject. This being the case, it seemed necessary to emphasize and/or guarantee that a portion of the questionnaire be designed to address this claim. Given the structure and information provided in the portions of the exchanges which are supplied in the questionnaire, it would be predicted that four of the verbs in the completions would appear in the third person plural (1, 2, 7, 9), three in the first person singular (3, 5, 8), two in the third person singular (4, 10), and one in either the first or third person plural (6). Informants were instructed to complete the missing elements in the conversations in any way they wished.

### Description of Part III

The third section of the questionnaire is once again a set of open-ended sentences

for informants to complete in any way they desire. In this case, the eight declarative statements are not accompanied by drawings, preceded by questions, or guided in any way other than the general situational context. Five of the items (2, 3, 5, 7, 8) have the first person singular *No sé si* in the matrix clause, two of them expressing subject *yo* (I). A sixth sentence also has a first person singular subject, here expressing future time (6). Of the two remaining statements, one is initiated by a third person singular subject (4) and one by a third person plural (1). In two of the eight sentences (4, 6), the negative *no* is replaced by *nunca* (never). There is an open slot for the subordinate clause subject in four of the sentences (1, 3, 6, 8). Of the remaining four statements, three of the subordinate clauses display third person plural subjects (2, 4, 7), and one a third person singular agent (5). In two of the sentences, further information is provided following the blanks (3, 5). Only in the case of sentence 5 is the subordinate clause subject inanimate. Instructions for this section once again simply indicated that sentences be completed.

### Procedures

In an effort to establish general configurations of mood use in the questionnaire, the total number of responses provided by informants were counted and separated according to gender and age. In addition, the sum total of responses appearing in each section of the questionnaire was calculated as was the total number of indicative and subjunctive responses per section and the percentages of the total which they represented. The percentage of each mood present in each question was also calculated.

In order to begin elaborating patterns typical of gender-related mood selection, general female and male differences in mood use were noted and described. All instances

of female and male subjunctive and indicative use were tabulated separately for each of the sections of the questionnaire, for each of the items within each section of the questionnaire, and for the questionnaire as a whole. In addition, though acknowledging the limitations of rigidly defined age categories, mood use was calculated for females and for males separately according to the four age groupings (18-25, 26-35, 36-55, 55+), again by sections as well as for the entire questionnaire. The percentages of all responses provided by each gender group which appeared in each mood were also computed. Frequency tables based on female-male mood choices for each of these categories were constructed, and a Chi-square analysis was performed on the data to determine whether statistically significant differences existed in female and male mood choice in the questionnaire data.

Subjunctive and indicative use was also counted and frequencies calculated for female and male mood usage in separate categories of constructions with coreferential and constructions with non-coreferential subjects in the matrix and subordinate clauses. In order to calculate these percentages, subjunctive and indicative mood uses following first person singular clauses containing *no saber si*, third person singular clauses containing *no saber si*, third person plural clauses containing *no saber si*, *¿quién sabe?* (who knows?) clauses, and clauses including impersonal expressions of the *no saber si* construction were counted and categorized according to whether the subordinate clause carried a subject identical to or different from that of the matrix clause.

Three other calculations were included as well. First, the relationship of mood use and gender following the negative *nunca* (never) was explored, and percentages of use tabulated. Next, the same calculations were made for subordinate clauses which featured an inanimate subject. Finally, in order to determine which verbs appeared most frequently

throughout the questionnaire and by whom they were provided, a count was also made of each verb which appeared in a questionnaire response according to its meaning.

Similar descriptions and tabulations were carried out with reference to the question of age and mood choice. A general characterization of age-related mood choice and usage was constructed, followed by a count of all instances of present indicative and present subjunctive use by age division for each part as well as for the complete questionnaire. The association of mood use and age in individual questionnaire items was not calculated due to the small number of tokens per item once separations into age groupings were made. Mood use among females and males in the various age groups had already been addressed in the portion of the study dealing with gender. Frequency tables were constructed based on age-related mood selection for each of the categories, and a Chi-square analysis was performed to discover any statistically significant differences in mood choice among the four age groupings.

### General Results

From an examination of general results concerning mood choice and usage which the questionnaire data yielded, a series of patterns of usage for females and for males began to emerge. In terms of questionnaires which contained either exclusively indicative or exclusively subjunctive responses, there were none which included only subjunctive mood responses, and only six of the 121 in which only indicative responses were provided by informants. Of these six exclusively indicative responses sets, five were provided by male informants and one by a female informant. There were no questionnaires which did not include present indicative mood responses. At some point, every open slot in the

questionnaire was filled by both indicative and subjunctive mood responses. Appendix I provides sample items in each mood.

Each individual section of the questionnaire displayed some degree of mood exclusivity, with Part I showing the largest number of completely present indicative response sets (females: 9 of 62; males: 17 of 59), and Part II the largest number of responses where only the present subjunctive mood appeared (females: 5 of 62; males: 1 of 59). The age of the informant did not appear to be a factor in exclusive mood use in any of the questionnaire sections, since contributions did not vary greatly from one age group to another.

Of the 3,388 verb responses which were available if each informant were to complete the entire questionnaire and furnish only one verb per response option, 3,171 verbs were actually provided by informants, 52% (1659) by females and 48% (1512) by males. This overall mismatch in possible and actual number of responses was due to the fact that some respondents of each gender and all age brackets chose to use two verbs in one slot, while others chose not to supply any answer at all to complete some of the blanks. When two verbs were provided in the same response slot, both the verbs generally appeared in the same mood. At times, a few informants seemed to have had difficulty in deciding which verb form or which mood they preferred since they wrote both of the forms in the response slot, one above the other, or one in parentheses. For most of these informants, there were three pairs of self-imposed response possibilities: either present indicative and present subjunctive (6), present subjunctive and an infinitive (3), or present indicative and future indicative (2). As illustrated in Table II, calculations showed that the present indicative surpassed the present subjunctive by 867 tokens, with 1152 (36%) of the

total responses in the present subjunctive, and 2019 (64%) in the present indicative.

TABLE II  
MOOD CONTRASTS  
BY PARTS

Indicative	Subjunctive	Total Blanks
Part I 674 tokens	Part I 261 tokens	8 blanks 935 tokens
72% of this part	28% of this part	
Part II 778 tokens	Part II 560 tokens	12 blanks 1338 tokens
58% of this part	42% of this part	
Part III 567 tokens	Part III 331 tokens	8 blanks 898 tokens
63% of this part	37% of this part	

#### Results from Part I

Since each of the separate sections of the questionnaire was conceived of as examining a slightly different mode of approaching mood selection and use, an exploration of the mood selection appearing in each of them should prove useful in developing an overall portrait of the mood choices made by this group of 121 respondents. Part I was designed primarily to investigate indicative and subjunctive use when little written context has been established for the informant, but when a rudimentary situational framework has been provided for her/him visually. The language which serves to cue informant responses in this part of the questionnaire is very simple, and non-coreferential subordinate clause subjects are provided by the eight different drawings which accompany the open slots. It

was anticipated that informants would be likely to respond with equally simple language and that they would also be able to avoid any preoccupation with grammatical issues. In addition, this section contained the smallest percentage of first person singular matrix clause agents (3 of 8). Part I also was expected to establish scenarios which would probably seem less connected to the respondents than those of the two later sections, and thus to reduce the possibility of providing formulaic responses. It should also be mentioned that, since this part of the questionnaire was presumably completed first, it might have produced less spontaneous responses overall than Parts II and III.

As illustrated below in Table III, it was apparent that indicative mood use (72%) predominated in Part I, with six of the eight items in this mood above 70%, and with no instances of subjunctive mood use over 50% in this section. Item number 3 came closest to demonstrating any balance between subjunctive and indicative use in this part, with a 51% present indicative to 49% present subjunctive split. It should also be noted that two examples of very low subjunctive mood use (16%) occurred in items 7 and 8.

TABLE III  
INDICATIVE AND SUBJUNCTIVE  
MOOD USE PER ITEM,  
PART I

Indicative	Subjunctive
1) 96 (78%)	1) 27 (22%)
2) 66 (53%)	2) 58 (47%)
3) 71 (51%)	3) 67 (49%)
4) 82 (70%)	4) 35 (30%)
5) 80 (79%)	5) 21 (21%)
6) 85 (74%)	6) 30 (26%)
7) 97 (84%)	7) 18 (16%)
8) 97 (84%)	8) 18 (16%)



## Results from Part II

Part II of the questionnaire was created with the expectation that informants might supply responses which more closely approximated their own automatic language choices than those furnished in the first section, since it allowed them to place themselves in the stead of one of the participants in each of the dialogues or conversations. This section of the questionnaire also provided more overall background for setting up the responses which were elicited and consequently was envisioned as somewhat more directed than Part I and Part III. Since a greater amount of language was furnished for the informants in this section than in the other two parts of the questionnaire, the tone of the discourse also seemed more firmly established. Another detail which once again should be mentioned at this point is that all matrix clauses in Part II displayed first person singular subjects (*No sé si*), thus helping to measure the possible impact of this construction on mood selection, while at the same time severely reducing any opportunity for coreferentiality. Only in items 3, 4, 5, and 8 was there an obvious occasion for identical agents to be used in both the matrix and the subordinate clauses.

As demonstrated below in Table IV, Part II displayed a more evenly distributed set of percentages among all 12 items than was evident in the 8 items in the first section of the questionnaire. Here present indicative percentages ranged from 37% to 69% with 10 of the 12 of these items in the 50% and 60% range. The present subjunctive pattern in Part II displayed a smaller percentage range (31% to 54%), and 11 of the 12 responses remained at the 30% and 40% levels. However, it should also be noted that no instances of present subjunctive mood use under 20% appeared in Part II, and that the greatest percentage of subjunctive production in a single questionnaire section appeared in this

part, with 42% of the responses occurring in this mood.

TABLE IV  
INDICATIVE AND SUBJUNCTIVE  
MOOD USE PER ITEM,  
PART II

Indicative	Subjunctive
1a) 55 (51%)	1a) 52 (49%)
1b) 68 (63%)	1b) 40 (37%)
2a) 60 (52%)	2a) 55 (48%)
2b) 76 (66%)	2b) 39 (34%)
3) 64 (56%)	3) 50 (44%)
4) 76 (69%)	4) 34 (31%)
5) 49 (46%)	5) 58 (54%)
6) 74 (63%)	6) 44 (37%)
7) 57 (51%)	7) 55 (49%)
8) 72 (65%)	8) 38 (35%)
9) 67 (61%)	9) 43 (39%)
10) 60 (54%)	10) 52 (46%)

#### Results from Part III

Part III of the questionnaire was the least regulated of the sections. It was assumed that respondents would be more likely here to answer from their own experience, express their own opinions, and state their own ideas. All open slots were constructed in an attempt to elicit speech which was as natural as that of Part II, but without the limitations brought about by assuming the role of another person. Here again it seems important to note that half of the initial clause subjects were first person singular, with the question of coreferentiality left undetermined in some cases (items 1, 3, 6, 8) and precluded in others (items 2, 4, 5, 7). Table V furnishes a summary of subjunctive and indicative selection for this final portion of the questionnaire.

TABLE V  
INDICATIVE AND SUBJUNCTIVE  
MOOD USE PER ITEM,  
PART III

Indicative	Subjunctive
1) 83 (85%)	1) 15 (15%)
2) 67 (59%)	2) 47 (41%)
3) 60 (53%)	3) 54 (47%)
4) 101 (91%)	4) 10 (9%)
5) 60 (52%)	5) 56 (48%)
6) 96 (84%)	6) 18 (16%)
7) 53 (45%)	7) 64 (55%)
8) 47 (41%)	8) 67 (59%)

Part III was distinguished by its furnishing the widest variation in percentages of mood usage found in the entire set of questionnaire data, with ranges as broad as 50% present in each mood (present indicative: 41%-91%; present subjunctive: 9%-59%). In addition, the lowest present subjunctive mood use, and consequently the highest present indicative use (9%/91%) appeared in item 4 of this section. Yet another feature of Part III which should be noted was the fact that the two lowest instances of present subjunctive use in the entire questionnaire occurred in item 1 (15%) and item 4 (9%).

#### Summary of Results by Questionnaire Section

In summary, each of the parts of the questionnaire was devised to work as part of a progression. Respondents were expected to move from Part I where language was quite uncomplicated and visual cues made for easy access to vocabulary, to Part II where setting and circumstances surrounding the open slots provided a focus which constrained responses to a certain extent, but which also evoked familiar contexts of usage, to Part III

where it was anticipated that respondents would be the most relaxed and furnish the most natural of their language samples. The greatest percentage of subjunctive mood use, and consequently the lowest indicative, appeared in Part II, item 5, with 54% subjunctive responses, and in Part III, items 7 and 8, with 55% and 59% subjunctive use. These three examples represented the only instances in which overall subjunctive mood use surpassed 50%. In three other examples, Part I, item 3, Part II, item 2a, and Part III, item 5, mood use was almost equally represented, with 51%-52% indicative and 48%-49% subjunctive use. There were four items which displayed a pattern of low subjunctive and high indicative mood use, items 7 and 8 of Part I, with only 16% subjunctive each, and items 1, 4, and 6 of Part III, with 15%, 9%, and 16% subjunctive.

#### Overall Patterns of Usage by Female Informants

In addition to these general considerations, the questionnaire data yielded information which addressed the question of gender and mood use. Here various categories of results were explored. First, several comments should be made concerning results which help to provide an overall description of female and male mood choices. On the whole, there were four typical female patterns for presenting information repeated in the data: general statements which seemed designed to create extended context; explanations/descriptions accompanied by attenuating mechanisms; judicious, perhaps even tentative expressions of opinions; and other types of personal or personalizing references. Overall, females tended to provide lengthier responses than males regardless of which mood they selected, to create more original context surrounding their verb choices, to include more personal comments in their replies, to add qualifiers to their

statements, and to reveal more of their own opinions.

*Es difícil saber si el detective busca el animal o si busca otra cosa, pero yo creo que busca el zorrillo.*

(female, present indicative, Part I, item 4)

**It's difficult to know whether the detective is looking for the animal or whether he's looking for something else.**

*Es difícil saber si el detective ve algo.* (male, present indicative, Part I, item 4)

**It's difficult to know whether the detective sees something.**

Female informants also displayed more instances of hedges and of clarifications or justifications of their responses:

*En realidad, yo no sé si mis hijos regresen hoy, digo, es posible, pero no sé.*

(present subjunctive, Part III, item 2)

**In reality, I don't know whether my children will come back today, I mean, it's possible, but I don't know.**

*En realidad no sé si mis hijos están peleando.* (male, present indicative, Part III, item 2).

**In reality, I don't know whether my children are fighting.**

In addition, 88% of all direct address responses were furnished by female informants, along with numerous direct references to themselves and/or their interlocutors.

*¿Quién sabe si ellos puedan subir? Ud. sabe como son los ascensores.*

(present subjunctive, Part I, item 2)

**Who knows whether they will be able to go up. You know what elevators are like.**

#### Mood Choice Patterns of Female Informants

In reference to the issue of mood choice, females continued to maintain many of the characteristics of their overall language production. They tended to opt for the present subjunctive in response to questions when they also chose to create a reply which contained more than one sentence; when they added certain types of intensifiers or other qualifying expressions; when they were attempting to voice a personal opinion; when they made an effort to establish an overall contextual framework larger than a basic

questionnaire response would necessarily require; when they sought to appeal to some common frame of reference assumed to be shared by their interlocutors; and when the ideas which they expressed or the details which they provided were not so much informative statements as glimpses into their own manner of linking themselves to their conversational partners.

*Yo no sé si su carro funcione porque me parece estar en muy malas condiciones.*  
(present subjunctive, Part III, item 5)

**I don't know whether his car will run because it seems to be in very bad condition.**

*Cuando hace tanto calor, no sé si los niños deban nadar porque puede hacerles daño.*  
(present subjunctive, Part III, item 7)

**When it's so hot, I don't know whether the children should swim because it could hurt them.**

*No sé si el pobre señor caiga en el hoyo. Debe caminar con más cuidado.*  
(present subjunctive, Part I, item 5)

**I don't know whether the poor man will fall in the hole. He should walk more carefully.**

#### Overall Patterns of Usage by Male Informants

It was less clear precisely what patterns of discourse development were followed by male informants, but among the patterns which they displayed could be found definite tendencies to favor a straightforward mode of presentation of information; to enumerate or itemize details; to convey what was indispensable to understanding their message, thus opting for the primary instead of the ancillary; to report specifics and technicalities when these were directly applicable to a clear-cut conferral of information; and to prefer linear declarations or recitations of facts to less direct forms of discourse. Male respondents were also less apt than females to make unrequired direct references to themselves or to their interlocutors, and more likely to create responses which pointed to a certain degree of security in the appropriateness or correctness of the details which they supplied. Most

of their responses seemed to be efforts at expressing their own precise message.

*No sé si su carro es nuevo o usado.* (present indicative, Part III, item 7)  
**I don't know whether his car is new or used.**

*Cuando hace tanto calor, no sé si los niños lo soportan.*  
 (present indicative, Part III, item 7)  
**When it's so hot, I don't know whether the children can stand it.**

*No sé si el pobre señor se va a caer.* (present indicative, Part I, item 5)  
**I don't know whether the poor man is going to fall.**

Where female informants tended to use either the conjunction *y* (**and**), the conjunction *o* (**or**), or the conjunction *porque* (**because**) to expand their responses, if males chose to elaborate at all, they were more prone to employ the conjunction *pero* (**but**). By means of using this conjunction, males were able to acknowledge what they did not know by completing the *no saber si* statement, and then, at times, to add an assertion of what they did indeed believe themselves to know.

*No sé si el hombre sueña, pero seguramente descansa.* (present indicative, Part I, #3)  
**I don't know whether the man is dreaming, but surely he's resting.**

#### Mood Choice Patterns of Male Informants

With reference to mood choice patterns, male informants, for the most part, deviated less than did female respondents from the prescriptive standard, in general, choosing to employ the present subjunctive mood primarily when the reply which they furnished was a strong, forceful, convincing expression of doubt, and maintaining a steady preference for the present indicative in most other contexts. The following examples are typical of their present subjunctive use:

*Nunca sabré si gane porque no participo.* (present subjunctive, Part III, #6)  
**I'll never know whether I'll win because I won't participate.**

*No sé si su carro viejo funcione por más de dos años.* (present subjunctive, Part III, #5)

**I don't know whether his old car will run for more than two years.**

### Numerical Results of Gender-Based Data Found in Part I

When numerical results of each of the three parts of the questionnaire were examined from the perspective of how great a percentage of the total female or the total male verb production calculated separately occurred in each mood, fairly clear patterns of contrasting mood choice emerged. Table VI provides information concerning these mood divisions.

TABLE VI  
FEMALE AND MALE INDICATIVE AND  
SUBJUNCTIVE RESPONSES  
PER ITEM IN PART I

Male Indicative	Male Subjunctive	Female Indicative	Female Subjunctive
1) 48 (83%)	1) 10 (17%)	1) 48 (74%)	1) 17 (26%)
2) 33 (54%)	2) 28 (46%)	2) 33 (52%)	2) 30 (48%)
3) 31 (57%)	3) 23 (43%)	3) 40 (66%)	3) 21 (34%)
4) 42 (76%)	4) 13 (24%)	4) 40 (65%)	4) 22 (35%)
5) 43 (83%)	5) 9 (17%)	5) 37 (63%)	5) 22 (37%)
6) 46 (85%)	6) 8 (15%)	6) 39 (64%)	6) 22 (36%)
7) 47 (89%)	7) 6 (11%)	7) 50 (81%)	7) 12 (19%)
8) 47 (85%)	8) 8 (15%)	8) 50 (83%)	8) 10 (17%)
Total: 337 (76%)	Total: 105 (24%)	Total: 337 (68%)	Total: 156 (32%)

In Part I, where the subjects of the matrix clause and that of the subordinate clause in each statement were non-coreferential, and visual cues were provided to aid respondents, both female and male informants produced average percentages of present indicative mood use which were more than twice as large as their present subjunctive mood output. Females



averaged 68% present indicative to 32% present subjunctive mood use, and males 76% present indicative to 24% present subjunctive.

#### Numerical Results of Gender-Based Data Found in Part II

In Part II, where informants supplied verbs to complete minimally contextualized dialogues and conversations, female respondents exhibited a more balanced set of frequencies, with approximately 50% of their verbs appearing in the present indicative mood and 50% in the present subjunctive, while male informants remained closer to the performance which they exhibited in Part I, with 67% indicative verb and 33% subjunctive averages. In Table VII, the responses which female and male informants provided in this section are detailed.

TABLE VII  
FEMALE AND MALE INDICATIVE AND  
SUBJUNCTIVE RESPONSES  
PER ITEM IN PART II

Male Indicative	Male Subjunctive	Female Indicative	Female Subjunctive
1a) 32 (59%)	1a) 22 (41%)	1a) 23 (43%)	1a) 30 (57%)
1b) 39 (74%)	1b) 14 (26%)	1b) 29 (53%)	1b) 26 (47%)
2a) 29 (53%)	2a) 26 (47%)	2a) 31 (52%)	2a) 29 (48%)
2b) 47 (84%)	2b) 9 (16%)	2b) 29 (49%)	2b) 30 (51%)
3) 34 (63%)	3) 20 (37%)	3) 30 (50%)	3) 30 (50%)
4) 36 (69%)	4) 16 (31%)	4) 40 (69%)	4) 18 (31%)
5) 31 (60%)	5) 21 (40%)	5) 18 (33%)	5) 37 (67%)
6) 36 (63%)	6) 21 (37%)	6) 38 (62%)	6) 23 (38%)
7) 34 (62%)	7) 21 (38%)	7) 23 (40%)	7) 34 (60%)
8) 45 (83%)	8) 9 (17%)	8) 27 (48%)	8) 29 (52%)
9) 38 (69%)	9) 17 (31%)	9) 29 (53%)	9) 26 (47%)
10) 37 (67%)	10) 18 (33%)	10) 23 (40%)	10) 34 (60%)
Total: 438 (67%)	Total: 214 (33%)	Total: 340 (50%)	Total: 346 (50%)

### Numerical Results of Gender-Based Data Found in Part III

An examination of Part III, eight open-ended sentences which provided the least guidance or direction for informants of the three sections of the questionnaire, found the mood production of female informants to be once again more evenly divided than that of male respondents, this time with the present indicative surpassing the present subjunctive 54% to 46%. Male informants, following their already established pattern, once again were much more prone to generate a greater percentage of present indicative (74%) than present subjunctive (26%) verb responses. It seems interesting to note that on item 4 of this section, only ten total present subjunctive responses were produced, nine by female informants and one by a male respondent, and on item 6, male informants sustained this low subjunctive production, this time supplying only three present subjunctive responses. Table VIII shows mood choices according to gender for this part.

TABLE VIII

#### FEMALE AND MALE INDICATIVE AND SUBJUNCTIVE RESPONSES PER ITEM IN PART III

Male Indicative	Male Subjunctive	Female Indicative	Female Subjunctive
1) 38 (90%)	1) 4 (10%)	1) 45 (80%)	1) 11 (20%)
2) 39 (71%)	2) 16 (29%)	2) 28 (47%)	2) 31 (53%)
3) 39 (71%)	3) 16 (29%)	3) 21 (36%)	3) 38 (64%)
4) 51 (98%)	4) 1 (2%)	4) 50 (85%)	4) 9 (15%)
5) 34 (63%)	5) 20 (37%)	5) 26 (42%)	5) 36 (58%)
6) 50 (94%)	6) 3 (6%)	6) 46 (75%)	6) 15 (25%)
7) 32 (58%)	7) 23 (42%)	7) 21 (34%)	7) 41 (66%)
8) 27 (52%)	8) 25 (48%)	8) 20 (32%)	8) 42 (68%)
Total: 310 (74%)	Total: 108 (26%)	Total: 257 (54%)	Total: 223 (46%)

As demonstrated by these figures, both females and males displayed high percentages of indicative use spread among all three sections. There were ten separate items produced by male informants, five in Part I (1, 5, 6, 7, 8), two in Part II (2b, 8), and three in Part III (1, 4, 6), where a very high percentage (over 80%) of the male-generated responses were in the indicative mood. Females added four more items which could be considered to display a high percentage of indicative use also (at least 80%): Part I, items 7 and 8, and Part III, items 1 and 4. Three items in Part III (1, 4, 6) of the male response set displayed a 90% or greater indicative mood use.

### Responses to Individual Questionnaire Items

The present subjunctive mood response percentages apparent in individual items depicted a quite different set of results. Here, rather than dealing with high percentages being in the 80%-90% range, anything over 50% seemed relatively high. Females produced eleven items with present subjunctive response frequencies of 50% or above, seven in Part II (1a, 2b, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10), and four in Part III (2, 3, 5, 7, 8). In the total set of male responses, there were no items above 48% (Part III, item 8) in present subjunctive mood production, and only seven items reached the 40% level (Part I, items 2 and 3; Part II, items 1, 2a, and 5; Part III, items 7 and 8). In the total female response set, only three items occurred with less than a 20% present subjunctive mood frequency (Part I, items 7 and 8; Part III, item 4), and no single item produced by female informants appeared with less than 15% present subjunctive mood usage.

Males, on the other hand, produced ten items with less than 20% subjunctive mood use (Part I, items 1, 5, 6, 7, and 8; Part II, items 2b and 8; Part III, items 1, 4, and

6), with three of these (Part III, items 1, 4, and 6) 10% or below in present subjunctive mood production. Males, of course, generated more high present indicative mood percentages than did females.

TABLE IX  
INDIVIDUAL ITEMS WITH SIGNIFICANT  
GENDER/MOOD RELATIONSHIPS

Part	Item	<i>p</i>	$X^2$	Phi
I	#5	.019	5.482	.222
I	#6	.010	6.709	.242
II	#1b	.025	5.035	.216
II	#2b	.000	15.503	.367
II	#5	.005	7.785	.270
II	#7	.029	5.161	.215
II	#8	.000	14.995	.369
II	#10	.004	8.157	.270
III	#2	.011	6.461	.238
III	#3	.000	14.240	.353
III	#4	.014	5.992	.232
III	#5	.024	5.111	.210
III	#6	.006	7.643	.259
III	#8	.044	4.514	.199

As shown above in Table IX, results of a Pearson Chi-square analysis conducted on each of the questionnaire items separately indicated that in 14 of the 28 items the gender-mood relationship could be declared to be a statistically significant one, though in each case the association was shown to be weak (Phi = .199-.369). The largest percentage of significant items was found in Part III (75% of total Part III and 21% of all items). In all of the Part III items, female informants produced more present subjunctive tokens than did male respondents as well as registering a higher percentage of their own production as present subjunctive (female informants: 54% present subjunctive/46% present indicative; male informants: 26% present subjunctive/74% present indicative).



school situation:

*El maestro nunca sabe si sus alumnos . . .*  
**The teacher never knows whether his/her students . . .**

Item 1 from this same section also exhibited a high percentage of indicative use for both genders (female: 80%; male: 90%). Here the subjects of the two clauses were coreferential (third person plural), and the church setting was again, in all probability, a familiar one:

*Las señoras de la iglesia no saben si . . .*  
**The women of the church don't know whether . . .**

A final indicative item which showed high indicative use for both genders was statement 7 of Part I (female: 80%; male: 89%). The initial clause subject in this case was impersonal and the subordinate clause agent a third person singular noun. The context here seemed to be quite far removed from probable informant experiences, given the fact that the drawing depicted a man asleep on a bed with giant spiders crawling on/toward him:

*No se puede saber si el joven . . .*  
**One can't know whether the young man . . .**

In terms of similarities between the genders in high subjunctive mood use, the highest percentage and only frequent subjunctive use held in common by females and males, occurred, as it did with the indicative, in the same item, this time Part III, statement 8 (female: 68%; male: 48%). This item was one which allowed for the possibility of coreferentiality, but did not guarantee it. The topic, purchasing something in a store, was obviously one which was a common scenario for all of the informants.

