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TITOLO DELLA TESI DI DOTTORATO

Audiovisual Translation and multimodality:
Character (re)design from source to target multimodal text.
The Chicano gangster stereotype as a case study.

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SOMMARIO (Italiano)

La tesi mira a espandere la ricerca su lingua e traduzione audiovisiva, includendo la relazione tra testo ed elementi non testuali che caratterizzano il prodotto audiovisivo. Ciò richiede un framework analitico capace di analizzare la multimodalità. Sebbene questo tipo di analisi sia relativamente semplice da applicare alle analisi qualitative di casi limitati, raramente è stata applicata a corpora più estesi.

In particolare, al centro di questa tesi è posta la costruzione del personaggio nei film. Un personaggio è uno strumento diegetico riconoscibile, in cui confluiscono elementi audiovisivi e testuali. I film usano costantemente personaggi stereotipati per trasmettere messaggi al pubblico e svolgere una specifica funzione comunicativa basata su una serie di assunti condivisi. L'analisi prende come case study una selezione di film americani, distribuiti tra 1988 e 1993 e doppiati in italiano, in cui è presente lo stereotipo del gangster chicano.

La metodologia è tratta da Descriptive Translation Studies e studio della multimodalità, nonché basata sull'analisi dei corpora e sulla traduzione di varianti linguistiche non-standard nei film. Un profilo storico e linguistico dello stereotipo analizzato servirà come supporto per la fase finale, l'analisi dei film. Innanzitutto, l'analisi si concentrerà sull'individuazione della varietà linguistica usata dai personaggi, con specifica attenzione al prestigio che tale varietà comunica, allo scopo di comprendere le strategie con cui cui questa è stata riprodotta nella versione italiana. Successivamente, la relazione tra elementi testuali e non testuali sarà oggetto di studio, per scoprire quali relazioni intermodali sono state instaurate nelle due versioni di ogni film. Questo servirà a comprendere il significato comunicato dal personaggio del testo multimodale e il modo in cui esso è mantenuto o modificato con la traduzione.

L'analisi ha un approccio quantitativo, allo scopo di trarre conclusioni generali sulla (ri)costruzione del personaggio nel corpus qui considerato. I dati vengono poi esposti e interpretati, al fine di capire come certe scelte linguistiche in un prodotto multimodale siano collegate al contesto linguistico-culturale che le ha determinate.

ABSTRACT (English)

The present work aims to expand the scope of research on audiovisual language and translation by taking into consideration the relationship between the audiovisual text and other modes characterising the audiovisual product. The complexity of this kind of product calls for an analytical framework that makes it possible to deal with multiple modes simultaneously. Although intuitively applicable to qualitative research, this kind of analysis has so far been difficult to achieve in larger corpora. In particular, the main focus of this thesis is character design in movies. A character is a recognizable, stereotyped diegetic device, composed of audiovisual as well as textual elements. Movies rely heavily on stereotyped characters to convey messages to the audience and fulfil a specific communicative function based on a set of shared assumptions. The analysis will take as a case study a selection of American movies released between 1988 and 1993 and dubbed into Italian, featuring the stereotypical character of the Chicano gangster.

The methodology is informed by descriptive translation studies and multimodality, as well as corpus-based analysis and translation of fictional non-standard varieties. A linguistic and historical profiling of the chosen character will serve as a toolkit in the final step, the analysis of the movies. First, the analysis will focus on identifying the linguistic variety spoken by the character, with particular attention to its prestige, with the purpose of understanding the way in which the variety of the source text was re-presented in the target text. This will allow the inference of the type of strategies used by the translators. Subsequently, the relationship between linguistic elements and non-textual elements will be analysed to understand the way that intermodal relationships are built in both texts. This will shed light on the communicative meaning conveyed by the character in the multimodal text, and the way it is preserved or transformed through the audiovisual translation process. The analysis will have an initially quantitative approach, so as to outline a general trend in the character design and re-design within the analysed corpus. The data will then be reviewed and interpreted, in order to understand how specific linguistic choices in a multimodal environment are linked to the linguacultural context that generated them.

Contents

Introduction

This work stems from the interdisciplinary nature of translation studies (Munday 2008: 1), as it originates from the intersections of different branches of this discipline, with other issues coming from various fields of investigation. These intersections correspond to a number of challenges for a researcher in Translation Studies who intends to embrace the interdisciplinarity of her/his study.

Chapter 1 of this thesis is dedicated to a detailed analysis of these challenges, and their relevance to the study of translation. This thesis is informed first by the approach of Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS, Holmes 1988; Toury 1995), whose aim is to liberate the translators and the study of translation from the prescriptiveness that implies quality assessments on the side of the Translation Studies (TS) scholar. Descriptiveness also opens a window onto more general statements, as observing and comparing numerous cases allows the hypothesising of generalisations concerning translation, which have been called "translation universals" (Baker 1993) or "laws" (Toury 1995).

In order to avoid the pitfalls of simplistic induction, however, a rigorous method based on empirical evidence coming from large amounts of data is necessary to provide general results. That is where another discipline offers a significant contribution to translation studies: corpus linguistics (Sinclair 1996; Johansson 1998). This discipline analyses larges bodies (corpora) of text with the aid of software, in order to satisfactorily describe a linguistic phenomenon. The idea of its usefulness for translation studies came from Baker (1992) and has developed ever since. In particular, this thesis is informed by the work of Laviosa (2002), who created a rigorous and complete typology to define a corpus for TS that takes into account a series of parameters, from the more general to the more specific.

One of the parameters proposed by Laviosa is the language(s) of the corpus. The choice of language triggers a reflection on the essence of language itself: languages are not monolithic entities, as they are subject to inner variation depending on chronological, geographical, social, and individual factors (Lippi-Green 1997). Variation in language exists in everyday life, but it is also a feature of fiction, which is particularly important for authors and translators of fictional

products. For authors, the variation of language is a pivotal means to conveying the sociocultural profile and positioning of a character in her/his fictional context: in other words, an author assumes that a certain language variety is linked to a specific level of *prestige*, and expects the audience to share the same assumption (Ramos Pinto 2009; Ramos Pinto 2016). This means that language variation is no secondary feature in a fictional product, and a translator has to decide how to deal with it, bearing in mind that a different audience means a different set of assumptions, and a different language means different ways of achieving a certain communicative meaning (Brodovich 1997). Thus, a translator may choose to follow different strategies according to the specific product and context, but also to the ideological implications of her/his choices – especially when translating oral varieties that belong to discriminated groups represented stereotypically (Bandia 2011; Assis Rosa 2012; 2015; van Doorslaer et al. 2016).

The fictional stereotype can be used in any fictional diegesis, from novels to audiovisual products (films, TV series etc.). In the latter case, the medium does not only consist of textual messages, as the other modes multiply the meaning while still being perceived unitarily by the audience (Lemke 1998; Stöckl 2004). Despite the central role of multimodality in audiovisual products, it has only recently sparked the interest of a limited number of TS scholars, possibly because of the focus on text that characterises research in the field (Díaz-Cintas 2008).

The studies in multimodality in TS have resulted in corpora and models of data processing that manage to go beyond the textual dimension, although in different ways and to different extents (e.g. Valentini 2008; Jiménez and Seibel 2012; Jiménez Hurtado and Soler Gallego 2013; Freddi 2013). In particular, the analysis in this thesis was carried out following the work of Pastra (2008), Ramos Pinto (2017) and Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming), since they developed a model that, rather than just putting different modes side by side, manages to take the relations between different modes into account.

Given the complexity and the multi-layered nature of the analysis implemented in this thesis, it was also important to dedicate some space to matters that are not specifically translational, but that have a crucial impact on the construction of the stereotype and its linguistic features. Indeed, in order to fathom a stereotyped,

mediated image, it was necessary for this author to get to know the truth behind the image itself. That is why Chapter 2 is a brief outline of the history of Chicanos (or Mexican Americans), the minority that is taken as a case study, with the aim of explaining how and why this group came to be discriminated against in the United States. A conquered and immigrant people, Chicanos have often been at the centre of social conflicts, and their "otherness" has transformed them into the ideal public enemy to create social cohesion in the Anglo majority (Acuña 2000). This creation of the other as an enemy is at the core of Chicano male (and often female) representation as a dangerous gangster (Ramírez Berg 2002; Bender 2002).

Not only their race and origin but their language is discriminated against, as it has been considered as a form of broken English spoken by learners of Hispanic origin (Macedo et al. 2003). Debunking this discriminating concept required investigating language contact, its origin, spread and ideologic implications – with particular attention to the contact languages of the English-speaking world. This was the aim of Chapter 3, which explored the way English has been a tool of linguistic colonisation in the past centuries, and it now exercises the same kind of annihilating pressure within the borders of the English-speaking countries (Campbell and Muntzel 1989; Macedo et al. 2003; Saraceni 2005). Contact languages have also been analysed in the way they develop as a synthesis of different languages, sparking creoles, pidgins, or contact varieties that may preserve their heritage to different extent, for example through code-switching (Gumperz 1982) or becoming a form of "English with an accent" (Lippi-Green 1997). Chicano English was analysed in detail in Chapter 4, in order to understand the real features of this variety and its internal variation (Fought 2003). Knowledge of Chicano English is crucial in the study of the way it is used in the media, where language is a tool for the authors and the audience. That is why the analysis of fictional language has been called "ficto-linguistics" (Ferguson 1998).

The first part of the thesis is the methodological and theoretical foundation of the actual work on the texts, which focuses on the issue of character (re)design from source to target multimodal text, and takes the stereotype of the Chicano gangster as a case study. In other words, the work of this thesis is centred on understanding

how a stereotyped character is designed in a source multimodal text, arising from a specific sociocultural and linguistic context, and then redesigned through translation for a completely different sociocultural and linguistic context. Since the visual elements remain unchanged, the text has to adjust to the new environment, while still making sense within the fictional product.

Why should anyone embark on such research? It adds value to the current debate in various ways. First, it contributes to shifting the study of audiovisual translation towards multimodality: a film (or a TV series) is different from a novel, because of the compresence of different modes that contribute to convey a certain communicative meaning. Multimodality is a core feature of any audiovisual product that requires specific attention, but the debate has so far remained concentrated on textual analysis (Chaume 2004; Gambier 2006). This was mainly due to tradition but also to the fact that the development of innovative frameworks is required for a fruitful discussion, and this may reasonably take time and result in dead ends. Nevertheless, emerging frameworks generate a discussion that may lead to a type of research that is more in line with the paramount importance multimodality has in everyday experience and in the contemporary media. Indeed, audiovisual products are omnipresent, and new platforms are only making them more pervasive than ever before (e.g. YouTube, Netflix etc.).

The choice of the case study is also still relevant. In fact, despite the fact that the chosen films were released between the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the character analysed here has recently re-emerged in the American sociocultural and political debate.[1] After having been replaced by the Muslim terrorist for a long time in the media (see Chapter 5), the image of the Latino gangster (either U.S. citizen or immigrant) is in the spotlight once again, especially thanks to TV series such as *Breaking Bad*, *Orange is the New Black*, *Narcos* or *Mayans M.C.*. To know where these stereotypes come from and how they have been translated in the past may shed light on the way their more recent counterparts are designed

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[1] The current U.S. president has often mentioned people of Mexican origin in his speech, not in flattering terms

(https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-us-canada-37230916/drug-dealers-criminals-rapists-what-trump-thinks-of-mexicans last visited June 28th 2018).

and redesigned through translation. Moreover, the recent populist turn in the political debates in Europe[2] makes the topic socially and culturally compelling, in order to warn against mediated narrations aimed at scapegoating minorities (especially immigrant minorities), to make it become the converging point for all sort of public discontent.

This thesis has the general aim of constructing a framework able to analyse the character design and redesign in source and target text in a corpus of films, taking into account both textual and non-textual aspects at the same time. Through this framework, it will be possible to answer a number of questions that represent the smaller objectives of the research:

- Which language variety was used for each character in the source and the target text (ST and TT)?
- Which strategies might have been behind the change?
- What were the most common features for conveying a certain type of language? Did they change from ST to TT?
- How did these varieties build intermodal relations with the non-textual elements of the film?
- Did the relations change from ST to TT, and to what extent?

Since a corpus fitting the needs of the research did not exist, this author had to build her own corpus, selecting and transcribing films featuring the Chicano gangster stereotype. The actual work on the corpus is related in Chapters 5 and 6. In particular, Chapter 5 explains the way the objectives were pursued, by revealing the logic behind corpus construction and tagging of both textual and non-textual elements, building upon the work of authors such as Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming), Assis Rosa (2015) and Ramírez Berg (2002). Chapter 6 is the final step, as it contains the results of the analysis, which are then discussed and interpreted in the light of the methodological tools and the knowledge acquired in the course of this author's doctoral studies.

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[2] A detailed analysis of the political phenomena across Europe can be found on the website of the American non-profit organisation Brookings: https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/03/08/the-rise-of-european-populism-and-the-collapse-of-the-center-left/ (last visited December 8th 2018).

PART I – Getting started. Methodological approach.

1. Chapter 1 – Accepting challenges in translation studies

What is probably the most fascinating and stimulating aspect of Translation Studies (TS) is also one of the hardest difficulties to tackle; it is a complex, composite field, which tenaciously resists all attempts at simplification and reduction:

> Translation studies is the academic discipline related to the study of the theory and phenomena of translation. By its nature it is multilingual and also interdisciplinary, encompassing any language combinations, various branches of linguistics, comparative literature, communication studies, philosophy and a range of types of cultural studies including postcolonialism and postmodernism as well as sociology and historiography. (Munday: 1)

To these, it is possible to add the subjects related to technology, in terms of tools, methods and products (Munday 2008: 179).

That is why approaching TS means to accept a range of challenges, which can take the scholar to uncharted territories, or simply face her/him with fields that may seem very far from her/his interest – but only at first glance. This first chapter will be focused on the challenges that impacted TS directly, expanding their scope, and motivated this research. Paradoxically, narrowing down the research focus on a specific type of translation implied a greater number of challenges.

1.1 Challenge 1: describing translation. Descriptive Translation Studies

Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) emerged as an answer to the need for TS to let go of what translation *should* be, in order to see clearly what translation is (Pym 2010: 230). Holmes (1988) was among the first to acknowledge how important it was that those working with TS across various fields communicate
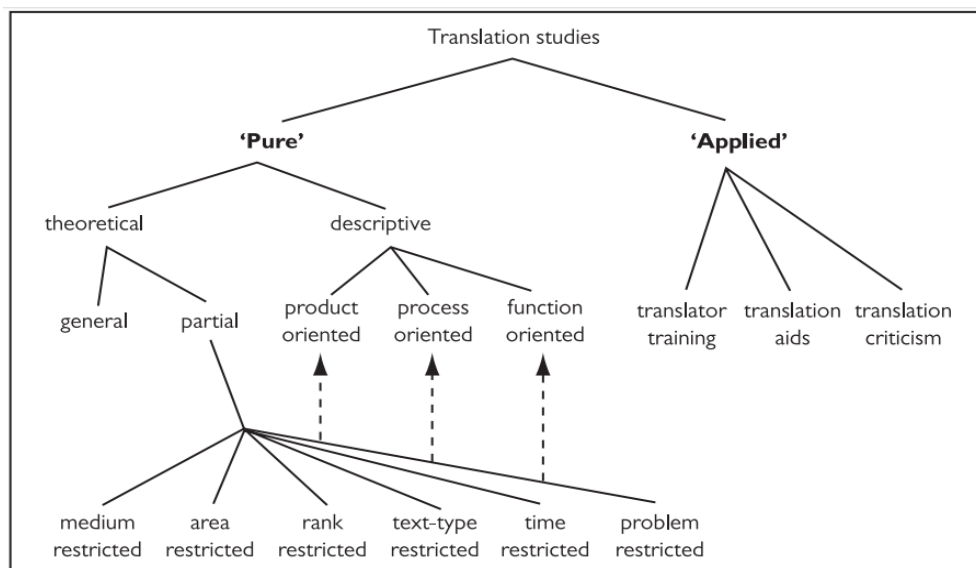
with each other. To achieve this objective, he devised a structure where the descriptive branch had its own space and ramifications (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Holmes's map as in Toury (1995: 10)

As stated by Holmes (1988: 71-72), DTS is "the branch of the discipline which constantly maintains the closest contact with the empirical phenomena under study," and it can be divided in three main branches:

- *Product-oriented DTS*, concerned with existing translations. The focus can be on individual translations as well as on "larger corpuses of translations, for instance those made within a specific period, language, and/or text or discourse type […] diachronic as well as (approximately) synchronic" (Holmes 1988: 72).

- *Function-oriented DTS*, which focuses on the contextual elements surrounding the text, since it "is not interested in the description of translations in themselves, but in the description of their function in the recipient socio-cultural situation" (Holmes 1988: 72), somehow overlapping with sociological analyses.

- *Process-oriented DTS*, whose aim is to understand "what exactly takes place in the 'little black box' of the translator's 'mind'" (Holmes 1988: 72). This kind of research naturally involves an interest in psychology. Although envisioned decades ago, this field has only recently been researched with a more systematic approach (Munday 2008: 11).

Holmes's model also outlines a series of possible restrictions applying to DTS theories (as well as to partial theoretical TS, see Figure 1), such as text type, time frame, specific problem or area of research, and he admits that more than one can act at the same time on the same theory (Munday 2008: 11).

A direct consequence of the structure of Holmes's model is that "the development of the entire discipline is dependent on the harmonious and dynamic interaction of all three elements, which enjoy equal status" (Laviosa: 10). In this sense, Gideon Toury's work brings DTS forward, as his aim was to "elevate DTS to the state of scientific branch […] at the heart of the discipline, [with] a distinctive internal organisation" (Laviosa 2002: 11). In Toury's view, experimental descriptions are crucial for DTS, as they provide material for the formulation of theory by verifying, revising or expanding existing conceptualisations of what translation could potentially be. In turn, once the theoretical laws are supported by evidence, they constitute the basis for prescriptive rules. However, according to Toury, applied TS partly falls outside the realm of TS themselves and overlaps with the respective fields of application – which further explains the prominence he attributes to DTS.

Toury envisions a link amongst *function*, *product* and *process*, as "the (prospective) systemic position & function of a translation determines its appropriate surface realization (=textual-linguistic make-up)," which in turn "governs the strategies whereby a target text (or part thereof) is derived from its original, and hence the relationships which hold them together" (1995: 13).[3] Toury draws his definition of function as "the 'value' assigned to an item belonging to a certain system by virtue of the network of relation it enters into" (Toury 1995: 12) from dynamic functionalism (Even-Zohar 1979; 1990). Function is at the core of translation, as "translators may be said to operate first and foremost in the interest of the culture into which they are translating" (Toury 1995: 12).

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[3] The author also acknowledges the possibility that the chain can go in the opposite direction, with the strategies determining the features of the product and giving it a "position in the recipient system" (Toury 1995: 14).

The centrality of function is key to understanding two crucial points of Toury's DTS. Firstly, translations are "cultural facts […] determined first and foremost by considerations originating in the culture which hosts them" (Toury 1995: 26). Consequently, being "facts of target cultures" (Toury 1995: 29), they should be

1. Target text presented/regarded as a translation:
   - acceptability, deviations from acceptability...
   - probably: first tentative explanations to individual textual-linguistic phenomena, based on the assumption that the text is indeed a translation.
2. Establishment of a corresponding source text and mapping target text (or parts of it, or phenomena occurring in it) on source text (or etc. ...)
   - determination of text's status as an appropriate source text
   - establishment of pairs of 'solution + problem' as units of immediate comparison;
   - establishment of target–source relationships for individual coupled pairs.
3. Formulation of first-level generalizations:
   - primary vs. secondary relationships for the text as a whole;
   - preferred invariant(s) and translation units;
   - [reconstructed] process of translation...

Figure 2 Toury's (1995: 38) three-phase analysis with discovery vs. justification procedures.

seen as texts in their own right, "which can easily function as a proper source text despite its derivative nature" (Toury 1995: 75). A text, or a body of texts, is then chosen by the DTS scholar according to criteria that are usually "external, provisional, and firmly based on the target language system" (Laviosa 2002: 12). The text(s) thus selected will undergo a three-phase analysis (see Figure 2).

When working on a discovery procedure axis, the scholar uses an inductive process. The first phase will consist in situating "the text within the target culture system, looking at its significance or acceptability" (Munday 2008: 111), and attempting to formulate tentative hypotheses. The second step consists of identifying the source text (ST) as an "appropriate source text," and to establish pairs of "solution + problem" relationships, which would allow the scholar to determine the relationships linking a target text (TT) to the source. However, this pairing cannot escape its own partiality and indirectness (Toury 1995: 80), and "[t]he results are flexible and non-prescriptive, if also less than rigorously systematic, means of comparing ST and TT" (Munday 2008: 111).

The third phase is the typical outcome of a (successful) inductive process, as it consists in formulating generalisations about the norms governing equivalence

between the texts. This allows the reconstruction of the process of translation itself, bearing in mind that a DTS scholar has a specific mission, which is not to formulate personal evaluations concerning the attainment of equivalence:

> Equivalence […] encompasses the actual relationships that characterise an acceptable translation in any given target culture. This means that in a descriptive study the researcher will always assume that equivalence exists. What s/he will uncover is the concrete way in which it is realised, in terms of the balance between invariance and transformation. This type of functional-relational and culturally determined equivalence in turn constitutes a stepping stone for discovering the concept of translation which informs the target text examined. (Laviosa 2002: 14)

As is shown by Laviosa's reading of Toury's concept of equivalence, the DTS scholar is required to let go of any "corrective" attitude, to abandon what Toury (1995: 80) called the "negative kind of reasoning," an attitude of the TS scholar that leads him/her to judge the "success" of a translation. On the contrary, a DTS scholar needs to approach a translated text without prejudice, in order to understand how a certain way of realising equivalence is embedded in the specific culture that generated the target text.

Contrary to the inductive discovery is the deductive justification that, in Toury's scheme, is not "offered only when the discovery procedures have already been exhausted," as "from the very start, explanatory hypotheses will be formulated, which will then reflect backwards and affect subsequent discovery procedures" (Toury 1995: 37-38). Moreover, since the final aim is to provide valid generalisations, it is clear that "one assumed translation, or even one pair of texts, would not constitute a proper corpus for study" (Toury 1995: 38). The DTS scholar willing to find out more about a specific translator, text-type or text-linguistic phenomenon should then extend their corpus to include all those texts matching the chosen criteria and go through the three-phase analysis for all of the texts, which may eventually bring the study closer to higher levels of generalisation, thus explaining translation according to the selected criteria.

As stated by Toury, in order to fully understand a translation, the DTS scholar should be able to identify the socio-cultural constraints under which a translator

works. These constraints might vary according to *potency* or along a *temporal axis*. The latter refers to the fact that a certain constraint may undergo "processes of rise and decline" (Toury 1995: 54) over time. Potency refers to the actual reach of a constraint, which is usually placed along a continuum between "absolute rules" and "pure idiosyncrasies" (Toury 1995: 54). Between the two "lies a vast middle-ground occupied by intersubjective factors" that constitute the *norms*. These are defined as "the translation of general values or ideas shared by a community – as to what is right or wrong, adequate or inadequate – into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations" (Toury 1995: 55).

Despite being a fact of the target culture, it is necessary to remember that a translation "inevitably involves at least two languages and two cultural traditions" that are "always different and therefore often incompatible" (Toury 1995: 56). Such a tension would have to be solved by the individual without any reference and without being able to determine the way their choice will be perceived by the target culture, were it not for the "regulative capacity of norms" (Toury 1995: 56). At different stages of the translation process, different norms come into play (Toury 1995: Munday 2008: 112). First, the *initial norm* is the basic choice that a translator is called to make. If the translator decides to abide by the norms of the target culture, their final product will be *acceptable* for the target audience – their work will be target-oriented, but this will imply significant shifts from the source text. On the other hand, choosing to privilege the norms of the source culture will produce an *adequate* translation that is source-oriented, but will come into contradiction with target culture norms, "especially those lying beyond the mere linguistic ones" (Toury 1995: 56). Thus, initial norm implies a choice between *acceptability* and *adequacy* – however, this choice cannot be said to be a neat dichotomy, but rather a continuum, as even the most source-oriented translation will entail some degree of shift from the source. This shift, according to Toury, is the "true universal of translation" (1995: 57). Toury also specifies that, although what he calls the initial norm would logically precede the others, micro-level decisions can be made by the translator at any point of the translating process, and

the micro-level choices do not necessarily need to consistently comply with the initial orientation towards adequacy or acceptability.

Secondly, *preliminary norms* concern two different but often connected aspects. The first aspect is the existence and features of a definite *translation policy*, consisting in "those factors that govern the choice of text-types, or even of individual texts, to be imported through translation into a particular culture/language at a particular point of time" (Toury 1995: 58).[4] The second aspect is the *directness* of translation, which is to say "the threshold of tolerance for translating from languages other than the ultimate source language" (Toury 1995: 58).

Finally, *operational norms* concern "the decision made during the act of translation itself" (Toury 1995: 58). These include *matricial norms*, which "relate to the completeness of the TT. Phenomena include omission or relocation of passages, textual segmentation, and the addition of passages or footnotes" (Munday 2008: 112). They also contain *textual-linguistic norms*, governing the actual linguistic material selected for the target text, both in general and in relation to a specific text type.

Toury notes that the norms concerning the language of translation may or may not reflect those governing non-translational language. Where they do not, the translation might position itself at a considerable distance from the target language:

> Operational norms as such may be described as serving as a model […] Every model supplying performance instructions may be said to act as a *restricting* factor: it opens up certain options while closing others. Consequently, […] the translation can hardly be said to have been made into the target language as a whole. Rather, it is made into a model language, which is at best some part of the former and at worst an artificial, and as such nonexistent variety (Toury 1995: 60).

This passage is relevant to audiovisual translation (AVT), and in particular dubbing, in a country like Italy. Indeed, this is the most-often-heard criticism

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[4] Munday (2008: 112) specifies that this aspect is not effectively looked into in Toury's case studies.

against what has been called *dubbese* (in Italian *doppiaggese*), to stress its detachment from natural spoken language. *Dubbese* is "the Italian spoken in all those films, series, cartoons, sitcoms, and any other imported foreign product, which are translated for the big and the small screen […] it is quite common on Italian TV to hear a member of a US street gang and his/her lawyer speak in the same way" (Antonini 2008:136). This language, often seen as unrealistic and overly-standardised (Chaume 2004), is the result of a specific context of translation for audiovisual products in Italy. As will be later specified, those in charge with film transposition into the target culture do not see themselves as translators and are not trained as such – indeed, the main rule governing their work is *speakability* and *performability* of the text for the dubbing actors (Pavesi and Perego 2006). From a purely linguistic point of view, the language of dubbing seems to be deeply affected by its need for acceptability, its policy and consequent operational norms – however, as will later be explained, the factors at stake in film translation make the whole discourse more complex and necessitate a broader discussion. In fact, it is important to remember that norms, subject to change in the course of time and moving along a continuum of potency, are inherently subject to socio-cultural specificity and instability (Toury 1995: 62).

As discussed above, DTS emerged from the need to go beyond prescriptivism, to see what translating and translation actually imply. That is the reason why what Toury defines as "laws" of translation are not guidelines for a "good" translation, but an attempt to generalise empirical findings in order to infer probabilistic, tentative laws of translation that might eventually prove to be universally true. These are:

- the *law of growing standardisation*: "in translation, textual relations obtaining in the original are often modified, sometimes to the point of being totally ignored, in favour of [more] habitual options offered by a target repertoire" (Toury 1995: 268). This implies dismissing the source language patterns in favour of others that are more common in the target language. As Munday points out (2008: 114), this often means a "tendency towards a general standardization and loss of variation in style in the TT, or at least an accommodation to target culture models," which is especially

true when "as commonly occurs, translation assumes a weak and peripheral position in the target system." As already observed by this author in her pilot studies (Renna 2018a; Renna 2018b; Renna 2018c), this was often the case with films in Chicano English;

- the *law of interference*: "in translation, phenomena pertaining to the make-up of the source text tend to be transferred to the target text" (Toury 1995: 274). This law can be observed when translators "copy" features of the source text in the target text, either because there is an expression akin to it in the target language or because there is not – which would create a non-normal use of the language (Munday 2008: 114). In this case, too, acceptance of a translation behaviour is, according to Toury, strictly related to power relations between cultures: a "minor" target culture will tolerate interference from a source culture deemed as "prestigious" (Toury 1995: 278).

These norms are not observable in themselves, and therefore need to be retrieved through "norm-governed instances of behaviour (Toury 1995: 65). One precious source of information in this respect consists in *textual resources*, "primary products of norm-regulated behaviour" that constitute "immediate representations" of the norm that guided the translator (Toury 1995: 65). Another source of information comes from *extratextual sources*, which are statements coming from those involved in the translation activity (e.g. translators, critics, editors, publishers etc.). The information drawn from this kind of source is taken by Toury with more suspicion because, being a by-product, it is partial and biased, and there might be a significant gap between what these sources maintain and the textual result in the translation.

Some aspects of Toury's model have certainly been challenged, and its limits have been pointed out. For example, Chesterman (1997: 64) and Hermans (1999: 77) have criticised the ambiguity of terms such as "adequate" and "acceptable" because they could also be used with an evaluative acceptation – in this sense, the terms source-oriented and target-oriented are probably "safer" to use. Also, Hermans (1999: 97) questions Toury's use of the term equivalence, as it is a "tainted concept" whose use "without problematizing it destroys the possibility of

critical interrogation." Munday (2008) also notes some unfilled gaps, especially linked to the weight of ideology in cultural processes and practices:

> Toury's early stance risked overlooking, for example, some of the complex ideological and political factors such as the status of the ST in its own culture, the source culture's possible promotion of translation of its own literature and the effect that translation might exert back on the system of the source culture. (Munday 2008: 115)

For the purpose of this research, the first point is particularly important, as the language translated in the case study presented in this thesis occupies a peripheral position in its own culture, and the ideological repercussions of this positioning require specific attention. This aspect was developed further by Toury himself (2004), when he concentrated his attention on the sociocultural aspects underlying linguistic choices. Other scholars, such as Pym (2008: 321) defend Toury's laws because, by virtue of their "probabilistic formulations," they allow for apparently contradictory tendencies: "If social conditions A apply, then we might expect more standardization. If social conditions B are in evidence, expect interference. And there is no necessary contradiction involved."

The findings coming from DTS, often applied to literary translation, have already been productively applied to fields like audiovisual translation (Karamitroglou 2000). Furthermore, while the theoretical debate remains open and new case studies contribute with textual and extratextual sources of information, the point of explaining DTS in this thesis is to take it as the assumed answer to the aforementioned TS challenge number one: describing translation without attempting to "reproach" translators for not delivering a "good" product, but rather with the aim to understand source text and target text for what they are.

The next challenge is tightly linked to the one just presented, as it stems from Toury's intention to reach greater accuracy in generalisation by expanding the corpus – and extended corpora are the distinctive feature of corpus linguistics.

1.2 Challenge 2: analysing quantities. Corpus linguistics and corpus-based translation studies

As discussed in the previous paragraph, the outcome envisioned by Toury for DTS was to be able to draw more solid generalisations from a broad collection of texts. Analysing great amounts of text is one of the specific features of corpus linguistics. Thus, it might not be wrong to affirm that, if TS aims to accept the challenge of understanding broader phenomena through quantitative (or partially quantitative) analysis, it might fruitfully turn to corpus linguistics and use some of its methodology for its own purposes.

However, before moving on to the graft between the two disciplines, it is useful to have an outline of corpus and corpus linguistics. According to Sinclair (1996: 4), "a corpus is a collection of pieces of language that are selected and ordered according to explicit linguistic criteria in order to be used as a sample of the language." Johansson (1998: 3) provides a more general concept by defining it as "a body of texts put together in a principled way and prepared for computer processing." This last part is particularly relevant to the present developments of corpus linguistics: in fact, while early studies on corpora were carried out before the widespread of Information Technology (McEnery et al. 2006: 3), corpus linguistics as it is today developed thanks to software processing in the 1980s and 1990s. According to Laviosa (2002: 6), it "can be defined as a branch of general linguistics that involves the analysis of large machine-readable corpora of running text, using a variety of software tools designed specifically for textual analysis." The guiding principles of corpus linguistics (Stubbs 1993: 2; 1996: 23; Laviosa 2002: 8) include the affirmation of the central role of descriptive linguistics in informing theories of language; the empirical methods of research (preferred to intuition and introspection); the conception of language as a social phenomenon reflecting and reproducing culture; the recognition of the heterogeneity and variation of language; the mission of discovering the rules of language in use, rather than prescribing the "right use" of language; the conception of linguistics as a social science and an applied science.

It is possible to recognise some common ground between these features of corpus linguistics and the aforementioned DTS. Indeed, Laviosa (2002: 16-17) identifies

similarities and differences between the two disciplines, in order to show in which ways and to what extent corpus linguistics is applicable to DTS. Firstly, the disciplines share an empirical approach rather than a speculative one. The selection of the material to be analysed depends on specific criteria, set according to a certain research question. Secondly, both corpus linguistics and DTS rely on results deriving from a broader corpus, rather than individual texts or cases. Finally, in terms of results, both disciplines deliver their findings thanks to systematic research, and express their results in terms of probable rules of behaviour – which remain open to further investigation of broader corpora, and do not represent absolute prescriptions.

On the other hand, differences between the two disciplines should not be overlooked. According to Laviosa (2002: 16), corpus linguistics has "no clear boundaries between theory, data, description and methodology," while, as already discussed in the previous paragraph, "for Toury these elements do interact, but are four distinct notions." Another difference concerns methodology, as DTS accepts a variety of methods, provided that they are "empirical, descriptive and conceived from within the discipline of Translation Studies," while for corpus linguistics the "object of study is created by the methodology itself" (Laviosa 2002: 16-17). Besides, the research in corpus linguistics does not admit psychological insights in the language user nor extratextual evidence, as it is inextricably bound to text, whereas these are accepted in DTS research. Last but not least, Toury's final aim was to elaborate "a general theory on the basis of the accumulation of facts and partial theories" (Laviosa 2002: 17), while corpus linguistics accepts partial theories and findings, as these reflect the variable and unstable nature of language. The first to notice the potential of a synergy between corpus linguistics and translation studies was probably Mona Baker, inspired by the work of Sinclair on corpus linguistics (1992). Sinclair briefly mentions translation practice as one of the possible fields benefiting from the development of large corpora. Building on his vision, Baker ties the success of translation studies in drawing credible generalisations from empirical research to the welcoming of techniques and methodologies borrowed from corpus linguistics:

> [T]ranslation studies has reached a stage in its development as a discipline when it is both ready for and needs the techniques and methodology of corpus linguistics in order to make a major leap from prescriptive to descriptive statements, from methodologising to proper theorising, and from individual and fragmented pieces of research to powerful generalisations. Once this is achieved, the distinction between the theoretical and applied branches of the discipline will become clearer and more convincing. (Baker 1993: 248)

More specifically, Baker is concerned with identifying the so-called *universals of translation*, which are "linguistic features that typically occur in translation rather than original texts and are independent of the influence of the specific language pairs involved in the process of translation" (Laviosa 2002: 18). Toury's laws, as laid out above, point the way to finding recurrent translator behaviours that may constitute the universals of translation. Among these, Baker (1993: 243-245) includes: explicitation, when translators add information in the target version; disambiguation and simplification (Vanderauwera 1985: 97-98); preference for conventional grammaticality, which refers to a tendency to polishing non-conventional or ungrammatical utterances; limitation of repetitions; exaggeration of features of the target language, making them more recurrent than they are in natural target language; specific distribution of lexical items in relation to both source texts and original target language texts.

What is more relevant to this research, and possibly to audiovisual translation studies at large, however, is a corpus-based research potential in terms of redefining *equivalence*. This becomes possible thanks to the "decline of what we might call the semantic view of relationship between source and target texts," whose worst implication for Translation Studies was "the idea that meaning, or messages, exist as such and can, indeed should, be transferred from source to target texts in much the same way as one might transfer wine from one glass to another" (Baker 1993: 236). The most important implication in such a turn in the concept of equivalence is that *meaning stems from a specific context that is both situational and linguistic, and equivalence should be found in usage rather than in semantic meaning* (Firth 1968: 91; Haas 1968: 104; Baker 1993: 236-237; Laviosa 2002: 19).