#### Mood Selection, Age Groupings, and Gender

Questionnaire data on gender and mood selection when divided by age groupings

revealed patterns of production which shed further light on the question of indicative and subjunctive mood selection and usage. The greatest overall percentage of present subjunctive verb use by one gender group (246 tokens/47%) was demonstrated by female informants in the 36 to 55 year old category, and the greatest present indicative production (310 tokens/76%) was exhibited by male respondents in the 36 to 55 year old group. It should be noted that no drastic differences in percentages of either present subjunctive or present indicative production appeared among the four age categories. The range of present subjunctive use displayed by female respondents was only eight percentage points (39%-47%). Their overall present indicative production showed exactly the same eight-point extension (53%-61%). Male informants' present subjunctive range was 11 percentage points (24%-35%), again mirrored by their present indicative production (65%-76%). Table XI elaborates further on mood divisions by gender.

TABLE XI

MOOD DIVISIONS BY  
AGE AND GENDER

female:	age	subjunctive	indicative	male:	age	subjunctive	indicative
	18-25	184 (41%)	263 (59%)		18-25	104 (27%)	282 (73%)
	26-35	158 (47%)	179 (53%)		26-35	130 (35%)	243 (65%)
	36-55	246 (47%)	276 (53%)		36-55	100 (24%)	310 (76%)
	55+	137 (39%)	216 (61%)		55+	92 (27%)	250 (73%)
Totals:		725 (44%)	934 (56%)	Totals:		427 (28%)	1085 (72%)

When each of the four age divisions was examined separately for associations

between mood selection and gender, a Chi-square test demonstrated that for each age range a significant relationship was indicated by the questionnaire data, but one which held very little associative value. The associative value was weakest for the 26 to 35 year old group of informants ( $X^2 = 10.630$ ,  $p = .001$  Phi = .122), while those respondents in the 36 to 55 group displayed a slightly stronger association than did the other three groups ( $X^2 = 50.85$ ,  $p < .05$ , Phi = .234). Table XII elaborates further upon present subjunctive and present indicative divisions by gender and by the four age categories.

TABLE XII  
SUBJUNCTIVE/INDICATIVE  
RESULTS BY GENDER  
AND AGE

18-25	26-35	36-55	55+
<u>Indicative</u> total: 545 female: 263 male: 282	<u>Indicative</u> total: 422 female: 179 male: 243	<u>Indicative</u> total: 586 female: 276 male: 310	<u>Indicative</u> total: 466 female: 216 male: 250
<u>Subjunctive</u> total: 288 female: 184 male: 104	<u>Subjunctive</u> total: 288 female: 158 male: 130	<u>Subjunctive</u> total: 346 female: 246 male: 100	<u>Subjunctive</u> total: 230 female: 137 male: 93
$X^2 = 18.517$ $p = .000$ Phi = .149	$X^2 = 10.630$ $p = .001$ Phi = .122	$X^2 = 50.855$ $p = .000$ Phi = .234	$X^2 = 10.757$ $p = .001$ Phi = .124

### Coreferentiality

Questionnaire results also furnished information concerning possible connections between the coreferentiality of matrix and subordinate clause subjects and the mood most frequently selected by female and by male informants. There were 2056 verbs (65% of the



total number of tokens) provided as questionnaire responses following subordinate clause subjects which were not coreferential with that of their matrix clause agents, and 1115 verbs (35% of the total number of tokens) which had identical subjects in both clauses. A Chi-square test determined that overall there was no significant relationship between coreferentiality and mood choice ( $\chi^2=3.0716, p > .05$ ). However, some interesting patterns of female and male mood choice appeared in these data. Table XIII exhibits divisions of coreferential and non-coreferential subjects produced by males and females in each mood.

TABLE XIII  
COREFERENTIALITY  
BY GENDER  
AND MOOD

Non-coreferential Subjects in Matrix and Subordinate Clauses			
female subjunctive:	male subjunctive:	female indicative:	male indicative:
448 tokens	274 tokens	626 tokens	708 tokens
Coreferential Subjects in Matrix and Subordinate Clauses			
female subjunctive:	male subjunctive:	female indicative:	male indicative:
249 tokens	181 tokens	336 tokens	349 tokens

#### Non-Coreferential Patterns of Usage

When patterns of mood choice by females informants in items which displayed non-coreferential subjects were explored, it was apparent that indicative mood use was greater, with 58% of the responses which they produced in these statements being in the

indicative mood, and 42% in the subjunctive. Males demonstrated an even more prominent interval between the number of indicative and subjunctive mood responses, with 72% of their choice of verbs in clauses with non-coreferential agents appearing in the indicative mood, and only 28% in the subjunctive. Coreferential configurations of mood use in female responses showed a very similar percentage of subjunctive use (43%) and consequently a greater indicative production (57%). Results for males in coreferential responses differed more than did the responses of female informants from those which they produced in non-coreferential contexts: 34% subjunctive and 66% indicative.

An overall analysis of the three questionnaire parts separately in order to determine differences in patterns of coreferentiality which might be distinguished in each of them, as was carried out in the examination of gender and age, seemed not to be worthwhile at this point. In the case of coreferentiality, unlike the gender and age categories which were operative throughout each of the parts of the questionnaire regardless of the structure of the statements involved, any efforts at making direct comparisons of the three questionnaire sections could lead to invalid assumptions since the amount of potential for coreferential and non-coreferential responses was quite imbalanced among the parts, and indeed in the questionnaire as a whole. It seemed necessary to furnish ample opportunities for non-coreferential verb production, even at the expense of an effort at achieving a more desirably balanced comparison, since some of the claims made in the literature on mood choice indicated that coreferential agents in the matrix and subordinate clauses are required for any possibility of subjunctive use following *no saber si*. As demonstrated below in Table XIV, in the entire questionnaire the opportunities for producing verbs which were in coreferential clauses were severely limited (Part II, items 3, 4, 5, 8; Part III,

items 1, 3, 6, 8).

TABLE XIV  
POTENTIAL COREFERENTIAL  
AND NON-COREFERENTIAL  
RESPONSES

Part I	Part II	Part III
1 - non-coreferential	1a - non-coreferential	1 - open
2 - non-coreferential	1b - non-coreferential	2 - non-coreferential
3 - non-coreferential	2a - non-coreferential	3 - open
4 - non-coreferential	2b - non-coreferential	4 - non-coreferential
5 - non-coreferential	3 - coreferential	5 - non-coreferential
6 - non-coreferential	4 - coreferential	6 - open
7 - non-coreferential	5 - coreferential	7 - non-coreferential
8 - non-coreferential	6 - non-coreferential	8 - open
	7 - non-coreferential	
	8 - coreferential	
	9 - non-coreferential	
	10 - non-coreferential	

As was anticipated by the format of Part I, there were no instances of coreferential subjects in this section. In general, subordinate clause agents were assumed by respondents to be the figures portrayed in the drawings which accompanied this part, except for a few responses to item 8. In Part II, when the topic of the conversation was the action of a third party, then, naturally, the two clauses were non-coreferential, and when the topic dealt with the action of the respondent, then coreferential agents were reasonably predictable. Part III contained 50% open slots, with the remainder being non-coreferential. All this is to say that to draw correspondences among Part I, Part II, and Part III of the questionnaire would be to try to measure unlike units and consequently should be approached with caution.

However, in addition to the overall patterns of usage already noted above, it seems

important to point to some of the specific items which display particularly striking results in terms of coreferentiality and gender, and along with these figures, to ascertain which precise combinations of matrix and subordinate clause agents were present in these items. In examining the overall present subjunctive production in sentences which contain non-coreferential subjects, one finds females furnishing the greatest percentage of their own non-coreferential subjunctive responses, and the largest percentage overall of subjunctive production in a non-coreferential sentence (66%), in Part III, item 7, where the matrix clause displayed a first person singular subject, and the subordinate clause a third person plural subject:

*Cuando hace tanto calor, (yo) no sé si los niños . . .*  
**When it is so hot, I don't know whether the children . . .**

The largest indicative production in a non-coreferential sentence (98%) was supplied by males in Part III, item 4. This statement had a third person singular subject in the initial clause followed by a third person plural agent in the subordinate slot:

*El maestro nunca sabe si sus alumnos . . .*  
**The teacher never knows whether her/his students . . .**

Other instances of high subjunctive or high indicative use in non-coreferential contexts, along with who produced these responses, are presented below in Table XV. Of the five highest non-coreferential present subjunctive uses, the most common matrix-subordinate clause subject pattern, present in three of the five examples, was a first person singular subject in the initial clause, and a third person plural agent in the subordinate clause (1, 2, 5). In the other two present subjunctive items, a similar pattern, that of first person singular-third person singular was present (3, 4). In the non-coreferential present indicative sentences, a less clear pattern emerged. Two of the items were identical, one

produced by males and one produced by females (1, 5). They displayed a third person singular-third person plural sequence, as did examples 3 and 4. The remaining item had an impersonal subject (one) in the initial clause followed by a third person singular agent in the subordinate clause (2).

TABLE XV  
GREATEST SUBJUNCTIVE/INDICATIVE  
USE IN NON-COREFERENTIAL  
SENTENCES

Subjunctive	Indicative
1. Part III, #7, 66%, female	Part III, #4, 98%, male
2. Part II, #7, 60%, female	Part I, #7, 89%, male
3. Part II, #10, 60%, female	Part I, #6, 85%, male
4. Part III, #5, 58%, female	Part I, #8, 85%, male
5. Part II, #1a, 57%, female	Part III, #4, 85%, female

### Coreferential Patterns of Usage

In terms of coreferential production and the choice of the present subjunctive mood, one finds that female respondents displayed not only the greatest present subjunctive use in sentences which included identical agents in both clauses, but also the highest overall present subjunctive mood displayed in a single questionnaire item (68%) in Part III, response 8. In this item, the matrix clause subject was first person singular, and the subordinate clause slot was left to the discretion of the respondent. It should be noted that this item also contained information which followed the open slot:

*(Yo) No sé si . . . en esa tienda.*

**I don't know whether . . . in that store.**

The item which displayed the greatest coreferential present indicative use was produced by males in Part III, item 6 (94%), and contained a first person singular agent followed by an open slot:

*(Yo) Nunca sabré si . . .*  
**I will never know whether . . .**

Table XVI presents further details on present subjunctive and present indicative use in sentences which have these coreferential subjects.

TABLE XVI  
 GREATEST SUBJUNCTIVE/INDICATIVE  
 USE IN COREFERENTIAL  
 SENTENCES

Subjunctive	Indicative
1. Part III, #8, 68% female	Part III, #6, 94% male
2. Part II, #5, 67% female	Part III, #1, 90% male
3. Part III, #3, 64% female	Part III, #1, 80% female

Of the sentences listed above, three, two subjunctive (1, 3) and one indicative (1) displayed first person singular subjects in the initial clause, with open slots following in the subordinate clause, leaving the choice of the second agent up to the respondent. The other subjunctive example (2) displayed once again a first person singular first clause agent, this time repeating the same subject in the second clause. The remaining indicative sentences (2 and 3/identical) contained third person plural subjects in the matrix clause and open slots in the subordinate clause. As illustrated in Table XVII, in some instances, the coreferential sentences in the questionnaire displayed a tendency to produce instances of

quite low subjunctive mood use, averaging only 37% of the tokens per item.

TABLE XVII  
PERCENTAGES OF SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD  
USE IN COREFERENTIAL  
SENTENCES

Part II: Female	Part II: Male	Part III: Female	Part III: Male
3. 50%	3. 37%	1. 20%	1. 10%
4. 31%	4. 31%	3. 64%	3. 29%
5. 67%	5. 40%	6. 25%	6. 6%
8. 52%	8. 17%	8. 68%	8. 48%

#### Negatives Other Than *No*

Leaving the issue of coreferentiality aside, data from two other areas of questionnaire responses should also be mentioned briefly. First, those items in which *nunca* (**never**) was substituted for the negative *no* (Part III, items 4 and 6) should be examined in order to note any possible differences in mood selection which might occur when negatives other than *no* precede the *no saber si* construction.

*El maestro nunca sabe si sus alumnos . . .*  
**The teacher never knows whether her/his students . . .**

*Nunca sabré si . . .*  
**I will never know whether . . .**

In these cases where *nunca* (**never**) appeared, results showed very low present subjunctive (12%) and quite high present indicative (88%) use. Unfortunately, the questionnaire did not provide sufficient opportunities for informants to supply verbs following *nunca* to verify whether these percentages would be typical of broader patterns of usage. Table XVIII provides the number of tokens for each of these two items along with

corresponding percentages.

TABLE XVIII  
INDICATIVE AND SUBJUNCTIVE  
USE WITH THE ADVERB  
*NUNCA* (NEVER)

Indicative	Subjunctive
Part III, #4: 10 tokens 9%	Part III, #4: 101 tokens 91%
Part III, #6: 18 tokens 16%	Part III, #6: 96 tokens 84%

#### Inanimate Subjects in the Subordinate Clause

The second consideration which should not be overlooked is the possibility that when the subject of a subordinate clause in a given statement is clearly a thing rather than a person, mood choice might possibly be adjusted in some way. In the one item in which an inanimate subject was present in the subordinate clause (Part III, #5), the overall division of subjunctive and indicative mood usage was similar [subjunctive: 56 (48%); indicative: 60 (52%)]:

*Yo no sé si su carro . . .*  
**I don't know whether her/his car . . .**

It is also conceivable that at least some respondents considered the subject of item 10 in Part II to be an inanimate one:

*Mujer #1: ¿Sabes si está en la cuarta planta?*  
*Mujer #2: No sé si . . . en la cuarta o la sexta.*  
**Woman #1: Do you know whether she/he/it is on the fourth floor?**  
**Woman #2: I don't know whether he/she/it is on the fourth or the sixth.**

In results of responses furnished on this item, the total number of subjunctive tokens was



52 (46%), and the sum of the indicative tokens was tokens 60 (54%).

### Patterns of Mood Use and Age

In addition to all these considerations of the relationship of gender and mood, frequency of occurrence of present subjunctive and present indicative forms when analyzed from the point of view of age alone displayed distinctive patterns. The overall picture of age and mood use which emerged from the questionnaire data showed that those informants in the two middle groupings (26 to 35 and 36 to 55) produced more present subjunctive verbs forms (634 of 1152/55%) than did those in the youngest and oldest age categories (518 of 1152/45%).

#### Analyses of Data from Each Age Group

When data on each of the age groupings was taken separately, some interesting patterns of present subjunctive and present indicative usage appeared. The present indicative production of all four age divisions was greater than their present subjunctive output. The oldest group, respondents 55 and older, produced over twice as many present indicative as present subjunctive responses. Members of the youngest age category, informants between the age of 18 and 25 and those between the age of 36 and 55 followed similar patterns of indicative use, with their indicative answers surpassing their subjunctive responses by 30% and 26%. Finally, responses from the 26 to 35 year old group were slightly less dominated by the present indicative, though indicative use was still 20% above that of present subjunctive production. Table XIX provides more exact information on usage within each of the four age groupings.

TABLE XIX  
MOOD CHOICES AS EVIDENCED  
BY INDIVIDUAL AGE  
GROUPINGS

18-25	26-35	36-55	55+
I = 545 (65%)	I = 424 (60%)	I = 586 (63%)	I = 464 (67%)
S = 288 (35%)	S = 288 (40%)	S = 346 (37%)	S = 230 (33%)

A Chi-square analysis performed on these data showed that a statistically significant relationship between age and mood choice exists ( $X^2 = 9.639$ ,  $p < .05$ , Cramer = .055). It should be noted, however, that the associative value is weak.

Data and Age Groupings for Individual Parts of Questionnaire

When the three sections of the questionnaire were examined separately for any association between age and mood choice, Chi-square test statistics indicated that only Part II showed a statistically significant relationship between the two ( $X^2 = 8.880$ ,  $p < .05$ , Cramer = .081). The greatest percentage of present subjunctive mood use in an individual age-divided section (46%) came from those in the 26 to 35 year old category in their responses in Part II, and the largest present indicative percentage from informants aging from 18 to 25 and those over 55 in Part I (76%). Part II displayed the highest degree of present indicative/present subjunctive balance for each age group, and Part I the greatest gap in mood percentages. Numbers were too small per grouping to make an analysis of individual items worthwhile. Table XX provides specific information concerning the mood choices of the respondents in each of the four age groups for each of the three

questionnaire parts.

TABLE XX  
AGE GROUPS AND MOOD USE  
FOR EACH SECTION OF THE  
QUESTIONNAIRE

Age	Part	Indicative	Subjunctive
18-25	I	76%	24%
	II	58%	42%
	III	67%	33%
26-35	I	69%	31%
	II	54%	46%
	III	61%	39%
36-55	I	71%	29%
	II	59%	41%
	III	62%	38%
55+	I	76%	24%
	II	66%	34%
	III	60%	40%

In Part I, all present subjunctive figures were within the 20% and 30% range, with the largest use coming from 26 to 35 year old informants (31%), while the largest present indicative production came from 18 to 25 year old respondents and those informants 55 and over (76%). In Part II, the 26 to 35 year olds again provided a higher percent of present subjunctive than the other ages (46%). The largest percent of present indicative (66%) in this section came from those in the 55 and older category. Part III's highest present subjunctive mood use moved to those in the 55 and older group (40%). It should be noted that the highest usage figure for Part III was only one percent greater than that of the 26 to 35 year old group's production in this part, and two per cent above that of the 36 to 55 year old respondents. In this section, the highest present indicative use shifted to the youngest group of informants (67%).

### Patterns of Verb Meaning and Mood Use

Upon concluding the reporting of both gender and age-related results, it seems useful to examine briefly, with emphasis on meaning instead of mood, some of the verbs which were commonly selected as responses in each of the three parts of the questionnaire in order to help determine whether any gender or age connection with specific verbs might have possibly existed. Depending upon the degree of perceived direction or control exerted by either the drawing, the question preceding the sentence to be completed, or the focus of the information positioned immediately prior to the open slot, similarity of informant responses varied. Since responses in Part I were guided, though not rigidly constrained, by the drawings accompanying each incomplete sentence, a large number of similar responses in terms of vocabulary choices were encountered. The item 2 drawing, in addition to prompting the largest number of like responses in this section, motivated the greatest number of two-verb responses in the entire questionnaire. Though it should be noted that in Part II various other verbs were selected for use by some of the informants, in general, the verb to be chosen to complete each statement, though not its mood, was strongly affected by which verb was used in the preceding question. However, any responses provided to complete statements other than those suggested by the first component of the adjacency pair in this section tended to be limited to no more than a four-verb range per blank. The dialogue/conversation format did not seem to inspire respondents to veer very far from what were the most obvious choices. The open-ended sentences in Part III displayed the greatest variety in verb-meaning responses, though some patterns were apparent here as well. Also, far more diversity was evident in relatively open sentences such as items 2 and 6 than in those which seemed constrained by

some feature of their context such as items 4, 6, and 8. Females tended to be slightly more consistent in their verb choices than did males (54%/46%), as did the two older age groupings (56%/44%) to those in the 18 to 25 and 26 to 35 year old divisions. Appendix J illustrates verb configurations typical of each section.

Some of the specific patterns of questionnaire results where the present subjunctive was the mood selected for use instead of the present indicative also bear mentioning at this point. These findings encompassed two principal topics: an examination of which particular verbs were most frequently used in the present subjunctive mood, and an analysis of the changes in the form of a given verb which are necessary in order to make the move from the present indicative to the present subjunctive mood. Along this same line, it seems especially beneficial to report apart from the overall present indicative-present subjunctive data any results which might help to reveal distinctive patterns of present subjunctive use following *no saber si* since this mood is the less accepted mood choice for Spanish speakers who are assumed to adhere to prescriptive standards.

First, results of an examination of data which provided listings of the verbs which appeared most frequently in the present subjunctive mood as questionnaire responses, with the term frequent being defined as those verbs used 60 times or more (5% of total present subjunctive production), indicated that five verbs [*poder* (to be able/can), *estar* (to be), *vender* (to sell), *tener* (to have), *ir* (to go)] accounted for 47% of present subjunctive production. Of this figure, 33% of the tokens were produced by female participants and 14% by male informants. Table XXI lists these verbs and the percentages of the total present subjunctive production which they represent in this sample.

TABLE XXI  
 MOST COMMONLY USED  
 VERBS AND PERCENTAGES  
 OF FREQUENCY

Infinitive	Subjunctive Form	Number of Occurrences	Percentage of Total Subjunctive	Percentage Produced by Females	Percentage Produced by Males
<i>poder:</i> to be able	<i>pueda(n)</i>	186	16%	13%	3%
<i>estar:</i> to be	<i>esté(n)</i>	161	14%	10%	4%
<i>vender:</i> to sell	<i>venda(n)</i>	72	6%	4%	2%
<i>tener:</i> to have	<i>tenga(n)</i>	64	6%	3%	3%
<i>ir:</i> to go	<i>vaya(n)</i>	60	5%	3%	2%

Age division representation when considering these same verbs revealed a set of percentages which were contained within a relatively narrow range. When all age groups' usages for the five verbs were compared, the percentage of production by any one group did not diverge extensively from that of any other (18% to 35%). All percentages for *ir* and *estar* were in the 20% range, for *poder*, between 20% and 30%, and for *vender* and *tener*, from the high teens to the 30% range. Appendix K summarizes these data.

#### Final Vowel Patterns and Subjunctive Mood Use

The second grouping of results examined in this portion of the study deals with any changes in the configurations of vowels and consonants which are required when verb

choices are present subjunctive rather than present indicative. Table XXII presents a synopsis of these alterations their gender divisions in descending order of extent of change, along with the dispersion of present subjunctive use among them. Appendix L summarizes the categories of change with age groupings.

TABLE XXII  
CATEGORIES OF VOWEL AND CONSONANT  
TRANSFORMATIONS IN SUBJUNCTIVE  
VERB RESPONSES

Type of Change	Example	Number of Responses	Percent of Total
Final vowel only	<i>baja &gt; baje</i>	680	overall = 59% female = 63% male = 37%
Final vowel + final consonant	<i>hace &gt; haga</i>	82	overall = 7% female = 62% male = 38%
Final vowel + insertion of consonant	<i>sale &gt; salga</i> <i>viene &gt; venga</i>	190	overall = 16% female = 66% male = 34%
Syllable added	<i>va &gt; vaya</i>	121	overall = 11% female = 64% male = 36%
Complete change of form	<i>cabe &gt; quepa</i>	79	overall = 7% female = 57% male = 43%

Results demonstrated that of the 1152 present subjunctive verb responses found in the questionnaire data, more than half were verbs which required only a change in the final vowel in order to move from the present indicative to the present subjunctive mood (*o > a, o > e, e > a, a > e*). Sixteen per cent of the remainder of the present subjunctive mood verbs used in the data required a change in this final vowel also, this time coupled with the

insertion of a consonant as well {e.g. *sale* (present indicative) > *salga* (present subjunctive)}. It should be noted that this category, along with the division which necessitated the addition of an entire syllable (third and fourth on the list of complexities required for movement from present indicative to present subjunctive) exceeded the number of tokens produced for the less complex change of final vowel and consonant only. Other categories of transformations which appeared in present subjunctive responses were all at the 10% level or below.

#### *No Sé Si* and Mood Use

Since *No sé si* (first person singular) was the construction which appeared most frequently in the matrix clauses of the items in the sample (71%), perhaps resulting patterns of use following this form should be examined apart from the data which deals with the other *no saber si* constructions, at least in terms of female and male patterns of mood use. In Part I, three of eight items begin with *No sé si* (1, 3, 5). All items in Part II have *No sé si* in the matrix clause of the sentences. Again in Part III, the *No sé si* construction predominates, with five of eight items displaying initial clauses containing this form (2, 3, 5, 7, 8). Of the 2275 responses after *No sé si*, 42% were present subjunctive, and 58% present indicative. Percentages of responses produced by female informants were quite evenly balanced between the two moods. Males, on the other hand, provided twice as many present indicative responses as present subjunctive. When each gender's replies were weighed separately, the picture of female responses remained quite balanced, whereas males informants seemd to lean heavily toward the use of the present indicative mood. Table XXIII summarizes this portion of the data.



TABLE XXIII  
GENDER AND  
*NO SÉ SI*

MOOD	GENDER	NUMBER & PERCENTAGE
Indicative	Female & Male	1312 (58%)
Subjunctive	Female & Male	963 (42%)
Indicative	Female Overall	581 (26%)
Subjunctive	Female Overall	607 (26%)
Indicative	Male Overall	731 (32%)
Subjunctive	Male Overall	356 (16%)
Indicative	Female of Own	581 (49%)
Subjunctive	Female of Own	607 (51%)
Indicative	Male of Own	731 (67%)
Subjunctive	Male of Own	356 (33%)

#### Unanticipated Factors

A brief mention should also be made of two unpredicted factors which became apparent in analyzing questionnaire results and which might be pertinent to creating a better understanding of mood use in this data set since their use precluded either mood's being selected as an option. These include both the unexpectedly large number of infinitives which in some cases were preferred to either indicative or the subjunctive mood verbs, as well as the inclusion of a variety of non-verb responses. Infinitives appeared most often in Part II, item 5 and Part III, item 1. Females provided 76% of the total number of infinitives supplied in the questionnaire, with those in the two upper age categories supplying the largest numbers of infinitives overall. Non-verb responses, most prevalent in Part II, showed no consistent pattern either for gender or for age grouping.

Table XXIV illustrates these findings.