In order to be able to talk about usage, however, it is fundamental to have greater amounts of data at hand, which proves once more the crucial role of corpora in descriptive translation studies. As noted by Laviosa (2002: 19), the work of Even-Zohar (e.g. 1979) and Toury (e.g. 1995) contributed to seeing translations as original texts, having their own creativity and a specific role within the context of the target culture. This encourages a shift from individual case studies, which compare a source text and its translation, to larger bodies of translated texts, either with or without comparison with source texts.

The Italian dubbing of audiovisual text offers a representative example of the role of translated texts in the target culture. In fact, *dubbese* contributed (and contributes) to shaping the language of native Italian speakers. As aforementioned, *dubbese* is a rather artificial language that was born to adapt target audiovisual texts to technical needs such as lip-sync, but also as a consequence of limited time and resources available for the editing of the dubbing script. These specific features of dubbing have originated a number of calques that, if on the one hand have become typical of translated audiovisual material to the point of making it immediately recognisable, on the other hand have entered the way Italian speakers use their own language, both in conversation and in more formal contexts (Paolinelli and Di Fortunato 2005: 20).[5] Criticism concerning such a phenomenon is definitely not the aim of this thesis, whose focus is on the way equivalence is *actually* pursued in audiovisual translation, rather than on the way it *should* be pursued: indeed, noting how heavily the language of dubbing has impacted Italian native speakers is undeniable evidence of its potential positioning in the target society. Moreover, this proven impact may serve as further justification for a descriptive study of translation, able to give account of certain phenomena without a reproaching attitude on the side of the investigator.

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[5] The phenomenon is so embedded in the Italian language that it has merited the attention of the most popular Italian Encyclopedia, the *Enciclopedia Treccani*, which shows how lexical and even morpho-syntactic calques from English have been imported via *dubbese*: http://www.treccani.it/magazine/lingua_italiana/speciali/fiction/motta.html (last visited November 4th 2018).

Such observation confirms Baker's words (1996: 176): "a translation, like any kind of text production, develops in response to the pressures of its own immediate context and draws on a distinct repertoire of textual patterns." This means that the perceived positioning (or the social status) of the text and the translators themselves may have a significant effect on translation choices – notoriously proved to be the case in audiovisual translation. In fact, studies on the contextual aspects of audiovisual translation in Italy have actually demonstrated how this sector works in an apparently counter-intuitive way, as "quality" is not the main focus of its agents (Antonini and Chiaro 2009: 99). External factors, such as market requirements, exert a considerable pressure on those in charge with film adaptation, and may push the linguistic aspects of translation to a peripheral role. Such considerations open two perspectives: one is that of ethnolinguistic analysis of audiovisual translation agents and recipients, and/while the other is a descriptive approach to texts, which is the motive behind the present research.

After accepting a corpus-based approach to translation studies for all the above reasons, the following step concerns the way corpora should be used in translation and, consequently, to design a corpus that may fit the aims of a TS research. Halverson (1998) poses the concept of representativeness at the core of corpus definition, as it links object, theory and data. Echoing Biber (1993: 243), she stresses again the crucial role of theory before corpus building and adds that the very first aim should be "consideration of the purpose for which the corpus is to be used" (Halverson 1998: 4). The precise delimitation of the scope of a corpus is crucial and must be clear in the mind of the researcher as well as openly declared, since "corpus-based findings cannot be generalised beyond the specific target population that a given corpus represents" (Laviosa 2002: 27).

Terminology in corpus categorisation might turn out to present some issues. This author has opted for taking Laviosa's typology (2008: 33-38) as a starting point for her own corpus definition – thus, her categorisation will be presented in this chapter. First of all, Laviosa (2002: 34) outlines a typology "organised along four hierarchical levels," where "[t]he first level consists of six sets of contrastive

parameters that relate to the most general features of a text corpus," and the following ones concern "increasingly more specific groups of parameters."

The first level defines the corpus type by and large according to general criteria. The first criterion is the *type of texts* chosen, which can be *full texts*, *samples*, a *mix* of full texts and samples or a *monitor* – full texts that are kept updated in the course of time. The second criterion in the first level is the *time frame* of the corpus: it can be either *synchronic*, when it is a snapshot of text(s) coming from a relatively limited period, or *diachronic*, which means that it includes texts produced during a longer period. Another important criterion concerns the *specificity* of the corpus: it can be *general*, if it represents everyday language without further specification, or *terminological*, when it includes "texts originating within specialised subject fields" (Laviosa 2002: 35). The fourth and fifth criteria for corpus definition concern the *languages* involved, as a corpus can be *monolingual*, *bilingual* or *multilingual*, and the specific language(s) considered will contribute to specify the corpus typology. The last specification in the first level consists in establishing if the corpus is *written*, *spoken*, or contains a *mix* of both. According to Laviosa (2002: 35), "[a] written corpus is made up entirely of written texts, that is written to be read while a spoken corpus consists of recorded spoken texts including those that are written to be spoken."

On the second level, Laviosa poses further specifications that depend on the ones chosen in the previous level, more specifically depending on whether the corpus is monolingual, bilingual or multilingual. A monolingual corpus can either be *single*, when consisting of a set of texts in a given language, or *comparable*, when made up of two single monolingual corpora, one of which is translational and the other non-translational. The texts can be selected according to genre, topic, characteristics of their authors, length etc.

A bilingual corpus can be *parallel*, when consisting of "one or more texts in language A and its/their translation in language B" (Laviosa 2002: 36). Alternatively, a bilingual corpus can be *comparable*, which is to say composed of two original texts in language A and language B respectively – their comparability being supported by genre, topic, time span, communicative function and other relevant criteria chosen by the researcher.

Similarly, a multilingual corpus is *parallel* when consisting of "one or more texts in different languages and its/their translation(s) in different languages" (Laviosa 2002: 36). A comparable multilingual corpus will include original texts in more than two languages, whose comparability depends on specific criteria chosen by the investigator.

On the third level, Laviosa poses further specifications for the types of corpus mentioned above. A single corpus can be *translational* or *non-translational*. In the first case, it will consist of texts that are "known to have been translated into a given language" (Laviosa 2002: 37). In the second case, the corpus will include original text in a chosen language. A bilingual parallel corpus can be *mono-directional* or *bi-directional*. A bilingual parallel mono-directional corpus "consists of one or more texts in language A and its/their translation(s) in language B" (Laviosa 2002: 37). In the second case, not only the pair A to B will be included in the corpus, but also translations in the opposite direction – language B translated into language A. A multilingual parallel corpus can be *mono-source-language*, *bi-source-language* or *multi-source-language* – in each case multiple language translations will accompany the source text(s). Finally, a fourth level includes further specifications for translational corpora, which can themselves be mono-source-language, bi-source-language or multi-source-language.

Laviosa (2002: 38) also mentions further criteria for designing translational corpora, including:

> [T]ranslating mode (written, oral, interpreting); the translation method (human, machine translation, computer-assisted translation); direction of the translation (into mother tongue, into the foreign language, into the language of habitual use); status of the translator (professional, translator trainee); status of the translation (published, unpublished).

Since their appearance, corpus-based translation studies have gained a central position in TS, as they offer the possibility 1) to test hypotheses with a specifically implemented empirical research model, 2) to transform hypotheses into tentative, probabilistic laws. Regardless of whether these tend to broader generalisation or to the description of a specific translation phenomenon, the

advantages of rigorous corpus-based research have a significant reach in all fields of translation studies.

Corpus-based studies certainly require rigour, as well as a great deal of attention and patience, since "[w]hile the methods of analysis are empowering to the point of pure euphoria, the collection of data can be challenging to the point of deep despair" (Laviosa 2002: 119). However, accepting the challenge of incorporating (at least part of) corpus linguistics into translation studies can really make the difference between a relevant but limited research and an arduous but comprehensive corpus-based research.

So far, challenges mentioned in this chapter are the ones that have long since become common to numerous TS researchers and scholars. The next two challenges are certainly more specifically linked to this thesis in particular and are in some cases only recently being dealt with consistently in TS. The following challenge serves as a further specification of corpus type for this thesis, as it answers the question concerning corpus language(s).

1.3   Challenge 3: recognising minorities in translation. Fictional dialects and ethnotypes[6]

While a corpus is certainly defined by the language chosen for its texts, languages themselves cannot really fall into univocal definitions. Indeed, a feature of corpus linguistics that is crucial for its application to this research is its recognition of variation *within* languages. In order not to lose the main direction of this paragraph, only general definitions of linguistic concepts will be provided, while the topic will be explored in greater detail in chapters 3 and 4). At this point, the main definitions to bear in mind are:[7]

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[6] While more technical aspects of fictional language and translation will be treated in detail in the analysis, this chapter aims at presenting the issue and demonstrating its relevance to the present research.

[7] The definitions provided here are commented on in further detail in chapter 3, which is specifically dedicated to language variation.

- *standard language*: according to David Crystal (2004) it is but a variety of language that, at some point in time, has reached a major social prestige within a community of speakers.
- *language variation*: according to Lippi-Green (1997: 25):

> Spoken language varies for every speaker in terms of speech sounds, sound patterns, word and sentence structure, intonation, and meaning, from utterance to utterance. […] There are three sources of variation in language: first, language-internal pressures, arising in part from the mechanics of production and perception; second, language-external influences on language, as a social behavior subject to normative and other formative social pressures; and third, variation arising from language as a creative vehicle of free expression. These forces can and do function in tandem […]

Language variation goes beyond "mere" linguistics, as it has profound connections with social, cultural and political aspects of society. This multifaceted reality is not only found in actual texts (written or spoken) produced by speakers in natural environments, but also in fiction. The use of dialect in fiction is not a recent phenomenon: Brodovich (1997: 26) mentions "the classic Greek comedy *Lysistrata*" by Aristophanes as an ancient example. For what concerns the English-speaking world, English literature has certainly been pervaded by language variation ever since the beginning (Blake 1981; Page 1988). The first representations of dialect date back to the dawn of English literature, as one can already be found in Chaucer (Chapman 1994: 38), and an early and influential author like Shakespeare offered abundant material for research on non-standard language (e.g. Blake 2004). Initial instances mainly consisted of comedic insertions, until Walter Scott, who is said to have given a crucial diegetic function to the use of language variation. According to Chapman (1994: 39), the way Scott used fictional language variation demonstrated how "dialect could not only place a character regionally but could also show register and relationships within that region." Chapman (1994) also maintains that speech in fiction can represent diversity in numerous ways, for example opposing standard and non-standard (where the latter also includes slang and non-native speech), dialect and register, social class and even gender.

Yet specific research on this phenomenon is fairly recent, as early essays on the topic date back to the twentieth century. One example is Lodge, among the first to investigate the topic from a non-fictional perspective and to coin the locution "language in fiction" (1966). He noticed how, while poetry critics agreed on the profound fusion of form and content, prose critics did not generally pay much attention to the language for itself. Ignoring the language as a means of communication in fiction is certainly fallacious, as everything a novelist does, "he does in and through language" (Lodge 1966: 3).

Indeed, such an early use of dialect and its potential in terms of fiction suggests that awareness of linguistic variation is an integral part of the competence of a proficient language speaker, who can deduce an important amount of information by just *how* someone speaks, before even hearing *what* they say, as well as associate speech features to a number of other apparently unrelated features.

In fact, the reasons and functions of fictional reproduction of language variation – which, as will be explained later on, is an infinitely complex phenomenon – are manifold:

> [T]he creative use of linguistic varieties in literary dialogue helps to inform the reader about which character is speaking and under which circumstances. It becomes a textual resource that helps the reader to define the sociocultural profile of the character, as well as his/her position in the sociocultural fictional context. Knowing the social stereotypes and assumptions readers may share with the rest of the society they are a part of, the author uses fictional varieties with the expectation that this will encourage certain reactions and assumptions which will aid characterisation. It leads to the stratification of the participants in the dialogue, since the speakers tend to associate higher prestige with a standard variety, and, consequently, to undervalue other varieties culturally associated with peripheral geographic spaces and with a lower sociocultural status. (Ramos Pinto 2009: 291)

Ramos Pinto's words clearly reveal that representing linguistic variation in fiction is not a simple matter of aesthetics, as it is integral part of the plot on both the side of the author and of the audience. If a text is a product with a specific place and role within its culture, then it might not be wrong to infer that author and audience share – or are supposed to share – a certain baggage of knowledge. This can be

exploited by an author, who can expect that using a certain variety within a language will trigger specific reactions and assumptions in the minds of the audience. In particular, the most relevant set of information that can be transmitted through language variation concerns the socio-cultural positioning of the character within the diegetic context as well as within society. The main factor in sociocultural positioning is *prestige* (Ramos Pinto 2016). In other words, the *communicative meaning* (Hatim and Mason 1990) of a certain linguistic variety consists of the fact that the latter conveys specific information related to prestige. The audience tend to expect the most prestigious social group to speak a language that closely approximates the standard, while the lower the character in the social scale, the further her/his language will stand from the expected standard. The fictional varieties move "along an axis extending from maximum to minimum prestige (or even stigma, i.e. negative evaluation of a linguistic form), based on the speakers' evaluative attitudes towards language use" (Assis Rosa 2015: 3).

It is nonetheless important to note that fiction does not have to faithfully reproduce linguistic reality in all of its aspects, since "the literary recreation of accents and dialects has no pretensions of being accurate," which means that "the degree of linguistic mimicry depends on the author's aesthetic, narrative, thematic, stylistic or functional objectives" (Ramos Pinto 2009: 291-292). This gap between actual use of language and its fictional counterpart is what fostered the definition of fictional language study as "ficto-linguistics" (Ferguson 1998). In fact, fictional language variation is a tool at hand for the author to use for her/his diegetic purposes.

Nevertheless, an author does not make a completely deliberate use of this tool, as it still needs to convey its message to a broad and potentially indefinite audience. In order to fulfil its diegetic function, a fictional variety has to be identifiable as such, and understandable through the use of what Assis Rosa (2012: 77) calls "linguistic sensitivity" or "knowledge of sociolinguistic stereotypes." While it is not probably right to take for granted that all proficient speakers have a specific and conscious competence in terms of language variation, it would not be wrong to infer that anyone can make assumptions based on a language variety – although often drenched in stereotypes. Indeed, common stereotypes are often what an

author relies on when choosing a variety: "[a]uthors generally take advantage of linguistic stereotypes easily recognised by the average reader, making sure that certain assumptions and images will be triggered" (Ramos Pinto 2009: 290).

LINGUISTIC VARIABLES	CONTEXTUAL VARIABLES	TYPE OF VARIATION	LINGUISTIC VARIETIES
Phonetic and Phonological features (grouped in accents)	TIME	DIACHRONIC VS. SYNCHRONIC	STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LANGUAGE
Morphological, Syntactic, Semantic, and Lexical features (grouped in dialects)	PHYSICAL/GEOGRAPHICAL SPACE	REGIONAL	REGIONAL DIALECT or ACCENT
	SOCIAL SPACE	SOCIAL	SOCIAL DIALECT or ACCENT; SLANG; TECNOLECT
	INDIVIDUAL SPEAKER	INTERPERSONAL	IDIOLECT
	COMMUNICATIVE SITUATION	FUNCTIONAL	REGISTER

Figure 3 Language variation as schematised by Assis Rosa (2012: 77)

According to Assis Rosa's scheme of language variation (2012: 77), audience may identify "linguistic variables" that concern two aspects. The first is phonetic and phonological features, often generically grouped as "accent" (who has not heard lines such as "what a lovely accent!" or "I could tell by your accent" or "he has no accent" or "British people have a *pure* accent" comfortably uttered by non-linguists?). The second is that the audience are also able to recognise morphological, syntactic, semantic and lexical items, frequently grouped under the label of "dialect."

These variables intersect with contextual variables such as time, geographical space, social space, individual speaker, and communicative situation, in order to obtain more specific information on what type of variation defines a character (or group of characters). If the language variation is to do with time, the variation can be synchronic or diachronic, and the linguistic variety will show an evolution in the development of a language. If the language variation concerns space, the variation will be regional, and a geographically located dialect or accent will emerge. If the linguistic and contextual variables suggest a social variation, the result will be a social dialect, for example a slang or a technical jargon. If the features are exquisitely individual, an idiolect will emerge as the specific feature of a character (see Page 1988: 97-121). Finally, when linguistic variables intersect

with a certain communicative situation, the variation will be functional, and expressed through a register adopted by the character(s).

Each person might agree to such statements and link them to fictional varieties used in their own language. However, if fictional dialects are "culture-specific" (Brodovich 1997: 26), what happens with translation, through which a culturally embedded text should become intelligible to a different culture? That is when the third challenge comes into play: translating fictional language variation, in order to make the character recognisable – deciding to take on what has been defined as an impossible task for translators (Fedorov 1985: 145) although being one that remains unavoidable, given the diegetic and meta-narrative power of fictional language variation (Assis Rosa 2012: 77).

Translating language varieties creates a deep tension between (as Toury puts it) adequacy and acceptability in translation, especially because languages vary and so does the organisation of the speakers in social, geographic and cultural terms. Moreover, different countries may have different conventions when it comes to representing linguistic variation in fiction (Brodovich 1997), which may not work in other contexts. Thus, translators must take the target audience into consideration and find a mediation allowing them to keep the message while making sure it is intelligible and acceptable:

> [T]he recreation of linguistic varieties results from the mediation, not only of the purposes to be fulfilled by the translation in the target culture, but also from what has been established by that system's literary tradition or factors such as legibility, intelligibility and the medium in which the translation will come to light. (Ramos Pinto 2009: 292)

Literary tradition has a strong influence in determining what a translator is "allowed" to do with varieties. Ramos Pinto (2009: 293) collects the possible strategies a translator may opt for, according to factors that are both related to the text itself and to the broader context of the target culture.

Non-preservation of the linguistic variation

- Use only of the standard variety
- Use only of a non-standard variety

Preservation of the linguistic variation

Preservation of the space and time coordenates of the ST
Preservation of the space coordenates but not of the time coordenates of the ST

Use of familiar features recognized as non-standard in the TC

- Addition of written indications after direct discourse moments indicating that the character was speaking in a non-standard variety
- Reduction of the linguistic variation to forms of address and honorifics
- Upgrading of the level of formality of the standard discourse
- Use of oral discourse features
- Use of features (lexical, morpho-syntatic, graphic or phonetic) from different varieties
- Use of features (lexical, morpho-syntatic, graphic or phonetic) of a specific variety

Use of features not familiar to the TC receiver

- Direct import of certain lexical features from the source text
- Introduction of lexical features from the source text, but following the spelling norms of the Target text
- Conception of a "virtual dialect"

Non-preservation of the space and time coordenates of the ST
Non-preservation of the space coordinates but preservation of the time coordinates of the ST

- Use of features (lexical, morpho-syntactic, graphic or phonetic) common in oral discourse
- Uprising of the level of formality of the standard discourse
- Use of features (lexical, morpho-syntactic, graphic or phonetic) from different varieties
- Use of features (lexical, morpho-syntactic, grahic or phonetic) of a specific variety

Texts where spatial and time coordinates have been preserved tend to be identified as translations in the TC

Texts where spatial and/or time coordinates have not been preserved tend to be identified as adaptations in the TC

Figure 4 Strategies in translating linguistic variation as in Ramos Pinto (2009: 293)

Ramos Pinto identifies the first turning point in the choice between preserving or non-preserving linguistic variation (thus normalising the text), but she also warns that – even though normalisation itself is listed among the universals of translation (Baker 1993) – it is rare for a complete normalisation of the whole text to take place (2009: 293). It is instead more likely for normalisation to affect secondary characters. A further normalising factor concerns the importance of the variation itself within the plot, as a consequence of "the relationship between the hierarchy established among plot elements and the recognition of linguistic variation as a peripheral element" (Ramos Pinto 2009: 293). Eliminating variation may also represent a political statement, in case the translator decides to opt for translating a whole text into a non-standard variety: this way, a translation can "change the relation of linguistic forces, at the institutional and symbolic levels, by making it possible for the vernacular language to take the place of the referential language" (Brisset 1996: 345).

The number of possible options dramatically increases when the translator decides to preserve (at least partially) the variation of the source text. The second choice s/he is called to make concerns time and space coordinates. The translator can either preserve both, change both (thus changing time of narration and place of setting), or keep only one of the two – thus having either a same-place/different-time combination or a same-time/different-place combination. When making such a choice, it is important to ponder all the elements at stake. If changing time and place might allow the translator "to avoid the problem of recreating a language from decades ago, about which he or she may not possess enough information," it is also true that "because of the modifications it imposes on the text, the non-preservation of one of the coordinates may cause critics to classify the translator's work as an adaptation" (Ramos Pinto 2009: 294).

If the translator decides to keep the space-related coordinates, s/he can either do so by using "familiar features recognized as nonstandard in the target culture or to make use of features not familiar to the target culture receiver" (Ramos Pinto 2009: 294). If recognisable features are opted for, the possible declinations in the text move along an axis from more to less normalised, like shown in Figure 4. One possibility is to add explicit indications of the variation, which would compensate for the elimination of the non-standard element. Alternatively, the translator might leave only those features that explain power relations among characters (e.g. forms of address and honorific forms, Ramos Pinto 2009: 295). Another option is to upgrade the standard part of the text to a more formal language, so that the variation tends upwards rather than downwards (see Yu 2017). Other options are using oral features, to communicate a diversion from the standard without resorting to non-standard features that may be perceived as "wrong;" using a mix of various non-standard varieties, to convey the polarisation without making a specific reference to a group in the target culture; using a specific non-standard variety, bearing in mind that its social meaning for the target audience can be rather specific.

The translator, however, might also opt for features that are not already known by the audience. This happens, for example, when the clash between setting and linguistic variety jeopardises the whole credibility of the text (Brodovich 1997), or

when the choice of a specific target language variety might cause discontent because of the social meaning of the variety in the original text.[8] Another reason for using unfamiliar features is that the source text itself presents unfamiliar (i.e. made up) features – Ramos Pinto (2009: 295) takes the slang created by the characters of Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* as an example.

The translator might choose to import directly the features as they are in the source text – as will later be shown, this has often been the case with the Italian dubbing of the "exotic" lexical items characterising Chicano gangsters in American movies (see also Renna 2018a and Renna 2018b). Other options are to use the lexical features of the source text, while adapting their spelling to the target language norms, or to develop a "virtual dialect." Ramos Pinto (2009: 296) underlines that there are no better or worse strategies – rather, a certain solution might turn out to work well in a certain situation – and also reminds us that most often translators will use a mix of strategies to achieve the best result.

The translator also has to take into consideration the social and political implications of certain linguistic choices. In fact, as will be explained in detail in Chapter 3, ideology is a crucial factor in determining the type and strength of stereotypes in a society. In particular, negative prejudices are often attached to *orality*, typical of those peripheral varieties in social and geographic terms. Indeed, according to Bandia (2011: 108), orality is "an important factor in the aesthetic representation of otherness, the assertion of marginalized identities through a variety of art forms," especially because the strong oral tradition of numerous colonised cultures is often presented as a sign of illiteracy (see Chapter

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[8] To better explain this last point, the recounting of a direct experience of this author with students might be useful. During a workshop (held in English) at the University of Verona in 2016, a group of Foreign Languages postgraduate students were asked by this author and her supervisor what dialect they would use to translate African American English into Italian. A student proposed a southern dialect because, in her view as a northern Italian person, dialects from the south are "less understandable." When this author reported the answer to southern Italian Media Studies postgraduate students at the University of Bari during a guest lecture in 2017, they immediately replied they felt offended and underlined that, to them, northern dialects are just as incomprehensible.

3). The recognition of such a role of orality in culture triggered the interest and concern of TS:

> [P]reoccupation with issues of ideology, identity and power relations led to a growing interest in the translation and representation of minority cultures. […] suffered the negative stereotyping associated with non-literate cultures. [...] their languages are often marginalized in the global cultural space. (Bandia 2011: 109)

Chicanos and Chicano English are good examples of the way otherness is subject to stereotyping in the U.S. dominant culture, and the use of Chicano English in American cinema tends to confirm – and reinforce – those prejudicial attitudes (Renna 2018a; Renna 2018b; Renna 2018c). In fact, when ideological content linked to power relations is involved, the translator will have to handle an even more delicate task, which is representing the other in a new context, tightrope walking on a taut line between centre and periphery, dominant and minority cultures. As mentioned before, the representation of language variation does not have to be accurate – nevertheless, it has an enormous power, since "[a] sense of nationality and ethnicity, with its attendant stereotyping, still informs our daily lives" (van Doorslaer et al. 2016: 1). In this sense, the main issue for both author and translator is not identity in itself, but the ways in which identity is represented in fiction, with all the possible aspects of selection and manipulation. The study of image (or *imagology*) has its origin in Comparative Literature (Leerssen 2007), but its potential in terms of Translation Studies should not be underestimated, as it provides a series of key concepts and guidelines (from van Doorslaer et al. 2016, see also Leerssen 2007):

- rather than actual cultural differences, the central issue for authors and translators alike is the construction of *ethnotypes*, which are fictional (and stereotyped) "rationalizations of cultural difference" (van Doorslaer et al. 2016: 3);
- in order to demonstrate the ideological constructedness of a stereotype, analysis can deploy in three directions: textual (analysing the discourse built within the text), contextual (looking at the real-world relations), and intertextual (following the fictional use of a common place across texts);

- the role of fictional characterisation in building ethnotypes stems from "the (neo-) Aristotelian nature of the idea of 'character' as an instance of […] 'motivation:' i.e. the narrative predication of behaviour and acts to actorial figures, linking 'what people do' to 'how people are'" (van Doorslaer et al. 2016: 3);

- the lack of consciousness in ethnotype-evoking strengthens the ethnotype itself, as the reasons behind it are not questioned. The role of the research is to retrieve the origin of those images and their evolution, in order to demonstrate that "ethnotypes are ingrained discursive tropes rather than empirical observations" (van Doorslaer et al. 2016: 3);

- another feature proving the discursive nature of ethnotypes is their variability in both moral and psychological terms; new ethnotypes "emerge from the need to contradict earlier ones" (van Doorslaer et al. 2016: 4).

The observations on ethnotypes are indeed the reason why a whole chapter of this thesis (chapter 2) is dedicated to unveiling the history of the specific ethnotype taken as a case study, while another (chapter 4) recounts the *actual* features of Chicano English. These are the necessary premises to recognise the biases at stake in staging and translating discriminated minorities. Without an awareness of the historical roots of the Chicano gangster stereotype, one might be tempted to buy into certain narratives. The reconstruction also proves that the textual analysis does not linger on the stereotype for the sake of doing so – rather, the hope is that unveiling the ethnotyping process and its deployment could help show its fictional nature.

In conclusion, why accept the challenge of studying fictional language variation in translation? The reasons are manifold. Primarily, these representations have existed for an incredibly long time, which demonstrates their importance. Furthermore, since they are an actual challenge for translation practitioners, scholars should not turn a blind eye to them. Finally, their presence poses a series of ideological questions that, if ignored, might go unnoticed by professionals and audience alike, contributing to the creation of cultural barriers.

There is one last challenge to accept, however, which adds an extra level of complexity to the points so far explored. The nature of the challenge is vaguely anticipated by the term "imagology" itself. A stereotype can be delivered through linguistic means, but a way to make it even more powerful is to intertwine it with a visual representation. How is this representation best addressed, in a thesis that aims to describe a corpus of non-standard speakers as they are represented in films? Is it really useful – or possible – to do so while totally ignoring the visual apparatus of a text (the audiovisual text) that is built around multimodality?

1.4 Challenge 4: going beyond the text. Multimodality and translation

John Bateman notes a jarring contradiction in the way the relationship between text and image is natural in everyday life and communication, but thorny in theoretical studies:

> In many respects, and in many contexts, combining text and images is seen as the most straightforward, the most natural thing in the world. People have been putting textual information and images together for thousands of years […] "texts" and "images" are generally addressed by very different groups of disciplines and those disciplines often take different views both on just what they are describing and how descriptions should be pursued. (Bateman 2014: 5)

The fourth challenge in this thesis consists in methodologically retrieving the union between (acted) text and image, in order to acknowledge *multimodality*, defined by Bateman (2014: 6) as "the investigation of diverse modes of expression and their combination," and by Pérez-González (2014: 185) as "the combination of speaking, writing, visualization and music." Moreover, "[t]he terms *mode* and *modality* designate each type of acoustic and optic meaning-making resources or signs involved in the creation of such composite texts" (Pérez-González 2014: 186) – movies being a suitable example. In fact, movies are audiovisual texts, and audiovisual texts "involve the simultaneous deployment of several sign repertoires (including but not limited to speech or the written language of subtitles, film editing, image, music, colour or perspective)," perceived by the audience simultaneously through "the synchronized use of multiple media" (Pérez-González 2014: 186-187). The concept of multimodality

was first introduced by the work of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1990) and Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2000).

The combination of different modes of expression results in something more than mere addition since, as explained by Jay Lemke, the presence of more modes multiplies the meaning conveyed (for example, by a film):

> When the resources of multiple semiotic systems are codeployed: 1) each semiotic can contribute componentially to each […] functional aspect of meaning (e.g. lexical name and figural image to a presentational construct); 2) each can internally cross-modulate meanings across functional aspects (e.g. alternating point-of-view shots helping to construct a visual-organisational sequence); and 3) functionally specialised meaning resources in one semiotic combine with those for a different function in another semiotic to modulate any aspect of the meaning of the joint construct (e.g. the visual juxtaposition of verbal captions can allow their thematic meanings to interact with the different sizes of two graphs to determine their relative importance. (Lemke 1998: 92)

The complexity of a multimodal "text" lies in the complementarity and mutual support of its modes, to the point that it is impossible to do without any of them. Indeed, people with sight or hearing impairment (to whom a complete access to the multimodal product is precluded) need specific aid in order to be able to fully understand (and enjoy) an audiovisual product (Díaz-Cintas et al. 2010).

Nevertheless, the fact of carrying out such a composite task remains largely unacknowledged, since "[w]hen 'reading' a multimodal text, average recipients will normally become only dimly aware of the fact that they are processing information encoded in different modes," to the point that these become "a single unified *gestalt* in perception" (Stöckl 2004: 16). Kress et al. (2001) also proved that multimodality does not only concern audiovisual products, as it is also intertwined with the way human communication works – especially for what concerns teaching and learning – and they propose a multimodal approach to communication.

The fact that this process of paramount importance works so smoothly without a conscious effort depends on a human neurological predisposition; in contrast, the role of the researcher is "to meticulously dissect an apparently homogeneous and

holistic impression" (Stöckl 2004: 16) in order to shed some light on the way it works.

If the multimodality of an audiovisual product is so important for its full comprehension, if multimodality is part of the human brain, and if the role of the translator is to deliver a product that can have a function in the target culture – how does Translation Studies tackle this issue?

Until not long ago, multimodality was not really a central theme in Translation Studies, as its existence was acknowledged but not investigated. In 2002, Frederic Chaume wrote:

> [F]ew authors have made a profound study on the peculiarities of the construction of audiovisual texts, of the semiotic interaction that is produced in the simultaneous emissions of text and image, and the repercussions that this has in the process of translation. (Chaume 2002: 3)

Chaume's description points towards multimodality, and underlines that not many authors have investigated it. A few years later, a similar idea was expressed by Yves Gambier (2006), who underlined the paradox of studying screen translation without including the non-textual in the corpora. While it would be wrong to imagine this is due to laziness in research, the reason should probably be found in the tools that have so far been available to researchers – bearing in mind that tools like media, languages and technology work as extensions of human mind and culture (McLuhan 1964). Indeed, while audiovisual communication is inextricably bound to image, which is probably its most important component, research has increasingly concentrated on the verbal element (Díaz-Cintas 2008).

On the side of AVT professionals, the divide between text and image may depend on the fact that "industry's surveillance of professional audiovisual translation continues to impose the excision of language from other forms of meaning-making (forcing translators to restrict their involvement to the mediation of language)" (Pérez-González 2014: 185). However, with the more recent developments in terms of digital technologies, this situation has gradually started to change, which pushed AVT activities towards a more multimodal and participated (with the audience) direction (Pérez-González 2014: 186).

Nevertheless, most research on the topic is limited to the textual dimension. According to Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming), this might be explained by the fact that academic research is predominantly focused on the written mode, and this is especially true for corpus-based research (which is today particularly appreciated by TS scholars). Corpora techniques (and technologies) have been focusing on textual analysis. This creates a rift between what the audiovisual product is and the way it is analysed. The authors note that audiovisual translation studies tend to focus either exclusively on text in order to analyse large corpora, or use qualitative (and smaller) case studies to look at a broader range of aspects of the audiovisual product. Some researchers have noticed this empty space in the Audiovisual Translation Studies, and have worked to build multimodal corpora, which is anything but easy, since the problem is not just to *have* the audiovisual material stored *there*, but also to make it analysable and processable (Allwood 2008: 208).

One example is the *Forlì Corpus of Screen Translation* (*Forlixt 1*), which contains source and dubbed versions of 30 Italian and German (and a few French) films, and includes both audiovisual material and transcripts (Valentini 2008: 38-39). The written and the audiovisual are stored in two different Web-based databases.

Another corpus is TRACCE (Jiménez and Seibel 2012; Jiménez Hurtando and Soler Gallego 2013), which contains hundreds of movies and audio descriptions. It includes three levels of semantic tagging: Narrative (intended as mise-en-scène), Image, and Grammar; for each of them a conceptual map with the possible ramifications is built (Jiménez and Seibel 2012: 413-415). The software used was *Taggetti*, especially created for tagging audiovisual products translated through audio-description (developed by Gizer.net and the University of Deusto, Spain), along with its evolution *Taggetti 2*.

One last example is the *Pavia Corpus of Film Dialogue* (PCFD), a parallel corpus of 24 British and American films with their dubbed Italian versions – as well as a small number of movies in Italian as a comparable source. The corpus consists in "orthographic transcriptions of the film lines as they were uttered on screen,

segmented and, in the case of the parallel corpus, aligned on a turn-by-turn basis" (Freddi 2013: 495).

While the efforts made in these corpora are certainly remarkable, Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming) underline that the amount of resources and labour required in the analysis of the data imposes relevant limits to the work of individual researchers, who will be discouraged from attempting such a daring project.

In this sense, inspiring suggestions concerning the study of multimodality have been made by authors working with multimodal language and translation. In his recount of the development of multimodality studies, Iedema (2003: 48) points to four key research directions:

> 1. [Multimodality] is concerned to include in its analyses of representations and give proper recognition to semiotics other than language;
>
> 2. [Multimodality] focuses on the relationships between these different semiotics, and on the "division of labour" between them in particular representations;
>
> 3. [Multimodality] aims to understand and describe in "phylogenetic" terms the displacement of some semiotics by others (e.g. the displacement of the linguistic by the visual);
>
> 4. [Multimodality] links the potential of the different semiotics deployed to how they affect (enable and constrain) interaction and formation of subjectivity. (Iedema 2003: 48)

The second point is crucial. While having text *and* video recordings is certainly a great step ahead in recognising multimodality, storing the two things in parallel might not necessarily reveal much about the connection *between* the two. It is better to ask the core question: how do textual and non-textual modes combine in order to create something that is more than a simple sum of the two? This is not a simple question since, as previously mentioned, the modes are perceived simultaneously.