TABLE XXIV  
 INFINITIVES AND OTHER TYPES  
 OF NON-CONJUGATED  
 VERB RESPONSES

<i>no saber si</i> + infinitive	<i>no saber si</i> without verb
<i>no sé si <u>ir</u> (to go)</i>	<i>no sé si <u>mañana</u> (tomorrow)</i>
<i>no saben si <u>orar</u> o <u>hacer</u> (to pray/to make)</i>	<i>no sé <u>hasta</u> (until)</i>
<i>no saben si <u>cantar</u> (to sing)</i>	<i>no sé si <u>en la de</u> (in the one of)</i>
<i>no saben si <u>ayunar</u> (to fast)</i>	<i>no sé si <u>tal vez</u> (perhaps)</i>

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the overall picture of mood choice and gender and mood choice and age provided by these questionnaire data was one of general predominance of the present indicative mood (64%) over the present subjunctive (36%) for both genders and for all age groups combined. Also, overall present indicative mood production tended to be more evenly balanced between both genders and all age groups than did present subjunctive contributions. However, females were shown to produce more subjunctive mood verbs (44% of their overall verb production) than males (28% of their overall verb production). When age divisions were added to the picture, the largest subjunctive production came from females in the 36 to 55 age group (47%), and the greatest indicative production from males 26 to 35 years old (76%). When considering data produced from responses in which the matrix and subordinate clause agents were coreferential, it was apparent that females once again led males in subjunctive output. Female subjunctive production made up 43% of the verbs which they supplied in this

category, while subjunctive verbs produced by males comprised 34% of their tokens in this area. In reference to the non-coreferential data, the subjunctive gap was somewhat wider (females: 42%; males: 28%). In present indicative use where identical subjects appeared in both the matrix and the subordinate clauses, male production was less (males: 66%; females: 57%) than when the agents were not the same (males: 72%; females: 58%). Finally, Chi-square tests performed on the questionnaire data demonstrated that for both gender and age a statistically significant relationship existed with mood choice, but that in neither case was this relationship a strong one.

## CHAPTER VI

### DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

#### Introduction

As demonstrated in Chapter I and Chapter II, the body of literature on mood choice and usage in Spanish is far too vast for it to be feasible to address all of the ideas proposed in terms of the three initial hypotheses of the present research effort and the data produced by questionnaire responses in this sample. Some of this previous research is compatible with the most apparent tendencies in the questionnaire data, but many of the studies provide little or no adequate way of accounting for the patterns of modal discrimination, choice, and usage as they appeared in the responses furnished by the group of Mexican informants who cooperated in this study. In order to situate results gleaned from informants in the overall context of research on mood choice and usage, it is necessary to establish which of this multitude of previous studies raise issues which are most clearly associated with the hypotheses under consideration. For purposes of this project, then, two principal guidelines were followed in order to relate past endeavors to the central focus of the information examined. First, previous studies which dealt with issues which were most frequently mentioned by researchers, scholars, and practitioners was selected for discussion, if the focus of the research seemed likely to provide insights into the trends which emerged in the questionnaire results. Second, those studies which seemed most strongly connected in some direct fashion to the initially proposed hypotheses were selected for comparison with the data produced in the sample. In order to carry out this re-examination and to seek out analogies and points of divergence, each of the three

original hypotheses will be considered and discussed separately.

### Mood Variation in Indirect Questions Employing *No Saber Si*

The burden of demonstrating the plausibility of the first hypothesis, that variation in mood use occurs among Mexican Spanish speakers as they employ indirect questions using *no saber si*, proved to be an especially significant point of departure for two reasons. It was important first because so much of the information found in the literature which addresses questions of mood selection and usage in Spanish falls into the category of studies mentioned above in which authors tend to avoid attempts to explain the presence of mood alternation or to explore with any depth how the selection process might operate. As a result, the researchers who provide this information stand firm in the argument that only the present indicative mood is permissible following the conjunction *si* in present or future time contexts, and consequently that the possibility that the present subjunctive and present indicative mood covary in this context in the speech of a wide age range of adult speakers of both genders seems quite remote.

It was also worthwhile to begin with this issue since even the more serious attempts at addressing the question of mood variation found in much of the available scholarship tend to be somewhat inexplicit and generally founded upon less than thoroughly tested assumptions and/or informally gathered or self-reported evidence. When diversity of mood use is mentioned at all, many researchers assert that the substitution which positions the subjunctive mood in a previously indicative-controlled context is merely an aberration or an unusual case of effort to raise the level of uncertainty of the proposition expressed in the clause (Ramsey and Spaulding, 1956).

### Non-Variationist Interpretations

The results presented in the preceding chapter stand in direct contradiction to the position that mood choice following *si* must be necessarily unidimensional, making clear that the Mexican Spanish mood use model is made up of a series of enormously flexible patterns. Examples from the questionnaire provide data which confirm the use of the present subjunctive mood instead of the present indicative in contexts where traditionally only the indicative mood has been expected to appear. It would seem apparent then that, based upon the 3171 token sample which was analyzed in this project, efforts to submit that variation in mood use in Spanish is non-existent, to discard variation in mood use as insignificant, or to rationalize documented instances of variation in mood use as irrelevant must be dismissed, and more adequate interpretations sought.

Given these conditions, it seems useful to begin the discussion of the first hypothesis by addressing briefly four of the most frequently cited of the assertions found in the literature dealing with mood choice which argue against this initial hypothesis and maintain that no verifiable or regular variation occurs in Spanish mood use. Those who uphold this view affirm that present subjunctive mood use following *si* is not appropriate usage if one speaks a standard dialect of Spanish. Most of the explanations offered for any deviation from the norm in mood use which cannot be ignored fit into the category of rationalizations of why atypical verb forms occur, rather than attempts to situate interpretations of variation as acknowledged components of the mood choice and usage process. These contentions include the previously mentioned general idea that present subjunctive use following *si* is some type of abnormality, quirk, or deviation from regularly expected language production; the idea that present subjunctive use following *si* is a case

of unnecessary redundancy made in an effort to express uncertainty (Rojas Anadón, 1979); that present subjunctive use following *si* is a violation of taboos imposed by prescriptive mandates (Escamilla, 1982); and that the use of the present subjunctive following *si* is an example of fossilization and therefore inconsequential in the mood choice process (Foster, 1982).

### Variation as Simple Aberration

First, the most traditional and widespread of these assumptions, that any documented mood variation with its consequent present subjunctive use after *si* is a mere aberration from the norm of general usage, seems easily dismissible based on the percentages of fluctuation which were reported in the previous chapter, and especially since there was no single item in the questionnaire in which each of the moods was not used by informants at some point. This much variation within one data set obtained from both female and male Spanish speakers between the ages of 18 and 55 who came from various regions in Mexico could not logically be discarded simply as a manifestation of random deviance from the prescribed norm. In addition, as mentioned earlier, results demonstrated that the picture of variation found in the sample was not only one of variation within the composite usage patterns evolving from an analysis of the 121 person gender and age-mixed group, but also one of a great deal of individual variation on a questionnaire-to-questionnaire basis. The data represented in this sample, then, unquestionably demonstrated that the variation in mood choice and usage was characteristic of the majority of its participants (95%), and that, in addition, the individual inconsistency of language production reported in some of the previous research (Lipski,

1978) was also characteristic of this group of Spanish speakers.

A set of responses taken from several randomly selected questionnaires submitted by informants of both genders and all four age categories serves as a typical example. First, a male informant from Córdoba, Veracruz in the 18 to 25 year old category used present subjunctive mood verbs in three items in Part I, in five items in Part II, and three items in Part III, while a female respondent from Toluca, Estado de Mexico in the 26 to 35 year group supplied two present subjunctive forms in Part I, eight in Part II, and three in Part III. Moving on to the 36 to 55 age category, a female participant from Guadalajara, Jalisco furnished two present subjunctive responses in Part I, two in Part II, and three in Part III. In the 55 years old and over group, a male informant from Saltillo, Coahuila chose to use three present subjunctive verbs in Part I, four in Part II, and one in Part III. At times variation even extended to the responses supplied to fill one open slot with both moods used side by side:

*¿Quién sabe si ellos suban (present subjunctive) o bajan (present indicative)*  
**Who knows whether they are going up or they are going down?**  
 (Part I, item 2)  
 (female, 18-25)

*Nadie sabe si ellos bailan (present indicative) o patinen (present subjunctive).*  
**No one knows whether they are dancing or they are skating.**  
 (Part I, item 6)  
 (male, 36-55)

Were a deliberate selection of questionnaires made, one would find some which showed either no present indicative or no present subjunctive mood in one section of the questionnaire, and others which displayed very little of one mood and a great deal of the other. At any rate, it should be apparent that evidence from this data sample compels the rejection of any assertion that mood alternation is an accidental departure from the



standard or an unusual exception to the norm.

### Redundancy and Variation

When considering this idea of redundancy in Spanish language use in general, it is difficult to sustain an argument that, although a particular construction may not appear to be necessary to the adequate communication of an idea, it cannot exist and be used on a regular basis in ordinary communication. Even the most exigent of grammarians recognizes that redundant constructions form part of everyday Spanish usage, that Vargas Barón (1988) is correct in calling redundant usage in Spanish a “caso muy usado” (a very frequently used case) (p. 165). When considering the conjunction *si*, that it indicates a great deal of indefiniteness is certainly verifiable, and that some degree of redundancy exists when it is coupled with the present subjunctive is also a reasonable assumption. The problem with the argument that present subjunctive verbs should not be used following *si* since this pairing creates unacceptable repetition, then, lies not in the question of whether or not this uncertainty is being reemphasized when the present subjunctive mood is used, but in the question of whether the uncertainty is being overexpressed to the point that such duplication makes communication less effective. Since other examples which could be labeled superfluous are used consistently, are accepted as valid by prescriptive standards, and appear regularly in Spanish constructions, it seems difficult to sustain the plausibility of any real interference in the communicative process by choosing a present subjunctive verb following *si*. Nouns which are used as indirect objects, often accompanied in the same sentence by a pronoun referring to the same person, serve as an obvious example: *Ellos le dieron el paquete a David*. (They gave the package to David). Indirect object pronouns

restated by a prepositional phrase provide another illustration of this generally accepted redundancy: *Me los mandó a mí* (She sent them to me).

### Dictated Standards and Variation

As for the third contention, that dictated standards are inviolate, and that, for fear of censure or some other stigmatizing force emanating from the world at large, speakers abstain from present subjunctive use following *si* (Escamilla, 1982), the evidence presumed to provide support is also lacking in sufficient substance to be convincing when compared to questionnaire results. In the first place, since many interlocutors do not have an active knowledge of what constitutes mood, and therefore do not know when the present subjunctive or the present indicative mood is being used, it would seem unlikely that any consistent fear of social stigma due to overuse of the subjunctive mood could be regularly generated. Second, even when interlocutors do realize that something which another person has said does not seem quite appropriate, it will many times be difficult if not futile for them to try to identify precisely what they themselves would do if compelled to alter the statement. Third, and probably of most consequence, is the fact that the present subjunctive-present indicative mood distinction is so subtle in many cases (only the substitution of *a* for *e* or *e* for *a*) that, at least in conversation, extra effort on the part of the listener may be required to notice that a mood alternation has occurred at all. Consequently, it is arguable that little or no ambiguity in meaning may be evident from mood alternation. Even when writing is included in the picture, many Spanish speakers find it difficult to decide which mood to choose when both are provided as options. As several prominent scholars have reiterated (García and Terrell, 1977; Lavandera, 1975;

Veidmark and Umaña Aguiar, 1991) in their analyses of mood in Spanish, the real problem tends not to be one of grammaticality or any sense of apprehension created by linguistic forms which have become sacrosanct, since alternative mood usages simply do not result in any real degree of social criticism, much less stigma, nor does the interchange of moods cause any confusion in meaning which is not quite easily disambiguated by context. The questionnaire responses which follow exemplify this likeness of mood form found in most regular Spanish verbs:

*No sé si pueden* (present indicative) *acompañarte esta noche.*

*No sé si puedan* (present indicative) *acompañarte esta noche.*

**I don't know whether they can go with you tonight.**

(Part III, item 3)

*No sé si nos gusta* (present indicative) *más, pero nos costó mucho menos.*

*No sé si nos guste* (present subjunctive) *más, pero nos costó mucho menos.*

**I don't know whether we liked it more, but it cost us a lot less.**

(Part II, item 4)

### Variation and Fossilization

In terms of considering that the present subjunctive mood verbs which appeared in the questionnaire following *si* might be examples of fossilized forms which surface with regularity in certain contexts due to the development of some custom of usage which occasionally supersedes the usual constraints of grammar, once again the evidence to the contrary seems abundantly clear. Logically, if a form is to be regarded as fossilized, its domain of application should be confined to certain fixed instances in which its use is invariant, or close to invariant. Some degree of association of fossilization with present subjunctive use following *no saber si* could possibly have developed from the fact that when references are made to this usage in both scholarly works and textbooks as a form

which occurs as an unusual choice, the range of verbs which are chosen by the authors to use as illustrations is quite narrow. If examples quoted from literary sources are set aside, most of the other examples which are termed “fossilized” seem to be either informal, anecdotal recollections of the author(s) or author-created illustrations designed to help explain an atypical usage.

Results from questionnaire responses alone produced contexts far too numerous and a range of verbs far too broad to conform to even the most generous definition of fossilization. When the response items which displayed the highest usage of present subjunctive following *si* in each of the three parts of the questionnaire were examined for variety of verb use as well as percentage of present subjunctive mood, the picture which emerged was certainly not one which could be labeled invariant usage. The following present subjunctive mood response sets which appeared in the data examined in this project are a fraction of those which could have been cited to help to confirm that present subjunctive verbs used following *no saber si* were not formulaic usages. In both Part I, item 2 and Part II, item 8, the semantic range was limited somewhat by either the action which is portrayed in the drawing, a group of people crowded into an elevator, or by the initial component of the adjacency pair in which one person demands that something be handed over to the conversational partner. In Part III, item 8, the range of potential verbs which could easily occupy the open slot was somewhat less restricted, though appropriate responses still had to be confined to what reasonably could take place in a store.

*¿Quién sabe si ellos bajen, estén +, puedan, quepan, quieran, suban, vayan?*

**Who knows whether they go down, are +, can, fit, want, go up, go.**

(Part I, item 2)

*¡No sé si te lo dé, diga, devuelva, perdone, permita, pueda nunca!*

**I don't know whether I will give, tell, return, forgive, allow, can ever!**

(Part II, item 8)

*No sé si compre, encuentre, esté +, haya, halle, pueda, robe, venda en esa tienda.*

**I don't know whether I will buy, find, be +, there is, find, can, rob, sell in that store.**

(Part III, item 8)

### Scenarios

Even as the idea of fossilization is rejected, another possibility which is based to a certain extent on habitual routines comes to mind as a potential reason for informants', at least those in this sample, having preferred one mood or the other. An adaptation of the concept of scenario (Sanford and Garrod, 1981), of a particular usage's being evoked by familiarity of the entire backdrop of the discourse situation, seems more plausible if one is to assume that an awareness based on previous connection to the situation at hand is to play a part in mood selection. For instance, it is conceivable that when the subjunctive mood was selected in a questionnaire item such as 8 of Part II (females: 52% subjunctive, 48% indicative; males: 17% subjunctive, 83% indicative), informants made this choice because of an association, however conscious or unconscious, of this affectively strong mood with the general scenario of a marital argument.

*Esposo: ¡Dámelo!*

**Husband: Give it to me!**

*Esposa: ¡No me pongas la mano encima o me las vas a pagar!*

**Wife: Don't lay a hand on me (touch me) or you'll pay (be sorry)!**

*Esposo: ¡Estoy esperando!*

**Husband: I'm waiting!**

*Esposa: ¡No sé si te lo \_\_\_\_\_ nunca! (perdone, dé)*

**Wife: I don't know whether I \_\_\_\_\_ ever! (forgive, give)**

It is equally feasible, then, that items which displayed a very high present indicative verb usage overall, or for either of the genders, might have been couched in scenarios which generally evoke this factually-oriented mood. Two examples from the data which

illustrate this side of the mood choice picture can be found in Part III, item 4, with the highest single present indicative mood usage in the questionnaire (females: 15% subjunctive, 85% indicative; males: 2% subjunctive; 98% indicative), and in Part III, item 1, with the third highest (females: 20% subjunctive, 80% indicative; males: 10% subjunctive, 90% indicative). In item 4, the scenario is that of a teacher and his students, and item 1 that of a group of women and their church.

*El maestro nunca sabe si sus alumnos \_\_\_\_\_.* (*estudian, comprenden*)  
 The teacher never knows whether his students \_\_\_\_\_. (study, understand)  
 (Part III, item 4)

*Las señoras de la iglesia no saben si \_\_\_\_\_.* (*rezan, hablan*)  
 The women of the church don't know whether they'll \_\_\_\_\_. (pray, talk)  
 (Part III, item 1)

#### Vowel Transposition and Variation

There are two other suggestions found in the literature on Spanish mood use, both more limited in scope and general endorsement than the claims which have just been examined, but which nevertheless should be entertained before concluding observations concerning this first hypothesis and its relationship to the work of scholars who contend that only the present indicative mood should appear following *no saber si*. Although these proposals remain far from the forefront of discussions found either in journal articles or texts, they seem to form part of the overall pattern of attempting to clarify why exceptional usages appear, rather than how the variation process is at work in current language. The first, Rojas Anadón's (1979) suggestion that some speakers may from time to time inadvertently transpose vowels at the ends of their verbs, seems an implausible explanation for data of the type gathered by the written questionnaires in this research effort since there

is almost always some possibility of monitoring associated with written information; since in writing transposition of final vowels is less common than in speech; and since, though there were certainly instances of misspellings in the questionnaire responses, no evidence for vowel reversal seemed apparent. It should be noted, however, that one can only speculate that in the written format these inversions have not occurred. All instances of unusual spelling found among informant responses were reversals of the vowels of a diphthong; none involved final vowel transposition or seemed to display any apparent connection to the mood choices involved. The following three examples typify the only pattern of vowel confusion and/or transposition which surfaced in the data:

*La secretaria no sabe si la peudan (instead of pueden) salvar.*

**The secretary doesn't know whether they can save her.**

(Part I, item 8)

*¿Quién sabe si qeupan (instead of quepan) en el elevador?*

**Who knows whether they fit in the elevator?**

(Part I, item 2)

*No sé si veulvan (instead of vuelvan) pasado mañana o el domingo.*

**I don't know whether they will return day after tomorrow or on Sunday.**

(Part II, item 1a)

### Variation and Morphological Similarity

The second of these considerations deals with Veidmark and Umaña Aguiar's (1991) idea that the extent of morphological similarity displayed by a given verb in the two moods may affect the openness experienced in interchanging indicative and subjunctive production. If this were the case in the questionnaire data, then results should have demonstrated less use of verbs which require more complexity of alteration in order to move from one mood to the other. In reality, as Table XXIII of the results section

demonstrates, over 40% of the verbs supplied for this data sample fell outside the simple final-vowel-only change pattern. The following excerpts from responses taken from each of the sections of the questionnaire exemplify this point. In the first example, in addition to the basic change which is required for a modification from the indicative mood to the subjunctive mood, and the only change that would be in place were a mere vowel transposition the only shift in verb composition, the final consonant has also been affected {*hacen* (present indicative) > *hagan* (present subjunctive)}. An additional move has taken place in the verb in the second example with the insertion of a consonant {*salen* (present indicative) > *salgan* (present subjunctive)}. In the third set of examples, a syllable has been added to each of the verbs {*voy* (present indicative) > *vaya* (present subjunctive); *hay* (present indicative) > *haya* (present subjunctive)}. In the three examples which comprise the fourth set, a more radical change is identifiable in that the form of the verb has changed completely {*es* (present indicative) > *sea* (present subjunctive); *cae* (present indicative) > *caiga* (present subjunctive); *caben* (present indicative) > *quepan* (present subjunctive)}.

- 1) *Nunca sabré si lo hagan bien.* (present subjunctive)  
**I'll never know whether they do it well.**  
(Part III, item 6)
- 2) *No sé si salgan tan temprano.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether they will leave so early.**  
(Part II, item 2a)
- 3a) *No sé si vaya mañana o el martes.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether I will go tomorrow or on Tuesday.**  
(Part II, item 5)
- 3b) *No sé si haya el producto en esa tienda.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether they have the product (the product exists) in that store.**  
(Part III, item 8)
- 4a) *No sé si su carro sea mejor que el mío.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether his/her car is better than mine.**



(Part III, item 5)

4b) *No sé si la señora caiga.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether the woman will fall.**  
 (Part I, item 1)

4c) *No sé si quepan.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether they will fit.**  
 (Part I, item 2)

### Interpretations Which Tolerate Variation

Yet another set of interpretations for why mood choices are not consistently present indicative in contexts where standard grammars ordain that they must be also bears re-examination in relation to this same hypothesis. As demonstrated earlier, among scholars who examine and analyze mood choice patterns in Spanish can also be found those who at least recognize and acknowledge, and perhaps even accept, that variation in mood choice occurs as a regularly patterned phenomenon in natural language and that this alternation is not some type of abnormality or eccentricity on the part of a few isolated and unusual speakers (DeMello, 1995; Levy Podolsky, 1983; Lope Blanch, 1953; Moreno de Alba, 1975, 1977, 1978). Some of them have even gone so far as to contend that the present subjunctive mood should be deemed the normally chosen option following *no saber si*. Of the proposals from this group of researchers which can be addressed from questionnaire results, some are more useful than others, since they offer at least partial explanations for whatever processes were at work in establishing and maintaining mood selection in the data sample on which they were based, but all contribute in some way to an overall understanding of how so many different modes of choice seem to have been in effect in creating responses for one discourse sample. Before beginning an analysis of the

ideas embodied in the work of this group of scholars, it should be noted that an examination of the entire set of data found in the questionnaire would provide reverse examples for each of those provided here, as well as in the rest of the discussion of results, as illustrative of the various points. In other words, some respondent(s) produced the present indicative and some the present subjunctive on the same item, perhaps even with identical wording. However, an effort was made to select only examples which represented the favored usage in the development of models of mood selection. Since gender and age considerations are discussed in detail in a later section of this chapter, references which include either of these areas were postponed unless they were necessary for greater clarification.

#### Variation and Speaker Attitude

The first of the suggestions proposed by those researchers who grant the presence of variation in Spanish mood usage (Lavandera, 1974, 1983) was that the speaker's perspectives, attitudes, and above all, intentions, and consequently the genre of the discourse constructed according to these intentions, affect the choice of mood to be used. These ideas coincide to a certain extent with gender-driven patterns which will be explored in detail in a later portion of this chapter, as they illustrate how the weight of responsibility for supplying information and for providing factual content as opposed to creating relational, experiential discourse is worked out by informants in their questionnaire responses. It seems advantageous, however, at this point to examine some of the general differences, without regard to age group or gender, which occurred in the data when respondents attempted to follow one of these models or the other, when either increasing

the knowledge pool of their partners or supplying them with some type of information seemed central to the purpose of the responses which they provided, as opposed to focusing their primary consideration toward affiliative concerns. As was predicted by Lavandera's (1974, 1983) theory, questionnaire responses demonstrated that when efforts to furnish information were stressed, the present indicative mood was fairly constant. On the other hand, when relational interests appeared to be foremost, the norm was often breached, and the present subjunctive mood was used instead. Examples which deal with multiple responses on the same item, several of which are basically informational and several of which are essentially affective in nature may serve to illustrate how these two paths diverged. Item 7 of Part III was selected because in the overall percentage calculation, responses were evenly divided between the two moods (49% subjunctive; 51% indicative).

factual/informational:

{Part III, item 7, male, primarily indicative (58%)}

*Cuando hace calor, no sé si los niños:*

**When it's hot, I don't know whether the children:**

*se están bañando (are bathing).*

*se van a deshidratar (are going to become dehydrated).*

*van a la alberca (go to the pool).*

*compran helado (buy ice cream).*

*siguen jugando (will keep on playing).*

*comerán (will eat).*

*van a la playa (will go to the beach).*

*quieren cargar suéter (want to wear a sweater).*

affective:

{Part III, item 7, female, primarily subjunctive (66%)}

*Cuando hace calor, no sé si los niños:*

**When it's hot, I don't know whether the children:**

*puedan dormir bien o sufran de la deshidratación*  
(will be able to sleep well or will suffer from dehydration).

*se enfermen o lo puedan aguantar* (will become ill or will be able to stand it).

*duerman a gusto en la noche o tengan que levantarse mucho para tomar agua fría*  
(will sleep comfortably at night or will have to get up a lot to drink cold water).

*lo pasen mal* (will have a bad time).

*se enfaden porque están exhaustos* (will get angry because they are tired).

#### A Variation Continuum

Closely tied to this information-affect explanation for why mood use might be variable is a second contention and one which seems to pervade many of the available explanations concerning mood choice. In this interpretation, the mood selection process is presumed to operate on a continuum with ignorance at one extreme and indecision at the other. Although some of the examples in the data which illustrate this idea have a degree of overlap with those of the first explanation, it seems worthwhile to examine a few of them in order to better comprehend how the present indicative mood was used in questionnaire responses more extensively at the ignorance pole and the present subjunctive at that of indecision.

ignorance:

*No se puede saber si el joven va a sufrir una picadura ponzoñosa.*  
**One can't know whether the young man is going to suffer a poisonous bite.**  
(Part I, item 7, 84% present indicative)

*El maestro nunca sabe si sus alumnos aprovechan la enseñanza.*

**The teacher never knows whether his students will take advantage of the teaching.**

(Part III, item 4, 91% present indicative)

*Nunca sabré si el doctor me dice la verdad.*

**I'll never know whether the doctor is telling me the truth.**

(Part III, item 6, 84% present indicative)

In the three responses above, informants appeared to be acknowledging that the agent in each sentence was uninformed on the matters being discussed, that the lack of knowledge or absence of awareness was greater than mere insecurity or uncertainty, that in reality she/he did not have sufficient information so as to recognize with confidence whether the situations described were indeed facts and/or would actually occur. The three examples which follow contrast with the uninformed stance in that they downplay the factual and highlight whatever insecurity and uncertainty was present in the response.

indecision:

*No sé si vaya mañana o el martes.*

**I don't know whether I will go tomorrow or on Tuesday.**

(Part II, item 5, 54% present subjunctive)

*¡No sé si te lo perdona nunca!*

**I don't know whether I will ever forgive you for it!**

(Part II, item 8, 35% present subjunctive)

*No sé si haya hielo en esa tienda.*

**I don't know whether there will be ice in that store.**

(Part III, item 8, 59% present subjunctive)

### Variation and Coreferentiality

Another possibility which has been repeatedly submitted as being linked to mood choice is the question of coreferentiality, of whether the presence of identical subjects in the matrix and the subordinate clause of a given sentence might be linked to the choice of

present subjunctive or present indicative (Alarcos Llorach, 1987; Lope Blanch, 1953; Ramussen, 1995). According to some scholars, in order for the present subjunctive mood to be a real possibility, this coreferential requirement must be quite rigidly maintained. The argument is that the subjects of the two clauses must be the same if the present subjunctive is to appear in order that the originally mentioned agent serve to regulate, or at least to oversee, the action carried out in both clauses, thus providing a somewhat uncertain overtone as to the completion of the action in the subordinate clause, but not leaving control of the actions in the hands of another person. Other researchers stipulate that the present subjunctive mood may appear following *saber* when there is a first person subject in matrix clause even when the agents of the two clauses are not coreferential (Porto Dupery, 1991). Also, some of these researchers argue that having unlike agents in the two clauses creates a context for uncertainty in the subordinate clause since the matrix clause agents have less direct control over someone else's actions than they have over their own.