Although her background is not Translation Studies, Pastra (2008) worked towards the implementation of a system capable of making the relationship between modes more visible. She argues that, although "everyday interaction is

predominantly multimodal," there is still a "poor understanding of multimodal human behaviour" (Pastra 2008: 299). Her attempt is to describe "semantic interrelations between images, language and body movements […] from a message-formation perspective rather than a communicative goal one" (Pastra 2008: 299), with the aim of achieving *descriptive power* and *computational applicability* in her system. Descriptive power refers to the fact that "the framework should be general enough to describe the interaction between any media pair," while computational applicability means that the framework "should guide the computational modelling of multimedia dialectics as evidenced in multimodal human behaviour" (Pastra 2008: 300). For this purpose, the COSMOROE (CrOSs-Media inteRactiOn rElations) framework was implemented – corpus-based, descriptive, focused on interactions between modes. The relations are built by analogy with figures of speech (e.g. metonymy) and "attempt to capture the semantic aspects of the message formation process itself" (Pastra 2008: 306). The COSMOROE contains vignettes, crime-scene photographs and travel documentaries – the latter providing the richest data to analyse. Pastra (2008: 307) also hypothesises the use of COSMOROE for audiovisual fiction but admits that the interactions in these products may drift apart from the relations established in everyday interactions (better mirrored by travel documentaries). Pastra's framework presents a complex diagram of relations and subrelations:
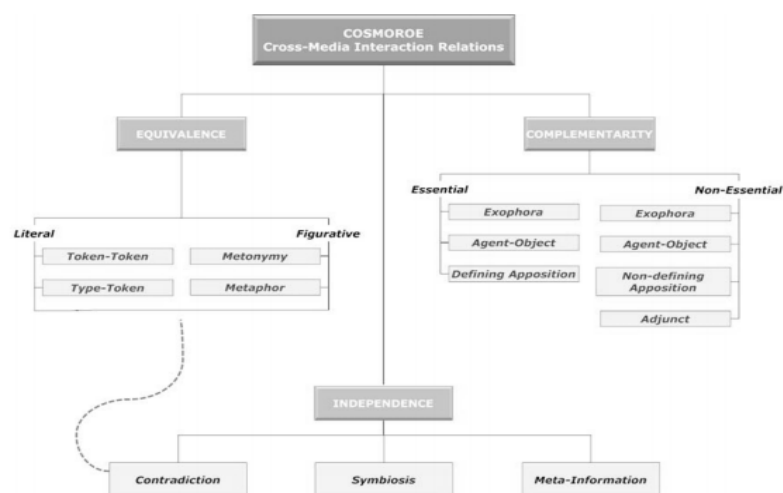

Figure 5 Pastra's (2008: 308) COSMOROE relations

The main relations are: 1) *equivalence*, present when "the information expressed by the different media is semantically equivalent" (Pastra 2008: 307); 2) *complementarity*, when "the information expressed in one medium is (an essential or not) complement of the information expressed in another medium (Pastra 2008: 308); 3) *independence*, when each medium conveys an independent message, regardless of whether the messages are reciprocally coherent or not. These main relations are further divided among subrelations. For example, the equivalence relations change based on whether they are literal or figurative, while the complementary relations are divided in subtypes based on whether the complementarity itself is essential or non-essential to message comprehension. Independence can be a) contradiction, when the messages passing through the modes are completely opposite to one another b) symbiosis, when "one medium provides some information and the other shows something that is thematically related, but does not refer or complement that information in any way" (Pastra 2008: 313); c) meta-information, if one mode carries "extra information independent from pieces of information expressed by the other media, but […] inherently related to them" (Pastra 2008: 314).

In order to retrieve this kind of information, the COSMOROE framework relies on multiple annotation systems that, as stated by the author, are demanding "in terms of cognitive effort and time" (Pastra 2008: 319) and might still present cases in which the relation is not necessarily intuitive for the annotators. Nonetheless, COSMOROE is a precious contribution, as it moves a step further in the attempt to answer the question: "what kind of semantic associations take place when humans combine pieces of information from different media in multimodal communication?" (Pastra 2008: 321).

Pastra's work inspired the multimodal analysis carried out by Dicerto (2014; 2018), who built a corpus of multimodal source texts (e.g. adverts, comic strips, web pages, graphs – no videos were included), thus expanding the interest of this model in the field of translation. Dicerto edits Pastra's model to make it suitable to her research purposes. Primarily "relations of contradiction are not treated as a sub-type of relations of independence, but as a category of its own whose sub-types coincide with the ones shown by the relation of equivalence" (Dicerto 2014:

79). Moreover, Dicerto attempts to combine Pastra's model with the framework developed by Martinec and Salway (2005), so as to add "a category identifying a visual-verbal relation in which a textual element is crucial for the recipient to be able to select one of two (or more) meanings associated with a polysemic word/image as the intended interpretation within that context" (Dicerto 2018: 84). Martinec and Salway had developed (in the context of communication studies) a system aimed at analysing intermodal relations based on "the relative status of images and text, and how they relate to one another in terms of logico-semantics" (Martinec and Salway 2005: 337). In particular, they identified the relations between text and image in terms of dichotomy between equal and unequal, in order to understand whether the modes were independent, complementary, or one was subordinate to the other (Martinec and Salway 2005: 349). The merging between the two models implies adding logico-semantic relationships to the (edited) COSMOROE scheme:
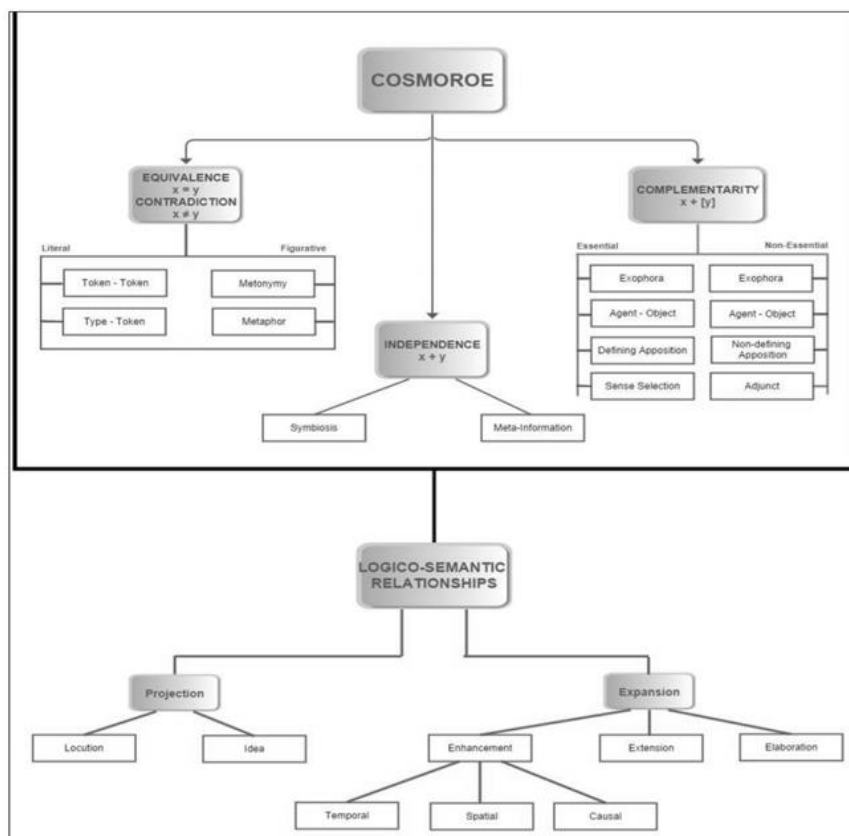

Figure 6 Dicerto's (2014: 81; 2018: 83) merged framework of COSMOROE and logico-semantic relationships

The purpose of Dicerto, however, is not entirely descriptive, as she suggests (2014: 82) that her model be used by translation trainees aiming to understand the relation between modes in the source text and reproduce them in a similar way in the target text. Undoubtedly, Dicerto acknowledges the fact that two main obstacles might jeopardise resemblance between source and target text, namely 1) the inability (due to the translator) or the impossibility (due to linguistic or external restrictions) "to reproduce the logical form" (Dicerto 2014: 82) and the relative intermodal relations; 2) differences between source and target culture's "contextual and/or encyclopaedic knowledge to which the textual resources appeal in order to suggest explicatures and implicatures meant to lead the recipient towards a certain interpretation" (Dicerto 2018: 85).

A step further towards intermodal relations, larger corpora and descriptiveness of source and target text is made by the contributions of Ramos Pinto (2017) and Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming). Since these works seem particularly relevant to this research, they will be used here as a reference in the description of the analysis carried out by this author (despite their research being focused on subtitling). In fact, they retrieve the issue of translating non-standard language, and assume a descriptive and corpus-related perspective.

The model implemented in Ramos Pinto (2017) and Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming) has multiple functions. Firstly, it serves to identify the linguistic varieties and the way those were expressed though speech in both source and target text. The subsequent step consists of retrieving the communicative function of the varieties and their relations with other modes. Consequently, it allows the inference of the strategies adopted (based on the product), and the understanding of their impact on the other modes. Finally, hypothesising possible external factors impacting the translation process helps avoid simplistic judgement on the "success" of a strategy (in line with the purposes of DTS). The model has proven its effectiveness on a large corpus (Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki, forthcoming).[9]

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[9] The figures and tables in Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming) will not be shown in this thesis since, at the time this author is writing, the article has not been published yet. The article, which presents an innovative AVT multimodal framework, could be accessed in advance by this author during her research period at the University of Leeds in 2018, where the authors Sara

The analysis works on the textual, diegetic and sociocultural dimension. For what concerns the textual dimension, by looking at the target text, Ramos Pinto (2017) identifies two sets of possible strategies: on the one hand, *neutralisation strategies*, which can either tend towards *discourse standardisation* or *discourse dialectisation* (Ramos Pinto 2017: 22; also see paragraph 1.3). On the other hand, *preservation strategies* are possible as well. Among these, the most recurrent is probably *centralisation*, "for the cases in which the TT presents a lower frequency of non-standard features (or the choice of more prestigious features/variety in relation to the ST) and can thus be placed closer to the centre of prestige" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 23). *Maintenance* and *decentralisation* are also possible, "respectively [for] cases in which the TT presents a similar or higher frequency of non-standard features in relation to the ST" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 23).

The research into the diegetic dimension has the purpose of finding out the way that "the non-standard varieties' communicative meaning and diegetic functions are constructed in an audiovisual context" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 23). In particular, the author envisions three main modes participating in meaning-making: the *spoken mode*, the *mise-en-scene mode* and the *subtitles mode*. These contribute to the construction of meaning in both source and target text. Within the spoken mode, the objective should be to look at how the non-standard variety was created, namely through accent (see paragraph 1.3) and/or vocabulary/morphosyntax. The mise-en-scene mode might be subdivided in costume and make up, figure behaviour, and setting.

In this sense, it is crucial to underline that selecting the "portions" for the analysis presents a number of issues: as mentioned earlier on, in a multimodal product all the modes are processed simultaneously, and separating is a counter-intuitive effort. In addition, separating also means deliberately selecting from a product that exists by virtue of its entirety. That is why, in suggesting a selection of subcategories for each mode, Ramos Pinto (2017: 24) suggests that "after considering the elements more directly participating in the construction of the character's profile," adding more categories might be considered.

Ramos Pinto and Aishah Mubaraki work on AVT and multimodality within the centre for Translation Studies (CTS).

Once the modes and their subcategories are outlined, the subsequent step is to distinguish whether these reciprocally establish relations of *contradiction* or *confirmation*. Contradiction is two modes expressing opposed meanings (Ramos Pinto 2017: 25; Pastra 2008). If the non-standard variety is used in contradiction with the other modes, the function of language is to create a distance between the character who is speaking and those around them (which can have various purposes depending on the broader plot). A relation of confirmation is established when the meanings expressed by each mode comply with the character's profile. If this happens, "the presence of the non-standard variety leads to the identification of the characters as part of a regional/social group […] introducing authenticity and […] establishing interpersonal relationships of solidarity (with characters who are part of the same group) or power (with characters who are not part of the same group" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 24). The relation of confirmation is further subdivided in Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming), who add the relation of *complementarity*, retrieving Pastra's (2008: 308) category. After looking at the ST, the construction of meaning in the TT also needs a thorough analysis, bearing in mind that the TT also contains the subtitles mode, which needs to be added to the equation and divided between vocabulary/morpho-syntax and graphic features. Indeed, changes in the intermodal relationships within the TT help to understand whether the ST relationships have been kept, modified, or cancelled. In turn, intersecting strategies and TT relations might shed light on the "possible impact of the strategy and procedures adopted in preserving or altering the intermodal relations established and, consequently, the diegetic functions they support" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 26).

Lastly, the function of the socio-cultural dimension is to "contextualise the identified strategies within the broader cultural context" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 29). This kind of evaluation will prevent the researcher from formulating uninformed judgements concerning the quality of the product or the "success" of the strategies. For this purpose, a list of key factors is compiled (but left open for more). The ideological context has a pivotal role, as it determines whether the translator's creativity is encouraged or repressed. Another element to consider is the differences between source and target cultures – the more distant these are, the

more difficult it will be to reproduce the same linguistic varieties and intermodal relations. The status granted to AV translation and its agents is also fundamental: is the translator supposed to be creative or will deviation be interpreted as a mistake? In this sense, the translator's working conditions cannot be ruled out: little recognition, tight deadlines and low pay might influence the way a translation is handled. The expected audience of an AV product also influences the translator's choices, as a product that is meant to be "sold" has to respond to its clients' needs and expectations. Analogously, the target product's function within its culture (see paragraph 1.1) will trigger certain expectations related to innovative solutions – in particular, translations accepted by the target culture as "innovative" tend to display a greater number of non-standard features (Ramos Pinto 2010).

A framework thus designed, in our view, represents an important step forward in tackling the challenge of multimodality in audiovisual translation from a descriptive, corpus-based perspective that focuses on non-standard language.

Accepting the challenge of multimodality in audiovisual translation is to move in a territory only partly charted so far. Although it is increasingly being explored and acknowledged, it does not have fixed paths yet – which makes the challenge more arduous but definitely worth accepting.

In conclusion, this chapter aimed to outline a framework within translation studies, whose function is to embed this research and to clarify its objectives and methodologies. From the issues tackled in this Chapter arise those discussed in the others, in a structure that behaves like a hypertext expanding in more directions – all converging in the conclusive analysis.

More specifically, the decision to describe a non-standard variety spoken by a discriminated and stereotyped minority prompted the historical and media review discussed in chapter 2, as how can this author comprehend how a stereotype is built without being aware of its origin and mediated uses? The same reasons inspired the writing of chapters 3 and 4: the fact that fictional language is not the real language of the minorities, but can reflect a "convenient" part of it, calls for a

deeper understanding of how minority languages are born and considered against an imposed yardstick.

Part II – Chicanos from identity to stereotype. Historical and linguistic contextualisation

After explaining the TS framework that inspired this thesis, the next chapters will provide a contextualisation which aims to explain how history, identity and language are complex issues, never completely separated from ideology, which is itself at the origin of discriminating practices such as stereotyping.

Stereotyping can have a neutral definition, when intended as the act of creating mental categories to organise human thought. However, when it is stained by ethnocentrism and prejudice, it becomes a way to create an unbridgeable distance between the in-group "us" and the out-group "them" (Ramírez Berg 2002: 14-15). Thus defined, a negative stereotype has a set of features defining it. According to Ramírez Berg (2002: 14-23), negative stereotypes have eleven common characteristics:

- they are applied with rigid logic, which means that a direct relation cause/consequence is built, based on belonging to a certain group;

- they may be partially fact-based, and the fact that the stereotype can in some cases be spotted in real-life examples contributes to its strength;

- they are simplified generalisations implying the homogeneity of the out-group: a stereotype is "the part that stands for the whole" (Ramírez Berg, 2002: 16). This is linked to their partial correlation with facts – as the negative examples are singled out and become the symbol of a whole group;

- they do not serve to predict actual behaviours as a consequence of their vagueness: confronted with the heterogeneous reality, those who are not willing to change their mind will simply rule out any contradictory data that may unsettle the stereotype;

- they lack context and historical positioning: since they are partially based on historical or current events, they need to abstract from them in order to conceal the difference between themselves and their factual counterparts;

- they are normalised by their repetition: while a director might say s/he is simply "telling a story," the regularity of recurring patterns concerning (for example) the Latino character in the role of the gangster reveals a more or less conscious mechanism. This reiteration is what makes a stereotype credible:

A "vicious cycle" aspect to repeated stereotyping arises because expressing learned stereotypes reinforces and to that extent validates and perpetuates them. Stereotypes are false to history, but conform to another historical tradition – namely, the history of movies and movie stereotyping. They begin, over time, to become part of the narrative form itself – anticipated, typical, and well nigh "invisible." Ironically, then, representation becomes narration. (Ramírez Berg 2002: 19)

- they are actually believed: more specifically, the attitude shapes and consolidates the belief in a certain stereotype (Allport 1954). The belief reaches the discriminating group, but is also interiorised by the discriminated, who may develop a sense of self-loathing from a young age (Stephan and Rosenfield 1982). Those strong beliefs are the prelude to actions that, as will be shown in the following chapter, often take the shape of racial violence, hate crimes and lynching;

- they can be reciprocal, even though they work better when the discriminating in-group has a socially and politically dominant position, since the dominant group usually controls media representations and public narrations (Ramírez Berg 2002: 21);

- they have an ideological core that replicates the colonial system: while representing the other as inferior, evil, savage, the stereotypes imply a power relation aimed at affirming and preserving the status of the dominant group;

- they happen to exist inside an in-group, whose members establish an internal hierarchy. Stereotypes of this kind usually address the weaker parts of the group (poor, disabled, ill etc.);

- they are usually defeated by knowledge: while people may refuse to
overcome their stereotypes by refusing contacts with the other group, once
contact has been established it is more likely to let go of preconceptions
(see chapter 3).

These characteristics transform representation in a recognisable universal that
works as a narrative device (Ramírez Berg 2002: 42) by virtue of the
normalisation effect triggered by its repetition (Ramírez Berg 2002: 16). In fact,
although stereotypes do not correspond (or not completely) to historical facts,
they conform to the tradition of their mediated representations (Ramírez Berg
2002: 19). Why is such a discriminatory practice come about? It has specific
functions at the individual level as well as at the group level, contributing to
simplify reality and representing and preserving values – which can explain social
events and justify group attitudes and behaviours. This eventually works as a way
to affirm in-group positive identity against an antagonist out-group (Oakes,
Haslam & Turner 1994: 85). The idea of justifying certain actions might be a
crucial driving force for the dominant in-group.

This thesis is based on the assumption that a stereotype is a complex construction,
in which several layers intertwine in an apparently inextricable way. Therefore,
the aim of this part is to provide the background knowledge that might explain the
Chicano gangster stereotype in its origin and motivations, while at the same time
debunking their rigid logic and unveiling their profoundly ideological core.

2 Chapter 2 – Chicanos: the history of a major minority.

The film characters of this case study are assessed in the context of the history and
directors build on this shared knowledge for character depiction (Ramos Pinto
2009; see chapter 5). In order to make this chapter functional to the understanding
of the stereotype, particular attention will be paid to comparing the events with
their public narration.

2.1 Introduction: who is an American?

First, it is useful to take a step back and define what it means to be American. The United States as we know it today exists as a result of settler colonisation, as people from some European countries moved there with the specific intent to establish their new home, and "the fact that those lands were inhabited was dealt with by the use of violent coercion and genocide" (Saraceni 2015: 46). Immigration to the United States continued beyond the initial settler colonisation, with immigrants arriving from other countries over the centuries. As a result, it is now commonplace to think of this nation as "the original immigrant country" (Kymlicka 1995: 61), where several nationalities, ethnicities and cultures merge into a complex identity.

However, the merging of different ethnicities and nationalities was never peaceful, as the new waves of immigration are usually frowned upon by former immigrants, and the newcomers often suffer from discrimination on many different levels (Espenshade & Hempstead 1996, 537). The conflicts are mainly triggered by a concept of Americanness that is linked to racial, ethnic, linguistic and religious criteria. It privileges the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) profile, reminiscent of the British colonisers, and is at the core of inner conflicts of all sorts, from the segregation of African Americans to the more recent success of political leaders promoting restrictive immigration laws that do not seem to resonate with the multicultural image of the United States. As noted by Glazer (1996: 94), "at every point in history, the broadly inclusionary view can be contrasted with a narrow racist and chauvinist view." In fact, despite the inherent hybridity of the American population, it appears that not everyone is considered as a legitimate inhabitant:

> A strong accent, a distant culture, is no bar to citizenship, although it is clear that whatever we mean by the American nation, the new citizen may not yet be considered a full member of it by many of his fellow citizens, because of race or accent. (Glazer 1996, 87-88)

Despite the social and political conflicts, the law concerning citizenship is clearly a product of the national history of migration and settlement. Indeed, according to

the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration services, one can become an American citizen at birth if s/he meets the following requirements:

- Have been *born in* the United States or certain territories or outlying possessions[10] of the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; OR

- had a *parent* or parents who were citizens at the time of your birth (if you were born abroad)[11]

Thus, the United States of America have in place a mix of *ius soli* (born on land) and *ius sanguinis* (born from citizen parents) to determine citizenship. This kind of citizenship, different from the ones purely based on *ius sanguinis*, is linked to a deeply diverse ethnic fabric, where different heritages combine more or less peacefully. However, the contrast between what is legally established and social reality is rooted in the nation-state rhetoric which originated and thrived in Europe starting from the seventeenth century (Bean 1973: 203). As explained by Hardt and Negri (2000: 95), the idea of nation-state is founded on a quasi-mythological unification of land, people and language: only those who were born within specific borders and share ethnic heritage and language can conceive of themselves as members of the same nation. Such a concept of nation implies a social, ethnic and linguistic 'pureness' that rarely finds corroborating evidence in experience: most of the times it proves itself to be a strongly ideological position,

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[10] The Policy Manual lists the specific territories that are included in the citizenship. Time restrictions also apply:

> Persons who are born in certain territories of the United States also may be citizens at birth. In general, but subject in some cases to other requirements, including residence requirements as of certain dates, this includes persons born in: Puerto Rico on or after April 11, 1899; Canal Zone or the Republic of Panama on or after February 26, 1904; Virgin Islands on or after January 17, 1917; Guam born after April 11, 1899; or Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) on or after November 4, 1986.
>
> (https://www.uscis.gov/policymanual/HTML/PolicyManual-Volume12-PartA-Chapter2.html, last visited 05/06/18).

[11] From the Official website of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration services: https://www.uscis.gov/us-citizenship (last visited June 5th 2018).

informed by nationalism. From a nationalistic perspective, the idea of nation compels its supporters to reify and de-historicise cultures and communities in order to justify itself:

> Nations as a natural, God-given way of classifying men, as an inherent though long-delayed political destiny, are a myth; nationalism, which sometimes takes pre-existing cultures and turns them into nations, sometimes invents them, and often obliterates pre-existing cultures: *that* is a reality, for better or worse, and in general an inescapable one. (Geller 1983: 47)

It can then be argued that the idea of a monolithic national identity is questionable *per se*, and that any claim of a complete overlapping is simplistic and counterfactual. This is especially evident in the United States, given its history of conquest and migration, which imposed a selective study and narration of history in order to accommodate for religious, political and racial ideologies that could contribute to the artificial construction of a monolithic, clear-cut national identity (Cartosio 2018).

The case of those called "Chicanos" is particularly emblematic, because their 'Americanness' is intrinsically bound to fading boundaries, shifting boundaries and boundary breeching – proving that boundaries are always historically determined, rather than natural and unchangeable.

2.2 From Mexico to USA

Several scholars have investigated the history of the population of Mexican origin in the United States, unveiling a complex history that refuses to be reduced to a simple matter of immigration from a poorer country to a wealthier one. Goldman and Ybarra-Frausto (1985: 12), in outlining the origin of Chicano art, divide the history of this community into four phases. The division seems relevant to both art and history, and will therefore be applied to simplify this brief recount of how Chicanos became what they are today. The first phase takes place between 1598 and 1821: in this period, given the uncertain geography delimitating Mexico and United States, numerous Spanish conquistadores migrated towards the area and mixed with the indigenous population, giving birth to the so-called *mestizos*. The

second phase starts one year after the Mexican independence from Spain: the new state included the territories of Alta California, Nuevo México, and Coahuila y Tejas (or Texas), roughly corresponding to the current south-west of the United States. The area of Alta California had developed through the expansion of Franciscan Order-managed missions, mainly dedicated to cattle raising. The missions, along with their laic counterparts, the ranchos, constituted the main economic resource of the region. Here, the first Anglo immigrants had arrived in small numbers and often mixed with the local population through marriage; however, after the inauguration of the Oregon Trail in the 1840s, whole families moved from the United States and settled far from the Mexicans, with no intention of abiding by the local law or becoming citizens of the state hosting them (Carlisle 2011: 45-46). In the meantime, the area that would now correspond to Arizona and New Mexico was mainly inhabited by mestizos. Facilitated by the construction of the Santa Fe trail, a thriving exchange between the independent Mexico and the United States saw people and goods travel both ways (Carlisle 2011: 45), with the Anglo population slowly growing.

The non-indigenous population of Texas counted a few thousands, and this made it barely profitable and difficult to defend. For this reason, the Mexican government initially encouraged migration from the United States, under the condition that the immigrants became Mexican citizens and abided by the local law (Carlisle 2011: 43). The new Anglo inhabitants of Texas (Texians), however, mainly coming from the southern states, largely ignored Mexican law. This was especially because, among the rest, it forbade slavery:

> Euroamericans had already created a privileged caste, which depended in great part on the economic advantage given to them by their slaves. When Mexico abolished slavery, on September 15, 1829, Euroamericans circumvented the law by "freeing" their slaves and then signing them to lifelong contracts as indentured servants. They resented the Mexican order and considered it an infringement on their personal liberties. (Acuña 2000: 44)

The Mexican authorities did not approve the attitude of the Anglos, and political tension grew in Texas. While Mexico had prohibited immigration from the United States in 1830 in response to the Anglos bypassing the law, mass movements

continued. In fact, U.S. Land Companies sold land scrips to great amounts of people, convincing them that the purchased paper entitled them to a plot of land – which, with Texas belonging to Mexico, was simply not possible (Acuña 2000: 45).

The conflict exploded in 1835. On one side, the Anglos fought on a familiar territory. Their opponents, guided by the military leader Santa Anna, were a few thousand conscripts (often conscripted against their will) who had travelled for miles from southern Mexico, and included a great number of non-Spanish speaking native Mexicans (Acuña 2000: 46). The consequent notorious battle of the Alamo garrison has long been depicted as a heroic enterprise at the roots of Texan and U.S. history, and many books and movies have portrayed it in significantly incoherent and ideologically biased ways (Weber 1988: 134). In the reconstruction of Walter Lord (1968: 25), as reported by Acuña, "two-thirds of the defenders had recently arrived from the United States […] come to Texas for the riches and the glory. They were hardly the sort of men who could be classified as peaceful colonists fighting for their homes" (Acuña 2000: 47). Indeed, the Alamo was an irrelevant location from a strategic point of view and, according to recent research, it was hardly defensible (Tucker 2010: 82-84). The defeat of the Anglos, rather than a heroic defence of a crucial bastion of Texan freedom, was a rather useless episode which concluded with the U.S. contingent surrender (Acuña 2000: 47). Nevertheless, the defeat encouraged a significant amount of help from the United States, providing men and resources to the cry of "Remember the Alamo" (Lord 1968: 25; Acuña 2000: 47). After another victory at the Goliad garrison, the Mexican troops were surprise-attacked during the siesta hour at San Jacinto: Santa Anna "signed the territory away" (Acuña 2000: 48) and most of his men were killed. Although the Mexican government did not recognise the legal value of Santa Anna's signature, this last battle led to the declaration of independence of the Republic of Texas in 1836 (Carlisle 2011: 47). This was the crucial premise of the following events.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, there had been an ongoing debate in the United States: while the northern states proposed the annexation of Oregon, the southern supported the annexation of Texas. The president, James K. Polk,

had promised during his campaign that both would become members of the United States. In fact, as already proposed by former president Tyler, Texas was annexed by joint resolution in 1845, and the new president Polk accepted the agreement after his election (Acuña 2000: 48). This all happened while there had been no official cession of Texas on the side of the Mexican government, which therefore could not accept the agreement. Both governments sent their troops to the border but, while the United States were convinced that Texas extended up to the Río Grande, for the Mexican authorities the border had always coincided with the Nueces River (Bauer 1974:11), 150 miles north. The Mexican War started in 1846, clearly as an act of aggression perpetrated by the United States, and went well beyond the scope of annexing Texas:

> The poorly equipped and poorly led Mexican army stood little chance against the expansion-minded Euroamericans. Even before the war Polk planned the campaign in stages: (1) Mexicans would be cleared out of Texas; (2) Euroamericans would occupy California and New Mexico; and (3) U.S. forces would march to Mexico City to force the beaten government to make peace on Polk's terms. (Acuña 2000: 49)

Indeed, the defeat of Mexico implied the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. By signing the treaty, the Mexican authorities recognised the border of Texas established by the United States, and were also forced to sell over 500,000 square miles of their territory, about half of their land, to their opponents (Carlisle 2011: 50). This way, the modern states of Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Utah, California and Nevada became part of the United States (Penfield & Ornstein-Galicia 1985: 1). Mexican negotiators feared for the destiny of the Mexicans that would wake up suddenly belonging to another state, with no protection for their rights, properties and religion. Indeed, while only 2,000 Mexicans agreed to be displaced and moved to what remained of Mexico, "most remained in what they considered their land" (Acuña 2000: 54). The articles added to the treaty to try to ensure that the rights of the Mexicans were respected (VIII, IX and X)[12] were either deleted (X) or simply ignored (VIII and IX), so that

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[12] Article VIII established that the Mexicans living on the territory that had become part of the United States could choose whether to stay in their homes or to move to Mexico. The right to

"during the nineteenth century most Mexicans in the United States were considered as a class apart from the dominant race" (Acuña 2000: 55). The enforcement of the protections stated in the aforementioned articles basically depended on "the mercy of the U.S. courts" (Acuña 2000: 55).

Facilitated by the Southern Pacific Railroad (completed in 1876), more Anglos moved to the area, which increased the population, but also brought about substantial changes in the ethnic (and linguistic) landscape, with Anglos outnumbering Mexicanos nearly everywhere and acquiring political leadership. The Mexican Americans were gradually displaced, relegated to the status of foreigners in the land that was once theirs. In the meantime, the new U.S. boundaries were breached from the south when significant amounts of Mexicans started migrating to the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century – along with other groups of Hispanics and Spanish, Cuban and Puerto Rican exiles (Carlisle 2011: 83). Given the widening gap between the economic development of United States and Mexico, it was not uncommon for American recruiters to hire workers from south of the border – often resorting to "deceptive tactics such as the promise of high wages and the imposition of a transportation fee that left the new arrival in debt" (Carlisle 2011: 85).

The Mexican immigrants mainly worked as seasonal agricultural labourers, work in which they were often joined by the established Mexican Americans, as their loss of status often relegated them to low-paid and physically demanding jobs. Mexican Americans thus also worked as railroad workers, miners or factory workers. Furthermore, they were subject to racial segregation, as "Hispanic Americans, like African Americans, faced daily battles with racism, discrimination, and the decline in the social acceptability of interracial marriages" (Carlisle 2011: 86). With this historical transformation ends the second phase, the

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property of those remaining in the USA had to be respected "inviolablemente." Article IX stipulated that, if they preferred to stay in the United States, they could apply for American citizenship, and their request had to be approved as quickly as possible. It also extended the inalienable right to property to Catholic properties (temples, churches, houses). Article X contained limitations and specifications of the previous two. For the full text of the Treaty (in Spanish): http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra/tratado-de-guadalupe-hidalgo--1/ (Last visited June 15th 2018).

conclusion of which is traced to 1910 by Goldman and Ybarra-Frausto (1985: 12). The third phase, lasting until 1965, starts in 1910. This was the year in which the Mexican Revolution sparked, mainly as a response to the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz. After gaining fame as a soldier, he managed to be elected in 1884, and amended the Constitution so that he could remain president indefinitely (Ochoa & Smith 2009: 133). Supported by those who saw in his rule the end of interminable socio-political turmoil and the beginning of an unforeseen modernisation of the state (the so-called *Pax Porfiriana*), he governed for 27 years following the beginning of the revolution. However, his rule meant the violent repression of all his opponents, whether killed, exiled or jailed. While the modernisation meant immense advantage for middle and upper classes, the lower social strata were largely left at the margin of the development (Ochoa & Smith 2009: 134). The natives had forcefully been deprived of their lands, and the fields, owned by a small dominant group, were cultivated by "debt peons living in hunger, illiteracy, and squalor" (Ochoa & Smith 2009: 134). The mass discontent led to the aforementioned revolution unleashed by peasant armies, guided by leaders such as Pancho Villa in the north and Emiliano Zapata in the south. The Mexican Constitution was approved in 1917 and, among other things, it "abolished debt peonage, mandated a minimum wage and unemployment insurance, and granted workers' rights, including the right to strike" (Ochoa & Smith 2009: 136). However, this milestone event happened after years of violence and conflict, also followed by a turbulent succession of presidents. The unstable situation naturally caused waves of migration towards the north: a first wave, going from 1900 to 1914, involved people trying to escape from the oppressive regime for political reasons, while the second wave from 1914 to 1929 involved greater numbers of people, and was a combined response to the inner chaos in Mexico and the labour shortage in the U.S. caused by World War I. While some Mexican Americans fled to Mexico to avoid the military draft, others joined the army to prove their loyalty to the United States – although, as will be later explained in more detail, the presence of Mexican Americans in the army was often looked on with suspicion (Ochoa & Smith 2009: 141).

The number of Mexicans migrating north of the border doubled in each decade from the start of the twentieth century, going from 49,642 in the first decade to 219,004 in the second decade to 459,287 in the third decade. It was a shift of about 10% of the total Mexican population, provoking a significant increase of the Mexican-born population in the United States: from 103,000 to 1,400,000 in thirty years (Ochoa & Smith 2009: 137). Their main destinations were usually in the southwest: Los Angeles in California and San Antonio and El Paso in Texas (Carlisle 2011: 85). It is worth noting that the migration did not only involve the lower classes. In fact, given the predicament that was being faced in Mexico, it should not be surprising that many of the displaced people actually belonged to the most disparate social backgrounds:

> The newcomers included many poor people but also well-to-do businessmen and political refugees of various sorts: politicians, army officers, intellectuals, and journalists. Some of the better-educated and better-capitalized immigrants started businesses, including Spanish-language newspapers and bookstores to serve a small but growing Mexican-American middle class. The poorer, unskilled refugees were fortunate to arrive just as commercial agriculture was booming in the West and Southwest. (Ochoa & Smith 2009: 137)

The state of California[13], initially lagging behind because of its geographical isolation and inadequate transportation network, gradually gained a position in world trade thanks to the industrial revolutions in England, U.S. and Europe (Acuña 2000: 132-133). Californios, proud of their Spanish and colonial heritage, took over the missions and grew in wealth and power through ranchos and haciendas, while the natives were increasingly pushed to the margin of the society and stripped of their land. Becoming part of the Mexican Republic in 1821 meant California aligning with the Mexican policy of openness to trade and immigration. As a collateral consequence, Euroamericans started migrating to California in greater numbers. While those who arrived prior to 1841 integrated with the society, the 1,500 who arrived between 1843 and 1846 tended to keep a distance (Acuña 2000: 134). In the period between Texas independence and the Mexican

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[13] Although the states handed over to the United States are several, the focus of this brief overview will be on California, the state where most movies starring Chicano characters are set.

American war, the U.S.'s interest in annexing California was demonstrated in three events listed by Acuña (2000: 136), who defines them as "the United States' Bismarckian conspiracy." The first event consisted of the irreverent attempts to buy San Francisco Bay (and to bribe the Mexican authorities) in 1835. The second event happened the same year, when Commodore Jones raised the U.S. flag in Monterey, believing that the war of 1846-1848 had already begun. The last event reported by Acuña is the third expedition to California led by Captain Frémont. After the first two expeditions, allegedly scientific but carried out by armed men, the third turned into a war in 1846, when Frémont received instructions from President Polk and, having gathered numerous Euroamericans on the territory, declared war on Mexico, brandishing a Bear Flag. The Bear Flaggers spread violence, thievery and death among Mexicans and Natives alike, which the Mexican resistance did not have the means to fight effectively: by January 1847 California had been occupied (Acuña 2000: 137). From an economic point of view, the handover of California meant the passage of property of most land from the local population to the Euroamericans thanks to the California Land Act of 1856 (Heizer and Almquist 1977: 150). This difficult situation faced by California in the mid-1850s meant limitation of the rights of Mexican American citizens (Heizer and Almquist 1977: 150-151). Hardships also contributed to sparking racial hate and inter-group antagonism, generally in favour of the Euroamericans:

> Racism cut across class lines and did not exclude ricos [rich], whether or not they were married to gringos. Most ricos were not pure-blooded Castilians, but descendants of the frontier people, who were a mixture of native, Blacks and Spanish. […] Another direct slap at the Spanish-speaking population came in 1856 when the California Assembly refused funds to translate laws into Spanish and further passed an antivagrancy act which was commonly referred to as the "greaser act." (Acuña 2000: 144)

The "Greaser Act" of 1855 was thus renamed because section 2, called "Disarming of Greasers," addressed "all the persons who are commonly known as 'Greasers' or the issue of Spanish and Indian blood […] and who go armed and are not known to be peaceable and quiet persons, and who can give no good account of themselves" (Chapter CLXXV 1855: 217). The law seemed designed

to arrest those who had already been displaced by the Land Act (D'Amore 2009: 54-55), but it also went one step further: by identifying Mexican Americans with dangerous vagrants, it took their supposed inferiority as an assumption, so as to justify "effectively incorporating racist stereotypes into state law" (Heidenreich 2013: 227). Here it is possible to see the historical roots of racism and discrimination against people of Mexican descent, which today takes for granted the idleness and dangerousness of people who, in reality, were transformed into vagrants, since they had been deprived of their properties and social position, as "the racist potential of this early antiloitering law survives today in loitering, antigang, anti–day laborer, and curfew statutes and ordinances that are racially neutral on their face yet give law enforcement officers great discretion in their application" (Bender 2003: 55).