Obviously, the information provided by the questionnaire responses does not uphold the stronger form of the coreferentiality assertion, nor does it confirm non-coreferentiality as necessary for subjunctive mood use. As described in the previously reported results section, numerous examples of verbs following non-coreferential subjects appeared in the present subjunctive mood (722 tokens; 35% of the 2056 non-coreferential verbs; 23% of all tokens). The second contention, that *saber* preceded by a first person subject breaks this mold, is especially interesting since this construction was the one chosen to introduce almost all the examples of *no saber si* followed by the present subjunctive mood included in the literature, whether they were deemed rare exceptions or normally occurring usages. Although the percentages of present subjunctive use found among the

questionnaire responses following *No sé si* were higher than those which were reported for the questionnaire responses as a whole (*No sé si*, 42%; overall, 36%), there were abundant examples linking non-coreferentiality and present subjunctive usage which did not display the first person subject in the matrix clause, certainly sufficient to reject the coreferentiality argument as possibly compatible with these data. The following examples from Parts I and III help to demonstrate that coreferentiality is unlikely to be a requirement for subjunctive mood use, but, of course, do not demonstrate that non-coreferentiality is a necessary requirement either. In each case, the subject of the matrix clause is a third person singular noun or interrogative and that of the subordinate clause a third person plural noun or pronoun. All matrix clause agents in Part II were first person singular, and thus provided less helpful information in this area.

*¿Quién sabe si ellos estén contentos?* (present subjunctive)  
**Who knows whether they are happy?**  
 (Part I, item 2)

*La secretaria no sabe si la puedan rescatar.* (present subjunctive)  
**The secretary doesn't know whether they will be able to rescue her.**  
 (Part I, item 8)

*El maestro nunca sabe si sus alumnos hagan la tarea.* (present subjunctive)  
**The teacher never knows whether his students do their homework.**  
 (Part III, item 4)

### Variation and Information Sharing

Still another explanation for variation in mood use which seems both applicable and valuable in interpreting the questions which arose in examining the data which were collected should be mentioned at this point, though, since once again it is closely tied to gender considerations, a more extensive treatment will be deferred until the section of the

chapter which deals specifically with gender and mood selection. This suggestion (Guitart, 1984), that the degree of information sharing present in the particular response supplied by the informant is crucial to the choice of mood, was especially helpful in understanding the conversational interchanges in the second questionnaire section in which mood selection seemed at times to be random. Here a presentation of new and unshared information tended to evoke the present indicative mood, while responses which were built upon commonly held information were more likely to appear in the present subjunctive.

A brief consideration of this contrast may be seen in the sets of responses included in the examples taken from Part II of the questionnaire which are provided below:

*Hombre: ¿Me puedes explicar por qué sucedió todo eso?*

**Man: Can you explain to me why all that happened?**

*Mujer: Pues, no sé si te lo pueda explicar porque acabo de llegar. (subjunctive)*

**Woman: Well, I don't know whether I can explain it to you because I've just arrived. (Part II, item 3)**

*Hombre #1: ¿Vas a Guadalajara mañana?*

**Man #1: Are you going to Guadalajara tomorrow?**

*Hombre #2: No sé si vaya mañana o el martes. (subjunctive)*

**Man #2: I don't know whether I'll go tomorrow or on Tuesday. (Part II, item 5)**

*Hombre #1: ¿Están en la clínica?*

**Man #1: Are they/you in the clinic?**

*Hombre #2: ¿Cuál?*

**Man #2: Which one?**

*Hombre #1: La de San Ignacio.*

**Man #1: The San Ignacio.**

*Hombre #3: No sé si estén allá o en la del doctor Villareal. (subjunctive)*

**Man #3: I don't know whether they are there or in Dr. Villareal's (clinic). (Part II, item 9)**

This section furnished the greatest amount of ready-made context, and consequently the most obvious opportunities to presume commonality of information. According to Guitart's (1984) vision, in each of the three cases considered here, the assumption could be



that when the present subjunctive appeared, the interlocutors had managed to maintain a common frame of reference concerning either the event which took place (#3), the trip to Guadalajara (#5), or the location of the items or people in question in one of the medical facilities (#9). If the present indicative were to be selected, it is presumed that the element of commonality might have been absent.

#### Variation and the *If/Whether* Dichotomy

The contention that when *si* is the equivalent of the English *whether*, instead of the English *if* (Goldin, 1974; Klein-Andreu, 1995), the present subjunctive mood might possibly replace the present indicative is also worth considering in reference to the questionnaire data, since it arises so frequently in the literature on mood choice. It is difficult to know precisely where to position this suggestion since it is offered both by some of the more prescriptive grammarians as an explanation for what for them are rare atypical usages, and by scholars who assume some variation in usage to be natural. In addition, it is not uncommon for a lay person who wishes to explain away any present subjunctive use which has surfaced following *si* in a conversation to resort to this interpretation. The *whether*-present subjunctive notion is generally accompanied by the qualification that when *si* is intended to mean *if*, the present indicative mood should/must/will accompany it (Cantelini Dominicis and Reynolds, 1994; Iglesias and Meiden, 1995; Solé and Solé, 1977). This idea is just as intriguing as it is difficult to substantiate. In order that it have any validity at all, one has to assume that individual Spanish speakers have the power to discern the difference in what English speakers label *if* and *whether*. In the data sample examined in this study, too few responses (11) included

the *o no* (or not) to determine with any reasonable degree of certainty whether or when the *whether/if* dichotomy existed, much less whether it could be related to mood choice.

Without this phrase accompanying the *si*, it is difficult for anyone other than the speaker himself/herself to know precisely when the *si* refers to *whether* and when it denotes *if*.

The responses in the sample which did display the *o no* following the verb phrase were more or less evenly divided between the two moods. It seemed that certain items lent themselves to the inclusion of the *o no* response since the construction appeared in sentences supplied for only 6 of the 28 items in the questionnaire and since it appeared more than once in the open slot for some of these items. All examples of this type were located in Part III of the questionnaire. The following typify the overall response set:

*Las señoras de la iglesia no saben si cantarán (haya reunión) o no.*  
(future indicative/present perfect subjunctive)

**The women of the church don't know whether or not they will sing (there will be a meeting).**  
(Part III, item 1)

*En realidad, yo no sé si mis hijos están siendo bien educados (sean míos) o no.*  
(present progressive indicative/present subjunctive)

**In reality, I don't know whether or not my children are being well educated (are mine).**  
(Part III, item 2)

*El maestro nunca sabe si sus alumnos están copiando (lo estimen) o no.*  
(present progressive indicative/present subjunctive)

**The teacher never knows whether or not his students are copying (respect him).**  
(Part III, item 4)

### Variation and Association with Certain Structures

Yet another of the efforts aimed at explaining the existence of mood variation which should not be discounted when endeavoring to understand the questionnaire data results asserts that certain grammatical constructions might have formed some type of regular association with one mood or the other (Veidmark and Umaña Aguiar, 1991). This

suggestion does not seem sufficiently broad as to encompass the whole mood selection picture as it was revealed in the data for this study, but it might be a possible consideration in the case of one verb which occurred with regularity in the sample. The verb *poder* (to be able) appeared consistently in the present subjunctive mood, even when the informant who supplied this form leaned strongly toward present indicative use in most or all other responses. Its use was also steady throughout all sections of the questionnaire, though, of course, it appeared more often in contexts where some type of ability or inability was the least complicated or most obvious response choice. Use of *poder* in the present subjunctive mood seemed to appear most commonly in instances where obvious doubt was displayed. It did not tend to occur in the indicative, as did most other verbs, with any frequency when the central focus of the response was upon the complete lack of knowledge previously described. Any other occurrences of the verb were most often found in the subjunctive mood, regardless of the gender or age of the informant, the agent of the matrix clause, or the coreferentiality of the agents in the matrix and the subordinate clauses of the sentence. Even in responses to items which displayed high indicative use overall such as those found in the following examples, the subjunctive mood was still used frequently with *poder*.

*¡No sé si te lo pueda dar, quizás nunca!*  
**I don't know whether I can give it to you, maybe never!**  
 (Part I, item 8, 84% overall present indicative use)

*Las señoras de la iglesia no saben si puedan lograr su meta.*  
**The women of the church don't know whether they can reach their goal.**  
 (Part III, item 1, 85% overall present indicative use)

*Nunca sabré si pueda pasar el examen.*  
**I'll never know whether I can pass the test.**  
 (Part III, item 6, 84% overall present indicative use)

### Variation and Adjacency

A further possibility which has been suggested for why mood choice varies which should not be overlooked in examining the questionnaire data is that of adjacency (Rojas Anadón, 1979), that modals which are positioned near each other in the discourse might be inclined to appear in the same mood. It would be easy to assume that because on most occasions when double-verb responses were furnished by informants, each of the verbs appeared in the same mood, were it present subjunctive or present indicative, that the adjacency argument should be considered a strong one. Admittedly, the following and other similar examples seem to support this perspective.

*¿Quién sabe si ellos estén (present subjunctive) muy apretados o si les guste (present subjunctive) la compañía de sus compañeros de trabajo?*

**Who knows whether they are very crowded or whether they like the company of their co-workers?**

(Part I, item 2)

*Es difícil saber si el detective busque (present subjunctive) una pulga o investigue (present subjunctive) un crimen.*

**It's difficult to know whether the detective is looking for a flea or investigating a crime.**

(Part I, item 4)

*En realidad, yo no sé si mis hijos están peleando (present indicative) o están jugando (present indicative).*

**In reality, I don't know whether my children are fighting or are playing.**

(Part III, item 2)

*Nunca sabré si yo tenga (present subjunctive) toda la razón o si me equivoque. (present subjunctive).*

**I'll never know whether I'm completely right or whether I'm mistaken.**

(Part III, item 6)

However, responses provided by informants in Parts I and III of the questionnaire results seemed to contradict any notion that an inadvertent prompt based on simple proximity signaled their mood choices. An examination of several of the responses in these

two sections in which two verbs were included in the same sentence lent enough support to the opposite perspective at least to call into question the validity of the proximity association with mood selection as more than occasional, perhaps even coincidental. As previously reported, in several cases which surfaced in the data where two verbs were included in the same response, one of the two verbs in the subordinate clause was present subjunctive and one present indicative. In these responses the first of the two verbs tended to appear in the present subjunctive mood and the second in the present indicative, perhaps due to a distancing of the second verb from the *no saber si* construction and thus a return to the more commonly expected mood choice. Whether or not the *si* was repeated seemed to make no difference. The important point here was that juxtaposing the two verbs in a single questionnaire response did not obligate the use of the same mood for both.

*No sé si ese hombre sueña* (present subjunctive) *o descansa* (present indicative).

**I don't know whether that man is sleeping or is resting.**

(Part I, item 3)

*No se puede saber si el joven padezca* (present subjunctive) *alucinaciones o tiene* (present indicative) *pesadillas horrosas.*

**One can't know whether the young man is hallucinating or has horrifying nightmares.**

(Part I, item 7)

*La secretaria no sabe si la salven* (present subjunctive) *o se ahoga* (present indicative).

**The secretary doesn't know whether they will save her or she will drown.**

(Part I, item 8)

### Variation and Meaning Distinctions

A final submission which seems worth entertaining before concluding this section is simply that the two moods express distinct meanings (Klein-Andreu, 1995). This idea is an intriguing one in light of the questionnaire results since, in many instances, it appeared to describe well some of the responses provided by informants of both genders and from all

age ranges. For example, in items such as Part II, 8, where a simple question about location was posed and most informants chose the same verb (*estar*) to complete the response, the only real difference in the present subjunctive *esté* and the present indicative *está* appeared, at least on the surface, to be one of intended meaning:

*Mujer #1: ¿Sabes si está en la cuarta planta?*

**Woman #1: Do you know whether he is on the fourth floor?**

*Mujer #2: No sé si esté (subjunctive)/está (indicative) en la cuarta o la sexta.*

**Woman #2: I don't know whether he is on the fourth or the sixth (floor).**

If the meaning difference idea is to be taken seriously, then the use of the present subjunctive mood verb in the example above could mean that Woman #2 truly is uncertain as to where the person in question is located, that she honestly believes that she does not know where the object can be found. On the other hand, present indicative mood use could imply that she is fairly certain that she does know but prefers not to commit herself totally to asserting what she believes to be the case. This concept of mood choice parallels to a certain extent other examples of commonly found present subjunctive and present indicative mood forms following verbs other than *no saber si* which express belief and disbelief in Spanish. In these cases, when disbelief is expressed, the present subjunctive mood is normally found in the subordinate clause, but when belief, even though it does not necessarily convey certainty, is what the speaker wishes to communicate, then the present indicative mood generally appears.

*No creo que vengan hoy.* (present subjunctive) **I don't believe that they will come today.**

*Creo que vienen hoy.* (present indicative) **I think that they will come today.**

*No pensamos que los tengas.* (present subjunctive) **We don't think that you have them.**

*Pensamos que los tienes.* (present indicative) **We think that you have them.**

The problem with using the data from this questionnaire in order to lend credence to Klein-

Andreu's (1995) assumption is that one cannot finally determine for certain from responses supplied in a written form whether any expression of differences in meaning was indeed intended.

### Variation in Female and Male Mood Choices

Moving to the second hypothesis, results from the data sample also provided ample support to sustain the validity of the contention that differences exist in female and male patterns of mood choice and usage and that female informants tend to be less subject to normative pressures than males. Females in the study departed from textbook standards and defied general notions of gender-related mood production by demonstrating a definite lead in the use of the non-prescriptively associated variant. Several types of patterns illustrative of these distinct female and male mood choice paths, both in terms of typical gender-related production elaborated in the literature and in terms of illustrations not in keeping with previously documented female and male language production appeared in the questionnaire data. In dealing first with the present subjunctive usage displayed by both genders, one finds the explanations offered by some scholars to be typical of female usage in the sample and some to be more a portrayal of patterns displayed by male informants. The general idea of probability or unreality (Ocampo, 1990), as expected, was pervasive throughout most present subjunctive responses, regardless of who produced them. The more specific renderings of this idea often manifested as indecision, uncertainty, probability (Lozano, 1972; Schane, 1995) and/or possibility, potentiality, exigency (Ramsey and Spaulding, 1956) accounted for much of the male informants' present subjunctive production. Paramount among the female mood selection and usage patterns was Guitart's

(1982) argument that the present subjunctive mood will appear in contexts where conversational partners are talking about generalized, universal experiences in which the information contained in the exchange is considered to be already shared by discourse participants.

### Female Informants' Use of Mood

Specifically, as illustrated in brief by the examples provided in the previous chapter, when female informants in the study seemed to choose the present subjunctive mood, in keeping with depictions of female language throughout much of the literature, they generally sought to lay a foundation for commonality by means of efforts to establish a mutual context grounded upon shared information. In their questionnaire responses, female respondents often seemed to be trying to achieve this commonality through the expansion of context, through inclusion of personal remarks which were not constrained by the structure of the questionnaire, through making direct references to the person to whom responses were being communicated and/or interjecting themselves into the discourse in an immediate and personal manner, or through what seemed to be efforts to establish and maintain an overall tone of collaboration and cooperation. However, that several other specific patterns of female language production stood in contrast to those which are normally assumed to be typical of standard-bearing females also seems sustainable based on the data which were examined.

Beginning with the points held in common with generally proposed notions of female-generated language, three of the general submissions found among the many works on the subject stand out as important to consider in light of questionnaire results: that



females tend to produce more lengthy, elaborated stretches of discourse than males; that females tend to strive toward a tone of harmony and accord which leads to an overall sense of connectedness to their conversational partners; and that females tend to mitigate, qualify, or soften their assertions, rather than assuming more confrontational stances. These suggestions manifested themselves in a variety of ways in the data gathered in the sample.

### Lengthy Responses

First of all, it can be argued that one of the most perceptible differences in the responses provided in the questionnaire by the two genders can be seen in female informants' tendency to supply somewhat lengthier responses than males, regardless of which mood was chosen, but especially when the present subjunctive was their preferred mood choice. Consequently, they tended to furnish some sort of an expansion where males might have merely held to a presentation of factual details. In this way, female informants relieved themselves somewhat of the discursive burden of stressing informational content described by Lavandera (1975), and consequently by means of this enlargement, tended to create more context for the idea(s) which they expressed. This increased context in turn often led to responses which revealed more to the listener than would normally be predicted by the questionnaire format, by expressing opinions and/or personal observations connected to the original comment presented, by making some type of evaluative remark which linked them more directly to the discourse, or by inserting additional comments where their use might imply cooperation, commonality, or help to establish or authenticate some typing of sharing. Such expansions, which appeared in responses produced by female

informants throughout the entire questionnaire, were achieved primarily by the addition of relative clauses, the inclusion of one or more prepositional phrases, the use of a second independent clause appearing in the same sentence, and/or the addition of one or more separate sentences. It was common to see the conjunctions *o* (**or**), *porque* (**because**), *y* (**and**), and, *pero* (**but**) used in the efforts on the part of female participants' to amplify previous remarks as well. Also, at times the additional elements which were supplied necessitated a second or even a third subordinate clause verb.

Examples such as the following, which occurred following both first person and third person matrix clause subjects, further illustrate what the lengthier comments which were typical of female-produced present subjunctive responses were like. They contrasted noticeably with present indicative mood statements created by female informants for the same open slot quite often to express the same or a similar basic idea, since most present indicative contributions were less well developed both in length and overall amount of detail and also leaned toward an emphasis on simple observational statements. In addition, many of these examples of the present subjunctive verbs supplied by female informants seemed to serve as guides to the tone of the overall speech situation. The following examples represent the longest and most well-developed of the present subjunctive mood responses produced, and should not be assumed to be typical of the length of all present subjunctive replies.

subjunctive #1

*¿Quién sabe si ellos suban o bajen porque van muy apretados e incómodos? A mí no me gustaría trabajar en ese edificio.*

**Who knows whether they are going up or going down because they are very crowded and uncomfortable. I wouldn't like to work in that building.**

(Part I, item 2)

## indicative #1

*¿Quién sabe si ellos están incómodos?*  
**Who knows whether they are uncomfortable?**  
 (Part I, item 2)

In the previous two examples, one finds in the subjunctive inquiry an extended statement of causation following the basic question containing the two present subjunctive verbs, as well as an additional sentence expressing the speaker's judgement of and feelings concerning the situation being portrayed. The present indicative example simply conveys the basic question. The present subjunctive question provides an opinion relating the speaker directly to the action portrayed in the drawing, while the present indicative counterpart shows no such tendency, remaining well within the domain of a factual inquiry.

## subjunctive #2

*Yo no sé si ese hombre se quede dormido en la oficina o si sólo descanse después de un árduo trabajo. A lo mejor lo van a despedir.*  
**I don't know whether that man will remain asleep in the office or whether he is just resting after a hard day at work. Probably they're going to fire him.**  
 (Part I, item 3)

## indicative #2

*Yo no sé si ese hombre está soñando.*  
**I don't know whether that man is dreaming.**  
 (Part I, item 3)

In this pair of examples, the present subjunctive sentence doubles the force of the doubt by adding the "or" clause in addition to expanding the scenario created by assuming that the workday had been a difficult one and thus explaining somewhat the conduct of the man in the drawing. The second sentence expresses the speaker's opinion in what might or might not seem to be a relevant comment. The speaker inserts herself more firmly into the overall scene and action being portrayed by implying that, although the man's actions may

have been justified, he would probably suffer negative consequences. The present indicative counterpart merely expresses the initial doubt as to the man's behavior. The primary contrast, then, is between a simple, factual statement (indicative mood) and one in which a degree of interest and connectedness has been established (subjunctive mood).

subjunctive #3

*Es difícil saber si el detective encuentre animales o hombres. Puede ser que busque delincuentes o que no vea bien. No sé si sepa las consecuencias de molestar al zorrillo o si no le importen.*

**It's hard to know whether the detective is looking for animals or men. It could be that he's looking for criminals or that he can't see well. I don't know whether he knows the outcome of bothering a skunk or whether he just doesn't care.**

(Part I, item 4)

indicative #3

*Es difícil saber si el detective busca un zorrillo.*

**It's hard to know whether the detective is looking for a skunk.**

(Part I, item 4)

In this set of responses, the fundamental idea being expressed is the same for both sentences. The difference arises when the first present subjunctive mood statement advances beyond the basic query concerning for what or whom the detective is searching and, in a second sentence, speculates upon who this might have been or whether the problem might not even have been directly tied to the question of trying to find someone. The focus then changes entirely to one which questions the strength of the detective's eyesight. The speaker then expands further, inserting another *no saber si* sequence of her own, this time not only questioning whether the detective recognizes the consequences of his actions but also wondering whether he cares. All this branching out, especially when it reaches into the realm of the reflective, serves to heighten the affective connections between speakers.

## subjunctive #4

*En realidad, no sé si mis hijos aprecien lo que hago por ellos, pero espero que así sea porque trabajamos día y noche mi esposo y yo para darles lo mejor.*  
**I don't really know whether my children appreciate what I do for them, but I hope so because my husband and I work night and day in order to give them the best.**

(Part III, item 2)

## indicative #4

*En realidad no sé si mis hijos van a la escuela.*  
**In reality, I don't know whether my children go to school.**

(Part III, item 2)

Perhaps more than in any of the earlier examples, response set 4 illustrates the emphasis on personal commentary found in many of the responses provided in the questionnaire by female informants. Since the context of the statement is already personalized by the fact that the speaker's children are the main topic, some degree of intimacy might be inevitable, regardless of the mood which is chosen. However, the typical present indicative response to this situation found in the questionnaire was to provide details or facts, to list simply, succinctly, and dispassionately what the speaker did not know about the children. These present subjunctive responses, on the other hand, dealt with more emotional situations in which the speaker tended to address her own hopes, disappointments, and desires concerning the children, often, as in the case cited above, adding information about the motivation behind these aspirations and/or the frustrations involved in parenting.

## subjunctive #5

*Cuando hace tanto calor, no sé si los niños deshidraten porque andan corriendo por todas partes, hasta van al balneario solos sin pedirme permiso. Así son los niños.*  
**When it's so hot, I don't know if the children will become dehydrated because they run around all over the place, they even go to the spa alone without asking my permission.**

**That's what kids are like.**

(Part III, item 7)

indicative #5

*Cuando hace tanto calor, no sé si los niños lo soportan.*  
**When it's so hot, I don't know whether the children can stand it.**  
 (Part III, item 7)

The last example in this section serves to illustrate a present subjunctive-present indicative divergence pattern found in the questionnaire which centers around equipping the listener with primary, essential information as opposed to supplying ancillary comments designed to clarify, amplify, or perhaps involve the interlocutor more keenly in the situation being discussed. Again children are the main discourse topic, but this time the context requires that the focus include hot weather as a subarea of emphasis. Present indicative responses are prone to center around tolerating the heat or maladies associated with an inability to do so, leaving any judgments about the situation to the imagination of the listener, whereas present subjunctive replies focus not only upon the problems involved in overheating but upon why the children are apt to suffer from heat exposure. In the example above, a supplementary, anecdotal account is added, seemingly to complain about what the speaker's children had done that was considered inappropriate, and concluding with a general statement of her opinion as to how children in general are prone to behave.

Examining the responses provided for one specific questionnaire item (Part I, #7) offers further insights into this idea of expanded versus abbreviated response sets, this time contrasting female respondents' ways of describing what is essentially a preposterous situation with those of male informants.

females:

*No se puede saber si el joven:*  
**One can't know whether the young man:**

*vaya a sufrir una picadura pozoñosa y morir antes de llegar al hospital.*

(present subjunctive)  
**is going to suffer a poisonous bite and die before he can get to the hospital.**

*es pariente del hombre araña o le gustan las emociones fuertes.* (present indicative)  
**is a relative of Spiderman or likes strong emotional experiences.**

*sobreviva el terrible susto de sentir tantas arañas o muera allí en la cama  
antes de que lo encuentren.* (present subjunctive)  
**will survive the terrible fright of feeling so many spiders or die there in his bed  
before they find him.**

males:

*No se puede saber si el joven:*  
**One can't know whether the young man:**

*está dormido.* (present indicative) **is asleep**

*sobreviva.* (present subjunctive) **will survive**

*está muerto.* (present indicative) **is dead**

*está borracho.* (present indicative) **is drunk**

*le pican.* (present indicative) **they will sting him**

*va a despertarse.* (present indicative) **is going to wake up**

### Personalization

Other comments furnished by female respondents which displayed even more direct language in expressing personal views, sentiments, or inclinations made a stronger case for the apparent present subjunctive-affective coupling. Whether these observations, remarks, and asides were simple efforts to voice a personal opinion or the unconscious demonstrations of either insecurity or deference proposed in the literature could not be categorically determined from written responses such as those provided in the questionnaire data. Whatever their origin, they furnished yet another component of the portrait of female mood use provided by informants in this study. Most of the comments

which female respondents added appeared to be attempts either to express stronger doubt than the initial response following *no saber si* would allow (#3, #4, #6); to make a bid to clarify further and provide justification as to which of the previously produced options was indeed the preferred alternative (#2); to create an expression of strong desire, anxiety, perhaps even consternation, concerning whatever motivated the uncertainty which was voiced by the present subjunctive use following the *no saber si* clause (#5); or, finally, to move in the direction of a more secure presentation of an opinion or idea, but without completely relinquishing the indecision or vacillation related in the *no saber si* clause (#1).