2.2.1   The origin of the term "Chicano"

The aforementioned agricultural boom, which attracted many destitute Mexican labourers, had been favoured by the evolution of transportation and by the replacement of ranchos and missions with the more efficient, large, mechanised farms, which needed the cheap seasonal labour of the Mexican refugees, many of whom would look for a way to earn some money before going back to Mexico outside harvesting season (Carlisle 2011: 86). However, as mentioned before, agricultural labour and other physically demanding jobs such as railroad workers, miners, and factory workers were not purely the prerogative of the new immigrants. Indeed, while a part of the population of Mexican origin that had lived on U.S. soil before the war and had attained a good social position looked upon immigration as a threat (Ochoa & Smith 2009: 138), most Mexican Americans, stripped of property and status, lived in the same condition as their immigrant counterparts, since neither was "white, socially integrated, culturally linked to European roots" (Carlisle 2011: 99). According to research carried out by the anthropologist José Limón, cited in Corti (1997: 86), the first evidence of the use of the term Chicano can be found in the United States in the newspaper "La Crónica" from Laredo, Texas, on July 27th, 1911. Its use was initially pejorative, as it defined the low-waged Mexican American or Mexican immigrant labourers, who had to roam to find casual employment. As stated by Tino

Villanueva, Chicano poet, writer and painter, the pejorative meaning of the term was not just extended to the labourers, since "Chicano tenía un significado peyorativo usado para designar a un mexicano de clase inferior, entendiendo por mexicano a un ciudadano estadounidense de ascendencia mexicana, fuese oriundo de los Estados Unidos o ciudadano ya naturalizado"[14] (Villanueva 1985: 7). However, it is claimed that the origin of the name dates back to older times: one of the most accredited hypotheses is that it comes by aphaeresis from the term Mexicano, used by the conquistadores to refer to the Mexica people, the Aztecs (Corti 1997: 86-87).

The term was opposed to "pocho," which indicated a Mexican American who was better integrated in the increasingly white society, although this often meant to betray (or to be accused of betraying) one's own roots and identity (Corti 1997: 86; Sánchez 2013: 542).[15] Pochos certainly were a minority, since Mexican Americans generally tended not to lose touch with their heritage, even when blending it with Euroamerican culture – which happened more often in urban settings (Carlisle 2011: 89). Knowledge of the history of Mexican Americans helps to attribute a completely different weight to words that could be otherwise used quite carelessly, and also explains the reasons of the evolution of the use of the word "Chicano," which will be explored further on in this chapter.

2.3 The first half of the twentieth century between World Wars and urban wars

The second phase, tumultuous and marked by social, political and economic transformations, meant a growing power gap that divided the Euroamericans from the population of Mexican descent, the latter being increasingly relegated to the

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[14] "Chicano had a pejorative meaning, used to identify a Mexican belonging to a lower class, where Mexican refers to a person from the USA with a Mexican descent, either native of the USA or become a citizen." (My translation)

[15] This kind of antagonism amongst members of a discriminated minority is not uncommon: African Americans use the derogatory term "Uncle Tomism" to address the behaviour of those African Americans who wanted to achieve integration by trying to assimilate into WASP identity and culture (McDaniel and Babchuk 1960).

lower classes. The census of 1900 reported the presence of 103,000 Mexican-born people living in the United States, 95 percent of them based in the Southwest, and 330,000 US-born Mexicans (Acuña 2000: 156). However, the situation was going to change rapidly in the third phase, which lasted from 1910 to 1965 and was called "The Mexican-American Period" by Goldman and Ybarra-Frausto (1985: 12). As previously discussed, 1910 was the year of the Mexican Revolution, but it is now important to reflect on what was happening north of the frontier. The authorised immigration from Mexico to the United States started increasing after 1900, and usually implied "continuous flows of Mexican immigrants" (Acuña 2000: 156). While migration to the U.S. also came from other nations (especially European ones), it is worth bearing in mind that migration does not usually start from poor countries with a basic agricultural economy, being rather encouraged by factors such as "modernization, droughts, and political instability" (Acuña 2000: 157). Certainly, Mexico was experiencing a difficult period from a political point of view, as suggested earlier in the chapter. After 1910 the population of Mexico grew, and the whole nation underwent a crucial process of urbanisation, since the growing industrialisation displaced agricultural labourers and many decided to opt for better paid jobs in railroad construction (Acuña 2000: 159).

In the meantime, industrialisation in the United States was going at an even faster pace, and it is easy to see how the displaced labourers were attracted by the perspective of a growing economy. Moreover, when looking beyond the economic aspects of the phenomenon, migration is not just a shift of population and a crucial factor in economy, but also a deeply cultural event with repercussions on each and every human being involved, as underlined by Guerin-Gonzalez in her study upon the relationship between migration and the American Dream imagery:

> Mexican immigrants brought with them ideas, experiences, and cultural practices that other groups, including Mexican Americans, incorporated into their social and economic lives. Immigrants altered residential and employment patterns. […] At the same time, returned migration devastated the lives of many […] Mexican immigrants in the United States, as well as Americans who could be mistaken for immigrants, lived in constant fear of expulsion during the 1930s. (Guerin-Gonzalez 1994: 1-2)

In the first years of the twentieth century it is also possible to observe a change in migration patterns, going from circular (which means going back to one's homeland after earning money with a temporary job) to settlement migration. Some factors favoured this passage, including the increase of female migration (Acuña 2000: 167; 173), and laws designed to restrict immigration that ended up favouring the change. One example of the latter is the Immigration Reform Act of 1917, which imposed on those willing to enter the U.S. a literacy test, a medical check and the payment of a fee, thus making the access more difficult by discouraging mobility (Kim-Rajal 2013: 112). These barriers regularly proved themselves to be useless, since "labor-hungry employers often assisted Mexican immigrants in circumventing barriers such as fees and literacy tests" (López 2013: 290). Indeed, the stricter law introduced in 1917 had the effect of increasing illegal immigration, which led to the establishment of a working program allowing immigrant workers to stay up to six months, which remained valid until 1921 (Carlisle 2011: 87). Mexicans were not the only ones crossing the border from the south, as several states in Central and South America were also experiencing political instability, and significant flows were registered coming from countries like Puerto Rico (Carlisle 2011: 86).

The immigration from Mexico, although fostered by American enterprises, often caused resentment in the American population, somehow convinced that immigrants could weigh on the domestic economy. The media contributed to the prejudice, since "newspapers created anti-Mexican hysteria by making Mexican scapegoats during times of depression. This pattern of repression would be repeated throughout the twentieth century" (Acuña 2000: 173). The twenty-first century is not immune to this practice either.[16] In Los Angeles, the arrival of 50,000 Mexicans during the 1910s was described as the main cause of social

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[16] There are countless sources that confirm this cross-media political trend of depicting minorities, and Mexican Americans and Mexican migrants in particular, as the source of all evil. The topic will be broadly discussed later on in chapter 5, but it is useful to anticipate one example: https://edition.cnn.com/videos/politics/2018/04/03/juliette-kayyem-steve-cortes-mexico-border-military-erin.cnn (last visited June 16th, 2018).

issues in the area, while "the flood of 500,000 new Euroamericans" (Acuña 2000: 175) in the area was largely disregarded.

The beginning of the twentieth century was certainly marked by what Carlisle (2011: 86) defines as "patterns of Mexican discrimination." Indeed, "[t]he pattern of displacement of the landed Tejano class that had begun in the second half of the 19th century would largely be completed by 1920" (Carlisle 2011: 86). All people of Mexican descent, either born in Mexico or in the United States, were equally discriminated against, relegated to low-skill low-pay positions, and treated as aliens. Most worked as agricultural labourers, their job being linked to seasonal need for labour in different areas. Those who managed to work in other industries were still paid far less than their white counterparts, even when their skills were just as good (Acuña 2000: 166), and the low pay was not the only problem. The high costs of transportation in Los Angeles, for example, forced many to pay exceedingly high rents to live in small, crumbling houses that had only the advantage of being located near their work place (Acuña 2000: 175). Moreover, just like African Americans, they still had to face segregation and violence (Carlisle 2011: 86). Episodes of mob violence were not new, and lynching is one of the most unsettling examples of how racial hate can find the most perverse justifications and expressions. According to the Lynching in America[17] report:

> Lynching and racial violence in border states of the South and Southwest from 1849 to 1928 targeted Mexican nationals and Mexican Americans, who were shot en masse and lynched by mobs that often included Texas Rangers and other law enforcement officials.
>
> While these lynchings frequently took place after an allegation of crime, Latino people, like African Americans, were considered undeserving of arrest and trial, and some were lynched not for crimes but for social transgressions such as "practicing witchcraft," suing a white person, or yelling "Viva Diaz." […] hundreds of Mexican nationals and Mexican Americans were lynched in the South and Southwest during this period, and have identified 232 lynchings in Texas alone. […] lynchings in border states served to establish white economic,

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[17] The research is organised by the private non-profit organisation "Equal Justice Initiative." For further information: https://eji.org/about-eji (last visited June 21st, 2018).

political, and social dominance in the border areas acquired by the United States

following the war with Mexico. (Stevenson et al. 2017: 56)

The main victims of lynching were African Americans, but also Mexican Americans, both US-born and immigrants. The lynching could be based on all sorts of allegations, as long as those responsible could justify violence upon those who were considered "alien" and "different." When it came to Mexican Americans, "discrimination depended on how dark the Mexican was" (Acuña 2000: 175).

This hostility towards people who are different in terms of ethnic or national heritage is a recurring pattern in the political and social fabric of the United States, and has been defined as nativism: stemming from the idea that certain attributes are innate in a culture, it pushes for policies favouring the locals against the immigrants, forgetting the intrinsically immigrant nature of the United States, in the desperate attempt to create an ancestral national legacy (Higham 1955 [1983]: xi). As will become more and more evident in this historical recount, discriminatory events in the history of U.S. can be better understood by looking at them from the nativist perspective of their perpetrators.

While racial tension was certainly an issue, a major event in world history was going to have an impact on the whole nation: the participation of the United States in World War I (against Germany) in 1917. The state issued the Selective Service Act of 1917, establishing conscription for all males, initially between 21 and 30 and then between 18 and 45 (Carlisle 2011: 91). This war and its aftermath played an important role in creating cohesion within different ethnic groups, although even such an event proved how deeply embedded social and racial divisions were. Men were drafted quickly and carelessly, regardless of whether they could speak English or not (Carlisle 2011: 92), and despite the fact that non-English speakers "were supposedly exempt" from conscription (Acuña 2000: 178). The contradiction between withholding education and then drafting those who had been neglected, forcing them to fight for the nation that was mistreating them, was quite blatant (Acuña 2000: 178). On the other hand, even those who were hoping to prove their loyalty to the nation by fighting for it were likely prevented from doing so. Since they belonged to a non-white ethnic group, they were often

relegated to non-fighting areas or minor responsibilities (Carlisle 2011: 93-94) or, even when they actively took part in war operations, they rarely received recognition for their heroic acts, remaining largely ignored by the chronicles – and were not rewarded after the war was over (Acuña 2000: 178). Euroamericans often doubted the loyalty of African Americans, and even more that of Mexican Americans. The lack of trust explained the incoherent behaviour of conscripting ethnic minorities but leaving them in the background. Indeed, not everybody agrees on the positive social-bond creating role of World War I. Based on his research on the ways in which the war impacted interracial relations in Austin, Texas, McDonald states that "[w]hite attitudes towards both African Americans and Mexicans toughened" as a response to the potential increase in the "promotion of self-determination" (McDonald 2006: 140) triggered by the participation of the minorities in such a major event in the history of the nation.

With the end of World War I started the Roaring Twenties, characterised by the ongoing general shift of U.S. population towards urbanised areas. This movement also involved Mexicans: while agriculture was still an important sector for them, urbanisation often meant "splitting their time between working seasonally in agriculture and finding menial jobs in cities such as Los Angeles, which was also a major producer of farm products" (Acuña 2000: 187). The case of Los Angeles also seems particularly interesting from the perspective of a phenomenon called "Americanisation." Thorough research on the topic was carried out by Sanchez, according to whom the Los Angeles of the early twentieth century mainly hosted people coming from other places, resulting in being equally alien to people of Mexican and European descent (Sanchez 1993: 87). Despite the striking diversity of the metropolis, "Anglo Americans new to the region took it as their mission to integrate foreigners into southern California" (Sanchez 1993: 87), behaving as the rightful owners of the area. Los Angeles was one of the most Mexican-populated cities in the United States, with an increase from about 30,000 in 1920 to 97,000 in 1930 (Sanchez 1993: 90), following the same patterns of other non-white groups (African Americans, Japanese). However, the city was culturally and politically dominated by the "middle-class midwesterner", generally white and protestant, whose "pietistic perspective" (Sanchez 1993: 91) on the world made

them prone to see conversion as their objective and also made them unafraid of mixing religion and politics to succeed in their intent. These people had chosen Los Angeles instead of cities like New York (with its poor European immigrants and crowded ghettoes) because it offered the possibility of realising the dream of "pastoral suburbia" (Sanchez 1993: 92), and they could not stand the presence of Catholic immigrants whose religion did not impose on them, for example, abstinence from alcohol. The desire of avoiding overcrowded environments pushed towards the expansion of the city (so that it could retain its bucolic allure), while always keeping class and racial distance. To prevent cultural difference from undermining their rigid conception of ethics and morality, midwesterners also worked towards the closure of saloons and limitation of alcohol (Sanchez 1993: 93). However, as the rest of the city did not seem to be willing to cooperate, the only way to spread their own lifestyle was to "Americanise" the immigrants. California was probably the state which sank most energy in this nationwide mission, as their program was "the most successful attempt to combine the efforts of government, business and private citizens in dealing with the 'problem of the immigrant'" (Sanchez 1993: 94), and the initiative was also embraced by enterprises, hoping that a stronger American identity of immigrant workers might mitigate their radicalism. Indeed, entrepreneurs defended indiscriminate migration from the southern border as they sought to have endless access to cheap labour, while those who saw the immigrants as competitors tried to limit immigration – Americanisation was the only solution that seemed to have positive aspects for both groups (Sanchez 1993: 97). The initial Americanising efforts were directed towards male workers, but this system proved ineffective, given the seasonal nature of most job positions and the little command of English that workers were required to possess. After World War I it became clear that the most productive system to eradicate Mexicanness was to target families, and in particular women and children – whose presence was favoured by the aforementioned Act of 1917, women being seen as more persuadable and influential in transmitting culture at home:

> Mexican immigrant women were targeted for a variety of reasons. First, they were assumed to be the individuals primarily responsible for the transmission of

values in the home. According to reformer's strategy, if the female adopted American values, the rest of her family would follow suit. […] Americanization advocates were interested in the contribution Mexican women could make in transforming their families' habits from those of a rural, pre-industrial lifestyle to a modern American one […] and inculcate Mexican families with the "Protestant work ethic." Targeting mothers was crucial to the overall strategy of Americanization. Motherhood, in fact, was the Mexican immigrant woman's most highly valued role in Americanization schemes. (Sanchez 1993: 99)

The targeting of women had a twofold effect: on the one hand it would, as mentioned above, impact the whole family (and especially the children), and on the other hand it would serve as a form of "training" to prepare women for domestic labour. In fact, in order to work effectively as maids or house servants they needed to know how an Anglo family worked in terms of housekeeping (Sanchez 1993: 100). Americanisation also involved replacing Mexican foods with more American ones, but also bearing fewer children, as this would have both made it easier to accomplish a re-education of the family and helped to avoid the threat of "race suicide" (Sanchez 1993: 103), a risk caused by the fact that the birth rate of Mexican-born population was generally higher (U.S. Congress, 1930: 406). However, the Mexican group proved to be more resistant to Americanisation than any other. This encouraged proponents to direct Americanising efforts towards school-based programmes, where the educators could establish the equation between American culture and bright future. The same equation still exists today in several American schools following the principles of the English-only[18] movement, which discourages bilingual education and reinforces the idea that science can only be taught and learned in English, thus equating English and knowledge itself (Macedo 2017: 83). Indeed, it was clear that the school programmes did not aim at integration, but at the construction of an idealised depiction of American values, in which Mexicans could only find a

[18] The English-only movement was officially born in 1983, with the declared purpose of encouraging the teaching of English to immigrants and the covert purpose of suppressing bilingual education as a means to reinforce the hegemony of English in the United States (De Rossi 2012). Although its official birth happened so late in history, more or less systematised efforts had been aimed at limiting the spread of Spanish from long before.

place as second-class citizens, whose education was specifically aimed at keeping them in the lowest strata of society (Sanchez 1993: 105).

However, most Americanisation programmes were suspended with the Great Depression of 1929, when straitened circumstances transformed the resolution of Americanising Mexicans into desperate attempts to find "methods to be rid of them altogether" (Sanchez 1993: 106). Indeed, during hard times the first victims of unemployment are minorities, and the Mexican community was no exception (Sanchez 1993: 209). Mainly consisting of U.S.-born children and Mexican-born adults, they were particularly "vulnerable since they worked at menial jobs which depression hit the hardest" (Acuña 2000: 216). Contributing to their unemployment was also the fact that, as the crisis impacted the whole society, Anglos started competing for the same low-skilled jobs they had willingly left to immigrants until then – and this in turn meant growing efforts to limit immigration (Faubion 2013: 261). An example is the Alien Labor Law of 1931, whose aim was to exclude Mexicans from working in construction of public projects (Acuña 2000: 216). In the same decade, hundreds of thousands of Mexicans and Mexican Americans alike were deported to Mexico, regardless of their wealth (Acuña 2000: 220; 225), while others deliberately decided to return to their homeland (Sanchez 1993: 216). Public hysteria, worsened by economic struggles, exasperated the aversion to people of Mexican origin. Stereotyping and openly racist declarations became part of public life, as demonstrated by the U.S. Congress document concerning immigration released in 1930, reporting opinions given by experts and citizens on Mexican immigrants, supposedly "the most ignorant, most oppressed, and poorest people of that country" (U.S. Congress 1930: 406-407). The document also contains lists of diseases plaguing the community (lice, gonorrhoea, syphilis, etc.), which most of the time were caused by irresponsible behaviour and extreme poverty – the recounts also include unsettling descriptions of men, women and children rummaging in garbage to find food (U.S. Congress 1930: 408-409). A whole section is dedicated to describing the "[i]nflux of Mexican peon population producing bad industrial, social, and racial problems" (U.S. Congress 1930: 409-416), basically describing the inhumane conditions of the population of Mexican origin as a natural

consequence of their innate inferiority. In fact, they are directly addressed as "unassimilable vagrants" having "none of the pioneer spirit that characterized other nationalities that have contributed so mightily toward the growth of the nation" (U.S. Congress 1930: 418). One of the reports in the document, signed by Roy L. Garis, "a supposed authority on eugenics" (Acuña 2000: 221), describes Mexicans as dangerous animals, and encourages severe restrictions to immigration. The report also contains the opinion of a someone identified only as an "American who lives in a border city" (U.S. Congress 1930: 436), elevated to a general sentiment of the American population:

> Their minds run to nothing higher than the animal functions – eat, sleep, and sexual debauchery. In every huddle of Mexican shacks one meets the same idleness, hordes of hungry dogs and filthy children with faces plastered with flies, disease, lice, human filth, stench, promiscuous fornication, bastardy, lounging, apathetic peons and lazy squaws, beans and dried chili, liquor, general squalor, and envy and hatred of the gringo. These people sleep by day and prowl by night like coyotes, stealing anything […] Nothing left outside is safe unless padlocked or chained down. Yet there are Americans clamoring for more of this human swine to be brought over from Mexico. (U.S. Congress 1930: 436)

According to the same report, this description applies to both Mexican-born and U.S.-born, the latter being even worse because of their alleged arrogance – especially when having some property. All of them are generally described as very quick in taking advantage of any act of kindness.

Overall, the 1930s were a difficult decade, characterised by traumatising experiences, but there were also positives. For example, the shared hardships encouraged Mexican Americans to develop a sense of community, going from materially supporting each other at difficult times through providing food and shelter to those in need (Sanchez 1993: 209; Acuña 2000: 217) to a labour organisation that was at times able to overcome interracial conflicts, which had been responsible for the failures of labourers' demands of the previous decades. In fact, the emergence of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, formed by the merging of smaller trade unions, helped developing lasting solidarity and awareness among labourers (Acuña 2000: 248; 262).

The following decade was characterised by crucial historical events, the most widely known being the breakout of World War II, joined by the United States in 1941 (Rosales 2017: 56). Several Chicanos were drafted, and yet again were discriminated against in the army, but faced their destiny with bravery, since they felt they "tragically had to prove themselves" (Acuña 2000: 265), as was clear in the war song "Soldado Raso" by Felipe V. Leal as reported by Acuña (2000: 265), and especially in the line "les probaré que mi raza/ sabe morir donde quiera." [19] Mexican Americans managed to distinguish themselves in battle despite the discrimination that surrounded them on the battlefield (Rosales 2017: 55). Nevertheless, Euroamericans could not trust them, and the FBI was in charge of scrutinising the activity of the Mexican community for the whole decades of 1940s and 1950s, although their investigation did not disclose any act or evidence of treachery (Acuña 2000: 281).

The shortage of men caused by drafts, along with the growing movement of people towards the urban areas, left a void in agricultural labour, which was filled by inaugurating the Bracero Program in 1942. This essentially opened the southern frontier to let Mexicans in, most of whom were employed by farmers, some in U.S. railroad construction. The workers, called *braceros*, often worked in inhumane conditions and for no pay. This happened against the will of Mexican authorities, increasingly worried for the widespread discrimination of Mexicans beyond the U.S. border, but helpless under the pressure of the U.S. government and entrepreneurs (Acuña 2000: 285-287).

Meanwhile, the hostility towards Chicanos, which was demonstrably unjust given their immense contribution during the war (Acuña 2000: 274), was widespread back home even more than on the front. Other crucial episodes of the 1940s happened in the United States, and were made even more dramatic by their coinciding with the war: the Sleepy Lagoon case of 1942 and the Zoot Suit Riots of 1943. Before mentioning those, it is worth spending a little time on the premise of these episodes and on the words linked to it, as it is true that "[s]ocial crises are

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[19] Translated by Acuña as "I will prove that my race/ knows how to die anywhere," while the title of the song is rendered as "Buck Private" (2000: 265).

never orphans in time; their genealogy reveals the many historical influences and forces from which they descend" (Obregón Pagán 2003: 25).

2.3.1   The Sleepy Lagoon case and the Zoot Suit Riots

When talking about Mexican Americans, it is important to know the meaning of the names used to talk *about* them. One of these is "pachuco," which literally means "flashily dressed" in Spanish, mainly used to refer to Mexican Americans in the 1940s Los Angeles (Moreno 2013: 461). The origin of this dates back to the first decade of the twentieth century, when "[f]aced with poverty, segregation, ill treatment from police and white residents, and limited economic opportunity, Mexican barrio communities developed subcultures" (Moreno 2013: 462), whose survival-aimed activities are said also to be linked to crime and drug sale. With the mass migration towards California in the 1920s, some features of the early pachucos were imported into the urban areas of Los Angeles and developed to become a widespread style among the Mexican American youth. They had a distinctive look, first of all characterised by the zoot suit, "a highwaisted, wide-legged, and tight-cuffed trouser ensemble with a long coat, pointy shoes, and long watch chain dangling to the knee or below" (Carlisle 2011: 128). Their female counterparts, usually referred to as *pachucas* or *cholitas*, "wore short skirts and high pompadour hairdos" (Moreno 2013: 462). The zoot suit was usually worn by "Puerto Rican, Filipino-American, Italian-American, African-American and Mexican-American youth" (Carlisle 2011: 128). Another peculiar feature was a tattoo "on the left hand, between the thumb and the index finger, with a small cross with three dots or dashes above it" (Acuña 2000: 267).

Figure 7 Pachuco look portrayed in the film
American Me *(1992)*

Figure 8 Pachuco hand tattoo (Tattoo Insider 2018)

Another distinguishing trait, which will more extensively discussed later, was their language: while some spoke Spanish, others spoke *Chuco*, "a mixture of Spanish, English, Old Spanish and words adapted by the border Mexicans" (Acuña 2000: 267). They were also known for their music, the pachuco boogie woogie, a variation of swing (Macias 2001: 144). Although no inherent link between the zoot-suit style and criminal activities can ever be made, American "[r]eporters for the larger newspapers seemed unable to find any other word but 'gang' to describe the social network of teenagers in the working-class districts" (Obregón Pagán 2003: 195). While gangbanging was a generally emerging phenomenon in urban areas from the 1930s, the story of pachucos shows how the strength of media narration can create a completely arbitrary association between a certain social/ethnic/age group and criminal activities, when it is in fact reasonable to believe that certain practices are not universal and that a phenomenon needs to be investigated from its roots and not just from a partial vision of its outcome:

Certainly there were youth gangs in Los Angeles as elsewhere, but not every gathering of teenagers was a gang meeting, and not every in-group custom practiced within teenage clusters was a cabalistic rite of gang membership. Indeed, there is compelling evidence to suggest that young people in many black and Mexican neighborhoods originally organized to defend themselves against

white teenage groups who violently resisted black and Latino families moving in "their" neighborhoods. (Obregón Pagán 2003: 195-196).

Indeed, the life of Mexicans in Los Angeles was anything but easy. They were usually placed in the oldest houses, worked extremely hard for low wages (as previously discussed), and they experienced segregation in many sectors, a small but striking example being the fact that "Mexicans and Blacks could only swim [in the swimming pools] on Wednesday – the day the county drained the water" (Acuña 2000: 267). It is understandable that such conditions can favour the rise of gangbanging which surely did not involve exclusively Mexicans, but all those who experienced a social disadvantage. However, Los Angeles media tended to identify gangs as a Mexican problem, and reinforced the stereotypes linked to it.

This was the climate in which the Sleepy Lagoon murder happened in August 1942, when the young Mexican José Díaz was found dead in the Sleepy Lagoon reservoir, near the area where, the night before, a gang fight had happened during a party at which Díaz had been an invited guest (Ochoa & Smith 2009: 159; Acuña 2000: 268). Despite the lack of evidence, the police immediately suspected the 38th Street Club to be responsible. The press added fuel to the fire by publicly accusing the zoot-suit youth and, after 600 people had been arrested, 22 were charged (Ochoa & Smith 2009: 159). Eventually only five were acquitted, in a trial that was carried out violating the civil rights of all defendants with the complicity of the authorities:

The Honorable Charles W. Fricke permitted numerous irregularities in the courtroom during the trial. The defendants were not allowed to cut their hair or change their clothes for the duration of the proceedings. The prosecution failed to prove that the 38th Street Club was a gang, that any criminal conspiracy existed, or that the accused had killed Díaz (Acuña 2000: 268-269).

The meeting between the mothers of the convicts (unaware of the fact that they could file appeal) and a group of activists gave birth to the Sleepy Lagoon Committee. The committee, opposed by the authorities who accused its members of communism, was supported by a large group of the local population, including famous people like Anthony Quinn, Rita Hayworth and Orson Welles, the more organised African American community (who had a longer experience in claiming

their civil rights, and were experiencing a similar situation in the Scottsboro case, which lasted from 1931 to 1950), and the whole Mexican American community, despite its being weakened by repatriations and war (Acuña 2000: 269-270). Eventually, thanks to the efforts of the Committee, the Court of Appeal reversed the convictions in 1944, stating that the trial was biased and not based on evidence. However, what happened in court did not stop social turmoil in the streets of Los Angeles, as well as in other cities like Chicago, Detroit and Philadelphia, pervaded by a growing "anti-Mexican sentiment" (Ochoa & Smith 2009: 160). In particular, Los Angeles Police "indiscriminately arrested large number of Chicanos on countless charges, most popular being suspicion of burglary" (Acuña 2000: 271), and the massive and biased media coverage of those arrests contributed to the conflict. Another element causing disorder in the street was the presence of servicemen from nearby training centres passing by Los Angeles for short periods, mainly looking for 'fun' and eager to prove their strength and masculinity by attacking the Mexican men, seen as aliens, and rudely approaching Mexican women, seen as 'easy' targets. The so called "sailor riots" (Acuña 2000: 271) happened at the beginning of June 1943, and consisted of a series of attacks perpetrated by the servicemen against Mexican Americans. All happened with the silent consent of the police, who would usually turn up too late and arrest the victims, and with the acclamation of the press, depicting the sailors as heroes and the zoot-suiters as the enemy (Acuña 2000: 272). After less than a week, the heated climate exploded:

> [In] June, when thousands of soldiers, sailors, and civilians surged down Main Street and Broadway in search of pachucos. The mob crashed into bars and broke the legs of stools using them as clubs. […] By this time Filipinos and Blacks had also become targets. Chicanos were beaten and had their clothes ripped off, and youths were left bleeding in the streets. (Acuña 2000: 272)

Random violence was perpetrated against minorities, and "[f]or several nights the riots continued, aimed at any and all Mexican-American youths, whether they were wearing zoot suits or not" (Ochoa & Smith 160). The authorities, including high officers of the army, the Mexican government and even Eleanor Roosevelt, slowly started realising the real nature of what had actually happened, while the

Los Angeles Times, responsible for most of the distorted narrative that had provoked the public opinion, insisted on defending its position and defending Angelenos from the accusations of racism (Acuña 2000: 273).

What made the Zoot Suit Riots of 1943 even more appalling was that they happened while Chicanos (including those who had been beaten up) were fighting for the American flag in World War II. An interview with World War II Mexican American soldier George Castrueta carried out by Rosales (2017) testifies to the sense of frustration and disillusion experienced by Mexican American soldiers:

> The Zoot Suit [Riot] was more or less brought about by some bad journalism that gave the Mexicano boys a bad name. So consequently, some of the military … [when] they read about us, it really incited them, and they would get the … Mexican kids uptown [and] just because they were dressed [in a zoot suit], or even not dressed [in one] … they would abuse 'em something terrible. In some instances they [would] take off their clothes and whip 'em [and] beat 'em up. Even the police got involved … The sorry thing is, the majority of those fellows that got beaten up, they later went into the military to defend the rights and the liberties of this country. (Interview of George Castrueta in Rosales 2017: 64)

After the war, discrimination continued. The G.I. Bill opened various possibilities of education for veterans, and Mexican Americans "hoped their military service was the first step toward the acquisition of many things: pride, first-class citizenship, monetary gain, and improved health care" (Rosales 2011: 627). These expectations, however, were not met, as discrimination continued and the benefits granted to veterans did not extend to all the ethnic groups who had fought in the war.

The painful experiences of the first decades of the twentieth century did not weaken the spirit of Mexican Americans: on the contrary, fighting in two world wars and demanding their rights as veterans, workers, and students, gradually contributed to the development of a consciousness that would soon express itself at its utmost.

2.4   Towards Chicano awareness

In reading the history of Mexican Americans and Mexicans in America it is easy to see a flagrant contradiction between the vision of a white America and the reality of favouring immigration whenever useful. The link between those apparently antipodal attitudes is that both are equally racist, and tend to objectify the other, who can be used when needed and then discarded. The two different attitudes informed the policies adopted and the actions undertaken throughout the history of contact between Anglos and Mexicans/Mexican Americans. As discussed, on the one hand people of Mexican origin were mistreated, segregated and repatriated, while on the other hand borders were open to let cheap labour in when convenient. This imbalance continued in the 1950s (Acuña 2000: 296). The census of 1950 testified that the southwestern states were home to over 2 million of what were generally defined as Spanish speakers – their identity of Americans of Mexican origin was probably still difficult to accept. Despite most of these being U.S.-born or naturalised American citizens, the vast majority would still conceive of themselves as Mexicans and remained outside any discourse of Americanisation (Acuña 2000: 296). The 1950s were characterised by frequent recession and international conflicts. One was the Korean War in which, once again, Mexican Americans participated just like all other Americans, despite the insufficient training and internal discrimination (Acuña 2000: 297). The other conflict was the Cold War, which brought a generalised fear of a Russian conspiracy lurking in the shadow (Acuña 2000: 300). The climate of fear promoted border-closing policies. Two in particular are worth mentioning here. The first is the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 that if on the one hand abolished the racial barriers for entry and citizenship, on the other established a series of grounds for deportation and denaturalisation, while giving more power to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in searching and interrogating aliens (Acuña 2000: 301). The racial barrier abolition was not as effective in promoting a multicultural America, as it was accompanied by limitations to immigration from Asia and Africa, while encouraging migration from Western Europe (García 2002: 40). The second is the so-called "Operation Wetback" of 1954. It is important when meeting each term used to define people of Mexican

origin to explore its meaning: in this case "wetback" refers to Mexican undocumented immigrant workers who supposedly crossed the U.S. border by swimming across the Rio Grande (Neumann 2013: 458). The operation lasted a whole year, coordinated by Lieutenant Joseph M. Swing and strongly supported by Attorney General Herbert Brownell under the presidency of Dwight Eisenhower. Its main aim was to find and deport undocumented Mexican immigrants across California, Texas and Arizona – the great publicity around the operation also encouraged many undocumented Mexicans to leave spontaneously (Neumann 2013: 458). The forcible return of great numbers of people was difficult to deal with on the side of the Mexican government, which asked for and obtained the integration of as many migrants as possible in the Bracero Program. In reality the operation did not live up to its purpose of limiting the presence of Mexican labourers, in part because the INS cooperated with farmers in allowing Mexican exploitation. In fact, the institution "rarely rounded up undocumented workers during harvest time […] when sufficient numbers of braceros or domestic labor worked cheaply enough, agents enforced the laws; when a labor shortage occurred, they opened the doors" (Acuña 2000: 304). While the press generally incited anti-Mexican sentiments, the Bracero Program and the collusion between INS and farmers allowed huge numbers of labourers inside the US.

The situation in Los Angeles in the same decade also needs to be mentioned. From a demographic point of view, the state of California was increasingly becoming the favoured destination of internal migration of Mexicans and Mexican Americans, and the Chicano population of California was also the most urbanised nationwide, with over 600,000 Mexican Americans living in Los Angeles in 1960 (Acuña 2000: 313). While the discrimination was not as blatant as in states like Texas, the population of Mexican origin was generally left out of public life and their votes for the democratic party were mostly taken for granted (Acuña 2000: 314). The general indifference towards them allowed wealthier families to flee the barrio, but this "mobility of middle-class Mexican Americans" (Acuña 2000: 313) towards white neighbourhoods had negative effects on the barrio itself, deprived of its most educated and wealthy members and of their organisational potential. However, another apparently small event was going to impact positively on the

Chicano community: the opening of two universities much closer to the area where Mexican Americans lived. One was East Los Angeles College, opening in 1948, and the other Los Angeles State College, opening in 1956 (Acuña 2000: 316). The proximity and the accessible fees of these universities encouraged more people of Mexican origin to stay in education for longer. By the end of the 1950s the awareness of discrimination, contradiction and injustice started to increase, along with a sense of community, in sharp contrast with the fact that "reactionary forces conspired to deconstruct social gains made in the 1930s" (Acuña 2000: 327). This awareness was of paramount importance in determining the events of the following decade, full of crucial moments and revolutionary actions. Indeed, the 1960s deserve a book of their own but, for reasons of space, only the main facts will be mentioned.

The youth of this decade was made up by the so-called baby boomers, sons and daughters of the generation who had survived through decades of war. Families were generally wealthier and could afford higher education for their children. However, not all families enjoyed the same condition, as unemployment was still widespread among ethnic minorities, made worse by the fact that technological advancement and automation made blue collar jobs less required (Acuña 2000: 328-330). The Mexican American community politically supported John F. Kennedy and, after his death, Lyndon Johnson. The latter, once elected, enacted the Civil Rights Act (1964) envisioned by Kennedy the previous year. Title I extended voting rights to minorities and the underprivileged, titles II and III banished racial segregation in public places, title IV established the desegregation of public education and title VII equal employment opportunities (regardless of race, but also regardless of sex).[20] Furthermore, Johnson implemented the Economic Opportunity Act in 1964, thus declaring his "War on Poverty," fought by allocating money to job training programmes. The Civil Rights Act, although revolutionary in itself, did not mean an immediate and universal change of attitude in a society drenched in discrimination, and each of its objectives required a change in society in order to be effective – some could wonder to what extent it

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[20] Full text available online: https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/history/35th/thelaw/civil_rights_act.html (last visited June 27th 2018)

can be considered effective nowadays (Rosenberg 2004: 1153-1154; Brown 2014: 551-552). The Economic Opportunity Act and its war on poverty were not as effective as hoped, either: struggling to be applied properly with its limited funds, it revealed the little knowledge of the situation of Chicanos on the side of the government, but it did legitimise their demands for better conditions (Acuña 2000: 335; Bigler 2013: 101). The fourth period in the timeline as outlined by Goldman and Ybarra-Frausto (1985: 12), called "The Chicano Period," starts after these laws were approved, in 1965. This, in fact, is the year that inaugurated action taken by the community itself. The first recorded instance was that of September 1965, when the Mexican labourers of Delano, California, joined the strike of the Filipino farm workers, guided by César Chávez and Dolores Huerta of the National Farm Workers Association (Acuña 2000: 351). Thanks to rallies, non-violent action and boycotts, they first had their voice heard. Seven months after their first strike they had obtained "the first-ever workers' contract for farmworkers" (Stohlman 2013: 85), and the action continued until the mid-1970s. An unprecedented fact that is worth mentioning is the birth of the student movements, between the 1960s and the 1970s. Born in college campuses with a significant Mexican American presence, it testified to the growing sense of community, as it can be considered "a series of smaller movements that cross-fertilized and energized one another" (Bigler 2013:101). In particular, this movement played a role in the development of the Chicano identity.

2.4.1 A new meaning for the word "Chicano"

It has often been observed that labels linked to discrimination and power relations are frequently re-appropriated by the stigmatised group through self-labelling, with the aim of emptying them of their negative connotation and giving them a new meaning (Galinsky et al. 2013: 2020). This has happened with the African American community and the n-word in the 1960s, the LGBTQ community and the term "queer" in the 1980s (Galinsky et al. 2013: 2022), and it was also the case for the Mexican American community and the term "Chicano." A series of events led to this inversion. First of all, in 1966 Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales founded the organisation called Crusade for Justice, whose aims were "self-determination, cultural appreciation, and rebellion against oppression" (Bruns

2018: 75). The same Gonzales published in 1967 the poem "I am Joaquín/ Yo soy Joaquín," which narrated the history of oppression, violence, but also creativity, pride and determination of the Mexican Americans. Some of the most significant passages are quoted here:

> […] I am Joaquín, lost in a world of confusion,/ caught up in the whirl of a gringo society,/ confused by the rules, scorned by attitudes,/ suppressed by manipulation, and destroyed by modern society./ My fathers have lost the economic battle/ and won the struggle of cultural survival./ […] "This land is ours . . ./ Father, I give it back to you./ Mexico must be free. . . ."/ […] In a country that has wiped out/ All my history,/ Stifled all my pride,/ […] Changed our language/ And plagiarized our deeds/ […] I am Joaquín./ I must fight/ and win this struggle/ for my sons, and they/ must know from me/ who I am./ […] I am the masses of my people and/ I refuse to be absorbed./ I am Joaquín./ The odds are great/ But my spirit is strong,/ My faith unbreakable,/ My blood is pure./ I am Aztec prince and Christian Christ./ I SHALL ENDURE!/ I WILL ENDURE! (Gonzales [1967] quoted in Bruns 2018: 77-84)

The poem resonated in the minds of the activists with the strength of its epic traits, because it gave voice to their unspoken identity. The following year, the sentiments of young students were further incited by a tragic event: in 1968, when the world was pervaded by youth and student manifestations, the violence used to repress a rally in Mexico City – defined "*la matanza*," the massacre – was broadcast on television and shocked the Mexican American community, who identified with their Mexican fellows (Acuña 2000: 365-366).

All these fragments fell into place during the First National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference, where smaller student organisations merged into *El Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán*. It was also the first occasion in which the word "Chicano" was used with a new acceptation through the adoption of *El Plan Spiritual de Aztlán* by the activist poet Alurista as a manifesto. *El Plan* contained the objectives of the student movement, laid out in seven points: unity, economy, education, institutions, self-defence, cultural values, and political liberation. Furthermore, the document was opened by a powerful declaration of intent:

In the spirit of a new people that is conscious not only of its proud historical heritage but also of the brutal "gringo" invasion of our territories, we, the Chicano, Mexican, Latino, Indiginous [sic] inhabitants and civilizers of the northern land of Aztlán from whence came our forefathers, reclaiming the land of their birth and consecrating the determination of our people of the sun, declare that the call of our sangre is our power, our responsibility, and our inevitable destiny.[21]

As noted by Corti (1997: 85-86), the keywords in this passage are "Aztlán" and "Chicano." The first refers to the mythic and symbolic land of the Mexica people, identified with the south-west of the U.S. and former north of Mexico, which becomes the land of Chicanos. Indeed, "Chicano" is the second keyword, as it was the new name of a people economically and culturally invaded, but finally willing to resist. From an insult, the term becomes a celebration of pride, a claim of ownership to the land, and since Chicanos "descended from the Aztecs," they can be considered the "original – and rightful – inhabitants of the region; Anglos were the foreigners" (Bigler 2013:102).

The period between 1960s and 1970s saw political activity flourish with the foundation of the political party *La Raza Unida* in the early 1970s (Acuña 2000: 368). The political engagement going from students to workers did not leave women behind: despite the discrimination that persisted inside and outside the community, Chicana conscience slowly managed to introduce "language and symbols that up to this point were foreign to most working-class Mexicans, often colliding with their traditions" (Acuña 2000: 399). The generally thriving atmosphere in the Chicano community also involved art, which was strongly oriented towards social activism and orbited around the key concepts echoing in Gonzales' poem.

What Goldman and Ybarra-Frausto (1985: 12) called "The Chicano Period," however, is further divided in two. The first part, characterised by widespread activism, ends by the first half of the 1970s, where new elements came into play and drained the energy of the previous years.

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[21] Full text available online: http://www.cwu.edu/~mecha/documents/plan_de_aztlan.pdf (last visited June 28th 2018).

2.5 Falling back: the end of the twentieth century

Unfortunately, achieving important results at some point in history does not mean that, from that moment on, every problem will be solved. Indeed, many of the conquests of the 1960s were – more or less gradually – stripped of their strength. The Vietnam War had ended in the early 1970s, under the pressure of public discontent and of minorities in revolt, but "few at the time could have predicted that, in less than a dozen years, the country would move from intolerance with injustice, to an acceptance of poverty in 'America'" (Acuña 2000: 386). Indeed, the 1973-1975 post-war recession was extremely severe (Frank 1978: 87), and favoured a series of policies that hit especially hard on the poor and the disadvantaged. In particular, Acuña (2000: 388-389) describes a number of events that affected the Chicano community. First of all, the Nixon presidency worked to divide the Chicano community: poverty was presented as normal or inevitable, the only solution being to work individually to raise oneself from one's condition and become members of the middle-class, while leaving the rest behind. The change of attitude can also be read through a change in words: the politically charged word "Chicano" was often replaced in the public debate by the more generic "Hispanic," which comprehensively referred to all the people of Central and South American descent (Green 2013: 98). Secondly, recession stimulated factory offshoring, which increased unemployment and decreased wages for low-skilled workers. The difficult economic situation also led to a growing intolerance towards progressive ideas and protests, with a return to old but stable "neo-liberal principles under the guise of religion, family values, and patriotism" (Acuña 2000: 389).

Migration was also involved in the debate: the unstable economy of Mexico was controlled by the more powerful U.S., which offshored its assembly factories south of the border, and "reduced Mexico to a sweatshop equivalent to Third World countries" (Acuña 2000: 402), disrupting any chance of growth and leaving it incapable of employing its own people independently. This meant unacceptable conditions for workers in Mexico and skyrocketing unemployment for Chicanos north of the border. Instead of taking responsibility for the lack of jobs and the worsening state of those who managed to work (by giving up their rights),

authorities spread through the media a narration that blamed undocumented workers for taking resources away from American citizens. In reality, those workers had become "structural" in the economy, as "[t]heirs was work that paid little and that most North Americans were conditioned to believe they were above" (Acuña 2000: 403). Sadly, media narration is often stronger than facts, and it worked effectively in convincing public opinion that more border security is needed and that the 'alien' is a threat, pitting the less advantaged against one another:

> By the mid-1970s, an anti-immigrant hysteria was in full swing. The country had come full circle since the nineteenth century when the Mexican was stereotyped as a bandit in order to justify the maintenance of military forts essential to capital accumulation. In the 1970s, Mexicans […] were made outlaws in order to criminalize them, to justify paying them less and hounding them […] Even many poor and middle-class Chicanos "believed" that the undocumented, like aliens from other planets, worker had invaded their land and taken their jobs. (Acuña 2000: 403)

Although the stereotyped images of Mexicans and Mexican Americans will be treated more in detail further on, this powerful passage shows once again the role of the media in shaping history itself, determining the life of whole ethnic groups and nationalities. According to Acuña, justice was another crucial issue since, after the fear triggered by the disorders of the 1960s and 1970s, it seems that "police brutality established a pattern" (2000: 418). The violence is most often linked to racial profiling, "the practice of targeting individuals for police and or security interdiction, detention, or other disparate treatment based primarily on their race or ethnicity" under the assumption "that certain minority groups are more likely to engage in unlawful behavior" (Laney 2006: 1). Racial profiling does not necessarily distinguish between American citizen and undocumented immigrant, and tends to identify a certain ethnicity with a specific behaviour. Certainly, whenever poverty is widespread, it is easy to find higher rates of crime. In particular, Chicanos in the 1970s East Los Angeles were more likely to be convicted for drugs than any other ethnic group (Acuña 2000: 420).

The 1980s and 1990s represent a painful fall back, stemming from distinct but related factors: immigration, inequality, and education. The Mexican immigrant population, under the aforementioned conditions, kept growing: it nearly tripled between the 1970s and the 1980s, doubled from the 1980s to the 1990s and then again from the 1990s to the 2000s (Gibson & Jung 2006: 110). Although immigration had become a wedge issue since the 1970s, it was actually needed by enterprises that, without cheap labour, would have exported their factories – and capital (Acuña 2000: 424-425). Inequality has been spurred by cyclic economic recessions at the beginning of each decade. Wealth has increasingly concentrated in the hands of a limited number of people (Piketty and Saez 2003: 37), while regular wage has proved itself to be declining source of income (Piketty and Saez 2003: 17). This means that the conditions of the disadvantaged workers worsened, and their desperation would make it impossible to repeat the strikes and boycotts of the 1960s. The new conditions substantially changed the future perspectives of each person. Since the only envisioned hope to improve one's children's life was to favour their individual social upgrade, from the 1980s families would be more concentrated on accumulating the wealth needed for high-level education (Acuña 2000: 422). As a consequence, it is easy to see how poverty affects the possibility of social affirmation, against the idea that the lower rate of success in education depends on a presumed cultural lack of Chicanos – or other minorities. In fact, statistical analysis proves that "the affordability of education and other less direct correlations between a family's income and the likelihood of enrollment among children persist as potential sources of socio-economic inequality in the United States", and this seems to be especially true for "black and Hispanic teenagers" (Anderton et al. 1997: 515). This means that economic inequality and lack of education are strongly related and reciprocally activated. Chicano children in education have to face more obstacles, as their heritage is frequently dismissed. One example is the aforementioned English-only movement that, with the pretext of teaching English to non-natives, supported the elimination of bilingual education: this basically means precluding children of Spanish-speaking heritage being taught in their own language, or to having language used as a bridge to achieve a full command of English (Macedo et al. 2003).

The power of these factors can be understood by looking at some Propositions approved in the 1990s by the state of California, "usually proclaiming itself a mecca of tolerance" (Pizarro 2005: 240), and where Mexican presence was most visible. Promoted "under the flag of fairness and equal opportunity" (Pizarro 2005: 241), they substantially served "to exorcise 'the demons' of the 1960s" (Acuña 2000: 452), that is immigrants (Proposition 187), minority agency (Proposition 209) and tolerance (Proposition 227). Proposition 187 of 1994 was the outcome of the terrifying media narrations, as it made "illegal aliens ineligible for public social services, public health care services (unless emergency under federal law) and attendance at public schools" and it also required that "state/local agencies report suspected illegal aliens."[22] Two years later, in 1996, Proposition 209 was passed by California voters, forbidding any "preferential treatment to any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting."[23] This proposition is particularly ambiguous as, while apparently forbidding discrimination, it fundamentally deprives a discriminated group of the means to prove they were being discriminated against, "since the institutions were not required to recruit or enrol minorities" (Acuña 2000: 453): a 'colour-blind' society becomes a society that, instead of fighting against discrimination, just refuses to see it "not only maintaining inequality but also creating a justification for the differences that are then explained as natural" (Pizarro 2005: 242). Last but not least, Proposition 227 of 1998 was the embodiment of the English-only movement objectives, as its main goal is the elimination of bilingual teaching in all the schools of California. The premise shows the deceitful nature of the Proposition, which aimed to blame the victims of inadequate education provision:

> […] Immigrant parents are eager to have their children acquire a good
> knowledge of English, thereby *allowing them to fully participate in the*

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[22] From the Los Angeles Law Library Archive:

https://web.archive.org/web/20120521094005/http://www.lalawlibrary.org/research/ballots/1990/1994.aspx (last visited June 29th 2018).

[23] Full text available online in the Los Angeles Law Library Archive:

https://web.archive.org/web/20110418091520/http://vote96.sos.ca.gov/Vote96/html/BP/209text.htm (last visited June 29th 2018).

American Dream of economic and social advancement; […] the skills necessary to become productive members of our society, and of these skills, literacy in the English language is among the most important; and […] The public schools of California currently do a poor job of educating immigrant children, wasting financial resources on costly *experimental language programs whose failure over the past two decades is demonstrated by the current high drop-out rates and low English literacy levels of many immigrant children*; […] Young immigrant children can easily acquire full fluency in a new language, such as English, if they are *heavily exposed to that language in the classroom* at an early age.[24] (Italics mine)

The Proposition stems from partial assumptions and draws partial conclusions, as it states that bilingual education is ineffective and takes for granted a mere theory of "heavy exposition" to English as the best practice. In reality, bilingual education often proves more effective in actual research on the subject, as it enhances the self-image of the non-English speaker and validates her identity (Macedo et al. 2003). It is rather the bad implementation of bilingual programmes that is to blame, along with the poor functioning of schools at a more general level (Pizarro 2005: 242).

When looking at the conditions of Chicano youth, all of these elements must be taken into consideration altogether, if one really wants to understand why some people are left out of the aforementioned "American Dream of economic and social advancement" and then held responsible for not being part of it. Not only undocumented immigrants are left behind and depicted as dangerous, as racial profiling becomes stronger over the years. With the War on Drugs becoming a priority of the government, "the targeting of young Latinos became a matter of major concern," while the number of Latino males in jail has been "creeping up slowly" (Acuña 2000: 463).

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[24] Full text available online in the Los Angeles Law Library Archive:
https://web.archive.org/web/20110721033606/http://primary98.sos.ca.gov/VoterGuide/Propositions/227text.htm (last visited June 29th 2018).

2.5.1 Conclusion

It is perhaps easy, and comfortable, to look at the facts as they present themselves (or are presented) at a certain point in history. It is perhaps even easier to judge the actors in a present event according to one's own understanding based on a relatively limited knowledge about how certain realities have evolved to become what is before our eyes in the present. However, wiping out history implies embracing what Macedo, Dendrinos and Gounari defined as *scientism*, which is the use of science as a means to "target race and other ethnic and cultural traits as markers that license all forms of dehumanization," rationalising all sorts of "crimes against humanity, ranging from slavery to genocide" (Macedo et al. 2003: 68). The underlying assumption of those supporting scientism as a viable means to understand reality is that it is possible to formulate opinions while being completely free from any possible bias and influence coming from one's personal background and interest. As a consequence, in the hands of those holding power, scientism closes the doors to debate and offers a single, unappealable interpretation of the world.

According to Wallerstein, the impossibility of seeing events in their historical evolution, and thus of understanding them, is caused by studying "these phenomena in separate boxes to which we have given special names – politics, economics, the social structure, culture," while ignoring the fact that "these boxes are so closely intermeshed that each presumes the other, each affects the other, each is incomprehensible without taking into account the other boxes" (Wallerstein 2004: ix). This, of course, cannot be the preferred perspective when trying to understand a present phenomenon, be it widespread gangbanging in ethnic minorities, high percentage of unemployment among Chicanos or immigration from Mexico. Leaving aside "historical amnesia" (Macedo et al. 2003: 68), it may be possible to look at certain facts from a broader perspective and, perhaps, to understand them better. Investigating the reality of an underrepresented minority through giving voice to their past was the implicit aim of this brief historical review. The only way of approaching critically a cultural product is to be familiar with the environment that generated it. That is the reason why, aware of the history and in agreement with Acuña's choice (2000: xii), the

word used by the author to refer to Mexican Americans and their language will from now on be "Chicano/a." In fact, after the initially negative acceptation and its re-appropriation, the term "Chicano," along with the feminine "Chicana," is used here for "people of Mexican ancestry living in the United States," and more specifically referring "to those born and raised on U.S. soil," living the unique condition of being "both a conquered and 1an immigrant people" (Green 2013: 97). This is particularly important from a linguistic point of view, as the term "Chicano English" will be used in chapter 4 to define their language variety, in order to constantly specify the fact that Chicanos are American citizens and native English speakers.

3 Chapter 3 – English, power and variation.

A stereotype is a complex construction. After exploring the historical root of the stereotype in chapter 2, this chapter will offer a contextualisation and description of linguistic features in order to show how certain linguistic features came to be seen as stereotypical and used in filmic representation. Indeed, understanding the language of Chicanos is an integral part of understanding their mediated representations. The literature review of this chapter will show how linguistic discrimination is just as real as racial discrimination across the world, often so ingrained in the way we think that it seems impossible to eradicate, how language contact can be both an occasion for reciprocal enrichment or conflict, and how language variation can mean that all languages (and varieties) are equal, but some are "more equal than others" (Orwell 1945 n.p.).

In very general terms, Chicano English is considered a *variety* of American English diverging from the national *standard*, spoken by a group usually sharing an ancestral national belonging intertwined with *migration* and *colonisation*, a *linguistic heritage*, an *ethnic heritage*, a *social* belonging and a specific positioning in terms of socio-political *power*. The words emphasised in italics represent concepts pertaining to Chicano English that fall within the realm of sociolinguistics. Chapter 3 will therefore provide a sociolinguistic toolkit to understand what words like "standard" and "colonisation" mean from a linguistic perspective, while Chapter 4 will focus more specifically on the situation of ethnic minorities in the United States and on the description of Chicano English itself.

Providing an array of linguistic tools to understand the relationship between language(s) and power means to explore the main definitions and debates that contributed to the opening of a new perspective on language, one capable of problematizing the monolithic equation "one land, one people, one language."

It is important to specify that, in line with the DTS approach adopted since chapter 1, the authors here discussed are especially the ones who have assumed a descriptive perspective in their studies. A prescriptive approach is more useful when matters of "correctness" are at stake: prescriptivism consists in "a normative enterprise, dictating what constitutes correct language use" (Wasow 2001: 295). Thus, prescriptiveness does not go very far when it comes to understanding the

use of a certain language variety or its social value. This task is probably better accomplished when analysing a variety "without bringing any preconceived notions of correctness to the task, or favouring the language of one social group as somehow 'better' than those of others" (Meshtrie 2000: 12), which is the characteristic trait of descriptive approaches to language.

Abandoning prescriptive purposes means to observe the use of language beyond its correctness or adherence to certain rules of grammar. This is where another important aspect of sociolinguistics comes into play: the issue of standard language and its applicability to human linguistic behaviour. The first part of this literary review will consist in retrieving some of the main steps through which the idea of English was pluralised and turned from object into practice, to better reflect the reality of its use.

3.1   Pluralising English(es) and English as practice

The first question to be answered is: what is Standard English? According to David Crystal (2004), it is but *a variety* of English that, at some point in time, has reached a major social prestige within a community of speakers. Crystal's definition purposely reveals the critical issues intrinsic to an idea of standard and, consequently, its limits. First, he calls the standard *a variety*, and he also underlines that this variety, which is one among others, has come to acquire a certain level of prestige within a certain community. This implies that its prestige is neither natural nor innate: it is bound to a specific time and to a specific group of people. Nevertheless, the speakers of that variety are considered the ones who speak that language "correctly," and all others should adhere to that standard to approximate correctness (Milroy 2002: 22). This conviction is the joining link between *standard* and standardisation, which is more closely related to sectors like education, government, and administration (Meshtrie 2000: 21). Standardisation implies a prescriptive action, and often embodies the point of view of the community that, attributing prestige to a certain variety, turns it into *the* standard of correctness. It consists of choosing a historically and geographically specific variety and in de-historicising and de-localising it in order to transform it into an abstract universal. Once its situatedness is removed, it can

be taken as the most desirable linguistic attainment, which prompts the misleading assumption that any language could exist "in a vacuum" (Macedo et al. 2003 [2016]: 31). This is the process through which a community forgets its relative and ephemeral positioning in space and time, and generates the myth of "pure language" (Watts 2011: 127).[25] The modern standard, according to Crystal, is mostly concerned with grammar, vocabulary, and orthography. Although pronunciation should not constitute a discriminatory element, what has long been looked up to by foreign English learners is the so-called Received Pronunciation (RP, Crystal 1995: 365).

The reason that foreign learners aspire to a model that is becoming less and less used by the same speakers who originated it – as RP is now most often mixed with local accents by its own speakers (Crystal 1995: 365) – is, indeed, standardisation. The closer one's variety to this abstract standard, the more his/her English will be considered "appropriate." The measure of "appropriateness" lies in the extent to which a variety abides by the *norms* of the standard. Saraceni underlines that the word "norm" itself has a double meaning, since "one refers to what happens most frequently, is most usual, most common and is, therefore, *normal*," while the other "relates to patterns of acceptable behaviour and conduct […] in this second case, 'norm' becomes a near-synonym of 'rule.'" (Saraceni 2015: 89). The two meanings are intertwined, since "while something that happens most frequently is most likely to be considered morally acceptable, something that is consistently *represented* as normal, natural and right is more likely to become standard practice" (Saraceni 2015: 89). The representation of standard language as *normal* influences the perception of divergence from it as "out of the norm," both in a statistical and a moral sense. This mechanism is activated by educational institutions, which present and represent a certain variety as the norm and disqualify the rest as abnormal. The role of representation is also stressed by Crystal, as he states that it is the public use of Standard English that makes people believe it to be the most common practice:

> And indeed you will hear Standard English spoken on the most public of
> occasions, and that's why everybody gets the impression that it's universal, but

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in actual fact perhaps only five percent at most of the spoken English around the world is going to be Standard English. (Crystal 2012: 5:05-5-18)

Although this may happen to any language variety that is chosen as a national/official language, for English it is especially meaningful, given its worldwide spread. Before moving on to one specific state, therefore, it is worth briefly looking at the role of English worldwide, as the global role of English explains the cultural power of those who are believed to master English in its standard version(s).

The English export was initially boosted by colonisation, which can be divided into two phases, each with distinctive features (Saraceni 2015: 46-50). The first phase is settler colonisation, between the fifteenth and the eighteenth century. During this period, people from Great Britain as well as from other European states set sail for "new" (to them) lands, looking for places to settle, which is what became of the countries now known as United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Here, "[t]he fact that those lands were inhabited was dealt with by the use of violent coercion and genocide" (Saraceni 2015: 46). English replaced the local languages, while the population of British origin mostly replaced the indigenous inhabitants. In these places, English is now the national/official language, and slowly raised to the status of recognised standard, more or less like British English. The second phase characterised the nineteenth century, and is known as exploitation colonisation: in this period, the main aim of colonisers was to procure raw materials and cheap labour. Only small numbers of colonisers (e.g. members of trade companies) would actually settle in the colony, with the aim of making sure that the local elites became socialised into the colonisers' language, culture and policies (Brutt-Griffler 2002: 89). In these places, English was more or less successfully imposed as the official language and was learned by the educated and the wealthy, while the lower strata of the population came into contact with the language adopted by the administration of their own country to a generally limited extent.

After colonisation was over, however, English was in most cases kept as an official language (or the only official language), for complex reasons linked to the

very essence of colonisation.[26] In many colonial states, boundaries were established by drawing lines on a map, regardless of the social, ethnic and linguistic groups on the territory (Griffiths 2013: 68). This meant extreme diversity, which often culminated in civil wars and attempted secessions which are still happening today, especially in Africa. Given that in some countries several languages are spoken, India and Nigeria being among the most notable cases, "the selection of one or another language as the national one would have meant granting special recognition to a particular group, with the inevitable strong resentment by the others" (Saraceni 2015: 49). Paradoxically, in these countries English seemed to be the most neutral choice, despite its heritage of conquest and colonialism.

However, colonialism alone is not enough to explain the spread of English, or its role today. The main factor favouring its lasting diffusion was the international position acquired by the United States through economic imperialism, ensuring English's central position, as a result of being the language of world trade, technology and entertainment (Crystal 2012: 10). The scope of English has gone far beyond being a national language, as it has become a commodity with a market value. Today, a good command of English is considered an asset for education and employability, and sold worldwide through educational institutions that profit immensely from the perceived need to speak English as an additional language (Saraceni 2015: 77).

English in the world has been classified following geographical, political, social and linguistic criteria, generating models aimed at putting all the varieties in order and giving them a space. Looking at those models shows the tension pervading discourses on Englishes, suspended between liberation from the imposed standard and dependency on the standard to define what diverges from it. They are also a larger-scale example of the way dialectics between standard and non-standard has developed in smaller context, for example at a national level with many of the discourses around social and ethnic dialects, as will be explained later. While

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[26] The relationship between language and colonisation is still a current topic. However, analysing it more in detail here would bring this analysis too far from its main focus. A thorough overview on the theme can be found in the work of Léglise and Migge (2007).

reading through these models and their critical point, it is important to try and compare these visions with one's more or less conscious ideas about what standard and deviation are, and what their social role in defining their speakers is. A reader may read through these models and wonder what her/his opinion is about the speakers of different English varieties. Indeed, the speakers of Chicano English, here taken as a case study, are not the only non-standard language speakers represented though their language in the media, Sometimes speakers of non-standard English are used for comedic purposes (e.g. the Indian Rajesh from *Big Bang Theory* or the Colombian Gloria from *Modern Family*, but also the Jewish Fran Fine from *The Nanny*), and others as villains against the American hero (e.g. the Russian Ivan Drago from *Rocky IV*).

Defending the dignity of non-standard varieties has long been the purpose of post-colonial writers, who proudly underlined the creativity of their language by deciding to use English as their means of expression. One of them is the famous Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe:

> The African writer should aim to use English in a way that brings out his message best without altering the language to the extent that its value as a medium of international exchange will be lost. […] But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings. (Achebe 1965: 29-30)

His programmatic words are the key to understand the World Englishes approach, which pluralises English, cracking the linguistic monolith imposed by standardisation. One of the most widely known and used models to talk about the plurality of World Englishes is probably Braj Kachru's *Three Circles of World English* (1982; 1985). Kachru divides the English-speaking world into three concentric circles, according to their relationship with English. The "inner circle" counts the fewest speakers, and includes the countries having English as a first and official language: primarily United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. These countries are considered "norm providing," since their use of English is accepted as standard for those who approach the study of the language from "the outside." The next tier is represented by the "outer circle," which includes countries affected by exploitation colonisation, such as

India or Nigeria. The countries belonging to this circle are numerous, and they are considered "norm developing" since the English inherited by the colonisers has, to variable extents, undergone transformations thanks to encountering the local languages. English is still one of the official or the only official language of higher education and government, but it is not equally known and spoken across the population, it lives side by side with other languages and experiences hybridisation, pidginisation and creolisation (which will be later explained in better detail). Their use of English is not taken as a norm for foreign English learners, but is increasingly becoming accepted as a variety. The last circle, called "expanding circle," has the greatest number of members, and includes all those countries that do not have English as an official language (e.g. Japan, Egypt, Italy, Zimbabwe, Brazil etc.). For the previously mentioned reasons, these states approach the study of English as a second or third language taking the inner circle as a reference. This circle is therefore defined as "norm depending."

Although very effective as a taxonomy, the model has been criticised for its extreme simplification (which is also one of its strengths), and for being based more on political than socio-linguistic criteria, as it considers the countries that experienced similar colonial histories without looking at critical differences among them in terms of how English developed locally (Bruthiaux 2003: 175).

Another classification worth mentioning is Schneider's dynamic model of postcolonial English (2007: 21-70), aimed at taking into account the evolution of English in postcolonial settings. The model is divided into phases, and for each of them a number of variables is considered: history and politics, identity construction of the speakers, sociolinguistics of contact, use and attitudes, and linguistic development and structural effects on the language.

The first phase is called foundation and is historically marked by the arrival of British settlers, who introduce English to the colonised: in this period the contact between colonisers and colonised is not deep enough to trigger change in either. The following phase is the exornormative stabilisation, marked by the imposition of English as the language of administration, although it borrows a number of words from the local languages. Being far from their homeland, the settlers' identity slowly drifts apart from their overseas compatriots' while, on the other

hand, the identity of the indigenous population, coming into closer contact with the colonisers, starts changing. The following phase is nativisation. Settlers, present on the territory long enough to generate a native offspring, feel completely detached from the original homeland, while their influence on indigenous people is becoming wider. In this phase English is influenced by the local language(s) not only at a lexical level, but deeper into the language structure. This prepares for the subsequent phase, called endonormative stabilisation, in which settlers and indigenous people have reached a level of merging that makes them identify together as members of a separate nation, and the English they speak is codified internally. The last phase is differentiation: after establishing their common national identity, the population will gradually differentiate internally according to criteria such as region or age, and develop specific dialects or sub-varieties.

This model, which takes more linguistic aspects into consideration, was considered reductionist as it fails to account for different situations like those of the United States and African or Asian colonies, where the indigenous people followed very different destinies and so did their languages (Wong and Schneider, 2008). It is also criticisable from a more ideological viewpoint since, by describing the "evolution" of the language, it might sound like a deterministic march towards progress, where the common adoption of English (although modified by the contact with native languages) is the ultimate linguistic objective (Saraceni 2015: 55).

Melchers and Shaw have tried to deal with the limits of models that try to include all the variables in one figure. They underlined the need to classify English according to more parameters that can be taken into consideration separately, so as to avoid oversimplifications -- for example by considering English in terms of linguistic form, or by looking at its speakers' features (natives, proficient etc.). These variables can also be taken into consideration together when a specific linguistic analysis may require it (Melchers and Shaw 2003; 2011).

What all these models have in common, while also representing their intrinsic limit, is the fact that they conceive of English as a tangible thing: a thing that can be spread, evolve, be altered or modified, but substantially remains a system – more or less open and tolerant to change. In their analysis of World Englishes,

while exploring their features, they more or less consciously take the inner circle variety as a yardstick, as is made evident in the choice of "words like *omission*, *deletion*, *unusual*, which are used against words like *norms*, *required*, *rules*, *standard*" (author's italics, Saraceni 2015: 87).

The step forward has for some linguists meant moving on to a conception of language in general, and English in particular, *as a practice*. Looking at English as a practice implies a change of paradigm and perspective, a more dynamic idea with neither starting nor arrival point, where languages and their uses are viewed in the making. Such attempts at shifting the perspective are commendable but, as will be shown in the next section, they represent a utopic point of view that is still far from becoming widely acknowledged.

One of the attempts is Suresh Canagarajah's proposal of English as a translingual practice (2013). The main aim of his paradigm is to problematize English to a different level, being aware that different languages are not divided from each other by clear-cut demarcations, especially when taking into consideration the way they work in the minds of the speakers, who have "an integrated proficiency" (Canagarajah 2013: 6) of these languages. From this perspective, labelling languages is also an ideological act (which ultimately allows to decide which one is better), while in reality different language codes are used by speakers in an integrated repertoire. In such repertoire the knowledge of more languages at the same time is not an interference, but a creative feature that facilitates the achievement of the main goal of language, which is not general correctness, but "negotiation practices in local situations" (Canagarajah 2013: 7).

Canagarajah's theorisation is informed by previous contributions. One is Mary Louise Pratt's concept of "contact zones" (1991), which challenges the classic concept of speech community. Contact zones are "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today" (Pratt 1991: 34). In this sense, her concept of contact zones proposes a level of dynamicity that goes against the idea of speech community as "discrete, self-defined, coherent entities, held together by a homogeneous competence or grammar shared identically and equally among all

the members" (Pratt 1991: 37). In fact, such a conception of community seems to be an abstract product of the aforementioned oversimplifying identification between nation, people and language.

This identification was also challenged by Vivian Cook's critique of the status of the native speaker – and the implicit inferiority of the L2 speaker (1999). With specific reference to ESOL teaching, Cook questions the idea that non-native speakers need to try and become a poor approximation of the natives: rather, they should acquire awareness of the intrinsic value of their own widening multicompetence, which stems precisely from the fact of *not* being native speakers (Cook 1999: 204).

Another contribution comes from Steven Vertovec and his concept of super-diversity (2007), triggered by his reading of contemporary London as a representation of social, cultural, linguistic and legal complexity at a global level. Super-diversity is a new level of diversity, never experienced so far, which can be described as "a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants" (Vertovec 2007: 1024). These immigrants represent a multifaceted reality where national and linguistic identities cannot be reductively defined as "being from" a certain nation-state and merely speaking its official language. Indeed, much more is at stake, namely the story of each person and their network of social relations, as defined by Radcliffe-Brown (1940: 2). It is important to note that high levels of social and linguistic complexity exist both on a macro-level when looking at globalisation at large, and on a micro-level, for example when considering a single metropolis. Large metropoles are central in Otsuji and Pennycook's concept of *metrolingualism*. Drawing from Maher's *metroethnicity* (2005: 83) as a "hybridised street ethnicity," the authors conceive metrolingualism as a way to go beyond the concept of multilingualism, implicitly concerned with viewing the language as a system. The metropolitan environment has a transformational power that concerns both social change and language (Otsuji and Pennycook 2010: 243-244).

3.2 Languages and inequality: critical linguistics

However appealing and fascinating these new conceptualisations might appear to linguists and experts, new and complex conceptualisations tend to penetrate the public imagery slowly, and not without struggle. It is not easy to replace more traditional ideas, especially when supported by authoritative bodies and figures, and that is where the role of ideology becomes fundamental for the understanding of language-related attitudes and behaviours. If on the one hand new ways of expression emerge from urban environments with a powerful creativity that allows language to survive and renovate itself, on the other hand the promotion of anything considered disruptive of the tradition is a complex and at times painful task. This section aims at retrieving the literature on linguistic inequality, a fundamental step towards the understanding of stereotyping ethnic and social groups based on the way they speak. If in the previous section the gap between standard and non-standard was analysed at a more global level, the issue will be here explored at a societal level – which proves its pervasive nature and explains its efficacy in determining discrimination.

As seen in the previous pages, the idea of standard language is very influential for speakers at all levels, as it is capable of shaping our conception of reality. That is why it can be seen as a myth, a "magical and powerful" construct, able to "motivate social behaviors and actions which would be otherwise contrary to logic or reason" (Lippi-Green 1997: 41).

The relationship between language and ideology is one of the main concerns of *critical linguistics* (Fowler et al. 1979; Kress and Hodge 1979), which unveils the power-related and conflictual aspects of language and languages, both worldwide and within a nation, a city, or a ghetto. Another reason to talk about this branch of linguistics is its relevance to the use of language in the media. When it comes to stereotyping, describing it also means not to turn a blind eye on the power relations that, as seen in chapter 1, determine the lives of entire peoples and, as is being explained here, pass through language, as well as and its mediated representations.

Critical linguists start from a critique of the sociolinguistic concept that language merely *reflects* society, and stress the naivety of such an assumption (Meshtrie

2000: 316-317). If it is true that a relationship between language and society must exist, it is also true that it cannot simply be understood as a neutral one, since society itself is not made of neutral people. In this sense, criticism calls objectivity into question and unveils its potential as a major instrument to conceal imbalance (Connerton 1976: 20). The fact that the link between signifier and signified is arbitrarily established by each society (and can change in time) implies that "the forms of signs are conditioned above all by the social organization of the participants involved and also by the immediate conditions of their interaction" (Voloshinov 1973: 21).