1) *No sé si ese hombre esté roncando, pero me parece que sí.*  
**I don't know whether that man is snoring, but it seems to me that he is.**  
 (Part I, item 3)

2) *¿Quién sabe si usen el ascensor por comodidad o necesidad, pero yo creo que por necesidad porque van incómodos?*  
**Who knows whether they are using the elevator because of convenience or necessity, but I think that it's because of necessity because they're uncomfortable?**  
 (Part I, item 2)

3) *Nunca sabré si existan seres extraterrestriales aquí en la tierra, pero personalmente, lo dudo.*  
**I'll never know whether extraterrestrial beings exist here on earth, but personally, I doubt it.**  
 (Part III, item 6)

4) *Nunca sabré si viva 100 años, pero lo dudo.*  
**I'll never know whether I'll live for 100 years, but I doubt it.**  
 (Part III, item 6)

5) *En realidad, yo no sé si mis hijos sean groseros, pero espero de todo corazón que se acuerden de lo que les enseñamos y que no aparten del camino recto.*  
**In reality, I don't know whether my children are rude, but I hope with all my heart that they remember what we've taught them and that they don't stray from the straight and narrow.**  
 (Part III, item 2)

6) *El maestro nunca sabe si sus alumnos entiendan bien, pero yo creo que no.*  
**The teacher never knows whether his students understand well, but I don't think so.**  
 (Part III, #4)



### Direct Address Forms

A third form of expression not uncommon to female informants when the present subjunctive mood was used prominently in their questionnaire responses, but which was generally absent from the responses supplied by the males in the sample was that of openly addressing their interlocutors. Several formats for this direct address were apparent. First, at times female informants tended to insert comments aimed explicitly at their interlocutors. These direct references, both pointed and personal, took the form of parenthetical comments, clauses which invoked some point of commonality between the two people communicating, and simple, but intentional statements designed to include the interlocutor in a specific way in the conversational interchange. They can be arranged on a continuum from the weak end of the scale of directness with a first person plural inclusive verb usage interjected in the response (#1), to the stronger extreme with the insertion of a second person singular familiar verb form (#2). Positioned between these two points one finds the use of the third person singular formal address *usted* (**you, formal**) (#4, #5) and the second person singular possessive pronoun *tuyo* (**yours**) (#3). When these forms were introduced into the discourse samples provided by female respondents, not only did they seem to be trying to create an aura of closeness to their interlocutors, an immediate, be it momentary connection, but also to emphasize the seriousness, even vigilance with which they approached maintaining any affinity which might possibly develop between the two conversational partners. Although these insertions were not made on a regular basis, an examination of some typical examples in which they appeared helps to clarify how they relate to the mood choice made by female informants.

- 1) *Es difícil saber si el detective sepa lo que busca porque, como todos sabemos,*

*los zorrillos son bien asquerosos.*

**It's hard to know whether the detective knows what he's looking for because, as we all know, skunks are really revolting.**

(Part I, item 4)

2) *No sé si las traigan, sabes, porque está en Iguala.*

**I don't know whether they'll bring them, you know, because she's in Iguala.**

(Part II, item 1b)

3) *En realidad, yo no sé si mis hijos vengan más que los tuyos.*

**In reality, I don't know whether my children come more than yours do.**

(Part II, item 2)

4) *Nunca sabré si usted desea algo, porque no me lo dice.*

**I'll never know whether you want something, because you don't tell me.**

(Part II, item 6)

5) *Nunca sabré si sea tan rápido como usted dice.*

**I'll never know whether he/she/it will be as fast as you say.**

(Part II, item 6)

A second type of direct reference, and another way in which female informants personalized their questionnaire responses which was uncommon to male replies, can be seen in Part II, items 1a, 2a, and 2b, as well as many of the open-ended statements in Part III. Since in Spanish a question which displays a third person plural verb ending (*-en/-an*) unaccompanied by any subject pronoun may be referring either to *ellos/ellas* (**they**) or *ustedes* (**plural you**), the question of inclusion or exclusion must be addressed, thus presenting respondents with the possibility of moving in either direction whenever a third person plural verb occurred in the introductory question. When the questionnaire was constructed, it was expected that the *ellos/ellas* pattern would be the usual one. Since it seemed to require considerably more work to make sense of the dialogue/conversation when the *ustedes* form was assumed, and since this form might not always be as readily compatible with the context which follows it, it was predicted that only rarely, if at all, would informants consider this option of including themselves in the verb chosen.



Female informants in the sample were more prone to view any *-en/-an* ending as the *ustedes* form which automatically included them in the group being addressed, thus inserting themselves into these dialogues when the discourse format did not constrain them to do so. Females also displayed a steady preference for present subjunctive verb forms when this type of inclusion took place, while their overall response sets for the same slots were almost evenly balanced between the two moods (1a: 57% subjunctive, 43% indicative; 2a: 48% subjunctive, 52% indicative; 2b: 51% subjunctive, 49% indicative). Male informants, on the other hand, generally viewed the same endings as the *ellos/ellas* form referring to others and excluding the addressee(s); it was a rare occurrence when male questionnaire respondents followed the pattern of self-inclusion. The following examples illustrate the female/male contrast in including or excluding themselves as part of the group addressed:

females:

- 1) *No sé si volvamos/vengamos pasado mañana o el domingo.*  
(first person plural, present subjunctive)

**I don't know whether we will come back/come day after tomorrow or on Sunday.** (item 1a)

- 2) *No sé si salgamos tan temprano.* (first person plural, present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether we will leave so early.** (item 2a)

- 3) *No sé por seguro si nos alojemos/ alojamos aquí en el pueblo, pero lo dudo.*  
(first person plural, present subjunctive/present indicative)  
**I don't know for sure whether we will stay here in town, but I doubt it.** (item 2b)

males:

- 1) *No sé si vuelven pasado mañana o el domingo.*  
(third person plural, present indicative)

**I don't know whether they will come back day after tomorrow or on Sunday.** (item 1a)

- 2) *No sé si salen/salgan tan temprano.*  
(third person plural, present indicative/present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether they will leave so early.** (item 2a)

3) *No sé por seguro si se alojen/alojan aquí en el pueblo, pero lo dudo.*  
 (third person plural, present subjunctive/present indicative)

**I don't know for sure whether they will stay here in town, but I doubt it.** (item 2b)

Several explanations for why female informants chose to include themselves in these responses seem plausible. First, the inclusive pattern could simply be another way of establishing a real or perceived closer association with their conversational partners. Second, including themselves in the response, and thereby assuming an equal role with the person(s) about whom they are speaking in the dialogue, might have been an indication that female speakers were trying to show the empathy so often attributed to them in the literature on gender and language. Another possibility arises when one considers that their tendency toward inclusivity might have denoted a degree of attentiveness both to the interlocutor and to the context which would be viewed as lacking in the more or less personal third person plural *ellos/ellas* construction.

Statements such as the following from Part III of the questionnaire, here less encumbered by foci already established in the discourse than those which began each adjacency pair in Part II, also lent themselves to the possibility of including the speaker in the response. In these examples, female informants repeatedly elected to include others, along with themselves, in the response verb, with the verb which was chosen generally occurring in the present subjunctive mood. Male respondents, in contrast, showed a propensity either for referring to themselves alone or to another person or persons. Their mood choice on these items was strongly present indicative.

females:

*No sé si podemos todos nosotros acompañarte esta noche.*

**I don't know whether we can all go with you tonight.**

(Part III, item 3)

*Nunca sabré si (nosotros) seamos felices el día de mañana.*

**I'll never know whether we will be happy in the future.**

(Part III, item 6)

*No sé si (nosotros) encontremos todo lo que necesitamos en ese tienda.*

**I don't know whether we will find everything we need in that store.**

(Part III, item 8)

males:

*No sé si (yo) puedo (ellos pueden) acompañarte esta noche.*

**I don't know whether I (they) can go with you tonight.**

(Part III, item 3)

*Nunca sabré si (yo) tengo razón.*

**I'll never know whether I'm right.**

(Part III, item 6)

*No sé si (yo) pueda conseguir algo en esa tienda.*

**I don't know whether I can get something in that store.**

(Part III, item 8)

It is also interesting to note another pattern which occurred in item sets in Part II. As noted previously, when responses to items which have two open slots (1a and 1b, 2a and 2b) were examined for consistency in mood use within the two-response set of the dialogue, at times the moods which appeared in the two verbs were not identical. For instance, in the first dialogue, informants, especially females, at times provided a present subjunctive verb response in items 1a and 2a, and a present indicative verb responses in items 1b and 2b, when logically it would seem that each of the companion verbs would appear in the same mood. What is important to consider here is that this mix was prevalent many times in responses where the first of the two components was the inclusive first person plural and the second the exclusive third person plural. The first person plural form usually appeared in the present subjunctive mood, while the third person form remained in the predicted present indicative. Whether a form of *saber* appeared in the initial question

component did not seem to affect responses. Females consistently supplied present subjunctive verbs when they included themselves in the group of respondents, while otherwise their responses continued to follow the same present subjunctive-present indicative pattern displayed throughout the remainder of the questionnaire. The following dialogues exemplify these ideas. It should be noted that these first person plural responses were not sufficient in number as to move away from the general usage patterns displayed throughout the remainder of the questionnaire (female subjunctive: 1a, 57%; 1b, 47%; 2a, 48%; 2b, 51%; male subjunctive; 1a, 41%; 1b, 26%; 2a, 47%; 2b, 16%).

*Hombre: ¿Cuándo vuelven de Chilpancingo?*

**When will they/you return from Chilpancingo?**

*Mujer: No sé si regresemos (present subjunctive) pasado mañana o el domingo.*

**I don't know whether we will return day after tomorrow or on Sunday.**

*Hombre: ¿Sabes si traen noticias de la tía Agripina?*

**Do you know whether they'll bring any news about Aunt Agripina?**

*Mujer: No sé si las traen (present indicative) porque está en Iguala.*

**I don't know whether they'll bring any because she is in Iguala.**

**(Part II, items 1a and 1b)**

Part III, item 6 follows a similar pattern, with many of the male questionnaire responses dealing with someone other than the speaker or the addressee, and many of the female contributions following the opposite pattern.

females:

*Nunca sabré si:*

**I'll never know whether:**

*me quiere si no se lo pregunte y no tengo el valor para hacerlo. (present indicative)*  
**he loves me if I don't ask him and I don't have enough nerve to do it.**

*voy a morir en la mañana, en la tarde o en la noche. Así son los misterios de la vida.*  
 (present indicative)

**I'm going to die in the morning, in the afternoon, or at night. That's just how life's mysteries operate.**

*sirva de algo lo que estoy haciendo con mi vida. (present subjunctive)*

**what I'm doing with my life is worth anything.**

males:

*Nunca sabré si:*

**I'll never know whether:**

*pueden conseguirlo.* (present indicative) **they can get it.**

*no lo investigo.* (present indicative) **I don't investigate it.**

*lo logro.* (present indicative) **I'll achieve it.**

*lo tienen ellos.* (present indicative) **they have it.**

*dicen la verdad.* (present indicative) **they're telling the truth.**

#### Qualification or Cushioning of Previous Statements

Female informants also chose the present subjunctive when they seemed either to perceive some need to cushion the statements which they presented in their questionnaire responses, to clarify what they were saying in their responses, or to qualify what they included in these responses in some way. Perhaps these efforts formed part of an overall endeavor to accommodate interlocutors and to cooperate with conversational partners to the extent that this type of collaboration was feasible given the format of the requested responses and of the questionnaire itself. The tendency to accompany some of their present subjunctive usages with a qualifier which emphasized the doubtfulness of the situation was one of the characteristics displayed by females which was most in keeping with traditional associations of present subjunctive mood use. Some of the qualifiers, in addition to enhancing the already acknowledged uncertainty of the statement in which they were couched, made the respondents who furnished them appear to be less prepared to take whatever risks were necessary to make the choices implicit in the options which they



chose to present.

*No sé si **acaso** vuelvan pasado mañana o el domingo.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether perhaps they will return day after tomorrow or on Sunday.**  
 (Part II, item 1)

*No sé si **realmente** esté en la cuarta o la sexta.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether he is really on the fourth or the sixth (floor).**  
 (Part II, item 10)

*Nadie sabe si ellos griten o **tal vez** patinen.* (present subjunctive)  
**No one knows whether they are shouting or maybe they are skating.**  
 (Part II, item 6)

*Es difícil saber si el detective **en realidad** sepa lo que sucede.* (present subjunctive)  
**It's hard to know whether the detective really knows what's going on.**  
 (Part I, item 4)

*No sé si su carro **de veras** esté en buenas condiciones.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether her/his car truly is in good shape.**  
 (Part III, item 5)

As an extension of this idea, examples of female informants' interjecting and/or incorporating clarifications of their comments as well as including some instances of hedges, attenuating mechanisms, and intensifiers arose from time to time in the questionnaire responses also. Some of these took the form of tag questions (#1); others simply acknowledged reservation (#2, #3, #5), or even an outright lack of knowledge (#4). Whether stemming from a conscious or an unconscious effort to display deference, to assume a non-aggressive posture toward conversation partners, or to communicate some expression of uncertainty, insecurity, or tentativeness, these additions to the basic female-produced questionnaire responses tended to be accompanied by the use of the present subjunctive mood, and sometimes to be part of rather lengthy responses as well. As has been the case in previously described sets of data, these examples were not pervasive throughout the responses provided by female informants, but were noticeable enough to

warrant some attention.

- 1) *¿Quién sabe si vayan pronto a su oficina? Es posible que salgan a la calle, ¿Verdad?*  
(present subjunctive)

Who knows whether they're going to their offices soon?

It's possible that they're leaving the building, isn't it?

(Part I, item 2)

- 2) *Nadie sabe si ellos griten, pero es posible, ¿No?* (present subjunctive)

No one knows whether they are shouting, but it's possible, isn't it?

(Part I, item 6)

- 3) *No se puede saber si el joven se asuste mucho si no se despierta. Puede ser que le gusten las arañas.* (present subjunctive)

One can't know whether the young man will be very frightened if he doesn't wake up.

It could be that he likes spiders.

(Part I, item 7)

- 4) *No sé si los tengan allí o en la iglesia. A lo mejor los dejaron en la iglesia, pero no sé.*

(present subjunctive)

I don't know whether they have them there or in the church. Probably they left them at the church, but I don't know.

(Part II, item 6)

- 5) *No sé si pueda acompañarte esta noche. Si no, tal vez mañana, Dios mediante.*  
(present subjunctive)

I don't know whether I can go with you tonight. If not, perhaps tomorrow, God willing.

(Part III, item 3)

#### Explanations for Female Response Patterns

That these types of patterns produced by female informants occurred in the data should not be surprising (Alturo and Turrell, 1990; Gutiérrez, 1992; Lybrand, 1982; Perissinotto, 1972; Rissel, 1981). Nonetheless, the question of precisely why these traditionally female-associated language characteristics, these emphases on relationships and rapport building, this empathy and respect for the feelings of the conversational partner, this desire to cement ties and maintain contact, this emphasis on the personal and

the immediate, and this need to provide the appropriate ambience should have been coupled with a tendency to use the non-standard variant in such abundance bears further consideration.

### Rapport-Building Inclinations

First, combining the more predictable facets commonly attributed to female speech and the innovative behavior displayed in this data sample, the most obvious interpretation suggests that female informants may have found themselves more at ease with shifts to the present subjunctive mood in traditionally present indicative contexts due to their rapport-building inclinations. This posture, which has at its core an overall effort to cooperate with conversational partners, might have thus abated to a certain extent some of the normally assumed responsibility for providing factual information and/or for accumulating a body of information. Instead female informants could place more emphasis upon establishing a frame of reference in which both they and their interlocutors were comfortable operating.

### Initial Use of a Variant

Second, it is possible that perhaps the use of the present subjunctive in the responses provided by females in the questionnaire could be an example of typical female performance in initiating the use of a particular variant, as studies have repeatedly shown them to do in the field of pronunciation, in their zeal for preciseness of expression, for finding a vehicle which truly expresses their uncertainty with sufficient strength and fervor. Perhaps in yoking the conjunction *si*, with its already incumbent doubt and uncertainty, and the present subjunctive mood, with its equally distinct association with incertitude and irresolution, female informants somehow fortified their mode of expression to the point

that they could be convinced of its adequacy.

### Degree of Shared Information

A third potential component of the female-language picture in this sample which might provide some further indication of how the seemingly contradictory traditional can be successfully blended with the innovative is centered around the earlier-mentioned issue of shared and unshared information (De la Puente-Schubeck, 1991; Guitart, 1982). As briefly mentioned earlier, according to this explanation of mood alternation, when sentences are constructed in such a fashion that the ideas involved in the discourse are considered by the speaker to be new information not held in common by the conversational partners, when he/she considers that the hearer does not “know” this information, then the speaker will opt for the indicative mood, here representing what is most often considered to be the conventional choice. On the other hand, the speaker will select the subjunctive mood when she/he believes that the ideas to be presented contain information already shared with or somehow known by the interlocutor. Female informants in this sample on many occasions seemed to opt quite for the pattern which suggested that the contents of the statements which were supplied as responses were shared by the informant and her conversational partner. This sharing was evidenced, as demonstrated above, by the urging of direct address forms by female informants, by their inclusive verb usages where exclusive verbs would have easily sufficed, by the large number of personal remarks and inclusionary comments exhibited in female responses, by female respondents’ willingness to risk opening up to express their opinions, by their attentiveness to their conversational partners, and by their efforts to provide the foundation

for whatever commonality might be achievable.

### Female Characteristics Not in Keeping with Past Research

Still other characteristics which generally have been associated with female speech did not appear to be part of the configurations demonstrated by the questionnaire responses. As already demonstrated statistically, no strong leanings toward orthodoxy of mood choice and usage or highly conservative linguistic performance could be found among the totality of female responses in the questionnaire set. Neither did any particular tendency toward moderation or restraint surface among the responses which females provided. Based on this data sample, it would also be difficult to sustain an argument that female speakers were predisposed to be slower than males in participating in change since they led male informants in present subjunctive use following *no saber si* on 27 of the 28 questionnaire items, the exception being Part I, item 3 with female responses being divided 35% subjunctive to 66% indicative, and male mood choices 43% subjunctive to 57% indicative. Any suggestion that when females in this sample moved away from the traditional the move was in the direction of a male-originated standard (Lafford, 1995), or any assertion that the female informants in the sample assumed, much less accepted, that male speakers served as the sole source of society's norms for language would seem equally unrealistic since whatever process was involved in the mood variation which was demonstrated in the data seemed much more likely to be an outgrowth of female than male speech. Given the questionnaire results, it is unquestionable that the females in the study departed from the standard. It is also likely that this departure represented a shift in a direction in which males had not already claimed as their own. It is possible, then, that

these females did not see themselves as part of a traditional societal make-up in which their role was to remain steady in their conventional patterns until males originated a change.

### Mood Use by Male Informants

Specific tendencies seemed less apparent in the data generated in the questionnaire by male informants than in that produced by the females in the sample, and those trends which did emerge were also more difficult to classify. As has previously been demonstrated by the statistics provided in the previous chapter as well as by some of the comparisons already presented in this chapter, in most contexts, males remained far more invariant than did females in the mood choices which they displayed in the questionnaire data. They maintained a steady preference for overall present indicative mood use, and generally employed the present subjunctive mood only when doubt seemed both unavoidable and was forcefully and convincingly expressed. Consequently, they generally remained well within the canon of conventional expectations for mood use as described in the literature.

### Exposition of Factual Information

In contrast to female informants' predilection for a lengthier response design, male participants displayed a preference for a rather prosaic exposition of factual information, for the presumed possibility stance associated closely with the present indicative mood in *si* sentences as a presentation of externally controlled options (Espinosa, 1975), and of probability which approximates fact (Klein-Andreu, 1995). Consequently, they followed fairly consistently the description of the general use of verbs following *si* provided by

Bergen (1978) when he stated that present indicative use following the conjunction communicates the idea that the statement under consideration should be assumed to be a factual one. This was apparent in several ways in their questionnaire responses. On many of the same items where female informants tended to provide at least some degree of elaboration, males in the sample overwhelmingly presented replies which were brief, concise, and direct. Whether the present subjunctive or the present indicative mood was selected for the verb in the subordinate clause, male informants seemed to find little need for expanding the information which they furnished, rarely extending beyond the addition of an adverb, a modal auxiliary, a noun object, or a short prepositional phrase. The sample responses which follow illustrate this point:

*¿Quién sabe si ellos suban o bajen (quieren salir) (están contentos).*

(present subjunctive, present indicative, present indicative)

**Who knows whether they are going up or down (want to get out) (are happy)?**

(Part I, item 2)

*No sé si ese hombre duerme (trabaje) (dure en su trabajo).*

(present indicative, present subjunctive, present subjunctive)

**I don't know whether that man is sleeping (works) (will last in his job).**

(Part I, item 3)

*No se puede saber si el joven esté muerto (sobreviva) (está dormido).*

(present subjunctive, present subjunctive, present indicative)

**It is not possible to know whether the young man is dead (will survive) (is asleep).**

(Part I, item 7)

*En realidad, yo no sé si mis hijos sepan bailar tango (querrán ir) (están en casa).*

(present subjunctive, future indicative, present indicative)

**In reality, I don't know whether my children know how to dance the tango  
(will want to go) (are at home).**

(Part III, item 2)

*El maestro nunca sabe si sus alumnos estudian todas las tardes (aprenden) (triunfarán).*

(present indicative, present indicative, future indicative)

**The teacher never know whether his students study every afternoon (learn) (will succeed).**

(Part III, item 6)

*Cuando hace tanto calor, no sé si los niños se enfermarán (están bien) (tomen agua).*  
 (future indicative, present indicative, present subjunctive)  
**When it's so hot, I don't know whether the children will become ill (are all right)**  
**(drink water).**  
 (Part III, item 7)

### Extensions

When male informants did choose to respond with more extensive contributions, they were inclined to add information or expand an idea, not additional observations, details, or remarks which could be in any way considered personal. Their presentation of thoughts, ideas, opinions, and impressions was straightforward in manner and generally without comment on what had been said in the previous portion of the statement, dialogue, or conversation.

*Yo no sé si la señora puede sostenerse para no caer (soportará la caída)*  
*(se tropieza al subir) (quedará bien).*  
 (future indicative, present indicative, future indicative)  
**I don't know whether the woman can support herself in order not to fall (withstand the fall)**  
**(is falling as she goes up) (will be all right).**  
 (Part I, item 1)

*¿Quién sabe si ellos toman en cuenta la capacidad (puedan ocupar el elevador)*  
*(van al mismo piso) (subirán o bajarán por el elevador)?*  
 (present indicative, present subjunctive, present indicative, future indicative)  
**Who knows whether they are considering the load (can fill up the elevator)**  
**(are going to the same floor) (are going up or are going down in the elevator).**  
 (Part I, item 2)

*La secretaria no sabe si la línea telefónica funcione para pedir ayuda (la rescatarán pronto de la inundación en su oficina) (la luz está funcionando)*  
*(la oficina está asegurada).*  
 (present subjunctive, future indicative, present indicative, present indicative)  
**The secretary doesn't know whether the telephone line is working in order to ask for help**  
**(they will rescue her from the flood in her office soon) (the light is working)**  
**(the office is insured).**  
 (Part I, item 8)

*Nunca sabré si llega la carta a su destino (pueda llegar hasta el rancho)*



(*pueden saltar en paracaídas*) (*él pueda pasar el examen*).  
 (present indicative, present subjunctive, present indicative, present subjunctive)  
**I'll never know whether the letter reaches its destination (I/she/he can reach the ranch)**  
**(they can parachute jump) (he can pass the test).**  
 (Part III, item 6)

### Disclaimers

Also, although all those who created questionnaire responses were bound by the *no saber si* construction to concede what they, or someone else, did not know, male informants sometimes followed their subordinate clauses containing remarks which seemed to be disclaimers, such as *pero creo* (**but I believe**), *aunque pienso* (**although I think**), and *pero estoy seguro* (**but I'm sure**) which were largely absent from female-generated responses. This was especially true when the subject of the matrix clause was the first person singular. Although these instances were not numerous, it is interesting to consider whether they served merely as follow-up comments or as sources intended to repudiate or disavow to some extent the lack of knowledge which male informants were constrained to admit by the information already present in the questionnaire statements. These remarks functioned as the principal source of direct expression of male opinion in the sample as well. Whether or not the subordinate clause verb was present subjunctive or present indicative did not seem to be affected by the addition of this type of comment.

*Yo no sé si la señora viene distraída, pero creo que así es.*  
 (present indicative)

**I don't know whether the woman is preoccupied, but I think that's the way it is.**  
 (Part I, item 1)

*No sé si ese hombre esté cansado, pero creo que debe despertarse pronto.*  
 (present subjunctive)

**I don't know whether that man is tired, but I think that he'd better wake up soon.**  
 (Part I, item 3)

*No sé si el pobre señor se da cuenta del hoyo, aunque pienso que se va a caer.*  
(present indicative)

**I don't know whether the poor man is aware of the hole, although I think that he's going to fall.**  
(Part I, item 5)

*No sé si ese hombre recibe salario, pero estoy seguro que no lo merece.*  
(present indicative)

**I don't know whether that man gets a salary, but I'm sure that he doesn't deserve it.**  
(Part I, item 3)

### Subjunctive Mood Use

In relation to overall present subjunctive production by male informants, they seemed most inclined to furnish verbs in this mood when they appeared convinced of the strength of the uncertainty expressed in the situation involved. Two initial examples of this conspicuous doubt which appeared in Part III of the questionnaire help to clarify this point. The present subjunctive responses presented in these items seem to illustrate apparent uncertainty in the mind of the speaker as opposed to the present indicative contributions which seem to presume some type of assurance or confidence. The indicative examples, though admittedly displaying the lack of guarantee suggested by the conjunction *si*, still seem to imply that the speaker in reality did feel fairly secure in the knowledge that what was being said was to be accepted as basically accurate and appropriate. In Part III, item 2, one finds a parent expressing genuine insecurity about his/her child's actions or future possibilities by means of a present subjunctive verb usage:

*En realidad, no sé si mis hijos sean míos (estén por buen camino)*  
*(puedan estudiar una carrera).*

**In reality, I don't know whether my children are mine (are on the right track)**  
**(can study a career).**  
(Part III, item 2)

In contrast, in Part III, item 1, the degree of doubt as to whether mass will occur at

eight o'clock, when it usually does take place at that hour, as to whether the women's meeting will take place as usual, and as to whether the May 10 holiday (Mother's Day) will be celebrated was relatively small, and either the present indicative or future indicative mood was employed:

*Las señoras de la iglesia no saben si hay misa a las ocho (tendrán su reunión como siempre) (festejan el 10 de mayo).*

**The women of the church don't know whether there is a mass at eight o'clock (they will have their meeting like always) (they will celebrate Mother's Day).**

(Part III, item 1)

In Part I, this contrast was still more apparent. Here precisely where the ideas expressed fell on the security-to-uncertainty continuum seemed to depend upon how the informant chose to view what was portrayed in the drawing. Items 2 and 6 of this section serve as examples of situations in which male participants at times seemed to see strong, and what to them must have appeared to be obvious doubt, and consequently used the present subjunctive mood, and at other times viewed the situation as more commonplace, or at least less disputable in terms of outcome, and did not veer from the norm of present indicative mood use. As the examples which follow illustrate, when situations such as those which might threaten one's well being are invoked, and there seems not to be any firm evidence as to what will result from the dilemma presented, the present subjunctive mood often appeared. When consequences seemed either insignificant or rather obvious as to results, then male informants tended to move back into the realm of the present indicative.

subjunctive:

*¿Quién sabe si ellos puedan salir (puedan subir) (quepan)?*

**Who knows whether they'll be able to get out (can go up) (they will fit)?**

(Part I, item 2)

indicative:

*¿Quién sabe si ellos están apretados (están subiendo) (están bromeando)?*  
**Who knows whether they are (tightly squeezed) (are going up) (are joking)?**  
 (Part I, item 2)

subjunctive:

*Nadie sabe si ellos sobrevivan el fuego (se quemén) (lleguen abajo sin lastimarse) (puedan aterrizar sin caerse).*  
**No one knows whether they will survive the fire (will get burned) (will get down without being injured) (can land without falling).**  
 (Part I, item 6)

indicative:

*Nadie sabe si ellos están bailando (juegan) (están patinando) (lo disfrutan).*  
**No one knows whether they are dancing (are playing) (are skating) (are enjoying it).**  
 (Part I, item 6)

#### Disassociation from Addressee

In their commitment to convey what was to them indispensable and little more, as well as to provide direct statements designed to supply sufficient information, males in the sample maintained fairly consistently a posture of disassociation from addressees, only infrequently referring to themselves or their partners. As mentioned earlier, they seemed to display a preference for imparting information about third parties lacking in the responses provided by female informants. They did this, primarily, by employing either a third person singular or plural subject, expressed or unexpressed, and at times by creating names for these absent agents:

*No sé si Juan y Gloria van a (ella deba) (mi hermana pueda) acompañarte esta noche.*  
 (present indicative, present subjunctive, present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether Juan and Gloria are going to (she should) (my sister can) go with you tonight.**  
 (Part III, item 3)

*Nunca sabré si ella sabe la verdad (Tiburcio vendrá a tiempo)  
(a su esposa le gustan las novelas).*

(present indicative, future indicative, present indicative)

**I'll never know whether she knows the truth (Tiburcio will come in time)  
(his wife likes novels).  
(Part III, item 6)**

Even though it seems evident that male informants in the sample made little attempt at approaching the interlocutor on a personal basis, they did not, of course, avoid personal and/or direct references altogether. However, when this type of response was included, there seemed to be little, if any connection to their choice of mood. Several examples from Part III items 6 and 8, all in the present indicative mood, illustrate this point. In item 6, perhaps the *Nunca sabré* (I'll never know) helped to create a connection to the individual. Item 8 is especially interesting in that the transactive nature of the context appeared to contribute to males' personalizing their responses. When present subjunctive mood responses appeared in this slot, the clearly delineated doubt already discussed seemed to work as the driving factor in mood choice.