Part of critical linguistics is rooted in principles coming from non-linguistic disciplines such as sociology. Worth mentioning here are the theories attempting to define power, beginning with Max Weber's definition of *Macht* (power, 1925: 28): "[w]ithin a social relationship, power means any chance (no matter whereon this chance is based) to carry through one's (individual or collective) own will (even against resistance)."[27] Since power is exerted indiscriminately (i.e. with or without resistance) and can be based on any sort of condition, it inevitably implies a concept of inequality. It is important to add that Weber makes a distinction between power (*Macht*) and rule (*Herrschaft*), the latter being the type of power officially held by institutions – also translatable as authority. While the latter is concerned with legitimacy, power in itself can be exerted whether it is legitimate or not (Weber 1925: 28; Walliman et al. 1977: 234).

Critical linguistics also refers to Michel Foucault, especially concerning the concepts of power and discourse. For the French author, power should not be intended in the *Herrshaft* sense only, as it is omnipresent and can emerge from any point in space and time:

> It is the moving base of relations of force that incessantly induce, by their inequality, states of power, but always local and unstable. Omnipresence of power: not at all because it regroups everything under its invincible unity, but because it is produced at every instant, at every point, or moreover in every relation between one point and another. Power is everywhere: not that it engulfs everything, but that it comes from everywhere. (Foucault 1991: 122)

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[27] Translation by Walliman et al. (1980).

Foucault stresses the dynamicity and instability of power, explaining the efforts to preserve it on the part of those who have it, and to try and subvert it on the part of those who suffer from a disadvantaged positioning. Here, the concept of discourse becomes fundamental, as discourse is what allows the organising of knowledge, which is intrinsically bound to power, in a way that directs power itself (Foucault 1981: 52). Far from denying that there are people and entities holding on to major power, Foucault unveils the dynamics determining how power is shifted and preserved.

Drawing from the work of these (and other) sociologists, Norman Fairclough laid out a specifically linguistic viewpoint on power and ideology, stemming from the assumption that "the exercise of power, in modern society, is increasingly achieved through ideology, and more particularly through the ideological workings of language" (Fairclough 1989: 2). Fairclough's study of language starts from a strong ideological position: the author understands language as a discourse, a "social practice determined by social structures" (Fairclough 1989: 17). Since discourse is a term that has been analysed from different and not necessarily incompatible points of view, by linguists and sociologists, Fairclough tries "to bring together three analytical traditions" (Fairclough 1992: 72) and designs a three-dimensional model of discourse that can simultaneously take different aspects into account.

In his scheme, the three dimensions are organised in concentric "boxes." At the core of this pattern one finds the textual dimension of discourse, which includes various levels of textual analysis. The first four are traditionally part of textual analysis, and Fairclough adds three further headings to make sure the analysis can give account of formal properties of a text and more pragmatic features as well:

> Text analysis can be organized under four main headings: "vocabulary," "grammar," "cohesion," and "text structure." These can be thought as ascending in scale: vocabulary deals mainly with individual words, grammar deals with words combined into clauses and sentences, cohesion deals with how clauses and sentences are linked together, and text structure deals with large scale organizational properties of texts. In addition, I distinguish further three main headings which will be used in analysis of discursive practice rather than text analysis, though they certainly involve formal features of texts: the "force" of

utterances, i.e. what sorts of speech acts (promises, requests, threats etc.) they constitute; the "coherence" of texts; and the "intertextuality" of texts. (Fairclough 1992: 75)

The second dimension, discursive practice, involves "text production, distribution, and consumption," where "the nature of these processes varies between different types of discourses according to social factors" (Fairclough 1992: 78). In this dimension, the social context is fundamental in determining the way a text will be produced.

The last dimension is the one concerning social practice, and is more specifically linked to ideology and hegemony. Ideology is understood by Fairclough following Voloshinov (1973) and Althusser (1971), but rejecting Althusser's assumption that the whole of society is inseparable from ideology (Fairclough 1992: 91). Nonetheless, ideology is a pivotal element in Fairclough's model, as it "invests language in various ways at various levels" (Fairclough 1992: 88).

Another crucial concept in the third dimension is power. Echoing Gramsci's (1971) concepts of *dominio* (rule) and *egemonia* (hegemony), Fairclough distinguishes between two ways of exercising power: a more violent one, resorting to coercion, and a subtler one, based on "the manufacture of *consent* or at least acquiescence towards it" (Fairclough 1989: 4). The second way of exercising power is deeply interconnected with language, and especially with its public use, which characterises political discourse and media.

Fairclough also retrieves Foucault's *orders of discourse*, defining them as "clustering sets or networks" of "underlying conventions" (Fairclough 1989: 28) that direct a discourse. Orders of discourse organise the validity of discourses hierarchically in different settings (Fairclough 1989: 29-30).

However, since "power is everywhere," forms of resistance must be taken into consideration as well: not only social and political, but also linguistic ones. An example of these are what Halliday calls "anti-societies" and "anti-languages" (1978). An anti-society is created and lives as a conscious act of resistance, as it "is set up within another society as a conscious alternative to it. It is a mode of resistance, resistance which may take the form either of passive symbiosis or of active hostility and even destruction" (Halliday 1978: 164). Anti-languages are

the mode of linguistic expression of such societies, one typical example being the languages of the underworld, and have specific features such as re-lexicalisation and over-lexicalisation. What makes anti-languages worth analysing for linguists is that "the phenomenon of the antilanguage throws light on the difficult concept of social dialect, by providing an opposite pole, the second of two idealized extremes to which we can relate the facts as we actually find them" (Halliday 1978: 178). By positioning itself as the antipodal opposite of mainstream language, an anti-language reveals the existence of a far more complex spectrum of languages in society, which challenges the monolithic idea of national language and of nation as a place where a specific language – and only that language – is spoken. The scheme outlined by Halliday is particularly useful here. In order to introduce the scheme, Halliday envisions two idealised societies positioned at the antipodes of a spectrum: on the one hand, a monolithic society where only one language is spoken, on the other hand a polarised society where only a main language and an anti-language, completely different from each other, are spoken. Reality is usually somewhere on the continuum between these two extremes:

> What we do find in real life are types of sociolinguistic order that are interpretable as lying somewhere along this cline. The distinction between standard and nonstandard dialects is one of language versus antilanguage, although taking a relatively benign and moderate form. Popular usage opposes *dialect*, as "anti-," to *(standard) language*, as the established norm. A nonstandard dialect that is consciously used for strategic purposes, defensively to maintain a particular social reality or offensively for resistance and protest, lies further in the direction of an antilanguage; this is what we know as a "ghetto language." (Halliday 1978: 178-179)

In Halliday's view, those commonly referred to as "non-standard" dialects are less dichotomised versions of the more extreme anti-languages and, as such, have a certain distance from the ideal unifying language represented by the standard (see Figure 9).
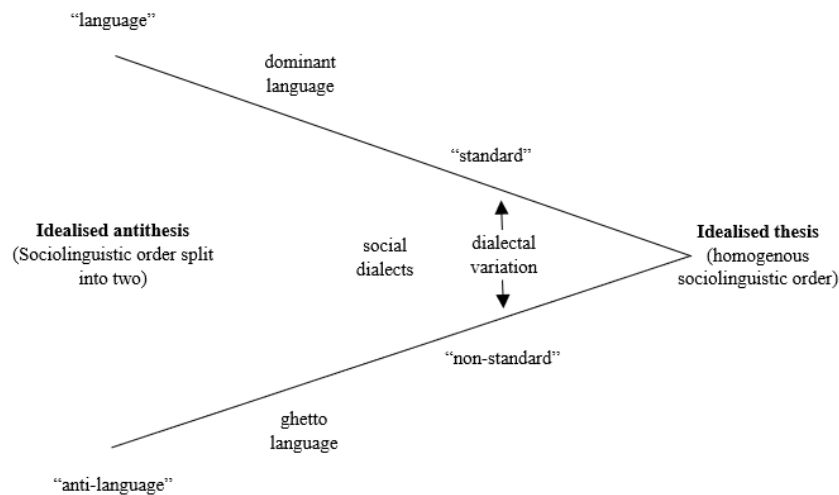
Figure 9 Halliday's representation of anti-language (1978).

Moving towards the antithesis, the relationship between the two languages becomes more conflictual, where dominant vs. ghetto language is a sharper social and linguistic division compared to standard vs. non-standard language. A number of examples have been provided for the language along the "anti-" line: the language of the underworld is an extreme form of anti-language. African American Vernacular English is an example of non-standard language, less extreme than the underworld language: "consciously used for strategic purposes, defensively to maintain a particular social reality or offensively for resistance and protest [it] was born and developed as a ghetto-language" (Halliday 1978: 179; see also Kochman 1972). The most vernacular subvarieties of Chicano English, the ones generally associated with gangbanging, are placed towards the anti-language end of the continuum, and their prominence derives from the mediated representations of their speakers (Fought 2003: 6-7).

Halliday's depiction of language and society from a perspective that takes variation and conflict into account is an ideal starting point to explore the theme of language varieties while taking the issue of power imbalance into account. In this sense, particularly relevant for our research are variations linked to social status and ethnicity, bearing in mind that "[i]t is seldom the case that class is the only sociological factor involved in language variation" (Meshtrie 2000a: 106). Power is also central in shaping the interactions among languages in a given community or territory.

3.3 Language variation and contact

The way languages emerge, evolve and at times dissipate through contact with other languages, along with the way a language itself cannot be seen as a unitary and immutable entity, are both relevant to the discipline of sociolinguistics, constituting, respectively, the study of language variation and contact linguistics. In some specific fields both may be relevant at the same time.

3.3.1 Language variation: dialects and sociolects

Language variation is one of the "linguistic facts of life" affirmed by Rosina Lippi-Green (1997: 25-29). In her words:

> Spoken language varies for every speaker in terms of speech sounds, sound patterns, word and sentence structure, intonation, and meaning, from utterance to utterance. […] There are three sources of variation in language: first, language-internal pressures, arising in part from the mechanics of production and perception; second, language-external influences on language, as a social behavior subject to normative and other formative social pressures; and third, variation arising from language as a creative vehicle of free expression. These forces can and do function in tandem […] (Lippi-Green 1997: 25)

The author summarises in these lines the most important issues tackled by social dialectology, i.e. the study of language variation across different social classes. It was first introduced by William Labov (1966; 1972; 1997) with an analysis of the way pronunciation varied among New Yorkers working in department stores of three price ranges, from the most expensive to the cheapest, assuming that this would imply a different social class of customer and an attempt to meet certain linguistic expectations on the side of the personnel (Labov 1997: 170). His findings revealed that pronunciation actually changes to some extent according to a series of criteria, including:

Store […]
Sex
Age (estimated in units of five years)
Occupation (floorwalker, sales, cashier, stockboy)
Race

Foreign or regional accent, if any (Labov 1997: 173)

Labov's work,[28] with all the limits of a very first attempt in this direction (Meshtrie 2000: 97), was a fundamental contribution to sociolinguistics, as it set forth a series of pivotal variables in a range of language-related research topics, from education to media representation. Furthermore, an inverse reading of Labov's findings is that it is possible to infer the social positioning of a person by the way s/he speaks. In this sense, it is worth noting that Labov (1972) identified three types of variables showing social variation: markers, indicators, and stereotypes. Indicators are subtle features, quite hard to notice for non-trained speakers, which do not really trigger specific reactions in the listeners, while markers are the most prominent signals of a specific social position – most listeners are able to gather social information from them, even when the speaker displays them unconsciously. Stereotypes are conscious characterisations of a certain group most widely acknowledged by outsiders, who often learn them from a caricatured media portrayal. Therefore, stereotypes tend to be the most hastily judged and stigmatised forms.

For the purpose of this research, two types of dialect require further investigation. The first one is "sociolect" or "social dialect," a variety "determined by social environments or associated with a particular social group" (Durrell 2004: 201). This definition has something in common with the essence of Chicano English, as Chicanos may represent a specific social group.

Although the terms "sociolect" and "social dialect" can be used to identify a distinctive dialect emerging from any social feature that does not depend (or exclusively depend) on geographical position, it is "most often used in connection with variation linked to social class" (Durrell 2004: 201). In the English-speaking world, social class may determine a substantial sociolectal variation, which can be an index of a broader situation of social injustice and inequality. Higher classes will speak a variety that approximates the standard, as previously discussed, thus attaining a perceived prestige that lower-class varieties do not have. However,

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[28] His results were further confirmed from across the ocean by Peter Trudgill's research upon social variation in a much smaller and closed environment, the city of Norwich (1974). He considered aspects of grammar, as well as pronunciation.

especially in more recent times, the division in social classes might not always apply, proving too rigid when compared to contemporary society. That is why a valid alternative to social class is the concept of "social network," intended not in the sense of social media but as social organisation and relations: "[s]ocial class is fundamentally a concept designed to elucidate large-scale social, political, and economic structures and processes, whereas social network relates to the community and interpersonal level of social organization" (Milroy and Milroy 1992: 2). This conceptualisation leaves more room for the role of each individual within their social context and their relation to the surrounding world. Indeed, fluidity and personal choice are a key element in social dialects, which cannot be delimited too neatly:

> It is a common place of traditional dialectology that, against the expectation of early dialectologists, regional dialects cannot be clearly delimited the one from the other, but typically form part of a geographical continuum of variation […] With sociolects, too, we typically find a similar (vertical) continuum which is perhaps even more fluid because it is not formed by variables with variants which are restricted in their occurrence to a particular social class. Rather it is the case that the distinctive usage of a particular social group is characterized by the relative frequency with which particular variants occur. (Durrell 2004: 204)

While it is of course easier to observe and interpret phenomena through simplification and reduction, reality presents a level of complexity that cannot be simply ruled out.

In this sense, another type of dialect is worth considering, as it shows the inherent level of complexity within a society. It was first noted by Labov during his aforementioned analysis of New Yorkers, in particular when he noted the fact that Puerto Ricans seemed to have "patterns of consonant cluster simplification which are different from those of both black and white New Yorkers" (Labov 1972: 118). What Labov found is what is now called an "ethnolect."

3.3.2 Language variation and ethnicity: ethnolects

Clyne defines ethnolects as "varieties of a language that mark speakers as members of ethnic groups who originally used another language" (2000: 86). But what does ethnicity mean? Is it possible to take such a concept for granted?

As underlined by Fought (2006), providing an exhaustive definition of ethnicity is not an easy task, even when starting from the currently accepted idea that ethnicity is a social construction. To the present day it has been impossible "to arrive at a set of quantifiable morphological and physiological features whereby we can unequivocally compartmentalize all human beings into a small array of discrete races" (Zelinsky 2001: 8). This proves that there is no such thing as a biological division among human beings nor is there any biological justification for racism. However, this does not suddenly wipe away centuries of racial clashes and discrimination influencing the way ethnicity is perceived in the public imagery. In the words of the American National Research Council:

> The concepts of race and ethnicity are social realities because they are deeply rooted in the consciousness of individuals and groups, and because they are firmly fixed in our society's institutional life. Further, these concepts are sustained by several mechanisms that frame the categories of race and ethnicity in terms of kinship and descent, group intermarriage and reproduction, distinctive geographical location and residence, specification in law and policies, discrimination and prejudice, and self-identification. (Smelser et al. 2001)

Just like the word "ethnicity," the word "race" is recognised by all English speakers, but both seem rather difficult to define, probably because of their factual groundlessness (Fought 2006: 4). In fact, as stated in the previous quotation, when drawing real lines between groups of people based on features such as phenotype, the concreteness of discourses on race and ethnicity lies not in scientific evidence, but in the minds of people, who are influenced by the institutions surrounding them, as well as on socially-driven psychological categories such as prejudice and discrimination. As chapter 5 will show, actors called to interpret the role of Chicanos are not necessarily Chicanos – the most important thing is for them to have certain features that the public may recognise as typical of a Chicano.

There have been several attempts to define ethnicity, ethnic group and race, some of which are worth mentioning here. One is Cohen's, according to whom ethnicity is "a set of descent-based cultural identifiers used to assign persons to groupings that expand and contract in inverse relation to the scale of inclusiveness and

exclusiveness of the membership" (Cohen 1978: 387). Such a definition is not too distant from Barth's list of the features that identify an ethnic group:

> 1. is largely biologically self-perpetuating
>
> 2. shares fundamental cultural values, realized in overt unity in cultural forms
>
> 3. makes up a field of communication and interaction
>
> 4. has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order.
> (Barth 1969: 10-11)

In both cases, the authors focus on the importance of shared cultural values and practices – functioning as cultural identifiers – which perpetrate themselves through blood. Another important characteristic in both definitions is membership. Cohen underlines that the belonging is not necessarily an in/out option, as it is possible to be positioned along a scale of inclusiveness/exclusiveness. Barth places more emphasis on the fact that not only does the group need to recognise itself as such, but it is also necessary for it to be identified from the outside. As for race, a definition provided by the American National Research Council presented it as a social category that is a subset of the broader concept of ethnicity. Race, in fact, is mainly referred to the identification of physical markers believed to be common to a certain group. The Research Council stresses that, being linked to recognisable physical features, "race" as a social category is much more arduous to dissimulate or modify:

> *"[R]ace" is a social category based on the identification of (1) a physical marker transmitted through reproduction and (2) individual, group and cultural attributes associated with that marker*. Defined as such, race is, then, a form of ethnicity, but distinguished from other forms of ethnicity by the identification of distinguishing *physical* characteristics, which, among other things, make it more difficult for members of the group to change their identity. (Smelser et al. 2001:3)

In her efforts to define the concepts of ethnicity, ethnic group, and race, Fought explains that it is fundamental to look at "*both self-identification and the perceptions and attitudes of others*" (author's italics, 2006: 6). Although it is vital for the individual to recognise themselves as belonging to a certain group, it is

also true that no one can "be completely free of the views and attitudes of others in the society" (Fought 2006: 6), which most often happen to depend on phenotypes. On the recognition of phenotypes depend ascription to a certain ethnic group as well as "passing,"[29] which, in turn, influence the way an individual will be categorised and treated. That is why, among the definitions of ethnicity, the most cogent ones are those able to take into account the fact that "ethnicity is something that is highlighted most clearly when ingroup/outgroup boundaries are part of the context" (Fought 2006: 13).

The possible definitions of categories such as ethnicity, ethnic group, and even race are certainly more numerous than those here mentioned. However, the ones selected contain most of the crucial points shared by the others. With these landmarks in mind, it is possible to go back to the definition of ethnolect and critically understand the way ethnicity, race and language intertwine. Language has an enormous power in marking one's belonging and influencing the way an individual is perceived. This means that the participation of language within the broader framework of identity is not secondary.

Identity is in fact a very complex matter where, apart from ethnicity, race and identity, other features, such as social class/profession, gender, sexual orientation, and territorial belonging, all play roles in different ways at different times. Language speaks for itself but also accounts for the self-expression and the presentation of many other aspects of identity, as stated by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller when proposing linguistic behaviours as "acts of identity" (1985: 14). Since language is such a pivotal part but also an invaluable instrument for identity construction (Lippi-Green 1997: 30), it should not be surprising that a number of linguistic resources developed to enable humans to both express and identify those identities. Fought (2006: 21-23) gathered some of the most relevant, which are hereby summarised:

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[29] "Passing," which refers to the possibility (and action) of "passing" for a member of a racial/ethnic group one does not belong to on a kinship line, was – and still is – a common practice in the United States. Usually done to mingle into the dominant group, it can also be done the other way round. The literature on the subject is vast and says much about American culture. However, treating it in thorough detail is not in the main scope of the thesis. A good starting point for investigating the subject is the dedicated book edited by Elaine K. Ginsberg (1996).

- A *heritage language* is the result of a life-long commitment to the preservation of one's origin – learning it and keeping it alive by using it. The heritage language immediately identifies the speaker as member of a certain group.
- *Code-switching*: while many will forget how to speak their heritage language or will grow without learning it, it is possible at all level of competence to display belonging by using a few words. This allows showing attachment to heritage but also an embracement of a more complex identity (code-switching will be explained in better detail in the following paragraphs).
- Specific linguistic features are "a key element in the indexing and reproduction of ethnic identity, just as they are for other aspects of identity, such as gender or social class" (Fought 2006: 22). They can be anything from phonology to lexico-grammar.
- Suprasegmental features: however close to standard a speaker can be in terms of phonology and grammar, suprasegmental traits, such as a more syllable- or stress-timed intonation, often actually reveal ethnic belonging.
- Discourse features, intended as pragmatic aspects of communication (e.g. turn-taking) can also be linked to specific ethnic groups.
- Using a "borrowed variety," which is not part of the speaker's heritage, but serves them to construct items such as masculinity (Chun 2001) or belonging to a peer group (Franceschi 2014).

A crucial issue is directly related to identification and self-identification as members of a group, and it comes into play whenever ethnic groups sharing a certain space have different positioning in terms of power. As is easy to imagine, that is very often the case. For people originally belonging to a dominated minority, the main identity question will be whether to try and be as assimilated as possible or to differentiate one's self in the name of ethnic pride. When positioning oneself between these two polarities, language is a determining element (Fordham and Ogbu 1986). In the United States, ethnic belonging is often intertwined with social class issues, as proved in Urciuoli's study upon Puerto Ricans in New York: the participants in the experiment linked a social class

upgrade with a change in linguistic behaviour, shifting towards a whiter, businesspeople-like variety of English (Urciuoli 1996: 142). The association between standard and whiteness and, conversely, between non-standardness and non-whiteness, is a common assumption in the United States (Urciouli 1996; Ogbu 1999). This association has paramount importance in the mediated representation of any minority, and Chicanos are no exception.

As will be later specified, such assumptions resound with the issue of language-based discrimination in the US, where speaking English with one of the aforementioned ethnic features is often a stigmatised linguistic behaviour. That is probably the reason why, as a form of resistance to forced assimilation, ethnic groups in the US, be they immigrant or African Americans, can be particularly defensive of their ethnic heritage, which includes language. Ethnic minority members who decide, for any personal reason, to shift towards the dominant language/standard variety, are often seen as traitors by their fellows, as "[t]he pressure to use the heritage language can be particularly strong where the language tied to an ethnic identity is perceived as threatened" (Fought 2006: 29). If not being able to speak one's own language/dialect is negative, it is seen as an even greater insult to refuse to speak it (Rickford 1999; Ogbu 1999, see the definition of *pocho* in chapter 2). Heritage language as a whole, along with the dialects that are influenced by a group's linguacultural heritage, participates strongly in the recognition of the group itself. An ethnolect is not just an interlanguage spoken by learners, since it acquires added value as a marker of identity and common belonging for a group that, most of the times, constitutes a minority within a larger national community:

> An ethnolect, like a community language, offers a means of expressing linguistic identity, of demonstrating solidarity with one's ethnic group. Importantly, it provides a means for those who may no longer be fluent in their ethnic language to continue to express their identification with, and sense of belonging to, their ethnic group. (Clyne et al. 2001: 226).

Once again, language and ideology are tightly intertwined. Indeed, despite a major language taking over, as will be explained in the next paragraph, the need for claiming one's own heritage is critical, and doing so might save a language from

disappearing, or disappearing completely, even when subject to violent repression. From the ideological point of view, however, using the term ethnolect implies some issues. First, identifying non-whiteness with ethnicity might implicitly mean accepting the idea that white dialects are *not ethnic*, which is an ethnocentric view. This is especially dangerous in places like the United States where, as will be later explained, discriminatory practices often pass through language difference:

> [T]he designation "ethnolect" can be part of a more insidious practice. In the dominant discourse of American dialectology, the white Anglo variety is considered a regional dialect, while African American and Latino varieties are considered ethnic dialects […] the dichotomy between regional and ethnic varieties and the lack of attention to regional varieties of African American and Latino speech underscores a deterritorializing discourse of subordinated racial groups" (Eckert 2008: 27).

In this sense, another implication of talking about "ethnic" dialects might be to (more or less consciously) consider regional dialects of "white" English, while neglecting regional differences in what are considered as "ethnic varieties." Moreover, while in nations like the United States ethnic heritage might significantly influence speech, it might not be as relevant in other areas of the world (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, 1985; Reaser, 2004; Walker & Meyerhoff, 2006). It is also essential to bear in mind that an ethnic group cannot be considered a monolithic and uniform group with immutable features, whose members (each and all of them) constantly feel the same about their identity. Indeed, an ethnic community as a whole has fading boundaries, it changes and evolves through time, it has members who perceive their affiliation in different ways, and even the same person might modify his/her perception of belonging (and consequently their linguistic behaviour) according to context (Fought, 2006:16-17, 20; Zelinsky, 2001:44; Schiffrin, 1994:197). Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that the *perception of ethnicity* has a great impact on the way people depict themselves and the others, since "race as something collectively perceived, as a social construct, far outweighs its dubious validity as a biological hypothesis" (Zelinsky 2001: 9). That is why, instead of completely dismissing the concept of

ethnicity when considering language, it may be worth making an effort to problematize it as part of a more complex identity, made of several layers that do not necessarily act at the same time or live peacefully with each other. Like the aforementioned linguistic repertoires, identity is a repertoire (Kroskrity 1999) that one can draw from in different ways, according to factors such as context, communicative strategies or interlocutors:

> Speakers may heighten or diminish linguistic displays that index various aspects of their identities according to the context of an utterance and the specific goals they are trying to achieve […] "repertoire of identity," in which any of a multiplicity of identities may be fronted at a particular moment. […] speakers may index a polyphonous, multilayered identity by using linguistic variables with indexical associations to more than one social category. (Barrett 1999: 318)

The process of selection is extremely dynamic, not necessarily (or completely) conscious, and it can be symptomatic of power imbalance when generated by more or less interiorised social pressure. Identity, and all the linguistic fragments that contribute to the construction and self-construction of each person and community, cannot be fixed – but they do exist, as it is evident in the way anyone is constantly judged and classified according to categories such as gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or social class. In the realm of interpersonal relations, perception can be heavier than reality.

All this must be taken into account, and should be carefully considered when approaching the study of a specific linguistic group, and Chicanos are no exception. In fact, Chicano English is a variety that depends on factors such as social class and ethnicity. However, it was also generated as an ultimate consequence of language contact – which will be dealt with in the following paragraphs.

3.3.3   Language contact part I: code-switching

Contact linguistics and language variation can overlap when a language varies in a bilingual or a multilingual community, which is the case of code-switching and code-mixing. These phenomena have something to do with variation within a language (for example based on ethnicity or nationality), but also with language contact and grades of competence of multilingual speakers.

First, it is be useful to briefly concentrate on the terms code-mixing and code-switching. Traditionally, code-mixing was defined as the alternation of languages *within* a sentence, while code-switching as the alternation of languages *between* sentences (Winford 2003: 105). However, it is not always easy to draw a line between the two, and that is why some scholars tend to avoid the dichotomy or to opt for one all-comprehensive definition (e.g. Matras 2001: 109).

The importance of the study of language alternation phenomena lies in the fact that "language varieties are meaningful," as they provide information on "a speaker's origin or of aspects of their social identity […] but they also carry certain social values related to the speakers who use them and the contexts in which they are habitually used" (Swann 2000: 148). This feature of language was observed by dialectology scholars, and is perhaps even more salient in a bilingual or multilingual context. The first to notice the meaningfulness of languages in such communities were Lambert et al. (1960), who found that the same voice reading passages using a different language prompted in the listeners completely different assumptions about the speakers (their study was carried out in bilingual Canada). Although clearly artificial in the method – the same person will probably fail at conveying all of the languages with the same authenticity – the research represented a valid starting point from which to investigate the way bilingual or multilingual speakers selected a specific language in context, and what the expectations of the listeners might be.

Through a series of studies and experimentations on the topic (Giles 1973; Giles and Powesland 1975; Soliz and Giles 1987; Giles et al. 1991), Giles showed that a bilingual speaker might change the way they speak according to their interlocutor, and called this process speech (or later communication) accommodation. Accommodation might trigger two procedures: one is convergence, the attempt to modify one's own speech so as to make it similar to the interlocutor's; the other is divergence, which consists in differentiating one's own speech from the interlocutor's. Both are usually aimed at specific communicative and social effects, respectively to reduce or to emphasise social distance between the participants in a communicative event. However, accommodation does not happen in a deterministic way, and is not necessarily perceived according to the generic

principle that convergence equals positive and divergence equals negative. As is predictable, the intentions behind accommodation strategies and its effects (either intended or unintended) were proven to depend heavily on context. In chapter 5 and 6, speech accommodation (or refusal to accommodate) according to the interlocutors of the cinematic CE speakers will prove to be an integral part of their stereotype. Accommodation, however, also applies to monolingual communities, where attempts at converging or diverging make use of other linguistic resources (e.g. register, regional accent).

Other research in the field of language choice concentrated on the habitual use of two (or more) available languages. While a multilingual speaker can potentially resort to any language at any time, research found that a speaker will tend to attribute to each language a different use, which is considered "proper" for the specific interlocutor, occasion and topic (Fishman 1972: 437). Thus, "proper" is what meets "widespread sociocultural norms and expectations" (Fishman 1972: 441). That is how each language in a bilingual or multilingual community becomes "proper" to a specific "domain." A domain is "defined […] in terms of institutional contexts and their congruent behavioral co-occurrences […] major clusters of interaction […] multilingual settings and […] interlocutors" (Fishman 1972: 441). Each domain consists of these elements, whose combination is recurrent in a specific society. Family, education, workplace, peer interaction, public and political communication are all valid domain examples.

The theory of domains, however, should not obscure the fact that code-switching may also depend on a personal choice bound to specific aims of the speaker, which is to say that code-switching can indeed work as a communicative strategy. For example, an interaction can switch when the participants find out they belong to the same ethno-linguistic group, so as to create a social bond based on the shared background, to then switch back to a more general/formal variety as soon as an "external" participant joins the conversation (Myers-Scotton 1993: 88). This happens in the analysed film *Blood In Blood Out* (1993), when the white Chicano Miklo reveals his origin to another Chicano by speaking Spanish, and a Spanish-only conversation follows (*Blood In Blood Out* 1993: 31.44-32.12).

A switch can also take place within a communicative event based on the general meaning attributed to a specific language. For example, if in a bilingual community a language is associated with authoritativeness, a switch to it can be used as a way to end an argument (Gal 1979: 113). The switch can also be an unmarked choice, when the aim of using more languages at the same time lies precisely in their co-existence as a sign of dual identity (Myers-Scotton 1993: 118-119). Sometimes, however, code-switching can purposely go against expectations, with the specific purpose of inviting the interlocutors to go beyond the social protocol and express their true self (Myers-Scotton 1993: 131).

Gumperz (1982) attempted to summarise all of the possible functions of code-switching in conversation, intended both as switch and mix (see previous distinction). A first function is that of reported speech (Gumperz 1982: 75-76), which can convey a message with a higher level of authenticity – although the speaker can also decide to translate the utterance for reasons of clarity (Gumperz 1982: 82). A second function identified by Gumperz (1982: 77) is addressee specification, when the mixed utterance is aimed at involving a speaker of the mixed language or at excluding someone who will not understand it. Gumperz also talks about interjection (1982: 77-78) when the switch is used as a sentence filler and also takes place in Chicano gangster films (Renna 2018a; Renna 2018b; Renna 2018c; Renna forthcoming; see chapter 6). Reiteration is the fourth function, and consists in repeating the same message in more languages to make sure it is understood by all of the interlocutors (1982: 78-79). Message qualification serves to qualify constructions "such as sentence and verb complements or predicates following a copula" (Gumperz 1982: 79). The sixth function is that marking personalisation versus objectivisation: in this case, one language represents something closer to the speaker (and the hearer) while the other probably conveys a minor involvement. Thus, the switch can mark the difference between "talk about action and talk as action, the degree of speaker involvement in, or distance from, a message, whether a statement reflects personal opinion or knowledge, whether it refers to specific instances or has the authority of generally known fact" (Gumperz 1982: 80).

3.3.4 Language contact part II: language shift, pidgins, creoles

Contact linguistics is also concerned with the linguistic consequences of the introduction of a new tongue in a speech community; the causes of such event can be manifold, from border contact to migration or colonisation (Meshtrie and Leap 2000: 248).

When two languages come into contact, it is likely for each of them to have a specific status of dominated or dominant– in most colonial settings it is likely for English to be dominant. The contact between languages naturally causes modifications in each of them, especially in the one considered less prestigious. The possible scenarios were first observed by Fishman (1964), and tend to hinge upon a vision of language as a living organism that can go in two opposed directions: maintenance or shift. When a language is still spoken despite being in contact with a dominant one, it is subject to language maintenance, whereas a shift takes place when the community opts for abandoning the minor in favour of the most powerful one. If a language relinquished by its own community is not spoken anywhere else, it is considered dead (Meshtrie and Leap 2000: 253).

The death of a language was studied by Campbell and Muntzel (1989). This phenomenon can happen in different ways, one being its "sudden death," which is caused by the rapid extermination of all of its speakers: it happened to Tasmanian when all of its speakers were killed by the British settlers in the nineteenth century (Campbell and Muntzel 1989: 182-183). It is also possible for a language to experience a "radical death," usually in tragic circumstances: in case of political repression of the language, often enforced with violence, the speakers of a language may decide to completely abandon their language in the shortest time possible as a sort of "survival strategy" (Campbell and Muntzel 1989: 183). Other kinds of death take place at a slower pace. There is "gradual death," a phenomenon occurring where a language is slowly replaced by another (a language shift). Similarly, in the sub-type of gradual death defined as "bottom-to-top death," a language is slowly excluded from everyday conversation but remains the language of specific sectors linked to cultural tradition, e.g. religious rituals. Research into gradual language death led to the identification of some possible causes, which most often combine in specific ways for each language. The list of

causes is re-elaborated from the work of Giles et al. (1977) and Appel and Muysken (1987). First of all, when two or more languages come into contact, it is vital to consider the economic factors that might favour one or the other language – indeed, economic factors can be the most powerful in determining a shift, as they are at the core of colonisation, migration and trade, these being linked to phenomena such as urbanisation and industrialisation (Meshtrie and Leap 2000: 255). The language representing economic power is most often the one that will survive, while the one spoken by the least powerful will gradually disappear. Another factor, related to economic power, is the status and prestige of a language that, along with the self-perception of the speakers, might make the difference between maintenance and shift (Meshtrie and Leap 2000: 257). Demographic factors are also important, as a language survives as long as it has speakers. In areas where more languages coexist, a discriminatory practice like segregation might actually work as a means to keep a language alive (Li 1982). Another element to be taken into consideration is institutional support, i.e. allowing the use of a language in official settings like education and media – although there may be a stark opposition between the over-formal variety taught at school and the extremely colloquial varieties the speakers are familiar with in their everyday life (Meshtrie and Leap 2000: 257). Languages like Te Reo Maori of New Zealand, nearly wiped out through the killing of its speakers and a series of repressing policies, is now being (at least partly) rescued thanks to governmental initiatives (Holmes 1997).

Apart from the causes, another set of data that can be gathered through observing a gradual language death concerns its late stages. A gradual death usually implies a progressive loss of command and familiarity with a language, a reduction of the viable contexts of use, and a substantial gap between generations of speakers. When a language is disappearing under the pressure of a more powerful one, its last niches will be informal and conversational contexts, while most official occasions will require the use of the dominant language. The fact that the language will only be used in very informal contexts means that the competence of its speakers will become more and more limited, as they will probably receive higher education in the dominant language. Depending on personal history and

familial context, as well as on other factors (e.g. age), language competence in a community of speakers of endangered languages may vary noticeably. This aspect is salient in the analysed films, as the Spanish competence of the characters varies from mere use of a limited set of recurring words (e.g. *vato* [man], cfr. Renna 2018b) to more complex sentences (see chapter 6).

Several authors attempted to classify speakers according to their command of the dying language (Dorian 1977, 1981; Dressler 1981; Campbell and Muntzel 1989; Rouchdy 1989; Grinevald 2001). Most classifications consist of a continuum going from the most competent bilingual speakers to those who retain but a passive competence of the dying language: although capable of understanding the language of their ancestors, they are fundamentally speakers of the dominant one. Younger fluent speakers generally display only subtle deviations from the way language is (or was) spoken by their elders. Dorian and Grinevald take age as an important factor – although it can be a slippery category, as the critical age to pass from young to old is not an absolute, and neither is the correspondence between age and language competence. Rouchdy's classification (1989: 2650-2661) has the peculiar feature of taking into consideration the environment of the speakers, as she talks about the difference between urban and non-urban speakers, the former generally more prone towards the shift to the dominant language; she also considers gender and age relevant variables. Dorian's classification (1981) also includes individual factors that might determine a certain level of competence, especially pertaining to the familial background, in the case of the "semi-speakers." These, although having an imperfect command of the language, still use it in some contexts. The reasons to use a language in which they are not really competent might lie in their family bonds to older members, especially grandparents, or in a natural tendency of the person to try accommodating the older speakers by using their preferred language. In other cases, the semi-speakers may be the youngest in a relatively large family, whose elder siblings are usually fluent bilinguals importing the dominant language from school. Another possibility is a temporary absence from the community (like Miklo in *Blood In Blood Out*, see chapter 5 and 6), which serves to revive a sense of belonging in the

speaker, who will feel the urge to express his/her identity through language – no matter imperfect it may sound.

Shift and death, however, are not the only possible outcomes of language contact – and probably not the most creative possibilities on the side of the speakers. Indeed, it is not always the case that a language totally eradicates the other, as in many occasions the two languages will be reshaped into something different: pidgins and creoles. Chicano English has some traits in common with pidgins and creoles, as it is a language that was born from the contact between two languages. Nevertheless, CE is not considered a pidgin nor a creole: in order to understand the difference between them, some key concepts about pidgins and creoles will be set out here. Research on this field is broad, ranging from accounts of specific cases to attempts to delve into the origin of pidgin and creoles, either to retrieve their origin, explain how they come to life or infer the existence of language universals. Mühlhausler (1986: 5) defines pidgins as "examples of partially targeted or non-targeted second-language learning, developing from simpler to more complex systems as communicative requirements become more demanding," and he also specifies that they "by definition have no native speakers" being a "social rather than individual solution" to a communicative need arising in an encounter among speakers of different languages. A classic trend in the research on language contact is to delineate a continuum going from the barest and most limited pidgins as a means to communicate basic messages in a certain communication domain to the most complex ones approximating a fully-fledged language. As summarised by Meshtrie and Leap (2000: 280-281), pidgins are said to vary according to the function they are meant to fulfil and to their structural complexity. The most basic would be "jargon," or "pre-pidgin," unstable and extremely limited; it is followed by "stable pidgins," often simply called pidgins, which are closer to Mühlhausler's definition of pidgin at a more general level – they are more recognisable than a jargon but still limited to specific domains. An "expanded pidgin" has attained a further level of complexity and can be used in a broader range of contexts, including interpersonal or even formal domains. The most complex are creoles, which detach from the "no native

speakers" feature attributed to pidgins, and become the first language of a given community.

As mentioned above, much research was dedicated to the origin of pidgins, and in particular to the contexts in which they emerge. Probably the most notable one, which generated countless contact varieties, is slavery. Slavery was a global phenomenon, often referred to as the Triangular Slave Trade – thus defined because it consisted of three journeys across the Atlantic Ocean.[30] The slaves arriving in the Americas, although mainly coming from West Africa, had a diverse range of ethno-linguistic backgrounds that prevented them from communicating with each other, at least through their own languages (Taronna 2016: 75). This lack of a common means of communication both between each other and with their masters (respectively horizontal and vertical communication) urged the development of a pidgin. The most common place for a pidgin to emerge was the plantation. The "catastrophic break in linguistic tradition" (Sankoff 1979: 24) represented by the plantation environment is indeed unique in history. Here, contact took place between the dominant language of the masters, often referred to as superstrate language, and the languages of the slaves, which represent the substrate (Meshtrie and Leap 2000: 284). Other possible contexts of pidgin development are trade, colonisation and settlement, war, and labour migration (Meshtrie and Leap 287-288).

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[30] Morgan's description of its geographical route originating in Britain is useful here to provide a brief contextualisation:

> The first leg of the triangle was the outward voyage from the English home port – usually London, Bristol or Liverpool – to the West African coast. Ships sailed laden with manufactured goods that could be exchanged for slaves in Africa. […] The second leg of the triangle consisted of the notorious Middle Passage. This was the name given to the Atlantic crossing from Africa after slaves had embarked on board ship, to the disembarkation point for slaves in the Americas. This was a particularly risky leg of the entire voyage. Ships were buffeted by Atlantic gales and storms, the crew and slaves often became ill through disease, malnutrition, or dehydration […] Slaves were sold at auction; the payments for the sale arranged; and plantation produce loaded to fill the ships' holds. The third and final leg of the slave trade triangle comprised the voyage home from the Americas to the original English port. (Morgan 2007: 54)

Another branch of studies concerning pidgin is focused on the identification of common features, especially in stable pidgins. In terms of lexicon (Holm 1988: 73; Todd 1994: 3,178), a recurring trait is the presence of polysemous words, which have more than one possible meaning, and another is multifunctionality – the multiple grammar uses of a single word. It is also common to find circumlocution, the tendency to use a paraphrase to express concepts that can be said in one word in the superstrate language. Compounding and reduplication are also characteristic of pidgin vocabularies. Grammatical structure, is often characterised by specific, albeit different, ways of marking tenses, which usually differ from the superstrate: it is not rare to find, instead of suffixes and conjugations, tense or aspect markers that are unheard of in the superstrate. In other cases, tenses will have to be deduced from context or through adverbs (Meshtrie and Leap 2000: 291-293).

Pidgin scholars investigating the genesis of pidgins are mainly divided among three possible theories. One is the monogenesis (Whinnom 1956; Taylor 1961), inferring that all pidgins originally descend from Portuguese, the language of the very first Europeans exploring and trading with Asia and Africa. Portuguese is believed to have originated all the pidgins that later underwent relexification when new traders and colonisers from other European countries followed. Another theory imagines pidgins arising across the world in similar ways due to similar conditions – parallel but independent development (Meshtrie and Leap 2000: 295). Affinity in the interaction dynamics, similarities in the interactions among superstrates (either Romance or Germanic languages) and substrates (mostly West African or Austronesian) might have triggered parallel phenomena.

Another possible reading of the fact that pidgin languages have similar features worldwide is the existence of linguistic universals, intrinsic linguistic abilities that would be shared by all humans, allowing them "to create simple communication systems which could be elaborated by having recourse to their mother tongues or to the linguistic common denominators which are thought to underlie all human languages" (Todd 1994: 3,180).

The study of creoles followed similar paths, scholars being especially concerned with tracing back the origin and spotting common features in different creoles

across the world. Creole is often defined, as previously discussed, as the culminant stage of "a process of expansion" (Meshtrie and Leap 2000: 297). A pre-existing pidgin (born from reduction of the languages that come into contact) passes from its characterising limitedness to the complexity of a fully-fledged language: this process is often referred to as "creolisation." How does creolisation happen? One of the earliest theories, equally well-known among supporters and detractors, is Bickerton's "bioprogramme" theory (1988). Informed by Chomskian theories, Bickerton infers the existence of an innate language ability inside every human being. While in ordinary contexts this ability will emerge when learning the rules of one's mother tongue, the children of people who spoke pidgin would not have a rich and complete basis to shape with their innate ability. As a consequence, children would have to create a language that is, by necessity, different from both the native one of their own parents and the pidgin itself. Since the resulting creole is not influenced by a pre-existing language, it is likely that it will be endowed with a somehow "pure" essence that more directly reflects the natural linguistic predisposition of human beings. Bickerton supported this theory by showing the similarities among the creoles he had studied.

His theory, however, has been criticised for some of its assumptions (Meshtrie and Leap 2000: 300). First of all, the involvement of adults in the development of creoles has been proved by other case studies (e.g. Jourdan 1991), while the lack of proof of an abrupt passage from pidgin to creole does not allow taking the exclusive role of children for granted. Moreover, his conclusions are mostly based on African pidgins, and do not seem equally applicable to the pidgins of the Pacific area.

A different explanation, referred to as "gradualism," was proposed by scholars like Baker (1995), who took into consideration the role of adults and also the lack of a neat division between a hypothetic pidgin-only era and the "rise" of creole. Gradualist theories see the passage from pidgin to creole as a slow evolution of language, which progressively adapted to respond to the people's "desire to communicate" (Baker 1995: 12). In this sense, pidgins and creoles may somehow embody the idea of language as a practice that characterises the conceptualisation proposed by Canagarajah.

Creole itself, however, cannot be seen as sharply divided from the superstrate language: on the contrary, it is more likely for each speaker to be positioned along a continuum going from a variety that is closer to the superstrate, called acrolect, to the most divergent, called basilect, with a range of intermediate varieties, referred to as mesolects (Meshtrie and Bhatt 2008: 226). Usually, the acrolect speakers are the elite of a (post)colonial society, while the basilect speakers use a variety that can be unintelligible for superstrate language speakers. Where the division in society is more evident, one might witness, although rarely, a decreolisation phenomenon: creole speakers have access to the superstrate language to the extent that their own variety loses some or all of its distinguishing features (Meshtrie and Leap 2000: 302-303). The opposite phenomenon is called recreolisation. It was observed in adolescents of Caribbean origin in Britain by Wright (1984): as a consequence of a lack of social integration, young speakers overturned the decreolisation enacted by their parents (in an attempt to become integral part of society), and acquired a higher level of command of creole so as to demarcate their own identity.

Despite most discourses upon pidgin and creole stemming from the idea of evolution from the former to the latter, it is worth mentioning some criticism undermining this very basic assumption, and opening a debate that problematizes the axioms of contact linguistics. One of the most notable detractors of the evolution theory is Salikoko Mufwene, who supports the idea of separate but similar paths followed by pidgins and creoles:

> Note that although creoles and expanded pidgins are comparable in structural complexity, this similarity in outcomes only reflects the role of vernacularization in the emergence, expansion, and stabilization of their structures. History provides no evidence suggesting that creoles evolved from pidgins, especially not that expanded pidgins represent an intermediary stage in this evolution. (Mufwene 2008: 5-6)

Mufwene's main argument is that no direct derivation of creole from pidgin has been proved, so that linguists supporting this idea are refusing to abandon what is nothing more than a myth. He finds it more likely that both linguistic forms emerged in different ways and contexts responding to different needs using the

same strategy – namely, vernacularisation, the process of approximating the outer language to one's own native language.

Mufwene reminds us that in a context like the homestead, contacts between masters and slaves were a daily matter, to the extent that "there is no particular reason to expect the adult Africans to have spoken a pidgin," while it is more probable that "they must have gone through an interlanguage stage, like any (naturalistic) L2 learner" (Mufwene 2008: 3). He also brings the example of Hawaii, "probably the only place where a creole and a pidgin lexified by the same language have evolved" (Mufwene 2008: 6). In Hawaii, the historical conditions favoured the emergence of a pidgin in the rural context, while the urban environment generated a creole (Mufwene 2008: 6). Indentured agricultural labourers arrived from different Asian nations at different times, and they were housed and employed separately, which enabled them to continue using their own native languages. That is why they only needed a pidgin for specific and limited interlingual interactions, which also explains the maintenance of their own linguistic and national heritages, which is mostly lost for African slaves. On the contrary, daily contact among different language speakers characterised the urban life, and that is why Hawaiian cities are the birthplace of the local English creole variety.

Relevant criticism was also raised by DeGraff (2001), who opposes McWhorter's statement that "the world's simplest grammars are Creole grammars" (2001: 125). The underlying assumption of such a statement is that age and complexity grow together, which implies that pidgin and creoles are a sort of "baby-talk," whose grammars are simple and elementary, in contrast with those of fully-fledged languages, which moved onto a more complex structure. According to DeGraff, such a position is not supported by facts and is flawed for a series of reasons. Among these, DeGraff underlines the observation that "[s]implification patterns are due to the idiolect-formation mechanisms that are necessarily employed in the creation of both Creole and non-Creole languages" (2001: 256), and are not exclusive of creoles. DeGraff also problematizes the concept of "basic grammar," pivotal to conceptualisations retrieving Bickerton's proposals. He doubts the possible awareness of a speaker of what is "basic" and necessary in a language,

which would be vital for them to "select" the basic items for communication (DeGraff 2001: 259).

In conclusion, varieties of English arise from language contact across the world, and dialects are proof of the multifaceted and multi-layered identity of each language within itself. Language has a paramount importance for human existence, as its ability to create individual identities and social relations is unparalleled. That is the reason why investigating language means investigating society, and both reveal much about each other. In particular, due to their peculiar histories, some societies display a thriving language variation, which mirrors its complex ethno-national composition. One of these is the United States, having American English as a first language and an enthralling (although not always peaceful) ethnolinguistic variation simmering right below the surface.

4 Chapter 4 – Chicano English: an American English

"Very different varieties of English in many ways are all equally efficient as languages,
although they do not enjoy the same degree of wider social acceptance."

Rosina Lippi-Green (1997: 12)

The previous chapters introduced notions of linguistics and history helpful for a better understanding of Chicano English as a quintessentially American language. Bearing in mind the complexity of American history and its multifaceted ethnic composition, the aim of this chapter is to outline a profile of Chicano English as a variety of English and, in particular, of American English, while showing that standardness and adequacy are often more a political than a linguistic matter. The importance of problematizing the concept of American English also comes from the numbers, as the non-WASP population of the United States is already significant and expected to grow in the next decades, especially when it comes to the population of Latino heritage.[31]

From the research reviewed in the previous chapter, one can take as a fact that English has not always been *the* language spoken in the area now known as United States – as the territory was affected by the settler colonisation phenomenon. For that matter, English is by no means the official language in the federal constitution, while it has been declared so in a number of states.[32] However recently it might have arrived, it is now considered an acceptable standard to be taught and learned – it is part of the Inner Circle of norm-providing Englishes. Nonetheless, when the differences between American English and the

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[31] While the white population is supposed to decrease, growth is expected for Latinos of all ethnic heritage, for Asians and, although to a lesser extent, for the Black or African American group. More specific numbers can be found on the US Census Bureau webpage "2014 National Population Projections Tables," https://census.gov/data/tables/2014/demo/popproj/2014-summary-tables.html (last visited August 4th, 2018).

[32] The US Constitution, despite some attempts in the opposite direction, does not establish an official language at a federal level, see http://constitutionus.com/ (last visited August 6th 2018), while 32 states decided to select English as their official (or one of the official) language: https://www.wnd.com/2018/01/32-states-make-english-official-language/ (last visited August 6th 2018).

English of Britain first started to emerge, they were not immediately welcomed as a fresh novelty by everyone.

4.1   American English: from deviation to standard

In what he calls the "prehistory" of World Englishes, Saraceni (2015: 59-60) points out that, before becoming a standard learned all over the world and especially appreciated through popular culture, what is now known as American English pioneered many of the elements that subsequently characterised the debates about World Englishes.

Indeed, one of the first to notice, not without dismay, that the differences between British and American English were becoming more and more evident, was the British writer Thomas Hamilton. He is the author of two volumes describing his anthropologist-like journey in the United States, and a relatively short but strongly felt paragraph concerned language:

> Though the schoolmaster has long exercised his vocation in these States, the fruit of his labours is but little apparent in the language of his pupils. The amount of bad grammar in circulation is very great; that of barbarisms enormous. […] Even by this educated and respectable class, the commonest words are often so transmogrified as to be placed beyond the recognition of an Englishman. (Hamilton 1833: 127-128)

Hamilton then goes on to provide a series of examples of how the words are different, specifying that the alterations seem to happen "arbitrarily," and "for some incomprehensible reason," to the extent that "the meaning intended to be conveyed by an American in conversation, […] is sometimes left utterly at large" (Hamilton 1833: 128). He looks upon the use of English made by Americans, his apocalyptic words sounding like those of a profoundly disappointed father in the act of disowning his own progeny:

> The Privilege of barbarizing the King's English is assumed by all ranks and conditions of men. […] I will not go on with this unpleasant subject; nor should I have alluded to it, but that I feel it something of a duty to express the natural feeling of an Englishman, at finding the language of Shakespeare and Milton

thus gratuitously degraded. Unless the present progress of change be arrested, by an increase of taste and judgement in the more educated classes, there can be no doubt that, in another century, the dialect of the Americans will become utterly unintelligible to an Englishman, and that the nation will be cut off from the advantages arising from their participation in British literature. If they contemplate such an event with complacency, let them go on and prosper; they have only to "*progress*" in their present course, and their grand-children bid fair to speak a jargon as novel and peculiar as the most patriotic American linguist can desire. (author's italics, Hamilton 1833: 129)

While his premonition has not become reality, as British and American English are almost always comfortably intelligible to each other, his disapproving attitude towards the linguistic differences between the two varieties anticipates many of the arguments against any variation, be it World Englishes or ethnolects/sociolects within a society. As will be later specified, such arguments can be found in the words of both language experts and people responsible for the enforcing of language and education policies. Similarly, the first defenders of American English anticipated much of the arguing of the variety supporters. One moderate example is H.L. Mencken, author of *The American Language* (1919), with the intention, both linguistic and political (Saraceni 2015: 63), of describing how the American language had its own validity. Indeed, he dismisses any attempt at receiving recognition by the British English speakers:

That it should be regarded as an anti-social act to examine and exhibit the constantly growing differences between English and American, as certain American pedants argue sharply – this doctrine is quite beyond my understanding. All it indicates, stripped of sophistry, is a somewhat childish effort to gain the approval of Englishmen – a belated efflorescence of the colonial spirit, often commingled with fashionable aspiration. The plain fact is that the English themselves are not deceived, nor do they grant the approval so ardently sought for. (Mecken 1919: ix)

In this passage, Mencken brings about an argument that will be typical of those defending World Englishes and non-standard varieties, which is the need to free oneself from what is perceived as colonial heritage. In fact, those colonial echoes are responsible for the efforts to approximate a certain standard, to measure one's

own language validity against an external yardstick. Mencken, who includes Hamilton's work and others like it in his discussion, is well aware that the detractors of the standard will not be approving or accepting, and will instead deem it necessary to stress the differences, not without patronising tones. Other writers are even more peremptory in cutting the umbilical cord and state that not only is American English a natural consequence of English being used in a new context, but it is a necessary renewal that English itself needs to overcome a perishing state of corruption. Among these, the most notable is Noah Webster, responsible for the appearance of first dictionary of American English:

> As an independent nation, our honor requires us to have a system of our own, in language as well as government. Great Britain, whose children we are, and whose language we speak, should no longer be *our* standard; for the taste of her writers is already corrupted, and her language on the decline. (author's italics, Webster 1789: 20)

Webster imagines British English as a decaying branch of a tree that will have its strength renovated thanks to the energy of American English. Furthermore, he underlines that, while Great Britain is but a small island in a continent where numerous languages are spoken, the United States, thanks to its greater size and number of inhabitants, offers a much greater opportunity for English to flourish (Webster 1789: 21).

It would be wrong, however, to take Webster's passionate defence of American English as a form of openness to multiplicity and diversity. His attitude is not so different from Hamilton's, as they both attempt to show that their own variety is "better." Moreover, Webster calls for an inner uniformity of American English: speakers need to rely on "the rules of language itself, and the general practice of the nation," which "constitute propriety in speaking" (Webster 1789: 27). Here, what Webster is addressing are "those odious distinctions of provincial dialects, which are the objects of reciprocal ridicule in the United States" (Webster 1783: 5), and need to be erased from language. While, for a contemporary linguist, expressions like "language itself" and "general practice" may as well sound faulty and arbitrary, they still endure in the public conscience and language policing.

Webster's cries for a unitary and strong American English, and his proud brushing off of both British English and local dialects in the name of an art-crafted standard (he states that he needed to deliberately intervene on syllable division to unify it, Webster 1783: 5-6) are quite emblematic of language in the United States. In fact, the same Americans that defended the dignity of their own variety have little hesitation in imposing their own view on American minorities, whose ways of speaking are quickly dismissed as forms of "English with an accent" (Lippi-Green 1997).

4.2 Multilingualism, language variation and linguistic discrimination in the U.S.

The United States, with its present demographic configuration, are the result of subsequent (and still ongoing) waves of migration, as mentioned in Chapter 2. From a linguistic point of view, this implies a multi-layered linguistic landscape that, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, can boast "at least 350 languages spoken in U.S. homes."[33] Out of a total population above 5 years of age counting about 291 million people, slightly more than 60 million speak another language at home.[34] Such a condition naturally makes language contact among different communities likely. Moreover, the U.S. population is spread across a broad territory, where extremely diverse environments – from metropolis to villages and rural areas – coexist in almost every state. This diversity has long been represented by defining the state as a "melting pot," from the title of Israel Zangwill's play (1921). Zangwill's view of the melting pot was a very positive one, the incarnation of the American Dream for everyone, with his character David exclaiming towards the end of the play: "Ah, Vera, what is the glory of Rome and Jerusalem where all nations and races come to worship and look back,

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[33] The data were released in 2015 by the U.S. Census Bureau.
https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-185.html (last visited August 10th 2018).

[34] The spreadsheets with detailed information are available on the U.S. Census Bureau website: https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2013/demo/2009-2013-lang-tables.html (last visited August 10th 2018).

compared with the glory of America, where all races and nations come to labour and look forward!"

Nevertheless, as the waves of immigration did not stop over time, the former immigrants soon started becoming defensive and discriminating against new immigrants, while racial discrimination against non-whites has been a consistent trait of the American society (see Chapter 2).

4.2.1 English-only and discrimination

The aforementioned statistics about the languages spoken in the U.S. have an interesting specification: "at least 350 languages spoken in U.S. *homes*." The word "home" might seem irrelevant, but is important to understanding the issue of language(s) in the country. *Homes* is where other languages *can* be spoken, as they are usually cut off from any other context. On an institutional level, Macedo et al. (2003: 23) underline that "even without a rigid policy, the United States has managed to achieve such a high level of monolingualism." According to their analysis, despite the public celebration of diversity, the U.S. have implemented "a covert assimilationist policy," enforced through "periodic assaults on languages other than English" operated by public institutions and bodies such as "media, educational institutions, and government agencies" (Macedo et al. 2003: 23).

Indeed, efforts to impose English have only recently become overt: until relatively recently immigrants tended to learn English, and within two or three generations their descendants would shift to English, "not because they were forced to, but because it was the vehicle for individual advancement" (Citrin et al. 1990: 536). This means that, without a public discourse on the subject and despite the absence of an official language in the country, people could already feel the social pressure of English as a key to success. The first clear attempt to promote a unitary American identity was carried out through the aforementioned Americanisation in the first two decades of the Twentieth century – interrupted by the breakout of World War I. While the conflict brought Americans into contact with other nations, "the strong anti-German sentiment engendered by the conflict only reinforced […] nativist fears" (Citrin et al. 1990: 536), which were embodied by a series of English-promoting laws at state level. Since, in the following decades, immigration from Western Europe was officially the only one allowed, the issue

momentarily disappeared from the public discourse. It then resurfaced with the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, started by African Americans and quickly widespread through other ethnic groups, including Mexican Americans. In particular, the minorities of *hispanohablantes* were demanding rights for themselves, but also for their language:

> In particular, Hispanic activists articulated the concept of language rights as a constitutional entitlement. They called on government to go beyond the mere toleration of the use of languages other than English in the private sphere to the active promotion of bilingualism in public institutions.
>
> A stream of federal and state laws, judicial decisions and administrative regulations in the late 1960s and early 1970s were largely sympathetic to the idea of language rights. These actions, however, sparked widespread criticism that culminated in the organized drive for "official English" in the 1980s. (Citrin et al. 1990: 537)

The disapproval of language policies merged with negative attitudes towards the increasing immigration from Latin America (the complex phenomenon was already analysed in Chapter 2), prompting nativists to call for the reduction of the public space for "ethnic" Americans and their cultures. The 1980s saw the promotion of laws aimed at limiting the presence of non-English languages in education, as well as the foundation of the U.S. English organisation, "which quickly became the leading advocacy group for the 'official English' movement" (Citrin et al. 1990: 538). The argument of this movement was that English was the cement of national unity, was what made people of all origins become a single nation and gave everyone the same opportunities to achieve success.

According to the APA (American Psychological Association),[35] four main points confute the position of English-only supporters, and can be summarised as follows:

- *Language shift*: while English-only supporters claim that bilingual education would allow immigrants (especially *hispanohablantes*) to idle

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[35] The points are summarised from the online article published by the Panel of Experts on English-Only Legislation for the American Psychological Association:

http://www.apa.org/pi/oema/resources/english-only.aspx (last visited August 13th 2018).

away from English learning, immigrants of all origins tend to shift to English within two or three generations. This happens more or less quickly depending on factors such as education, social class, or age of immigration. The shift already happens, regardless of English-enforcing regulations.

- *Racism*: studies on the subjects have proven that a strong racist sentiment is often behind the support of English-only (Crawford 1989; Huddy and Sears 1990; MacKaye 1990). These studies have noted that supporters of such policies also displayed clearly racist attitudes both in the public and political discourse and in smaller contexts such as the workplace. The latter, although in theory regulated by the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission), is often a place where more or less covert racial/ethnic/linguistic discrimination takes place (Lippi-Green 1997: 152-170).

- *Interethnic group relations*: acts of violence against people perceived as "different" are increasingly becoming commonplace, to the extent they have been given a specific definition – hate crimes – and are prosecuted as a specific kind of misdemeanour. The ethnic group that is viewed most positively is also the most likely to perceive the others as inferior, as well as the one that tends to display ethnocentric attitudes and prejudice against the others (Adorno et al. 1950). Conversely, studies such as Lambert (1987) proved that allowing contact and exchange among groups increases genuine interest and tends to eliminate prejudice.

- *Social and ethnic identity*: the forcible deletion of one's language is a critical psychological issue in terms of group identification, which can be devastating for the members of a minority. In fact, while being forced to forget their heritage language, they still struggle to be acknowledged by the rest of the society, with the ultimate consequence of complete displacement.

One of the main battlefields of English-only supporters is education. Monolingual education discourses are based on the assumption that English is the most "viable and pedagogically suitable language" (Macedo et al. 2003: 23) to teach and learn.

The role of English in this sense is inflated to the extent that even the celebration of other cultures and diversity itself can only be made through the use of the English language, ignoring the fact that this constitutes a hard blow on the students' cultural identity, and socialises them with "the experience of subordination" (Macedo and Bartolomé 1999). This covert assimilationist policy underlies education and paves the way for an adult age where speaking any other language than "Standard" (i.e. white) English means, in Bourdieu's (1991) terms, to possess a habitus that does not fit in with the requests of the market. Namely, it means not to be able to achieve certain social and economic positions.

The APA report also underlines that monolingual education is a major cause for minority student dropout and poor performance, while bilingual education has so far proven to be a far more effective strategy to include students and to achieve better results.

When considering student dropout and poor performance, it is much more useful to search for causes in the context, rather than (more or less consciously) dismissing the issue by believing the equation between English and education to be a valid explanation. First of all, it is necessary to consider the general failure of public education in major urban areas – where minority dropout reaches its highest. It is also important to acknowledge the predicaments of the poorer strata of society, and the fact that such conditions could prevent anyone from succeeding in academic and work environments, regardless of their heritage language. Considering these factors also helps explain the high rates of dropouts in English-speaking, non-immigrant communities, e.g. African Americans. A study by Kozol (1997) showed that in an area of New York where children performed poorly there was a series of critical issues such as squalid housing, widespread drug addiction, HIV and paediatric AIDS, depression, anxiety, sleep deprivation, and asthma.

In light of such data, Macedo et al. (2003) underline that, without any scientific proof of English-only benefits for anyone, imposing one language is nothing more than a form of colonialism:

> Any colonized person who has experienced firsthand the discriminatory
> language policies of European colonialism can readily see many similarities

between colonial ideology and the dominant values that inform the American English-only movement. Colonialism imposes "distinction" as an ideological yardstick against which all other cultural values are measured, including language. In the United States this ideological yardstick serves to over-celebrate the dominant group's language to the point of mystification – viewing English as education in itself and measuring the success of bilingual programs only in terms of success in English acquisition. On the other hand, it devalues the other languages spoken by an ever-increasing number of students now populating most urban public schools. The position of U.S. English-only proponents is not very different, for example, from that of European colonizers who tried to eradicate the use of African languages in institutional life and who inculcated Africans with myths and beliefs concerning the savage nature of their cultures through educational systems which used only European languages. (Macedo et al. 2003: 65).

Those who only measure educational success using English proficiency tend to ignore all other aspects in the name of scientism, a research behaviour producing statistical data that are completely stripped of any contextualisation, thus providing nothing but oversimplified snapshots of a phenomenon (Macedo et al. 2003), which do not help understanding or proactive problem solving. Educators themselves believe such statistics, and end up evaluating minority students according to merely technical factors, without considering both practical conditions and psychological traumas experienced by students living in a state of "cultural subordination" (Macedo et al. 2003: 76).

This eventually reinforces stereotypes of non-English speakers as somehow less capable or fit for academic and professional achievement. The same one-sided assumptions, as previously discussed, also constitute prejudicial attitudes towards speakers of a non-standard variety, and especially for the ethnic minorities of America. While their varieties are seen as forms of "broken English," a closer look might prove how these are just as functional and internally codified as any other dialect. The next paragraph, in line with the selected case study of this thesis, will provide an overview on Chicano English, the variety of Chicanos.

4.3   What Chicano English *is* and *is not*: providing a definition and debunking popular beliefs

First, a definition of Chicano English will be provided, aiming to be as thorough as possible. In order to do so, it is helpful to have not only a definition of what Chicano English *is*, but what it *is not* – debunking the existing myths about it, which prevent complete comprehension.

As discussed in Chapter 2, people of Mexican origin have lived in the United States since the aftermath of the Mexican American war of 1848. The languages of the two groups have come into variable degrees of contact throughout the U.S., especially in the areas that used to belong to Mexico and along the borderlands now separating the two states. What is now called Chicano English is the result of this contact:

> Chicano English […] is a contact dialect, one that emerged from the setting […]
> in which two languages, English and Spanish, were present. [People of Mexican
> origin] spoke a non-native variety which included phonological, syntactic and
> semantic patterns from their first language, in this case Spanish. But the children
> of these immigrants generally grew up using both Spanish and English (possibly
> in different settings or with different people). As the community began to
> stabilize, so did a new dialect of English. (Fought 2003: 14) [36]

Chicano English was originally born as an interlanguage, with a process that can be compared to the development of pidgins or creoles (although creoles usually involve more than two languages). Chicano English, however, does not seem to be an intermediate step in a shift from Spanish to English, in which case it would have been most likely for the former language to disappear within a few generations (see chapter 3). Conversely, Chicano English developed and stabilised into an independent and distinctive language with its own native speakers:

> Chicano English is an ethnic dialect that children acquire as they acquire English
> in the barrio or other ethnic social setting during their language acquisition

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[36] Fought's work *Chicano English in context* (2003) is taken as a main linguistic reference because it is fairly recent and definitely one of the most complete books on the topic. The author reviews all previous research and tests it with her own on-field studies.

period. Chicano English is to be distinguished from the English of the second-language learners [...] Thus defined, Chicano English is spoken only by native English speakers. (Santa Ana 1993: 15)

Santa Ana's words mean that CE is a variety of English in its own right. In fact, with its persistence in time (e.g. Metcalf 1979; Penfield and Ornstein-Galicia 1984) it has proved to be an "autonomous social dialect with distinct characteristics passed on by mutual processes of linguistic transmission" (Godinez 1981: 45). In this sense, it seems close to the definition of the aforementioned "sociolect," which is a variety "determined by social environments or associated with a particular social group" (Durrell 2004: 201). Furthermore, given its inextricable link to a specific national group, it can also be linked to the definition of "ethnolect," intended as "varieties of a language that mark speakers as members of ethnic groups who originally used another language or distinctive variety" (Clyne 2000: 86). Using the "ethnolect" label for languages like Chicano English can be counterproductive, since ethnolects and minority dialects in general often tend to be "reified," treated "as a fixed rather than fluid entity," whose identity is "compartmentalized, allowing one to think of an ethnolect as a discrete system indexical of ethnicity alone" (Eckert 2008: 26).

In this sense, it is important to stress once again that it is spoken by native English speakers, an aspect confuting the idea that the peculiar features of Chicano English are a consequence of an incomplete acquisition of English in people fundamentally classed as *hispanohablantes*. This is no more than a myth, as proved by authors like Fought (2003) or Santa Ana (1993), whose on-field research proved that not only Chicano English speakers have English as a first language, but that the great majority of them have no command of Spanish, with the exception of a few basic words they might have heard at home. The lacking awareness and the prejudice around this variety has affected negatively young Chicano English speakers in the school system. Chicano students have been classified as "LEP" (Limited English Proficient) because the features of Chicano English are mistaken for the interference of Spanish (Fought 2003: 4). Bilingualism among Chicanos only depends on one's personal background – as seen in the previous chapter, proficiency in the heritage language can depend on a

number of factors especially linked to one's family life. From a linguistic point of view, it is impossible to distinguish a bilingual Chicano English speaker from a monolingual one, the same way it would be impossible to know if someone knows a second language by just hearing them speaking their native idiom (Fought 2003: 5).Another common prejudice towards Chicano English is the idea that its features are mere "bad grammar." Other varieties share this negative depiction with Chicano English, for example African American Vernacular English and Appalachian English (Taronna 2016: 73; Fought 2003: 7).

Based on similar assumptions, another myth about Chicano English is that it is basically the same as Spanglish, which is to say code-switching between English and Spanish. Indeed, while code switching is among the typical competences of a Chicano English speaker, "it is a separate phenomenon from Chicano English and should not be confused with it" (Fought 2003: 5-6). Research around Chicano English stemmed from the need to establish that Chicano English is not an incomplete acquisition of English, but a "competent learning of a variety of English current and standard in the community" (Peñalosa 1981: 8). Chicano English speakers, in fact, do not *need* to resort to Spanish, and can definitely live without code switching. When they do use Spanish, it is mainly to achieve a specific communicative purpose. As Gumperz (1982) puts it, the function of the switch can for example be interjection or personalisation versus objectivisation (see Chapter 3). With reference to the Latino communities in the United States, Poplack (1980: 589) talks about "emblematic" switches, aimed at stressing one's belonging to a certain community. To activate this kind of switch, it is not necessary to be bilingual, as it generally requires a rather limited set of emblematic words.

The last myth about Chicano English, which is also an integral part of the cinematic use of this variety, is "a tendency for those outside the community to associate Chicano English, particularly when it falls at the more non-standard end of the continuum, with gang members" (Fought 2003: 6). While gangbanging is a reality within the Chicano communities, it is misleading and simply wrong to equate this variety with participation in criminal activities. Such a conviction

derives from the recurring use of this variety to depict members of a gang in the media – neglecting all other kinds of people belonging to the Chicano community.

4.4   What Chicano English *is*

Chicano English (from now on CE) is not a monolithic variety spoken in the same way across the community. For example, belonging to a certain gang or the desire to dissociate oneself from the local gangbangers can determine specific linguistic choices, but accepting any aprioristic assumption can result in stereotype fostering:

> Where there are gang members in a community, this membership is obviously a salient factor in the construction of identity by these young adults, and to some extent in the construction of identity by the other young adults in the community, who may see themselves as standing in opposition to the sub-culture represented by the gangs. In such a community, gang membership must be taken into account when conducting a sociolinguistic study of variables. Even the difference between two gangs may be represented linguistically […] Nonetheless, in our excitement over how neatly gang membership aligns with a particular linguistic variable, we may unintentionally reinforce a stereotype among the general population that CE is the language of gang members. In reality, as I mentioned earlier, CE encompasses a continuum of styles and of varieties, from less to more standard. (Fought 2003: 7)

In the following subparagraph, the *actual* features of CE will be briefly explored, with particular attention to their sociological variability and to their commonalities with the languages CE developed with (or from): Spanish, AAVE, California Anglo English (the local white variety), and even some traces of Nahuatl. This helps in understanding the way the language is used in movies.

It is worth noting that differences among CE speakers can stem from various factors. One is certainly geography, as Chicanos are spread across the whole south-west of the U.S., but can also be found in other areas of the nation, and their speech can receive different inputs from the other varieties locally available. Another factor is the consistency of contact with speakers of the local Anglo/white variety of English, but also with speakers of other minority Englishes

(e.g. AAVE). In this sense, Santa Ana (1993), drawing from Baugh (1983), distinguished among more or less vernacular sub-varieties of CE according to their markedness in comparison to the white varieties, explaining it in terms of contact between Chicanos and Anglos:

> Vernacular Chicano English (VCE) is the spoken dialect of Chicano speakers of English who have minimum contact with non-Chicanos in their daily communicative life. […] There is no lack of second- and third-generation Chicanos who live their lives in major U.S. cities without significant contact with non-Chicanos. The rural isolation in turn-of-the-century Texano, New Mexican Hispano, and Californio communities has been replaced by urban segregation in barrios that are overwhelmingly Chicano. (Santa Ana 1993: 25)

It is important to specify that the variety of CE that will be taken into consideration here is the one spoken in California and, more specifically, in Los Angeles, a multilingual and multicultural metropolis where the huge Latino community coexists with the white majority, other minorities (e.g. African Americans), and a great number of migrant communities (Fought 2003: 12-13). The choice is driven by the fact that several movies starring CE speakers (and all the movies included in this research) are set in Los Angeles – East Los Angeles, more precisely. A thorough study of the features listed here has been critical for the recognition of CE in the films analysed in chapters 5 and 6.