*Nunca sabré si voy a morir en la mañana, en la tarde o en la noche  
(esa ingrata me es tan traicionera como me dicen) (te agrada mi  
compañía, pues temo preguntar) (te caigo bien, ¿Verdad?).*

**I'll never know whether I'm going to die in the morning, in the afternoon,  
or at night (that ungrateful woman is as unfaithful to me as they say)  
(you like my company since I'm afraid to ask) (you like me, right?).  
(Part III, item 6)**

*No sé si podré encontrar lo que busco (tienen lo que necesito)  
(encontraré jabón) (venderán lo que busco) en esa tienda.*

**I don't know whether I will be able to find what I'm looking for (they have what  
I need) (I will find soap) (they will sell what I'm looking for) in that store.  
(Part III, item 8)**

### Explanations for Male Informants' Mood Choices

Finally, addressing the question of why, in general, male informants opted for less

innovative mood use, why they preferred to follow such a predictable course, and why they remained so conventional in their overall mood choices, one of the most reasonable possibilities for clarification which arose from an examination of questionnaire results had to do once again with how the speaker views the information being addressed in a conversation and also how he/she views the speaker's role in dealing with the ideas, opinions, and thoughts presented in the discourse. As illustrated by the examples cited earlier in this chapter, male informants' preferences centered the majority of their responses in the domain of expository, factual presentation of ideas and information, with linear declarations of facts being favored over less direct modes of discourse, thus linking them, at least to some extent to the idea of "discursive burden" (Lavandera, 1983, p. 229).

According to Lavandera, when this discursive responsibility is great, the indicative is most frequently the mood chosen to express precisely what the speaker wishes or needs to convey. In other words, when the weight of responsibility for supplying information is heavy, the speaker will find the need to adhere to rather strict guidelines of explicitness which make it difficult to deviate from the indicative mood as its use has been traditionally defined. It is certainly possible that greater use of the present indicative mood by the male informants in the study could be explained, at least in part, by their efforts to bear this unconscious discursive responsibility in the provision of information and presentation of ideas, even in a context in which the value to the respondent of the information which he provides is not great, and the identification of the information provided with the individual respondent is not possible. This factually oriented posture, which might have led male informants many times away from any prospect of present subjunctive usage, manifested itself in a variety of ways ranging from their tendency to express their messages precisely to

the security with which they conveyed the details which they supplied, to their previously demonstrated tendency to avoid interjecting themselves personally into the interchanges and their disregard for elaboration of any kind. In essence, in their seeming desire to guide by means of providing information or to instruct through presenting information, many times male informants moved to the opposite extreme from females in any manifestation of subjectivity.

### Female/Male Contrast

A brief contrast of typical female and typical male responses on one specific questionnaire item might help to conclude the examination of the second hypothesis as well as to provide further insights into some of these patterns which evolved throughout the data. In Part III, item 5, female informants (58% subjunctive; 42% indicative) not only provided responses which were more elaborate than those of the male informants, and more conversational in tone, but also dealt with more empathetic stances or at least presented ideas which held on to some type of speaker-listener association. Males (37% subjunctive; 63% indicative), on the other hand, tended to dwell more on concrete information and facts.

females:

*Yo no sé si su carro:*  
**I don't know whether his/her car:**

*esté asegurado por cualquier cosa.* (present subjunctive)  
**is insured for any type of problem.**

*funcione después del accidente de ayer, pero espero que no tenga muchos problemas.*  
 (present subjunctive)  
**is working after yesterday's accident, but I hope that he/she doesn't  
 have a lot of problems.**

*esté listo para mañana o si tenga que esperar hasta el jueves.* (present subjunctive)  
**will be ready for tomorrow or whether he/she will have to wait until Thursday.**

males:

*Yo no sé si su carro:*  
**I don't know whether his/her car:**

*tiene gasolina.* (present indicative) **has any gas.**

*es último modelo.* (present indicative) **is the latest model.**

*tiene gato.* (present indicative) **has a jack.**

*sea mejor que el mío.* (present subjunctive) **is better than mine.**

*está en buenas condiciones* (present indicative) **is in good shape.**

*es verde o azul.* (present indicative) **is green or blue.**

#### Age and Variation in Mood Choice and Usage

Previously reported results found in the scholarly literature which deal with the main focus of the last hypothesis also have some elements in common as well as some points of difference with questionnaire findings. When examining the overall picture, one finds that results from responses supplied by informants in the sample generally supported the expectations and assumptions found in many of the investigations described in the available articles on mood choice that different age groups will, for the most part, display different patterns of mood use. However, when dealing with specifics, most researchers anticipate that an inverse relationship between age and language innovation will most often be the case and that younger speakers will lead in the use of forms which are considered to be non-traditional (Almeida, 1995; Lantolf, 1978; Rissel, 1981; Sanou de los Ríos, 1982). At this point the connection between data found in the sample responses and previously



reported general assumptions was severed since, as the questionnaire results reported in the previous chapter indicated, it was the 26 to 35 year old group which displayed the highest percentage of the non-traditional present subjunctive production (288 of 712 tokens: 40%), rather than informants in the youngest age division (288 of 833 tokens: 35%).

Respondents in the other mid-range group, 36 to 55 year olds, closely followed the 26 to 35 year old division in non-traditional offerings (346 of 932 tokens: 37%).

When separate questionnaire sections were examined, 26 to 35 year olds once again showed the highest single instance of present subjunctive responses (Part II, 46% subjunctive). It should be emphasized, then, that, although no drastic differences in mood usage appeared among the four age divisions in the study, the two middle divisions offered more examples of innovative usage than did either the youngest or the oldest group. Consequently, these data displayed little of the anticipated solidarity or the inability to break free of set patterns suggested as typical of groups outside the youngest age range, since the 26 to 55 year old informants displayed too much variation in their mood production to be characterized as typically orthodox or overtly conservative. All this is to say that the rise in the use of conservative structures (*no saber si* + present indicative), the increase in the production of forms which are considered to be more careful (*no saber si* + present indicative), and the appearance of fewer variants considered by some to bring with them a risk of criticism from mainstream society (*no saber si* + present subjunctive) generally expected as the age of the informant increases did not occur among informants in this study as a regular pattern of usage. If the present indicative is to be taken to satisfy the conventional expectation, then, for the informants who participated in this research, the ascending order of usage, accompanied by predicted ascending conservatism, would be the

following: 26 to 35 years olds (60% indicative); 36 to 55 year olds (63% indicative); 18 to 25 year olds (65% indicative); 55 years old or over (67% indicative). The oldest group, according to this framework, remained in the most conservative position, but the youngest group was positioned directly below them.

### Explanations for Age-Associated Mood Choice

When seeking out what motivations led to the departure from predicted behavior in this data sample, it seems feasible to examine the possibilities by separating them into two categories. The first of these assumes that the present subjunctive following *no saber si* is an unusual, unanticipated usage. The second admits the possibility that this construction could be a characteristically unexceptional pattern of usage within the speech community involved in producing the questionnaire responses. In other words, it is possible that for this group of informants, the question of present subjunctive or present indicative mood use may not have been one of standard and orthodox linguistic behavior as opposed to the production of norm breaking forms.

### Security

If the first category is presumed to be viable, then the greater production of non-traditional, atypical forms by informants in the mid-age groups could be attributed to several possibilities which are not necessarily mutually exclusive. First, although younger speakers are customarily assumed to be more apt to initiate change, it is not inconceivable that those who belong to other age groups could also introduce, and certainly that they could expand, the use of innovative forms, especially if some of this orientation toward

change was not a sudden occurrence, but a gradual movement of new forms into the speech community to which they belong. Perhaps the sense of security which is presumed to come with both personal and professional maturity, especially in the case of those who are either beginning or are in the midst of what they see as their most productive years, allowed these informants to acquire the confidence and assurance necessary for innovation, instead of displaying the presumed anxiety or inhibition when faced with the possibility of moving beyond the parameters espoused as linguistic perfection by those who create and maintain societal norms.

### Different Standards

If the second scenario is to be considered the case, then perhaps the informants in the middle groups were following the expected norm just as the literature predicts, but they were simply adhering to a different set of standards as their ideal than those who are considered to be authorities on Spanish language issues in general. It may be, then, that those in the mid-age categories displayed predictable patterns of usage as they entangled themselves in all that was entailed in what they perceived to be the pressure to conform, but that this pressure in their community of speakers was at a point where the use of the present subjunctive mood co-varied as a prestige form with the present indicative following *no saber si*. Their present subjunctive use, thus, would form part of the compliance with the usage expected of them, not just permitting them to use what generally has been considered the non-traditional form but requiring them to do so in order to accommodate to general societal expectations. To go one step further, it is even possible that this group of speakers may not have acquired the mood choice parameters which determine what

much of Latin American calls standard. They might have been adhering to what has been both instituted and authenticated for them as the norm by measuring their linguistic behavior against what seemed to them to be the most available of gauges, when for Spanish speakers at large the scale was essentially a different one.

### Contact

Connected to this argument two other possibilities for the stronger present subjunctive production displayed by the 26 to 35 year olds, as well as those in the 36 to 55 year old category. It could be that the members of this group were among those who had experienced more extensive contact with the use of the present subjunctive following *no saber si*, either due to its extended use during their life span or because of greater amounts of exposure in the particular professional contexts in which they had participated regularly for a longer period of time than younger speakers. Also, the fact that it was unlikely that the respondents in these mid-groups received any formal instruction which indicated that only the present indicative was to be used following *no saber si* could have afforded them more freedom of choice than was the case with the younger speakers, especially if the younger informants had been recently exposed to some consciousness-raising activities dealing with mood selection and use.

### Mid-Range Groups

Several other points dealing with age-related issues apparent from the results chapter should also be discussed further since they help to clarify the overall pattern of difference displayed by the mid-range categories of informants (26 to 55 year olds). First,

although those informants in these groups produced more non-traditional verb responses than those in the youngest and oldest groups, it would be difficult to argue successfully that the actual responses which they furnished were different in any substantive way from those of the other age groups, except in the quantity supplied. There were, however, several points which, though not widespread enough to be considered more than minor patterns, set informants in the 26 to 55 year old groups apart from other participants, and helped to solidify their position as innovators.

### Atypical Verb Choices

First, in Part I, informants in these two categories were more prone to use verbs in their responses which were outside the range of the typical overall set of choices. For instance, participants from this age range were more apt than those in the younger and older groups to supply a response for item 1 which had nothing to do with tripping or falling, when the drawing is obviously portraying a woman falling up a flight of stairs. In Part II, informants from this group were also more likely to diverge in their verb choices. Some of these changes were carried out merely by the substitution of a synonym for the verb in the first component of the adjacency pair. Others stemmed from the choice of a completely different verb, but, of course, one which made sense in the context of the sentence. The following provide illustrations of typical use of synonyms and/or choices of verbs which carried a slightly different meaning:

*Hombre: ¿Cuándo vuelven de Chilpancingo?*

**Man: When will they/you return from Chilpancingo?**

*Mujer: No sé si regresen pasado mañana o el domingo.*

**Woman: I don't know whether they will return day after tomorrow or on Sunday.**

(Part II, item 1a)

*Mujer #1: ¿Salen a las ocho?*

**Woman: Are they/you leaving at eight o'clock?**

*Niña: No sé si me vaya tan temprano.*

**I don't know whether I will go so early.**

(Part II, item 2a)

*Mujer #1: Así es. ¿No sabes si se alojan por aquí?*

**Woman #1: That's right. Don't you know whether they/you are staying around here?**

*Mujer #2: No sé por seguro si nos hospedemos aquí en el pueblo, pero lo dudo.*

**Woman #2: I don't know for sure whether we will stay here in town, but I doubt it.**

(Part II, item 2b).

### Use of Infinitives

A second pattern in the responses of these two groups which served to distance their verb production from that of the youngest informants was their use of more infinitives. Here they were joined by the oldest group of participants in what Moreno de Alba (1975, 1978) claims is an expression which is meant to be more indecisive or hesitant than doubtful, and which Vargas Barón (1988) offers as option to present indicative instead of providing present subjunctive as a possibility. In the case of the informants in this sample who produced the majority of the infinitives, the indecisiveness explanation seems most plausible. In the following responses which are typical of the examples of infinitives used by informants except for those in the youngest group, one sees the vacillation between which day to make a trip and the hesitancy expressed concerning what women do when they go to church:

*No sé si ir (viajar) mañana o el martes.*

**I don't know whether to go (to travel) tomorrow or on Tuesday.**

(Part II, item 5)

*Las señoras de la iglesia no saben si rezar a la Virgen o a los santos o a Dios (ponerse a rezar o platicar) (reír o llorar).*

**The women of the church don't know whether to pray to the Virgin or to the**

saints or to God (to get on with the task of praying or chat) (to laugh or to cry).  
(Part III, item 1)

### Elaboration

Another tendency toward distinctive usage exhibited by both the 26 to 35 year old and the 36 to 55 year old informants was their addition of an occasional elaboration, of the inclusion of additional words and phrases to the responses which they supplied in Part II of the questionnaire. Generally, the pattern for the youngest and oldest groups was to make only rare any contributions outside the range of the basic verb or verb phrase. Male respondents, especially, tended not to veer from this common pattern. For instance, in the case of the examples cited from Part II, items 3 and 6, the addition of a prepositional phrase provided extra information about the time reference in the dialogue or concerning the people to whom the original question referred. Item 5 projects what appears to be the informant's reaction to the proposed travel plans. Item 8 serves as another example, this time with the respondent adding a modal to the verb which he chose for the response and also clarifying somewhat what had happened prior to the conversation by adding a phrase. In item 10, the addition converts the expected verb into an auxiliary to accompany a present participle.

*Pues, no sé si te lo pueda contar en este momento porque acabo de llegar.*  
Well, I don't know whether I can tell it to you right now because I've just arrived. (item 3)

*No sé si vaya tan lejos mañana o el martes.*  
I don't know whether I'll go so far tomorrow or on Tuesday. (item 5)

*No, no sé si los tienen con ellos allí o en la iglesia.*  
No, I don't know whether they have them with them there or in the church. (item 6)

*¡No sé si te lo pueda perdonar nunca por algo tan grave!*  
I don't know whether I will ever be able to forgive you for something so serious! (item 8)

*No sé si está trabajando en la cuarta o en la sexta.*  
**I don't know whether he is working on the fourth or the sixth (floor). (item 10)**

### Weaknesses in the Study

If the strength of support provided by the questionnaire data both in relation to these age-related concerns and to those dealing with gender issues is to be assessed both fairly and accurately, then any apparent weaknesses or defects in the study methodology and procedures, both obvious and potential must be evaluated. In appraising the limitations which are indisputably present in this study, it seems most expedient to begin by signaling the drawbacks which are inherent in any data which have been produced from responses obtained from written questionnaires. In addition to the gap between the natural and the contrived which accompanies any set of elicited responses and which is very difficult to close completely, a request for written responses provides informants the time to monitor, rethink, and reword, a latitude largely absent from spoken language. It is possible also that, although every effort was made to avoid any emphasis on grammar, and although most if not all the informants were in all likelihood unaware that they were dealing with mood contrasts, any written questionnaire brings with it some hint of the academic, or at least of a certain amount of focus on care in language usage. It is even possible, though presumably unlikely, that some informants were intimidated by the format of the questionnaire and responded by some form of hypercorrection of the language which they normally would have employed in the settings in which they were asked to communicate. Another related caveat which should be noted here concerns the fact that the conditions under which the data were gathered precluded subjects interacting directly with each other. Had this been the case, there might possibly have been an effect of the



informant's conversation partner's mood choice on her/his own preferences.

A second restriction on questionnaire results which should be taken into account is found in the fact that two of the three sections of the questionnaire (Part I and Part III) were made up of essentially disconnected discourse, thus enhancing the difficulty of creating any kind of valid framework for the utterances which were produced. If this framework is not properly established, then the nature of task created by its absence might, at least to some extent, affect mood fluctuation. Although this same open-ended format satisfied to a certain extent the criticism which has often been made concerning past mood choice research that informants are merely asked to select among options, not to provide responses using their own language, the problem of no continuous context still remains. Even in Part II where there was a more well-developed framework surrounding the mood choice slots, the amount of context provided was minimal. Longer stretches of discourse would allow for more close evaluation of the overall use of mood and the choices which operated behind its use.

Along this same line, another set of potential difficulties arises from the constraints imposed by the specifics of the instrument which was used for data collection. Despite efforts to the contrary, the drawings in Part I might have limited flexibility of informant response more than was desirable. The assistance and/or support which they provided in order to facilitate both a more rapid and a less threatening response pattern might have been achieved at the expense of some degree of participant freedom. Since more unfilled slots, erasures, and changes in original responses were found in Part II than in either of the other sections, it appears that, despite the efforts to provide more natural language dialogues, some of the items seemed to have been confusing or at least to have required

more analysis than was desirable in order to create a response. Whether due to insufficient context, to the move from one topic to another, or to the dialogue/conversation format, overall, informants seemed less capable of responding as spontaneously as they did in the other two questionnaire sections. If informants must struggle to formulate what they consider to be acceptable responses, those which they produce may be less typical of their normal language patterns than is desirable, though at the same time this grappling for responses which seem germane to the dialogue may have created a positive de-emphasis on grammatical concerns. Whether this drawback affected informants' mood choice in any significant way cannot finally be determined.

The relatively small size of the sample and the fact that it was not random should be cited as a fourth weakness in the study. Despite the fact that the number of informants in the study was much larger than that found in most of the previous studies on mood choice reported in the literature, it still remains a convenience sample which wants for data from a wider range of participants. The fact that so much variation was demonstrated in the results which were obtained from the questionnaire responses, both in the entire sample and among the responses of individual informants adds another dimension to the size-of-sample problem at the same time that it upholds the original thesis. It is necessary to acknowledge that, while these results identify the presence of significant mood choice fluctuation, they also should be recognized as an indication that choices made in completing this particular set of responses on this one occasion might be quite different in another setting at another time. In other words, both the sample type and size restrict the generalizability of the results.

Another consideration which also should be brought into any discussion of

limitations of questionnaire results is the fact that no concerted effort was made to sustain a geographic balance among participants, either in terms of inclusion of informants from all parts of the Mexican Republic, from both urban and rural areas in México, or from the other parts of Latin American where some variation in mood choice after *no saber si* has been demonstrated. This being the case, the generalization power of the results must necessarily be diminished in a similar way to that of the small, convenience sample. At best, results of this research can be expected to address only certain groups in the Mexican population. Also, since some of the questionnaires were administered to established groups who met together from time to time, it is possible that some of the informants not only knew each other quite well, but also might have displayed some of the predicted effects of networking (Milroy and Milroy, 1985) which could not be moderated as the data collection method was set up. It would be difficult to claim with any reasonable certainty that at least some degree of undesirable homogeneity of respondents did not exist. In addition, there could have even been some potential effect of the group setting itself as opposed to individual, private sessions for questionnaire completion.

Three remaining concerns which deal with omissions in the study should be noted before leaving the topic of weaknesses. First, that educational levels were not taken into account could be another vulnerable point in the study. There was no attempt made to venture from the high school graduate/some college work group represented by most of the informants here to involve respondents with fewer years of instruction. Second, the need to account for the use of infinitives and non-verb responses should have been addressed from the outset, and questionnaire items which lent themselves to these types of constructions should probably have been eliminated. Third, narrower sets of age divisions

might have produced a more accurate picture of age-related mood choice and use. Specifically, the 26 to 35 and 36 to 55 year old categories may have been too broad to provide as clear an indication as was desirable of precisely who produced the greatest percentage of present subjunctive mood usages. Likewise, the oldest age grouping, informants who were over 55 years old, was too all-encompassing to provide clear indications of those who made up this category. As suggested by Hamilton (1992), a final age-related problem which should be mentioned is that of the inaccuracies inherent in situating informants in particular categories solely on the basis of chronology.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the general information gleaned from the questionnaire results indicated that the division of production between the present subjunctive and the present indicative moods reported in the analysis of the data was in keeping with most of the information available in the literature on mood choice, confirming the predictably strong position of the present indicative in the entire data sample. Both genders chose this mood when the ideas being expressed seemed to preclude doubt (Lavandera, 1975) or when the emphasis which was being carried out was obviously that of a simple portrayal of reality (Ocampo, 1990; Blake, 1985). Also, in keeping with patterns predicted in much of the previous research on mood choice, male informants added to this emphasis on certainty their pattern of present indicative use when their response pattern required that the mood chosen emphasize knowledge and information, when they required a means for revealing their plan to express what was their specific view of reality (De la Puente-Schubeck, 1991; Mejías-Bikandi, 1994). Female informants added yet another dimension to present

indicative mood use. They chose to express in the present indicative mood what they perceived to be unshared information (Guitart, 1982), information which they did not believe that their interlocutor(s) knew from past experiences or could be expected to abstract from the rest of the immediate discourse.

In terms of present subjunctive mood production in the study, female informants consistently led males in quantity and in variety of potential explanation for the use of these verb forms. Male informants' preferences for present subjunctive use centered around the doubt-uncertainty-insecurity trilogy often considered at the heart of present subjunctive production. Female respondents, on the other hand, demonstrated present subjunctive choices in a variety of non-information bearing contexts ranging from basic affiliative efforts to assertions of shared background knowledge and assumptions of experiential commonality.

In essence, females throughout the age groups represented in this sample seemed to have developed their own directions of discernment and paths of linguistic discrimination, whether because of less preoccupation with the hazards associated with a non-conformist position; because of efforts to gain and/or maintain the prestige habitually identified with their speech, this time through the dispersing of what might perhaps be a community-generated norm, with community being defined as the country as opposed to the standard mood use for all of Latin America; because of their part in the overall endeavor to create something distinctively female; or because of a combination of all of these.

Because male informants, in general, adhered to the information-bearing role so tightly, their responses were less prone toward the deferential, consequently displaying little or no cushioning of what might be perceived as overly candid or explicit. Whether

this forthrightness stemmed from less interest in the overall success of the communication than was demonstrated by females in the sample is arguable, though definitely a possibility. In addition, male informants in all the age categories which were addressed in the sample customarily demonstrated themselves to be, as often depicted in the literature, the confident purveyors of factual information. However, while it would have been generally assumed that males are more apt to veer from the prestige variant than females in their same speech community, this group of male informants moved outside the parameters of the patterns set up for them when they showed themselves to be less accepting of change in terms of modal use than the female participants in the sample.

Age-related conclusions which emerged from the study were inconsistent with many of the predicted outcomes and expectations for linguistic performance found in the previous research. This deviation primarily centered around the fact that youngest speakers, those in the 18 to 25 year old range, were less frequent in their production of present subjunctive verbs than those in the two middle categories. Most of the linguistic behavior which might be termed either innovative or unorthodox by those who maintain the strictest standards of uniformity appeared in the speech of informants between the ages of 26 and 55.

In summary, the results presented and discussed in the preceding chapters made clear that the relationships exhibited in the questionnaire data supported two of the three initially proposed hypotheses dealing with mood alternation and use. First, they substantiated the overarching hypothesis that variation in mood choice exists in Mexican Spanish and in turn upheld the more specific proposal that, when employing an indirect question construction containing *no saber si*, Mexican speakers use the present subjunctive

mood in some cases and the present indicative in others. Analyses of results also validated the second hypothesis by confirming the existence of disparate patterns of mood choice based upon gender divisions, finding this covariation in the speech of both genders of all four of the age groups of Mexican Spanish speakers included in the data pool. Significant differences appeared in female and male configurations of mood choices and usage, as female speakers consistently used more present subjunctive mood verbs than did male informants in contexts where prescriptive grammar predicts that the present indicative mood must appear. Finally, reported results supported the first part of the third hypothesis, as they pointed to dissimilarities in mood choice and usage for the different age groups of Mexican Spanish speakers who participated in the study. However, the data collected in the questionnaires did not uphold the contention that youngest speakers produce more non-traditional variants following *no saber si*. Instead, speakers in the two middle groups, 26 to 35 year olds, followed by those in the 36 to 55 year old group, used slightly more present subjunctive mood verbs in previously present indicative-dominated contexts.

## CHAPTER VII

## CONCLUSION

Throughout the Twentieth Century, serious scholars and researchers have been concerned with examinations of the processes underlying mood choice and use in Spanish. The predominant philosophy which has undergirded most of these efforts has been that of necessary maintenance of a standard dictated by grammarians who based their explanations and decrees upon prescriptive notions and idealizations rather than descriptive portrayals of language as it is and has been used in natural interactions. Consequently, instances of variation found in ordinary speech have been generally labeled as some type of inexplicable deviation, as one of those anomalous irregularities which must surely appear in all languages from time to time. Much of this body of research, then, does not present in-depth analyses of variation in mood choice and usage or offer more than informal characterizations of recollected or author-created examples.

The central question addressed in this study, mood selection following the conjunction *si* (**if/whether**) and/or *no saber si* (**not to know if/whether**), has been typically treated in the most perfunctory of ways. In the few cases where the question of why the present subjunctive seemed to be chosen in lieu of the present indicative in a certain context was investigated in a more serious fashion, reports of research remained within the realm of either qualitative descriptions or quantitative studies based upon samples so small as to eliminate any possible generalizability. The issues of any gender-or age-related associations with mood alternations in Spanish has not been emphasized at all.

Though admittedly a limited examination of the associations which exist between



mood choice and age and mood choice and gender in Spanish, the present study has demonstrated that native speaker mood selection for the group of Mexican Spanish informants included in the sample is far from consistent, that there is no automatic triggering effect which forces an invariant choice of one mood or the other, and that the present indicative mood is not obligatory following all occurrences of *no saber si* for all speakers. Consequently, it is reasonable to assert based on the relationships found in these data that, in relation to the population of Mexican Spanish speakers examined, the originally postulated submission that there is no single pattern for mood selection following *no saber si* in Mexican Spanish was qualifiedly corroborated. In addition, response patterns which confirmed that female and male speakers from this speech community, as well as individuals within the differing age groups to which participants belonged, exhibited contrasts in their mood choices and consequent usages were sufficient in number and range to sustain the contention that gender and age are allied in some way, weak though this association may be, with the processes of mood selection. Clearly illustrated also in the questionnaire responses were patterns of variation in mood choice which occurred not just from speaker to speaker, but also within the speech production of individual informants.

In attempting to reconcile through analysis of the data gathered in this study the traditionally accepted standard version of the mood choice process following *no saber si* in Mexican Spanish with what appears to be the reality demonstrated for a group of speakers from this speech population and to move toward the evolution of a more coherent model of mood selection based on more than qualitative description, one first must decide whether to accept or reject at least two basic points of divergence. First, the question of whether, in general, the value which speakers incorporate into their overall schema for successful

communication centers around acceptability of usage (Lakoff, 1986) or upon uncompromising applications of grammatical decrees must be evaluated. In addition, the supposition that exclusiveness of language usage is an adequate portrayal of linguistic reality must be weighed against the position that rigid absolutes are not only questionable but undoubtedly an inadequate depiction of reality.

It would seem credible to argue when raising the issue of mood selection that from an examination of the relationships based on the evidence accumulated from the results of the present study, the contention that communication is the dominant focus of language choices and usage is the most compatible choice. It is difficult to argue from responses supplied in a questionnaire format that informants focused their attention solely or even primarily upon issues of communication and the conveyance of an intended message without being accused of forcing the data to fit specific biases. However, it seems reasonable to assume that the series of interacting processes at work in constructing the replies found in this data sample were not centered fundamentally around concerns of grammar and structure. In raising the issue of exclusivity, the argument which can be made against the assertion of invariance seems much stronger. Here there can be little room for accusation of overly subjective judgments since the facts demonstrated in the results of this study illustrated that variation was indeed at work. The commonly reported one-mood model of mood choice following *no saber si* cannot be sustained based on questionnaire responses, while explanations based on some version of interplay between social and linguistic factors must be regarded at least as conceivable.

At this point, if the variation which was apparent in the data sample examined in this project is to be acknowledged as meaningful or perhaps even suggestive of a trend

which is at work among Mexican Spanish speakers, a consideration of whether a conflict exists between new forms of usage and old ones, represented by the present subjunctive and the present indicative, merits exploration. Despite the indisputable alternations in mood choice which were demonstrated repeatedly in the questionnaire responses, there seemed to be little evidence of any clear-cut clash between the two moods, of any pivotal opposition which could lead to more than cautious speculations as to precisely why so many present subjunctive mood verbs appeared in contexts traditionally assumed to require the present indicative if speakers were to communicate adequately their thoughts and ideas. What does seem reasonable to maintain is that the verb *saber* (to know) serves as a major factor influencing the selection processes. The overall set of questionnaire responses provided the impression that there might be somewhat of a silent accord that *saber* occasioned an environment for exception and that some imprecise transitional areas might exist where either of the moods could possibly appear (Navas Ruiz, 1990; Sánchez, 1972). The gray areas (Klein-Andreu, 1995) where much wavering seemed to occur among informants' verb responses appeared to be more typical of the data examined than any definitive breach between the two moods or any sort of assurance of specific usage of either the present subjunctive or the present indicative.

In exploring the more specific concerns in the research described in this study which dealt with possible reasons for the overall differences between the use of the present indicative mood and the present subjunctive mood found in the data, it seems that since the use of *no saber si* and specifically *No sé si* constitute indirect questions (Fernández Alvarez, 1987), then they are likely to become or to have become already a means of denoting present subjunctive-linked doubt, uncertainty, indecision, reservation, and

vacillation in many contexts. Consequently, if a prompt for moving modal verb usage from the realm of exclusive present indicative mood use into a joint domain shared by the present subjunctive were to arise in natural language usage, it should not be surprising that the *no saber si* environment would be an initial or even the principal locus of this phenomenon.

In relation to the issue of gender and mood use, several specific claims as to why the presumed relationship between the two exists also seemed sustainable based on the data. First, it is possible that the contrasting concepts of what constitutes an appropriate manner of presenting and dealing with conversational information perceived by female and male informants may hold the key to at least some portion of an explanation of their differences in approach to mood choice and usage in Mexican Spanish, though one must bear in mind that perceived patterns of female and male mood production are primarily “differences of degrees” (Weatherall, 1998, p. 10) rather than unequivocal constructs, especially given the gender role modifications potentially at work in influencing contemporary language choices within the Mexican culture. In the sample being evaluated in this study, female informants seemed to place less emphasis on providing their conversational partners with specific items of information and accordingly to feel more at ease than male informants with shifts to the present subjunctive mood and its associations of uncertainty, emotion, and general affect. One can speculate from the data gathered in the questionnaire that when females made choices as to whether to use the present subjunctive or the present indicative mood, they leaned toward the present subjunctive more frequently than males in contexts where its use might imply cooperation or commonality or help to establish or authenticate some type of sharing, many times

preferring to leave their male counterparts with the burden of presenting through present indicative use any exposition of facts which might be appropriate to the context. Whether females were functioning in their predicted role of preserving relationships (Aikio, 1995), or shunning any “discursive burden” (Lavandera, 1983), it is not incomprehensible that they should choose to accomplish their task by means of opting for the more affectively associated variant.

Second, when addressing the question of general trends dealing with mood choice and gender, the question of linguistic conservatism must be addressed. Trends which emerged from the overall data sample did not sustain the position that female informants demonstrate the linguistic conservatism predicted by most of the scholars who have studied their patterns of usage in the past. Evidence here supported the early-established, but little-extolled tendency of females to lead in innovation (Gauchat, 1905), leaning toward a portrayal of female informants as cooperative conversational partners who were more susceptible to linguistic variation and consequently more apt to choose the present subjunctive mood in a new context than were the male informants in the sample.

In general, linguistic conservatism has been assumed to be linked tightly to the use of the present indicative mood. It is possible, though certainly based more upon conjecture than quantitative evidence, that a present indicative choice might not automatically signal the conservative variant. Instead, the conservative choice, if one truly exists, might have moved from the realm of dominant present indicative preference either toward a position of equality between the two moods or toward the dispreferred position. Were either of these possibilities the case, then perhaps female informants in this sample did not discount what they had been taught, as might have been assumed, in contexts where they produced more

tokens of the present subjunctive than the present indicative. It is at least worth questioning whether the prestige variant could have been represented by the present subjunctive within their community of Mexican Spanish speakers.

Before reflecting further on conceivable motivations behind male patterns of mood use, it seems important to re-emphasize the information supplied earlier that, although male participants did indeed lag behind females in unorthodox production of present subjunctive verb forms, nevertheless their subjunctive contributions played a meaningful role in the overall use of the present subjunctive following the *no saber si* construction. Although there was no evidence for males producing vast amounts of language which could be deemed less than traditional, they did on many occasions displace the standard present indicative form with the innovative present subjunctive variant, if the present subjunctive following *no saber si* is always to be termed innovative. It should be recognized that male contributions to the present subjunctive response pool helped to strengthen the assertion that significant variation in mood choice is a reality for this group of Mexican Spanish speakers.

The overall linguistic behavior of the males in the study, then, though important in corroborating the hypothesis that variation in mood use following *no saber si* is an unexceptional occurrence in Mexican Spanish, tended to hold fast to what has generally been the accepted trend for mood use following *no saber si*, serving as bearers of the discursive burden avoided by females of providing information and of delivering facts. Their more invariant position in terms of mood alternations placed male informants' preferences solidly in the realm of introducing new information and of providing support for their assertions. They did not seem to see themselves as shouldering responsibility

either for any attitudinal comments, qualifying remarks, or affiliative markers which might have linked them more securely to any affective-present subjunctive association. If indeed the present subjunctive mood is used to demonstrate that heavy reliance should not be placed on the information value of the content of one's statement (Lavandera, 1983), then it should be expected that when the male informants in the study operated within the parameters of their expected speech patterns (Tannen, 1992) they would find themselves more comfortable remaining faithful to the prescriptive model of present subjunctive/present indicative use.

In dealing specifically with the question of age and mood selection, the most convincing evidence points toward the existence of age-graded groups of speakers in the middle range of the divisions set up in this study who produced the greatest numbers of present subjunctive verb responses as fundamental to understanding the mood choice-age association. That these mid-range groups led in present subjunctive production ran contrary to the hypothesis originally suggested for the study that younger speakers would provide the greatest number of present subjunctive tokens. In speculating as to what motivated higher usage of the present subjunctive mood by informants in age categories which generally are considered to display less innovative linguistic production, to cling to the status quo, and even to be precisely positioned at the peak of their personal linguistic conservatism, several possibilities seem feasible. First, for these particular informants, the use of the present subjunctive mood following *no saber si* might have simply been an acquired variant, one which they had used consistently throughout their lives. A second possibility is that the present subjunctive following *no saber si* might have come to serve as a co-prestige variant for their community, that age-related mood choice following *no saber*

*si* was status neutral, that it did not carry with it any particular virtue or fault, nor was it likely to serve to reduce or increase esteem in social contexts. A third possibility for the perceived non-traditional stance of the informants in the mid-ranges might be found in the fact that the social roles incumbent upon these participants simply did not seem to impel them toward a need for any particular linguistic precision, if the exclusive use of the present indicative mood following *no saber si* can be defined as such.

In seeking to determine how this study might supply information, insights, or observations which have not been readily available in past research and which might serve as both a starting point for revising past foundations, and as initiative for future inquiries, perhaps it is useful to examine more carefully the question of prestige which has surfaced in relation to both gender and age-related mood choice and usage. Future possibilities for research in this area include examinations of whether a prestige variant, which seems to be the case in most of Latin America, remains in place in Mexican Spanish, and if so, which of the two moods best fulfills this role. Also included here is a possible examination of whether the present subjunctive and the present indicative moods might exist as co-prestige forms for the Mexican Spanish-speaking community.

Second, an analysis of the data in this study clearly points to the need for clarification among researchers of several concepts, especially of the notion of what precisely delimits the term “conservative,” and of the abstraction which is commonly termed “mood choice.” A clarification of whether “conservative” usage must parallel what those with authority to impose linguistic models term “standard” should be seriously considered. The issue of whether mood choice in reality reflects two opposing parts of a paradigm or many points along a continuum probably cannot be definitively resolved, but



more explicitly directed efforts to deal with the question should be undertaken.

There is ample room also for further research on the issue of the mood choice and gender connection in general, as well as the precise process of mood selection and gender associated with the *no saber si* construction. A few of the assuredly many specific issues which merit additional consideration surfaced during the study. If one is to accept that female members of the Mexican Spanish-speaking community are moving away from the stringent requirements set down for their behavior in other areas, and that rather than “strident confrontation” (Heusinkveld, 1994, pp. 46-47), they favor less overt manners of asserting the value of their gender, then gender-driven linguistic production in other areas than pronunciation needs to be examined in more depth. Basing gender- and/or age-related assumptions concerning other areas of language production on past studies which have dealt almost exclusively with phonology as their primary focus provides helpful insights into potential connections, but does not offer as complete a basis for comparison as would research into broader sets of usage patterns.

Studies which take into account problems associated with polarization (Weatherall, 1998) in a more comprehensive manner and which make a greater effort to begin to examine the gender-mood association with fewer preconceived ideas, regardless of what traditional grammarians have postulated, are also vital to developing a broad, more equilibrated picture. In addition, studies which situate the gender-mood linking in a discourse-centered context of analysis rather than dwelling on sentence-level examinations along with those which explore the potential for different findings due to different interactional settings, both female-male and single-gender, might be investigated as well. Also, studies which provide more empirical data dealing with gender and language

production, and specifically with gender and mood selection are necessary not only so that the issue of replicability be satisfied, but also in order that the rather incomprehensible portrait developed from commonly reported qualitative studies be reconciled with statistical realities.

Several other areas which warrant future research also emerged from an analysis of the data. Avoidance of present subjunctive or present indicative mood use altogether (use of the infinitive) following the *No sé si* construction is a factor whose influence should be studied as part of the interacting processes of mood alternation. Larger samples taken randomly from the Mexican population should be examined, especially in relation to age divisions and mood choice and production. The question of whether particular verbs might tend to be used more frequently in the present subjunctive mood should also be explored when a larger corpus is accessible. Still other issues which should be considered are the contrasts between the use of present subjunctive and future indicative and the issue of mood use and flexibility in word order, whether the present subjunctive or the present indicative appears to be the more adaptable mood. It also seems appropriate to conjecture that for this group of Spanish speakers complex interrelationships, both linguistic and extralinguistic, were at work and that these associations must continue to be addressed if mood choice is to be more fully understood. Finally, the pedagogical implications of any assumption that mood choice is unquestionably governed by exceptionless rules are certainly open to review.

In conclusion, Labov (1972) points out that the infrequent use of some grammatical constructions in natural conversation creates obstacles which are often quite difficult to overcome in serious efforts to examine and analyze their use in natural language. If one

considers how few instances of *no saber si* generally occur in daily speech, taking the *norma culta* data as an example, it is not surprising that alternation in mood choice patterns following the construction might not be readily noticed, or, if they are observed, why they are many times considered unimportant. This study has attempted to raise the consciousness of those who are interested in research in the area of mood choice and usage as to the important role which this construction carries out in the delicate balance established between the two moods in Mexican Spanish, and especially to stress the vital association of the *no saber si* construction with variation in mood selection and the consistent appearance of the present subjunctive mood in previously considered exclusive or almost-exclusive present indicative contexts. The fact that the occurrence of use of present subjunctive verb forms following *no saber si* was documented so frequently among the group of informants participating in this research effort, and that both gender and age-related associations were shown to be viable earns recognition if not acceptance of the phenomenon, whether its advent and/or expansion constitutes a change which has been and is occurring in the speech of Mexican Spanish speakers or whether, rather than any type of change, the fluctuations in usage stem from the application of a series of variable rules.

Bartoš (1983) insists that any analysis of language production, especially when the language being considered is Spanish, must be approached by recognizing that it is the outcome of the interplay of both internal and external motivations which induces variation (p. 29) and bring about an “*aplebeyamiento*” (vernacularizing) (p. 31) of language structures which in turn tends to permeate the speech of those who are exposed to such influences. Whether one chooses to accept that the production of both the present subjunctive and the present indicative moods following *no saber si* among the group of

Mexican informants who participated in this research effort is an example of this process or even of Studerus' (1981) image of a twilight zone where concurrent usages are not only possible but expected, the puzzle of mood choice following *no saber si* seems less overwhelming after having examined the responses which they provided. Certainly the processes involved as well as the outcomes of mood variation, may continue to perplex but should seem somewhat less obscure to those interested in gaining an increased understanding of how mood selection interacts with social phenomena. The co-occurrence of present subjunctive alongside present indicative can no longer be judged to be simply and solely a superficial modification of traditional, standard usage, but rather must be recognized as a substantial expansion of possibilities for communicative expression.

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## Appendix A

Examples of Present Subjunctive Use Found in *Telenovelas*

1. *No sé si me dé miedo. (De frente al sol)*

**I don't know whether it will frighten me.**

2. *No sé si pueda hacerlo. (Valeria y Maximiliano)*

**I don't know whether I can do it.**

3. *No sé si sea mucho que pedir. (Los parientes pobres)*

**I don't know whether it's a lot to ask.**

4. *No sé si me convenga que las deje solas. (Los parientes pobres)*

**I don't know whether it's a good idea to leave them alone.**

5. *No sé si a Ud. le parezca. (Los parientes pobres)*

**I don't know whether it seems appropriate to you.**

6. *No sé si sirva de algo. (Valeria y Maximiliano)*

**I don't know whether it's useful.**

7. *No sé si pueda conformarme con sólo tenerlo cerca. (De frente al sol)*

**I don't know whether I can be satisfied with just having him nearby.**

8. *Aunque no sé si hagas bien en seguir enamorada de él . . .*

*(De frente al sol)*

**Although I don't know whether you're doing the right thing by continuing to be in love with him . . .**

9. *No sé si pueda aguantarlo. (Lazos de amor)*

**I don't know whether I can stand it.**

10. *No sé si tenga las ganas. (Valeria y Maximiliano)*

**I don't know whether I feel like it.**

11. *No sé si me necesitan. (De frente al sol)*

**I don't know whether they need me.**

12. *No sé si quiera perjudicarnos. (Valeria y Maximiliano)*

**I don't know whether he wants to cause us harm.**

13. *No sé si aparezca por aquí. (Lazos de amor)*

**I don't know whether it will turn up around here.**

## Appendix B

## Pilot Study Questionnaire and Translation

Edad \_\_\_\_\_ Sexo \_\_\_\_\_  
 Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

## I. Complete en español:

1. Yo iré al centro mañana si \_\_\_\_\_  
**I will go to town tomorrow if**
2. Puede ser que lleguen hoy si \_\_\_\_\_  
**They may arrive today if**
3. No sabemos si ellos \_\_\_\_\_  
**We don't know whether they**
4. Vamos a comprar estos zapatos si \_\_\_\_\_  
**We are going to buy these shoes if**
5. Sé que tú me vas a ayudar si \_\_\_\_\_  
**I know that you are going to help me if**
6. Él no sabe si Ud. \_\_\_\_\_  
**He doesn't know whether you**
7. Te voy a llamar si \_\_\_\_\_  
**I'm going to call you if**
8. No sé si \_\_\_\_\_  
**I don't know whether**
9. Los terminarmeos hoy si \_\_\_\_\_  
**We will finish them today if**
10. Ellos quieren saber si ella \_\_\_\_\_  
**They want to know whether she**
11. Quién sabe si tú me \_\_\_\_\_  
**Who knows whether you . . . me**
12. No se sabe si todos \_\_\_\_\_  
**It isn't known whether everyone**
13. Vendré esta noche si \_\_\_\_\_  
**I will come tonight if**
14. Sepa Dios si Uds. \_\_\_\_\_  
**God knows whether you (plural)**
15. Nadie sabe si esos niños \_\_\_\_\_  
**No one knows whether those children**

II. Complete en español según los dibujos:

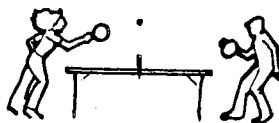
1. No sé si la señorita \_\_\_\_\_  
**I don't know whether the woman**



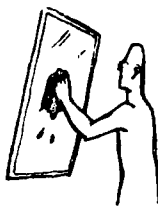
2. No se sabe si el señor \_\_\_\_\_  
**It isn't known whether the man**



3. Su mamá no sabe si la muchacha \_\_\_\_\_  
**Her mother doesn't know whether the girl**



4. No limpiará el espejo si \_\_\_\_\_  
**He won't clean the mirror if**



5. No hay nadie que sepa si el arquero \_\_\_\_\_  
**There isn't anyone who know whether the archer**



6. Francamente, yo no sé si él \_\_\_\_\_  
 Frankly, I don't know whether he



7. El pobre no sabe si su auto \_\_\_\_\_  
 The poor man doesn't know whether his car



8. Comprará otro globo si \_\_\_\_\_  
 He will buy another baloon if



9. El señor no sabe si \_\_\_\_\_  
 The man doesn't know whether



10. Quién sabe si el preso \_\_\_\_\_  
 Who knows whether the prisoner



## Appendix C

## Samples of Present Subjunctive Responses from Pilot Study #1 Questionnaire

## Part I:

1. *No sabemos si vuelvan a hacerlo.* (#3)  
We don't know whether they will do it again.
2. *Él no sabe si Ud. entienda.* (#6)  
He doesn't know whether you will understand.
3. *No sé si consiga lo que quiere.* (#8)  
I don't know whether she will get what she wants.
4. *No se sabe si todos lo acepten.* (#12)  
One can't know whether everyone will accept it.
5. *Nadie sabe si esos niños sepan lo que hacen.* (#15)  
No one know whether those children know what they're doing.

## Part II:

1. *No sé si la señorita abra o cierre la puerta.* (#1)  
I don't know whether the woman is opening or closing the door.
2. *No se sabe si el señor sea sonámbulo.* (#2)  
One can't know whether the man is a sleepwalker.
3. *No hay nadie que sepa si el arquero tenga tino.* (#5)  
There isn't anyone who knows whether the archer has good judgment.
4. *Francamente, yo no sé si él quiera comerla.* (#6)  
Frankly, I don't know whether he wants to eat it.
5. *El pobre no sabe si su auto se queme.* (#7)  
The poor man doesn't know whether his car will burn.
6. *El señor no sabe si esté soñando.* (#9)  
The man doesn't know whether he is dreaming.



## Appendix D

## Role Play and English Translation from Pilot Study #2

EDAD \_\_\_\_\_ SEXO: \_\_\_\_\_ M

AGE \_\_\_\_\_ SEX \_\_\_\_\_ F

Ud. acaba de graduarse de la universidad y solicita trabajo en una empresa internacional.

Ha sido un proceso largo y pesado de entrevistas y demoras y más entrevistas y más demoras. Finalmente, han escogido a tres aspirantes para las “entrevistas” finales. Ud. es uno/a de ellos. En vez de hablar directamente con el GRAN JEFE de la compañía, Ud. y los otros dos aplicantes tienen que contestar por escrito una serie de preguntas. El GRAN JEFE de la empresa va a leer sus respuestas y entonces decidir cuál de los tres merece más el trabajo. Todos le han dicho que el GRAN JEFE es un hombre muy extraño, y que a veces hace preguntas muy raras. También le han dicho que el GRAN JEFE no quiere que sus empleados hagan las decisiones de prisa; prefiere que vacilen un poquito, que parezcan algo indecisos. Por eso, Ud. ha decidido empezar todas sus respuestas con *No sé si . . .* y después de mostrar suficiente incertidumbre y de titubear un poco, decir lo que piensa. Recuerde que necesita empezar todas las respuestas con *No se si . . .*

**You are a recent university graduate, and you have applied for a job with a international firm. The interview process has been long and somewhat oppressive, with repeated interviews and delays. Finally, three applicants have been selected for the final “interviews.” You are one of them. Instead of speaking directly with the BIG BOSS of the firm, you and the other two candidates have to answer a series of questions in writing. The BIG BOSS of the company is going to read your answers**

and then decide which of the three of you deserves the job. Everyone has told you that the **BIG BOSS** is a strange man, and that at times he asks really bizarre questions. You have also heard that the **BIG BOSS** doesn't like for his employees to make decisions too quickly; he prefers that they vacillate that they seem to be somewhat indecisive. Therefore, you have decided to begin all your answers with *I don't know if/whether . . .*, and, after showing a little indecisiveness and faltering a bit, say what you think. Remember that you need to begin all your answers with *I don't know if/whether . . .*

**PREGUNTAS PARA LOS ASPIRANTES:  
QUESTIONS FOR THE CANDIDATES:**

- 1) ¿Puede Ud. llegar a la oficina a las 7:30 todos los días?  
**Can you arrive at work by 7:30 every day?**
- 2) ¿Trabaja Ud. bien cuando hay mucho ruido?  
**Do you work well when there is a lot of noise?**
- 3) ¿Tiene Ud. mucha paciencia?  
**Do you have a lot of patience?**
- 4) ¿Necesita Ud. una secretaria bilingüe?  
**Do you need a bilingual secretary?**
- 5) ¿Se enferma Ud. frecuentemente?  
**Do you get sick very often?**
- 6) ¿Puede Ud. llevarse bien con las mujeres mandonas?  
**Can you get along well with bossy women?**
- 7) ¿Espera Ud. ganar un sueldo muy alto?  
**Do you expect to earn a big salary?**
- 8) ¿Miente Ud. muy a menudo?  
**Do you lie very often?**

- 9) ¿Es Ud. muy egoísta?  
**Are you a very egotistical person?**
- 10) ¿Puede Ud. trabajar los sábados y los domingos?  
**Can you work Saturdays and Sundays?**
- 11) ¿Es Ud. una persona formal?  
**Are you a serious person?**
- 12) ¿Puede Ud. memorizar fácilmente?  
**Can you memorize easily?**
- 13) ¿Sabe Ud. cuando puede empezar a trabajar?  
**Do you know when you can start to work?**
- 14) ¿Merece Ud. este puesto más que los otros aspirantes?  
**Do you deserve this job more than the other candidates?**

## Appendix E

## Olivet Questionnaire, Pilot Study #3

Edad: 18-25 \_\_\_\_\_ Sexo: M \_\_\_\_\_ Lugar de  
 26-35 \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_ nacimiento: \_\_\_\_\_  
 36-55 \_\_\_\_\_  
 55+ \_\_\_\_\_ Residencia actual: \_\_\_\_\_

## I. Favor de escoger la respuesta preferida:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Es difícil saber si \_\_\_\_\_ los compadres hoy o mañana.  
 A. vienen                      B. vengán
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. No sé si te \_\_\_\_\_ ayudar en eso.  
 A. pueda                      B. puedo
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. La verdad es que no sé si \_\_\_\_\_ posible comunicarme con él.  
 A. sea                      B. es
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Ellos no saben si \_\_\_\_\_ razón.  
 A. tienen                      B. tengan
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Nadie sabe si Uds. la \_\_\_\_\_ bien.  
 A. conozcan                      B. conocen
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. ¿Quién sabe si los \_\_\_\_\_ encontrar?  
 A. podemos                      B. podamos
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Ellos me los han repetido mil veces, pero no sé si los \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. crea                      B. creo
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. No sabemos si tú la \_\_\_\_\_ de verdad.  
 A. quieras                      B. quieres

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. Ella me lo prometió, pero no sé si \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. cumple                      B. cumpla

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. Me urge hablar con él, pero no sé si \_\_\_\_\_ hasta la noche.

- A. puedo                      B. pueda

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. Estoy seguro de que él lo sabe, pero no sé si me lo \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. diga                      B. dirá

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. Aun siendo amigos no sé si ellos \_\_\_\_\_ convencerlo.

- A. logran                      B. logren

II. Favor de completar las oraciones según el dibujo:

1) Yo no sé si la señora \_\_\_\_\_.



2) ¿Quién sabe si ellos \_\_\_\_\_?



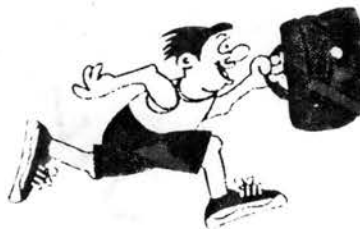
3) No sé si ese hombre \_\_\_\_\_.



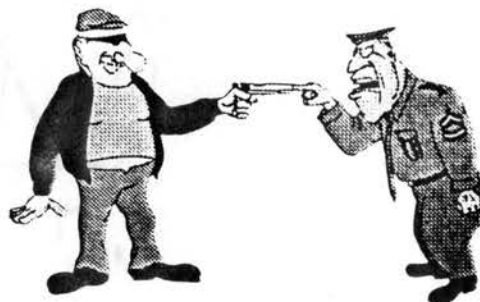
4) Es difícil saber si el detective \_\_\_\_\_.



5) No sé si el pobre señor \_\_\_\_\_.



6) Nadie sabe si ellos \_\_\_\_\_.



7) No se puede saber si el joven \_\_\_\_\_.



8) La secretaria no sabe si la \_\_\_\_\_.



## III. Favor de completar las siguientes conversaciones:

1) Hombre: ¿Cuándo vuelven de Chilpancingo?

Mujer: No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ pasado mañana o el domingo.

Hombre: ¿Sabes si traen noticias de la tía Agripina?

Mujer: No sé si las \_\_\_\_\_ porque está en Iguala.

2) Mujer #1: ¿Salen a las ocho?

Niña: No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ tan temprano.

Mujer #2: Pero, tienen que llegar antes de mediodía. ¿O no?

Mujer #1: Así es. ¿No sabes si se alojan por aquí?

Mujer #2: No sé por seguro si \_\_\_\_\_ aquí en el pueblo, pero lo dudo.

3) Hombre: ¿Me puedes explicar por qué sucedió todo eso?

Mujer: Pues, no sé si te lo \_\_\_\_\_ porque acabo de llegar.

4) Mujer #1: Fuimos a Acapulco la semana pasada y lo pasamos de maravilla.

Mujer #2: ¿Te gusta más que Ixtapa?

Mujer #1: No sé si \_\_\_\_\_, pero nos costó mucho menos.

5) Hombre #1: ¿Vas a Guadalajara mañana?

Hombre #2: No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ mañana o el martes.

6) Mujer: ¿Sabes si los tienen en casa?

Hombre: No, no sé si los \_\_\_\_\_ allí o en la iglesia.

7) Hombre #1: ¿Sabe Ud. si se venden los boletos aquí?

Hombre #2: No sé si los \_\_\_\_\_ aquí o en la oficina.

8) Esposo: ¡Dámelo!

Esposa: ¡No me pongas la mano encima o me las vas a pagar!

Esposo: ¡Estoy esperando!

Esposa: ¡No sé si te lo \_\_\_\_\_ nunca!

9) Hombre #1: ¿Están en la clínica?

Hombre #2: ¿Cuál?

Hombre #1: La de San Ignacio.

Hombre #3: No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ allá o en la del doctor Villareal.

10) Mujer #1: ¿Sabes si está en la cuarta planta?

Mujer #2: No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ en la cuarta o la sexta.

IV. Favor de completar las oraciones:

1) No sabemos si ella \_\_\_\_\_.

2) En realidad, yo no sé si mis hijos \_\_\_\_\_.

3) No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ acompañarte esta noche.

4) Nadie sabe si estos muchachos \_\_\_\_\_.

5) Ella no sabe si tú \_\_\_\_\_.

6) ¿Ganarán? No sé si \_\_\_\_\_.

7) Cuando hace tanto calor, no sé si los niños \_\_\_\_\_.

8) No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ en esa tienda.



9) El pobre hombre no sabe si su carro \_\_\_\_\_.

10) ¿Pueden llegar antes de las seis? No sabemos si \_\_\_\_\_.

11) No sé si sus vecinos \_\_\_\_\_.

12) No sabe si sus amigos \_\_\_\_\_.

**¡Muchísimas Gracias!**

## Translation of Olivet Questionnaire

Age: 18-25 \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: M \_\_\_\_\_ Place of  
 26-35 \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_ birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
 36-55 \_\_\_\_\_ Residence at the present  
 55+ \_\_\_\_\_ time: \_\_\_\_\_

## I. Please choose the preferred answer:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. It is hard to know whether . . . the *compadres* today or tomorrow.  
 A. vienen B. vengan  
 are coming (present indicative) are coming (present subjunctive)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I don't know whether . . . help you with that.  
 A. pueda B. puedo  
 I can (present subjunctive) I can (present indicative)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The truth is that I don't know whether . . . possible to get in touch with him.  
 A. sea B. es  
 it is (present subjunctive) it is (present indicative)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. They don't know whether . . . right.  
 A. tienen B. tengan  
 they are (present indicative) they are (present subjunctive)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. No one knows whether you . . . her well.  
 A. conozcan B. conocen  
 know (present subjunctive) know (present indicative)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Who knows whether . . . find them?  
 A. podemos B. podamos  
 we can (present indicative) we can (present subjunctive)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. They have repeated them to me a thousand times, but I don't know if . . . them.  
 A. crea B. creo  
 I believe (present subjunctive) I believe (present indicative)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. We don't know whether you really . . . her.  
 A. quieras B. quieres  
 love (present subjunctive) love (present indicative)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. She promised it to me, but I don't know if she . . .  
 A. cumple B. cumpla  
 will fulfill it (present indicative) will fulfill it (present subjunctive)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. It is urgent that I speak with him, but I don't know whether . . . until tonight.  
 A. puedo B. pueda  
 I can (present indicative) I can (present subjunctive)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I'm sure that he knows it, but I don't know whether . . . it to me.  
 A. diga B. dirá  
 will tell (present subjunctive) will tell (future indicative)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Even being friends I don't know whether they . . . to convince him.  
 A. logran B. logren  
 will manage (present indicative) will manage (present subjunctive)

II. Please complete the sentences according to the pictures:

- 1) I don't know if the lady
- 2) Who knows if they
- 3) I don't know if that man
- 4) It's hard to know if the detective
- 5) I don't know if the poor man
- 6) No one knows if they
- 7) It's not possible to know if the young man
- 8) The secretary doesn't know if

III. Please complete the following conversations:

- 1) Man: When are they returning from Chilpancingo?

Woman: I don't know if \_\_\_\_\_ day after tomorrow or Sunday.

Man: Do you know if they have any news about aunt Agripina?

Woman: I don't know if \_\_\_\_\_ because she is in Iguala.

- 2) Woman #1: Are they leaving at eight o'clock?

Little girl: I don't know if \_\_\_\_\_ so early.

Woman #2: But, they have to get here before noon, don't they?

Woman #1: That's right. Do you know if they're staying around here?

Woman #2: I don't know for sure if \_\_\_\_\_ here in town, but I doubt it.

- 3) Man: Can you explain to me why all that happened?

Woman: Well, I don't know if \_\_\_\_\_ it to you because I just arrived.

- 4) Woman #1: We went to Acapulco last week y we had a great time.

Woman #2: Do you like it more than Ixtapa?

Woman #1: I don't know if \_\_\_\_\_, but it cost us a lot less.

5) Man #1: Are you going to Guadalajara tomorrow?

Man #2: I don't know if \_\_\_\_\_ tomorrow or Tuesday.

6) Woman: Do you know if they have them at home?

Man: No, I don't know if \_\_\_\_\_ them there or at church.

7) Man #1: Do you know if tickets are sold here?

Man #2: I don't know if \_\_\_\_\_ them here or in the office.

8) Husband: Give it to me!

Wife: Leave me alone or you'll be sorry!

Husband: I'm waiting!

Wife: I don't know it \_\_\_\_\_ it to you ever!

9) Man #1: Are they at the clinic?

Man #2: Which one?

Man #1: San Ignacio's.

Man #2: I don't know if \_\_\_\_\_ there or at Dr. Villareal's.

10) Woman #1: Do you know if he's on the fourth floor?

Woman #2: I don't know if \_\_\_\_\_ on the fourth or the sixth.

III. Please complete the following sentences:

1. We don't know whether she
2. In reality, I don't know whether my children
3. I don't know whether . . . go with you tonight.

4. No one knows whether these boys
5. She doesn't know whether you
6. Will they win? I don't know whether
7. When it is so hot, I don't know whether the children
8. I don't know whether . . . in that store.
9. The poor man doesn't know whether his car
10. Can they arrive before six o'clock? We don't know whether
11. I don't know whether his neighbors
12. He doesn't know whether his friends

***THANK YOU VERY MUCH!***

## Appendix F

### Translation of Statement Read to Informants

The questionnaire which we would like for you to fill out is part of a study of Spanish as it is spoken in Mexico. The only purpose of this questionnaire is to solicit information connected to everyday Spanish language usage. No opinions or other personal information is necessary to complete it. The results of the questionnaire will be used only as data for a doctoral dissertation. No part of the information obtained will be used for any other purpose.

## Appendix G

## Questionnaire

Edad: 18-25 \_\_\_\_\_  
 26-35 \_\_\_\_\_  
 36-55 \_\_\_\_\_  
 55+ \_\_\_\_\_

Sexo: M \_\_\_\_\_  
 F \_\_\_\_\_

Ciudad: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Favor de completar las oraciones según el dibujo:

1) Yo no sé si la señora \_\_\_\_\_.



2) ¿Quién sabe si ellos \_\_\_\_\_?



3) No sé si ese hombre \_\_\_\_\_.



4) Es difícil saber si el detective \_\_\_\_\_.



5) No sé si el pobre señor \_\_\_\_\_.



6) Nadie sabe si ellos \_\_\_\_\_.



7) No se puede saber si el joven \_\_\_\_\_.



8) La secretaria no sabe si la \_\_\_\_\_.



II. Favor de completar las siguientes conversaciones:

1) Hombre: ¿Cuándo vuelven de Chilpancingo?



Mujer: No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ pasado mañana o el domingo.

Hombre: ¿Sabes si traen noticias de la tía Agripina?

Mujer: No sé si las \_\_\_\_\_ porque está en Iguala.

2) Mujer #1: ¿Salen a las ocho?

Niña: No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ tan temprano.

Mujer #2: Pero, tienen que llegar antes de mediodía. ¿O no?

Mujer #1: Así es. ¿No sabes si se alojan por aquí?

Mujer #2: No sé por seguro si \_\_\_\_\_ aquí en el pueblo, pero lo dudo.

3) Hombre: ¿Me puedes explicar por qué sucedió todo eso?

Mujer: Pues, no sé si te lo \_\_\_\_\_ porque acabo de llegar.

4) Mujer #1: Fuimos a Acapulco la semana pasada y lo pasamos de maravilla.

Mujer #2: ¿Te gusta más que Ixtapa?

Mujer #1: No sé si \_\_\_\_\_, pero nos costó mucho menos.

5) Hombre #1: ¿Vas a Guadalajara mañana?

Hombre #2: No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ mañana o el martes.

6) Mujer: ¿Sabes si los tienen en casa?

Hombre: No sé si los \_\_\_\_\_ allí o en la iglesia.

7) Hombre #1: ¿Sabe Ud. si se venden los boletos aquí?

Hombre #2: No sé si los \_\_\_\_\_ aquí o en la oficina.

8) Esposo: ¡Dámelo!

Esposa: ¡No me pongas la mano encima o me las vas a pagar!

Esposo: ¡Estoy esperando!

Esposa: ¡No sé si te lo \_\_\_\_\_ nunca!

9) Hombre #1: ¿Está en la clínica?

Hombre #2: ¿Cuál?

Hombre #1: La de San Ignacio.

Hombre #2: ¡No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ allá o en la del doctor Villareal.

10) Mujer #1: ¿Sabes si está en la cuarta planta?

Mujer #2: No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ en la cuarta o la sexta.

III. Favor de completar las oraciones:

1) Las señoras de la iglesia no saben si \_\_\_\_\_.

2) En realidad, yo no sé si mis hijos \_\_\_\_\_.

3) No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ acompañarte esta noche.

4) El maestro nunca sabe si sus alumnos \_\_\_\_\_.

5) Yo no sé si su carro \_\_\_\_\_.

6) Nunca sabré si \_\_\_\_\_.

7) Cuando hace tanto calor, no sé si los niños \_\_\_\_\_.

8) No sé si \_\_\_\_\_ en esa tienda.

*¡Muchísimas gracias!*

## Appendix H

## Translation of Questionnaire

Age: 18-25 \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: M \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 26-35 \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_  
 36-55 \_\_\_\_\_  
 55+ \_\_\_\_\_

## I. Please complete the sentences according to the pictures:

- 1) I don't know if/whether the woman
- 2) Who knows if/whether they
- 3) I don't know if/whether that man
- 4) It's hard to know if/whether the detective
- 5) I don't know if/whether the poor man
- 6) No one knows if/whether they
- 7) It's not possible to know if/whether the young man
- 8) The secretary doesn't know if/whether

## II. Please complete the following conversations:

- 1) Man: When are they returning from Chilpancingo?

Woman: I don't know if/whether \_\_\_\_\_ day after tomorrow or Sunday.

Man: Do you know if they have any news about aunt Agripina?

Woman: I don't know if/whether \_\_\_\_\_ because she is in Iguala.

- 2) Woman #1: Are they leaving at eight o'clock?

Little girl: I don't know if/whether \_\_\_\_\_ so early.

Woman #2: But, they have to get here before noon, don't they?

Woman #1: That's right. Do you know if they're staying around here?

Woman #2: I don't know for sure if/whether \_\_\_\_\_ here in town, but I doubt it.

3) Man: Can you explain to me why all that happened?

Woman: Well, I don't know if/whether \_\_\_\_\_ it to you because I just arrived.

4) Woman #1: We went to Acapulco last week y we had a great time.

Woman #2: Do you like it more than Ixtapa?

Woman #1: I don't know if/whether \_\_\_\_\_, but it cost us a lot less.

5) Man #1: Are you going to Guadalajara tomorrow?

Man #2: I don't know if/whether \_\_\_\_\_ tomorrow or Tuesday.

6) Woman: Do you know if they have them at home?

Man: No, I don't know if/whether \_\_\_\_\_ them there or at church.

7) Man #1: Do you know if tickets are sold here?

Man #2: I don't know if/whether \_\_\_\_\_ them here or in the office.

8) Husband: Give it to me!

Wife: Leave me alone or you'll be sorry!

Husband: I'm waiting!

Wife: I don't know if/whether \_\_\_\_\_ it to you ever!

9) Man #1: Are they at the clinic?

Man #2: Which one?

Man #1: San Ignacio's.

Man #2: I don't know if/whether \_\_\_\_\_ there or at Dr. Villareal's.

10) Woman #1: Do you know if he's on the fourth floor?

Woman #2: I don't know if/whether \_\_\_\_\_ on the fourth or the sixth.

III. Please complete the following sentences:

- 1) The women if the church don't know if/whether
- 2) In reality, I don't know if/whether my children
- 3) I don't know if/whether . . . go with you tonight.
- 4) The teacher never knows if/whether his students
- 5) I don't know if/whether his car
- 6) I'll never know if/whether
- 7) When it's so hot, I don't know if/whether the children
- 8) I don't know if/whether . . . in that store.

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH!**

## Appendix I

## Sample Subjunctive and Indicative Questionnaire Responses

## Part I:

1. *Yo no sé si la señora se vaya a tropezar.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether the woman is going to trip.**

*Yo no sé si la señora se va a caer.* (present indicative)  
**I don't know whether the woman is going to fall.**

2. *¿Quién sabe si puedan respirar?* (present subjunctive)  
**Who know whether they can breathe?**

*¿Quién sabe si caben en el elevador?* (present indicative)  
**Who knows whether they will all fit in the elevator?**

3. *No sé si ese hombre esté descansando.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether that man is resting.**

*No sé si ese hombre tiene algún problema.* (present indicative)  
**I don't know whether that man has some problem.**

4. *Es difícil saber si el detective descubra algo.* (present subjunctive)  
**It's hard to know whether the detective will discover something.**

*Es difícil saber si el detective sabe exactamente lo que busca.* (present indicative)  
**It's hard to know whether the detective knows exactly what he's looking for.**

5. *No sé si el pobre señor vea por donde va.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether the poor man sees where he is going.**

*No sé si el pobre señor va a caer al hoyo.* (present indicative)  
**I don't know whether the man is going to fall in the hole.**

6. *Nadie sabe si ellos estén asustados.* (present subjunctive)  
**No one knows whether they are frightened.**

*Nadie sabe si están perdidos.* (present indicative)  
**No one knows whether they are lost.**

7. *No se puede saber si el joven tenga pesadillas.* (present subjunctive)  
**It is not possible to know whether the young man has nightmares.**

*No se puede saber si el joven se va a asustar.* (present indicative)

**It is not possible to know whether the young man is going to be frightened.**

8. *La secretaria no sabe si la salven.* (present subjunctive)

**The secretary doesn't know whether they will save her.**

*La secretaria no sabe si la despiden.* (present indicative)

**The secretary doesn't know whether they will fire her.**

Part II:

1a. *No sé si vuelvan pasado mañana o el domingo.* (present subjunctive)

*No sé si vuelven pasado mañana o el domingo.* (present indicative)

**I don't know whether they will return day after tomorrow or on Sunday.**

1b. *No sé si las traigan porque está en Iguala.* (present subjunctive)

*No sé si las traen porque está en Iguala.* (present indicative)

**I don't know whether they will bring them because she is in Iguala.**

2a. *No sé si salgan tan temprano.* (present subjunctive)

*No sé si salen tan temprano.* (present indicative)

**I don't know whether they will leave so early.**

2b. *No sé por seguro si se alojen aquí en el pueblo, pero lo dudo.* (present subjunctive)

*No sé por seguro si se alojan aquí en el pueblo, pero lo dudo.* (present indicative)

**I don't know whether they will stay here in town, but I doubt it.**

3. *Pues, no sé si te lo pueda explicar porque acabo de llegar.* (present subjunctive)

*Pues, no sé si te lo puedo explicar porque acabo de llegar.* (present indicative)

**Well, I don't know whether I can explain it to you because I've just arrived.**

4. *No sé si me guste más, pero nos costó mucho menos.* (present subjunctive)

*No sé si me gusta más, pero nos costó mucho menos.* (present indicative)

**I don't know whether I like it more, but it cost us lot less.**

5. *No sé si vaya mañana o el martes.* (present subjunctive)

*No sé si voy mañana o el martes.* (present indicative)

**I don't know whether I'll go tomorrow or on Tuesday.**

6. *No, no sé si los tengan allí o en la iglesia.* (present subjunctive)

*No, no sé si los tienen allí o en la iglesia.* (present indicative)

**No, I don't know whether they have them there or at the church.**

7. *No sé si los vendan aquí o en la oficina.* (present subjunctive)

*No sé si los venden aquí o en la oficina.* (present indicative)

**I don't know whether they sell them here or in the office.**

8. *¡No sé si te lo dé nunca!* (present subjunctive)  
*¡No sé si te lo daré nunca!* (present indicative)  
**I don't know whether I'll ever give it to you!**
9. *No sé si estén allá o en la del doctor Villareal.* (present subjunctive)  
*No sé si están allá o en la del doctor Villareal.* (present indicative)  
**I don't know whether they are there or in Dr. Villareal's (clinic).**
10. *No sé si esté en la cuarta o la sexta.* (present subjunctive)  
*No sé si está en la cuarta o la sexta.* (present indicative)  
**I don't know whether it is on the fourth or the sixth (floor).**

## Part III:

1. *Las señoras de la iglesia no saben si deban rezar o mirar a la gente.* (present subjunctive)  
**The women of the church don't know whether to pray or look at the people.**
- Las señoras de la iglesia no saben si va a haber bautizo.* (present indicative)  
**The women of the church don't know whether there will be a baptism.**
2. *En realidad, no sé si mis hijos quieran irse de vacaciones.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether my children want to go on vacation.**
- En realidad, no sé si mis hijos quieren ir o no.* (present indicative)  
**In reality, I don't know whether my children want to go or not.**
3. *No sé si pueda acompañarte esta noche.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether I can go with you tonight.**
- No sé si voy a poder acompañarte esta noche.* (present indicative)  
**I don't know whether I will be able to go with you tonight.**
4. *El maestro nunca sabe si sus alumnos lo admiren.* (present subjunctive)  
**The teacher never knows whether his students admire him.**
- El maestro nunca sabe si sus alumnos estudian bastante.* (present indicative)  
**The teacher never knows whether his students study enough.**
5. *Yo no sé si su carro esté nuevo.* (present subjunctive)  
**I don't know whether his car is new.**
- Yo no sé si su carro está en buenas condiciones.* (present indicative)  
**I don't know whether his/her car is in good shape.**
6. *Nunca sabré si me entiendan.* (present subjunctive)



**I'll never know whether they understand me.**

*Nunca sabré si pueden hacerlo bien.* (present indicative)

**I'll never know whether they can do it well.**

7. *Cuando hace tanto calor, no sé si los niños se cansen más rápido.* (present subjunctive)

**When it's so hot, I don't know whether the children tire more quickly.**

*Cuando hace tanto calor, no sé si los niños pueden resistirlo.* (present indicative)

**When it is so hot, I don't know whether the children can stand it.**

8. *No sé si lo pueda encontrar en esa tienda.* (present subjunctive)

**I don't know whether I can find it in that store.**

*No sé si compro en esa tienda.* (present indicative)

**I don't know whether I'll shop in that store.**

## Appendix J

## Typical Verb Patterns (Part I, Part II, Part III)

Part I	Part II	Part III
(1) <i>caer, tropezar, lastimar</i> : fall, trip, hurt	(1a) <i>volver (regresar)</i> : <b>return</b> (1b) <i>traer</i> : <b>bring</b>	(1) <i>Haber, orar, hablar</i> : <b>existential there, pray, talk</b>
(2) <i>subir, bajar, caber</i> <i>poder</i> : go up, go down, fit, be able	(2a) <i>salir, levantarse</i> : <b>leave, get up</b> (2b) <i>alojar (quedar)</i> : <b>stay</b>	(2) <i>portarse, llegar, querer,</i> <i>estar, crecer</i> : <b>behave, arrive, want, be,</b> <b>grow up</b>
(3) <i>estar, trabajar, dormir,</i> <i>perder</i> : be, work, sleep, lose	(3) <i>poder, decir</i> : <b>be able,</b> <b>tell</b>	(3) <i>poder, permitir (dejar)</i> : <b>be able, allow</b>
(4) <i>encontrar, ver, buscar,</i> <i>seguir, saber</i> : find, see, look for, follow, know	(4) <i>gustar (agradar)</i> : <b>like</b>	(4) <i>estudiar, comprender,</i> <i>estar, hacer caso</i> : <b>study, understand, be, pay</b> <b>attention</b>
(5) <i>caer, darse cuenta,</i> <i>necesitar</i> fall, realize, need	(5) <i>ir, poder</i> : <b>go, be able</b>	(5) <i>estar, correr</i> : <b>be, run</b>
(6) <i>tener miedo, gritar,</i> <i>correr, patinar</i> : be afraid, shout, run, skate	(6) <i>tener</i> : <b>have</b>	(6) <i>despertarse, poder</i> : <b>wake up, be able</b>
(7) <i>soñar, vivir, morir,</i> <i>sobrevivir</i> : dream, live, die, survive	(7) <i>vender</i> : <b>sell</b>	(7) <i>llegar a ser, poder,</i> <i>deshidratar</i> <b>become, be able, dehydrate</b>
(8) <i>llenar, cubrir</i> : fill, cover	(8) <i>dar</i> : <b>give</b>	(8) <i>vender, tener, hallar,</i> <i>comprar</i> : <b>sell, have, find, buy</b>
	(9) <i>estar</i> : <b>be</b>	
	(10) <i>estar (encontrar)</i> : <b>be</b>	

## Appendix K

## Verb Meanings and Age

*PODER:***to be able**

18-25: 25%

26-35: 23%

36-55: 31%

55+: 20%

*ESTAR:***to be**

18-25: 27%

26-35: 29%

36-55: 23%

55+: 22%

*VENDER:***to sell**

18-25: 19%

26-35: 28%

36-55: 35%

55+: 18%

*TENER:***to have**

18-25: 30%

26-35: 19%

36-55: 25%

55+: 27%

*IR:***to go**

18-25: 27%

26-35: 22%

36-55: 28%

55+: 23%

## Appendix L

## Age Groupings and Changes from Indicative to Subjunctive

TYPE OF CHANGE	AGE	PERCENT PRODUCED
Final vowel only	18-25	26%
	26-35	24%
	36-55	29%
	55+	20%
Final vowel + consonant	18-25	35%
	26-35	13%
	36-55	30%
	55+	21%
Final vowel + insertion of consonant + possible loss of diphthong	18-25	27%
	26-35	19%
	36-55	33%
	55+	21%
Syllable added	18-25	17%
	26-35	29%
	36-55	21%
	55+	33%
Complete change of form	18-25	15%
	26-35	33%
	36-55	39%
	55+	13%

## Appendix M

## IRB Form

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD  
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

Date: February 6, 1998

IRB #: AS-98-040

Proposal Title: MOOD CHOICE AFTER NO SABER SI IN MEXICAN SPANISH

Principal Investigator(s): Carol Moder, Ronda Hall

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

ALL APPROVALS MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT MEETING, AS WELL AS ARE SUBJECT TO MONITORING AT ANY TIME DURING THE APPROVAL PERIOD.

APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR DATA COLLECTION FOR A ONE CALENDAR YEAR PERIOD AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.

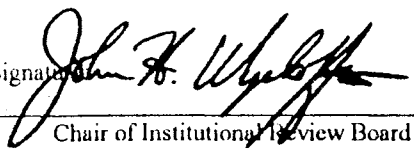
ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

---

---

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature

  
Chair of Institutional Review Board

Cc: Ronda Hall

Date: February 6, 1998

VITA

Ronda L. Hall

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: MOOD CHOICE AFTER *NO SABER SI* IN MEXICAN SPANISH

Major Field: English

Biographical:

Education: Graduated with Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish from Samford University in 1969; received Master of Arts degree with a major in Spanish from the University of Alabama in 1971; also studied at the Universidad Iberoamericana and the Universidad de Madrid; completed requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree with a major in English at Oklahoma State University in May, 1999.

Experience: Employed by the University of Alabama as a graduate assistant; worked for International Mission Board, SBC, in Guerrero, Mexico; employed Oklahoma Baptist University, Department of Modern Languages, 1973 to present.

Professional Memberships: American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages, Oklahoma Foreign Language Teachers Association.