4.4.1 Phonology and suprasegmental traits

Phonology

Phonology, along with more suprasegmental features like intonation and stress patterns, is the most prominent trait of CE, differentiating it from the local variety spoken by Anglo Californians. CE has its own phonology that, although surely related to its Spanish heritage, should not be mistaken for a "Spanish accent." Indeed, "[m]any elements of CE phonology do reflect the influence of Spanish, but some may come from contact with other dialects" (Fought 2003: 63).

Santa Ana (1991: 139-184) was among the first to explore vowel reduction in CE speakers, and he found a less frequent occurrence of this trait in CE speakers than in their white counterparts. The result was later confirmed by Fought (2003: 64), who reports that the most common examples in her field study are *together*

realised as [tʰugɛðɚ] and *because* realised as [bikəz], where Anglo speakers are more likely to replace the first vowel with a reduced sound such as [ɨ].

Both authors (Santa Ana 1991: 155; Fought 2003: 64) also noted a recurring lack of glides, in particular for the high vowels realised as [ij] and [uw] by the Anglo speakers and, although less frequently, for [ej] and [ow]. Another distinctive feature is the tense realisation of [ɪ], pronounced as [i], but this particular trait in CE speakers is very limited, and the occurrences were noted by Fought (2003: 65) in the realisation of the gerund morpheme *-ing*. This feature seems to be more prominent in non-native speakers of Mexican origin and, as far as CE speakers are concerned, only the speakers of more vernacular subvarieties seem to have a realisation of [ɪ] slightly more tense in other positions (apart from the *-ing* suffix). There is also a tendency to front the low back vowel [ɑ], realising it as [a], e.g. *talk* realised as [tʰak]. The fronting of the vowel /u/ seems to be common in young Californian CE speakers (Fought 1999: 11) and, as will later be explained in more detail, it might derive from the contact with the local Anglo dialect (Fought 2003: 87).

Regarding consonants, CE displays a feature that is typical of AAVE, but is also found in several varieties of English in the world, which is the replacement of apico-dental fricatives [θ] and [ð] with the apico-dental stops [t̪] and [d̪] respectively. Indeed, an Anglo-like realisation of the apico-dental fricatives is so uncommon that Jenkins (2000: 137), in her attempt to find a common grammar of English as a Lingua Franca, excluded their realisation from the group of consonants deemed as necessary for mutual understanding. According to Mendoza-Denton's study of female gangsters (2008), this trait has come to be seen as a symbol of "toughness" in Northern California. Examples of this phenomenon are *something* realised as [səmt̪ɪn] and *then* realised as [d̪ɛn] (Fought 2003: 68). This, however, is not the only common feature between CE and AAVE, as both also display a tendency to consonant cluster reduction (Thomas 2007: 455-456; Fought 2003: 68-69). The reduction can involve final *t* or *d* in a cluster (Santa Ana 1991: 75-138) but also a whole cluster (e.g. *hardware*) realised as [hɑwɚ]). According to Santa Ana (1996: 64), this feature shows a certain level of resistance to assimilation of CE into the "nonethnic regional dialect." It might

be worth noting that deletion of final consonants, even when these are not part of a cluster (e.g. *met some* realised as [mɛsəm]), is extremely common in CE: it is even possible to have "four or five final consonants in a row" (Fought 2003:69) left unpronounced, e.g. *wouldn't get lost* realised as [wʊn gjɛ las]. Another common habit of CE speakers is to glottalise voiceless stops (Fought 200: 69-70), often preceded by creaky voice in the vowel. In some cases, the consonant is completely replaced by the glottal stop, so that this phenomenon overlaps with the previously mentioned fall of final consonants.

Suprasegmental traits

Perhaps even more than single phonetic features, what makes CE recognisable in terms of sound are its suprasegmental traits. Often considered a sign of lacking command of English (González 1984: 39), they were studied to a lesser extent by the linguists investigating the language of Chicanos. Santa Ana (1991) noted that, when it comes to rhythm, CE seems to tend towards syllable-timing – like Spanish – while American English is stress-timed. This means that, while Anglo American English speakers tend to stress syllables at approximately regular intervals and shorten unstressed syllables, CE speakers will tend to have a lower degree of vowel reduction in unstressed syllables, which implies that most syllables take approximately equal amounts of time when uttered. It is oversimplifying, however, to think that a language is either stress-timed or syllable-timed: it is better to imagine those two extremes as the poles in a continuum, along which languages and dialects can be positioned.[37] In fact, the stress shifting happens more often and in a more noticeable way in non-native English speakers of Mexican origin, who tend to replicate the syllable-timing of their native language into English. CE is placed somewhere in between the two and, among the dialects of English, it is one of the most syllable-timed (Fought 2003: 72). A common example of this shift in CE is the stress on the verbal component of phrasal verbs,

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[37] A significant contribution to the deepening of the discourse on stress patterns came from the development of the Pairwise Variability Index (PVI), which allows the quantifying of rhythm in languages, so as to place them along a continuum going from the most stress-timed to the most syllable-timed (Nolan 2009).

where most dialects tend to stress the preposition, e.g. *sit* up rather than sit *up* (Penfield 1984).

Just like music, CE has a distinctive rhythm, but also a specific melody. Indeed, intonation patterns carry the influence of Mexican Spanish, which differs from peninsular Spanish. Matluck (1952) was probably the first to notice and name the peculiar intonation pattern of Mexican Spanish, which he called "circumflex" intonation pattern:

> La cadencia enunciativa en el habla popular del Valle es muy diferente de la castellana, y en su forma circunfleja está lo característico de la entonación peculiar de la altiplanicie mexicana. De la antepenúltima sílaba a la penúltima hay un ascenso de unos tres semitonos, y de allí a la última un descenso de seis semitonos más o menos; tanto la última como la penúltima sílaba son largas. […] Las sílabas acentuadas en el habla popular del Valle tienden a alargarse mucho más que entre la clase culta y en el castellano general; en cambio, las inacentuadas se abrevian. La impresión total es de alargamiento silábico al principio y especialmente al final de la frase, y de acortamiento en el centro; por ejemplo: *no seas malo > nooo sias maalooo*; *tengo que hacerlo pronto> teengo quiacerlo proontoo*. (Matluck 1952:119)[38]

The "circumflex" intonation of Mexican Spanish was also seen to apply to CE speakers' intonation over twenty years later by Metcalf (1974: 55), who observed that CE statements can sound very similar to questions for white American English speakers. The finding was later confirmed with more quantitative examples by Penfield and Ornstein-Galicia (1984: 37-39). In fact, while Anglo

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[38] Translated by Fought (2003: 74-75) as:

> The cadence of enunciation in the popular speech of the Valley is very different from the Castilian one, and what is characteristic of the intonation peculiar to the Mexican plateau is its circumflex form. From the antepenultimate syllable to the penult there is a rise of about three semitones, and from there to the final a fall of six semi tones more or less. Both the penult and the final syllables are lengthened. […] Accented syllables in vernacular speech in the Valley tend to be much longer than those of the educated class and in Castilian generally on the other hand, unaccented syllables are shortened. The overall impression is of syllabic lengthening at the beginning and especially at the end of the sentence, and of shortening in the middle. For example, *Don't be bad > Doont be baaad*; *I have to do it soon> III have to do it sooon*.

English declaratives have a clearly descending contour, Mexican Spanish and CE ones (even more than peninsular Spanish) tend to have a rise-and-fall pattern, or sometimes end higher end. Such an ascending intonation is associated with questions or segments of sentences in most dialects of American English, and this is probably why this trait is perceived as a signal of non-standardness, and often used in caricatured reproductions of Mexican speakers, along with other forms of altered and exaggerated speech (Hill 1993; Fought 2003: 73). A tendency to lengthen the stressed vowels at the beginning and at the end of sentences was also observed to be especially widespread among lower class Mexican Spanish speakers. Such a musical pattern, distinguished from the one of peninsular Spanish, is a unique bequest of Nahuatl, one of the Uto-Aztecan languages spoken in the area since before the arrival of European colonisers in the Americas (Matluck 1952: 119).

Other suprasegmental traits of Californian CE are creaky voice and clicks. The former is a process in which "the subglottal pressure is lower than that of modal voice, the airflow is lower, and the fundamental frequency is also lower" (Mendoza-Denton 2011: 264). Studies found it particularly widespread in California among "young urban-oriented upwardly mobile American women" (Yuasa 2010: 315) of white origin.[39] Fought (2003: 78) found it in all her surveyed CE speakers, but especially in women, while Mendoza-Denton (2011) notices its spread among Chicana gangsters, as well as in famous Chicano rappers such as Kid Frost. Clicks, by which Fought (2003: 79) intends an "alveolar or palato-alveolar" sound of disagreement, was especially recurrent in gang members between phrases, and reflected a generally disapproving attitude.

Native or non-native

In an attempt to distinguish CE from the English spoken by native Mexican Spanish speakers, it is helpful to notice that there are phonemic differences between the two groups. As mentioned above, the tense realisation of [ɪ] is very

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[39] Also referred to as "vocal fry," it is often considered an annoying trait of women's speech patterns, to the point that it might be yet another factor undermining their success in job interviews (Anderson et al. 2014).

limited in CE speakers, and is especially found in the realisation of the morpheme *-ing*. It is, however, much more widespread among non-native speakers, to the extent that there is no clear-cut distinction between [ɪ] and [i] for native *hispanohablantes* of Mexican origin (Fought 2003: 81).

Moreover, CE speakers may at times rise the near-low front unrounded vowel [æ], while still keeping it a distinct sound from the low-mid front unrounded vowel [ɛ], whereas non-natives do not make distinction, and tend to use the [æ] sound for both.

Some features of non-natives are not found in CE (Fought 2003: 82-83), with occasional exceptions in the older speakers, who are probably closer to their Spanish heritage. It is the case of the sounds [tʃ] and [ʃ]: clearly distinguished in CE speech patterns, they may be used interchangeably by non-native speakers. In other cases, traits of non-native speech are completely non-existent in CE. One example is the use of [a] instead of the shwa sound [ə], e.g. *lucky* realised as [laki]. Similarly, the voiceless velar fricative sound [x] does not exist in CE, while non-natives may produce it where a [h] sound is expected in American English, e.g. *home* realised as [xom]. A stereotypical process that does not exist in CE and is rare even for non-natives is the insertion of epenthetic *e-* before consonant clusters beginning with /s/, e.g. *spent* realised as [əspɛnt].

4.4.2   Morpho-syntax and semantics

Morpho-syntax

Chicanos can speak a less vernacular variety of CE, in which case their morpho-syntax will tend to follow the general pattern of white American English speakers, or a more vernacular variety, which means they will display non-standard features that are either shared with other non-standard varieties or CE-specific. Since, as explained by Halliday (1978, see Chapter 3), non-standardness exists along a continuum, the more vernacular the speech pattern, the more and more often non-standard features will appear. In some instances, it is difficult to trace the origin of a feature, as more possibilities are equally acceptable – it is likely for such traits to have emerged as an effect of convergence of more influencing factors. Fought (2003) classifies the morpho-syntax of CE based on whether it is common to

many other non-standard varieties, to AAVE, unique to CE – possibly because they derive from Spanish, or are of dubious origin.

Regarding the features that are shared with several non-standard dialects of English, it is worth mentioning the lack of agreement of the third personal singular, concerning regular and irregular verbs as well as the past of the verb *to be* (*was*/*were*). Fought (2003: 94-95) provides some examples from her on-field study: "Everybody knew the cowboys *was* gonna win again" or "Otherwise, she *don't* know Brenda." This feature shows a tendency to regularisation of what can be perceived as an irregularity of the English language. In the same way, CE speakers tend to regularise irregular past tenses, e.g. "it spinned." Other non-standard verb uses include a widespread use of *ain't* or past forms such as "I had *came* out of the hospital" or "I haven't *wrote* in a long time." Pronouns, too, can be used in non-standard ways, especially reflexives, e.g. "he could take care of *hisself*," or through the use of a resumptive pronoun in a relative clause e.g. "The guy that um, *that they knew he was doing it*."

These features somehow show a perceived need for regularisation that is common in many other non-standard dialects, including AAVE, which has much in common with CE. AAVE features are often noticed in the most vernacular CE speakers, which seems quite peculiar, given that Chicanos do not necessarily have close contact with African Americans in Los Angeles (Fought 2003: 95). On the contrary, the two groups often clash with each other – a contrast that, starting from rival gangs, often spreads across the two communities. An example showing the animosity between the two groups can be the Chicano use of the racial slur *mayate* (fem. *mayata*, plur. *mayates*, *mayatas*) to talk about African Americans (Acuña 1996: 152-153).[40] Nonetheless, the two varieties do have morpho-syntactic traits in common, such as the use of habitual *be*, especially recurring in Chicano males' speech patterns, e.g. "The news *be* showing it" (Fought 2003: 96), which is an emblematic verbal marker of AAVE (Green 2002: 54). Other CE traits that are typical of AAVE are much more common in AAVE than in CE, for example the replacement of existential *there* with the empty subject pronoun *it*,

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[40] *Mayate* is a word of Nahuatl origin, and indicates the *Cotinis mutabilis* species of beetle (Polkinhorn et al. 2005: 41).

e.g. "I'll try to do my part […] but, you know, *it*'s like nothing I could do" (Fought 2003: 96).

Other features have more ambiguous origin, for example the negative concord, also referred to multiple negatives, e.g. "Things *ain't* gonna *never* change in LA *no* more" (Fought 2003: 97). Very common in AAVE, it also exists in other non-standard varieties and is often displayed by non-natives of Mexican origin and bilingual CE speakers in California and elsewhere in the U.S. (Frazer 1996: 80; Fought 2003: 151). More than two negations are allowed in CE, and the negative can be transferred to a subordinate clause – as in AAVE, but also in Spanish and other romance languages. Similarly, the subject-auxiliary inversion in embedded questions, e.g. "then they asked them where did they live" (Wald 1984: 25), is found in AAVE and other non-standard dialects, but could also be inherited from Spanish.

Some features do not seem in common with other non-standard dialects, and may well derive from the heritage language. The non-standard use of modals, where present, does not seem to follow any other dialect. Wald (1996: 520) noticed the use of *would* in *if-* clauses among East Los Angeles speakers, e.g. "If *he'd be* here right now, he'd make me laugh," which could be a calque of Spanish conditional with pluperfect subjunctive. Another modal used in a non-standard way is *could*, when employed to intend a capability that is true in the moment when the statement is made, e.g. "Nobody believes that you *could* fix anything" (Fought 2003: 100). This pattern of usage was recurrent in Fought's (2003) field study, but is not documented for AAVE, nor does it have similarities to Spanish. Another unique Chicano feature is the use of prepositions, which is only marked for bilingual speakers and non-natives of Mexican origin. Indeed, their non-standard use of preposition is clearly derived from Spanish, one case being the use of *for* instead of *so that* – linked to the Spanish construction with *para que*, e.g. "For my mum can understand" (Fought 2003: 100).

Semantics and lexicon

Lexicon, more than other features, depends on many elements, rather than just to being Chicano/a. Indeed, factors like age, gender, education, or geographical

positioning have a pivotal role, and that is why certain lexical choices can characterise small groups or even single individuals. Moreover, lexicon is the most likely to change over time, and what applied at the time of the movies in this case study might not apply today. Nevertheless, Fought has found some lexical features and semantic shifts to be recurrent in her sample of CE speakers – most of whom were young, but whose features did not seem to be found in Anglos or African Americans of the same age (Fought 2003: 102-109). With these factors in mind, considering that the intent of this research is not lexicographic, and that dictionaries of Chicano slang already exist (e.g. Polkinhorn et al. 2005), only some examples will be provided (Fought 2003: 103-105): the word *fool*, used to refer to a person and not in a necessarily negative acceptation; *to kick it*, used as a synonym of *hang around* or *wait for a while*; *to talk to*, used to mean *dating* someone, e.g. "I *talk to* his sister;" *to clown* someone, used in the sense of teasing; *American* used as a synonym of *Euroamerican* or *white*; *some* used as a synonym of *this*, e.g. "I'm seeing *some* girl; she's white, also;" expanded use of *to tell* in the sense of *asking*, e.g. "If I tell her to jump up, she'll *tell* me how high," a use of the verb that is allowed in informal Spanish conversation (where *decir* – to tell – can be used instead of *pedir* – to ask); expanded use of *barely* in the sense of *just recently* (which translates the double use of the Spanish word *apenas*); and the use of *brothers* to indicate siblings of both genders, as in the Spanish plural *hermanos*, valid for both male-only siblings and a group of male and female siblings.

Some discourse markers emerged in Californian CE through contact with the local Anglo dialect: it is the case with *like*, *be like*, and *be all*, which originated in California and subsequently transmitted to many other English dialects, both inside and outside the United States (Macaulay 2001). Despite their clear link to white Californian youths, these markers were recurrent in Fought's study (2003: 107-109) – especially the marker *like*, e.g. "He could talk, *like*, smart, y'know, *like*, he's *like* a straight-A student". *Be like* and *be all* are less frequent, especially *be all*, and used to introduce quotations, e.g. "*I was like*, 'Don't worry about it, man'" and "*He's all*, 'I'm working for you.'"

It is easy to imagine that gangs have their own slang, and it must be remembered that, in the reality of the Chicano society, gangsters are a minority. However,

gangster slang is the most likely to be heard and associated with Chicanos in the movies, including the ones that are part of this case study. First, to say that someone belongs to a gang, speakers often resort to a sort of euphemism, *to be from somewhere* – while being *from nowhere* means not belonging to any gang, e.g. "I'm not from nowhere" (Fought 2003: 103). A gang member is a *cholo* (fem. *chola*, plur. *cholos*, fem.plur. *cholas*, Polinkorn et al. 2005: 21), while an older gang member is a *veterano* (Fought 2003: 46; Polinkhorn et al. 2005: 63-64). In the 1940s, gang members were also referred to as *pachucos* (fem. *pachucas*, Polinkhorn et al. 2005: 46). When a new member is accepted in the gang, they can either be *jumped in* – a rite of initiation implying a beating for the newcomer – or *walked in*, when they are admitted without the beating (Fought 2003: 46). Often girls can be walked in or jumped in by the other female members of the gang. It is common practice for the gang members to *throw signs*, which is a specific hand gesture that reproduces the gang initials: doing so in another gang's territory is a sign of challenge, while it is considered as a greeting among fellow gang members (Fought 2003: 46-47). Mendoza-Denton (2008: 81) shows a handout to teachers created by Fog City Police Department, illustrating the gang signs that would help identifying a *cholo*'s affiliation. There is also an opposition between having *green light*, which means to be on a hit list (United Gangs 2018), and deciding on a *red light*, which is a truce (Fought 2003: 46). If the head of a gang decides there is green light on a person or a group (e.g. a rival gang) it means anyone from the gang can kill them, while a red light implies that the head of the gang has decided that a certain individual (or group) should be kept alive. Numerous words that are commonly associated to Chicano identity and also used by gangs are in Spanish, and will emerge from the movie analysis in the next chapter.

4.4.3   *Examples of gang-related phonetical and syntactic variation*

Fought (2003) chose a phonetic and a syntactic feature of CE and explored the sociolinguistic variability of their use among her sample Californian CE speakers, in order to understand what certain features say about the speakers' identity – with particular attention to gang belonging. Indeed, a gang can be considered a community of practice, which "has its own life and develops its own trajectory"

(Mendoza-Denton 2008: 211). As a consequence, behavioural and linguistic choices of those who belong to this community, who orbit around it or who define themselves against it, might be expected to overlap to some extent.

In particular, Fought considered the phonetic feature of /u/-fronting, absorbed by CE speakers from California Anglo English speakers (Fought 1999: 11), and the morpho-syntactic negative concord that, opposed to standard American English, might have been drawn from AAVE or Spanish – in both cases, peripheral languages and groups. In this sense, the /u/-fronting can be considered a "conservative" norm, a way to sound closer to standard speakers, while negative concord, with its clearly non-standard connotation, can be considered a way to sound "tough" and to go against norms. Fought also divided her speakers according to their closeness to gangbanging. In this sense, it is worth spending a few words for each category she identified:

- *Gang members*: despite their participation in illegal activities and violence, gang members do not hide their belonging to a gang in any way. The young gang members interviewed by Fought were open about their gangbanging, and even "teachers, students and administrative staff" (Fought 2003: 47) know who the gang members were.[41] They usually display their identity through clothing (more about gangster appearance in the next chapter). Gang members can be males or females, but most often they are men. Girls can have their separate female gangs (Mendoza-Denton 2008) or belong to mixed gangs.

- *People who are affiliated or "know" gang members*: in the LA Chicano youth jargon, to *know* a gang member does not simply mean to know them, but to actually spend time with gang members, even just occasionally, or to be informed about their activities (Fought 2003: 48). This subgroup is further divided in subgroups:

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[41] Mendoza-Denton (2008: 82), on the other hand, recounts a different attitude in the female Latina gangsters she surveyed in Northern California, as she states that these girls had been "begging" her "not to tell their teachers/parents/the cops" about their activity, and eventually "only signed off on consent forms because they honestly believed no consequence would come of it."

(a) people who are friends or family of gang members and might have grown up with them in the same neighborhood, but are not themselves interested in being in a gang; (b) people who spend most of their time with the gang, sometimes participate in its activities, and may someday become members; or (c) people who pride themselves on having some amount of information about gang activities, want to keep on the good side of the gang members, but do not participate in gang-type activities. (Fought 2003: 48)

Cases (b) and (c) also include the so-called *wannabes*. Wannabes of category (b) are usually respected by gang members and are most likely to become members at some point in the future; wannabes in group (c) are mostly deluded, take any possible opportunity to boast about their dangerous life, but they are not considered respectable nor reliable by the gang members and are not likely to become members – comparable to what Labov defined *lames* (1970: 255).

- *Non-gang members*: they usually dissociate themselves quite strongly from any gang-related activity (Fought 2003: 52).

- *Taggers*: these form a separate group from gang members, and their name derives from the activity of *tagging*, drawing graffiti. Gangbangers usually only tag their gang initials for a specific purpose, e.g. claiming a territory, while taggers are not involved in any other illegal activity. Tagging can be considered as a less extreme outlet for anti-social behaviours of youths belonging to slightly higher social environments (Fought 2003: 51-52). Indeed, taggers can be linked to artistry and hip-hop culture, sometimes achieving a certain popularity (Phillips 1999: 336), and are more likely, compared to gangbangers, not to drop out of school (Lachmann 1988: 239).

Fought then looked at the social distribution of these traits among the different subgroups and noticed that the use of specific features is linked to the social positioning of the speakers.
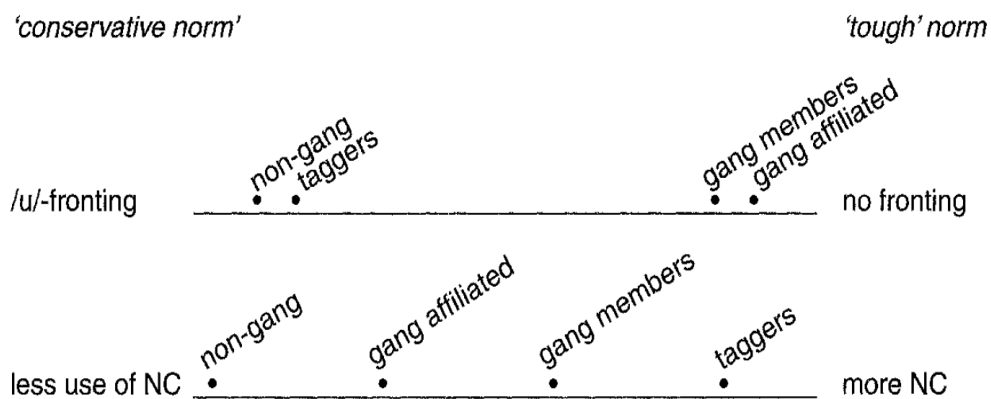
Figure 10 – Fought's comparison of the correlation of gang status with phonetic vs. syntactic variations (2003: 150).

The social opposition between gang members and non-gang members is also a linguistic one, both from a phonetic and morpho-syntactic point of view. Gang members might not have a specific awareness of the vowel fronting process in itself, but they certainly tend to keep a distance from the language of the (white) authorities. Moreover, they usually come from working class and low-income families (Fought 2003: 52), which makes them objectively less likely to be in contact with speakers of more standardised varieties (Santa Ana 1993: 25). That is probably why they tend to diverge from the Anglo habit of fronting the /u/ sound, while displaying a broad use of negative concord, as a clear signal of non-standardness. For the same reason, non-gang members show greater adherence to standard grammar by using negative concord far less than their counterparts and /u/-fronting significantly more.

More complex is the case of gang affiliates and taggers, who are socially "in-between" gang members and non-gang members. This is at the root of their apparent inconsistence between phonetic and morpho-syntactic traits. When it comes to phonetics, the key to interpreting the data is that "[o]n the less perceptually salient phonetic variables, the taggers and affiliated people 'sound' like the people they spend time with" (Fought 2003: 150). Phonetic traits are often displayed less consciously, and are interiorised by listening: that is why taggers, who belong to higher social classes, phonetically "sound" closer to white middle class Californians. Gang affiliates, on the other hand, acquire their status by

spending time with the gang members, absorbing their distinctive phonetic markers.

Morpho-syntactic choices seem to be a more conscious production, and that is the reason why they can be taken as "a kind of statement about their identity" (Fought 2003: 150). Gang affiliates probably try to tone down their language by making the effort of avoiding negative concord, in the same way that they do not fully participate in gang activities. Conversely, taggers take on their tagging activity with the precise intent of feeling rebellious, and would like to be perceived as dangerous and "tough" – an intent they feel the need to pursue through language, since they are not actually as threatening as gangbangers. The efforts of the taggers to seem rebellious ended up creating a generalised confusion between gangbangers and taggers in Los Angeles. Most consider taggers to be actual gangsters, with extreme consequences like the killing of an unarmed teen tagger by a vigilante in 1995, praised by the community as though it were the righteous execution of a dangerous villain (Acuña 1996: 259)

4.4.4   Spanish competence and code switching

Spanish competence and degrees of bilingualism
As previously discussed, CE is not a synonym of Spanglish, and code switching is not an integral part of its speech patterns. Spanglish itself, as a phenomenon of linguistic mix and mutual influence between English and Spanish, has its expressions in all the communities of *hispanohablantes* in the U.S., e.g. Cuban, Puerto Rican and others. (Rothman and Rell 2005: 517). It was also established above that CE speakers are often English monolinguals. Nevertheless, Spanish is still a part of Chicano heritage, and does have a role in the lives of most CE speakers.

There seem to be factors favouring the maintenance of some degree of Spanish which are opposed to factors pushing for a complete shift towards English, as anticipated in Chapter 3. For Chicanos, a close bond to older family members, specific efforts on the side of the parents, Mexican baby-sitters in early years, and acknowledgement of the Mexican heritage seem to be factors favouring maintenance (Fought 2003: 153-155). Personal history and affective bonds prove to be key for language maintenance (Schumann 1978). Fought (2003) analysed

her sample CE speakers in order to understand what other variables could contribute to Spanish maintenance. Particularly worth attention are her results in terms of gender and social class. Middle-class women and working-class men were found to be the most proficient in Spanish. These two groups are internally homogeneous, and their linguistic behaviour answers to specific social needs. Middle-class girls might have kept Spanish in an effort to prove a conservative behaviour, and a degree of respect for their elders, while middle-class boys might have rejected Spanish to prove a stronger character. Conversely, working-class boys tend to see Spanish as a proof of their being "outsiders" compared to richer peers, while working-class girls may tend to see a limited use of Spanish as a way to differentiate themselves from their brothers (Fought 2003: 189). Such results reinforce the idea that bilingualism in CE speakers does not depend on an immigrant status nor exclusively on education, as discriminated communities have a complex relationship with language. Indeed, to be proficient in one's heritage language does contribute to the building of a sense of identity, where linguistic and national identity may overlap: a Spanish-dominant or a bilingual speaker is more likely to define him/herself according to the heritage language nation (Ernst-Slavit 2013: 58).

Furthermore, despite the fact that Spanish proficiency was not as widespread as an outsider might imagine, the overall attitude towards Spanish was generally positive in Fought's interviews (2003). In particular, while a different native language between parents and sons/daughters can become an obstacle, many agreed that Spanish has a strong role in defining the ethnic identity of the Chicano community (Fought 2003: 201). At the same time, bilinguals may not to see Spanish as a crucial element for their ethnic identity, while some young speakers may refuse to learn it or to speak it even if they are able to. As seen in Chapter 3, embracing or rejecting one's heritage language often becomes a synonym of either ethnic pride or assimilation. Some people in the community may react negatively if another member of the community refuses to speak Spanish, or even if their Spanish accent make them sound "like a white boy" (Fought 2003: 203). These people give up on the language because they have not managed to attain a native-

like level, while others may do it out of an attempt to assimilate with the white majority.

Shifts to English, conversely, usually happen not because Spanish was not learned at all, but rather because the Spanish quickly learned at home is wiped out as soon as the child starts attending school – where, as previously shown, bilingual teaching is lacking or non-existent, most students, teachers and admin staff speak English, and children can even be ridiculed for speaking Spanish. In fact, studies on children of pre-schooler age have shown that their bilingualism proves to work efficiently for both English and Spanish, and would not be damaging for either (García 1983) but, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, the rejection of Spanish is fundamentally activated at a social level. The fall in Spanish literacy caused by faulty education had already been noticed between the 1980s and 1990s –this despite the fact that many employers might see Spanish proficiency as an asset (Acuña 1996: 220). The loss of such a crucial piece of Chicano identity is bitterly regretted later on in life.[42] Whereas the acquisition of Spanish may have taken place in the pre-school years, the loss happens relatively early, between third and fourth grade, as found by Merino (1983) in his research on children with variable degrees of bilingualism:

> Diagnosing language delay in Spanish-speaking children in the United States is a highly complex process. Hispanic children, like all members of bilingual communities, vary to a significant degree in the amount and kind of exposure which they receive to both of their languages. Children who receive equal or near equal amount of input in Spanish and English have been shown to progress in their language development to a degree comparable to that of monolingual speakers […] Some children however, may begin developing both language normally and because of the influence of the dominant majority language of the school and peer group, can suffer either arrested development or actual loss in one of their languages, […]. The first language of some bilingual children may

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[42] Overall, it seems that the trend for the Latino community from the second generation onwards is to gradually lose touch with their Spanish heritage, and the issue has become commonplace, as proven by the fact that it is being discussed in non-scientific magazines, too:
https://eu.usatoday.com/story/life/2017/09/10/spanish-fluency-u-s-decreases-each-generation/636773001/ (last visited September 8th 2018).

seem deviant simply because they are proficient in a dialect variety which differs from the language used in the assessment process. (Merino 1983: 381-382)

Merino's consideration of how complicated assessment can be for bilingual speakers is confirmed by the aforementioned fact that CE speakers are often still classed as LEPs today,because the variety they speak is not the one they are measured against. This ultimately proves that the lack of bilingual education and the stigma surrounding Spanish cause actual damage to bilingual children, pushing them towards a shift to monolingualism, instead of enhancing their abilities and encouraging the preservation of the heritage language while *also* learning English.[43]

It is also important to underline that the boundary between monolingualism and bilingualism is not a clear-cut one since, as shown in the previous chapter, language maintenance and loss happen in different ways for each person and leave each person with variable degrees of competence in the heritage language. Many of the CE speakers interviewed by Fought (2003) declared that they could understand Spanish very well but not speak it, despite their passive competence being discredited by actual testing of their Spanish competence: their illusion of understanding Spanish was due to the fact that they do understand it when it is mixed with English (Fought 2003: 156). Others may actually understand Spanish, but are unable to produce complete utterances, or their Spanish utterances contain "mistakes" similar to those of learners of Spanish as a second language. This can be due to the habit, in bilingual home environments, of enacting asymmetrical communication (Sanchez 1982), where a generally older member of the family

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[43] The sense of loss of heritage and language alike for Latinos is described in a brief and intense spoken poem by Melissa Lozada-Oliva (poet and writer who also collaborated with The Guardian online) entitled "My Spanish." One passage cites:

> If you ask me if I am fluent in Spanish, I will tell you my Spanish is an itchy phantom limb. It is reaching for words and only finding air. My Spanish is my third birthday party. Half of it is memory, the other half is that photograph on the fridge, is what my family has told me. My Spanish is puzzle, left in the rain too soggy to make its parts fit together to look just like the picture on the box.

Full poem available online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fE-c4Bj_RT0 (last visited September 5th 2018).

speaks the heritage language and the younger one answers in the dominant language. The possibility for these young speakers to use English at home withers their linguistic production of Spanish, while their comprehension skills may survive.

Given the case study of our research, a brief survey of bilingualism in the Chicano gangster subgroup is needed. In the analyses carried out with real speakers, there was a substantial discrepancy between an earlier study of Santa Ana (1991) and a more recent by Fought (2003). While the former found Los Angeles gang members to be "fiercely monolingual" (Santa Ana 1991: 174), moved by no desire to speak Spanish, the latter states that "[n]ot only were most of the gang members bilingual, but they also tended to be very positive about the Spanish language and Mexican ethnicity" (Fought 2003: 203). Such a striking difference could depend on a number of factors, from the specific sample of the researchers to the period in which the interviews were carried out. It is important to underline both perspectives, and to see how they relate to the linguistic behaviour of the cinematic gangsters.

Code switching

Communities living between two languages can display variable degrees of code switching, as mentioned in Chapter 3, and Chicanos are no exception. However, Fought's study of 2003 revealed something that may seem unexpected. Frequent switches to English happened while her sample speakers were speaking Spanish, which is due to their effective lack of competence in Spanish production, as proved by the fact that they openly declared they were struggling to find the word in Spanish (Fought 2003: 158). On the other hand, switches to Spanish while speaking English were significantly fewer. Never motivated by inability to say something in English (García 2005: 28), switches were mostly emblematic statements of ethnic pride (Poplack 1980: 589), and involved minimal portions of their utterances. Indeed, emblematic switches do not require high levels of Spanish proficiency. According to Poplack (1980: 613), non-fluent Spanish users are able to code switch keeping grammaticality in both languages, by resorting to switches of single emblematic words or of tags.

There is a difference, however, between Fought's teenage speakers (who were teenagers in 2003) and her older speakers (in their forties in 2003), who were more likely to extensively switch to Spanish, not because of a lack of competence in English, but rather out of a fully aware choice to display their belonging through language. This may depend on the different socio-political environments the two generations grew up in:

> [C]odeswitching while speaking English may have a particular political and cultural significance to the older speakers, who grew up amid the charged political climate of the 1960s and 1970s, when civil rights issues for Mexican-Americans and others were a crucial focus. The younger generation does not seem to have these strong associations. (Fought 2003: 159)

This is particularly important to underline in this thesis, as it might explain some of the linguistic behaviours of the analysed movie characters, which will be explored in detail in the next chapters.

Although CE speakers can be considered such without resorting to code switching, its role in the community should not be underestimated. The speakers interviewed by Fought (2003: 208-210) seemed unaware of the fact that CE is a distinct variety of American English. Many identified Chicano language with code switching. Most had positive attitudes about switching between English and Spanish, and declared that they did it often, especially at home with their Spanish-speaking family members. It was appreciated by both monolingual and bilingual Chicanos, with few exceptions. The main reason for appreciating code switching was its practical role in the community, since constantly moving between two linguistic worlds means being able to communicate effectively with people with all levels of command of both English and Spanish. This perception of code switching as a flexible tool and practice is confirmed by Zentella's study (1997), which proved that even the youngest proficient bilingual speakers are able to evaluate their interlocutors' level of bilingual proficiency and to adjust the number of switches in their speech accordingly.

One of Fought's interviewees identifies switching with the language of the Chicanos, the Mexicans on the U.S. side of the frontier: "Es que así nos- se hablan los Chicanos, los Mexicanos. Los que viven aquí. Como los de Mexico no hablan-

no saben na' de eso, pero los que viven aquí sí hablan Chicano – 'Chicano language'" (Fought 2003: 209).[44]

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter covered some relevant aspects of Chicano English as a variety of English in the United States. Telling the story of how white/Euro/Anglo American English used to be seen as an unforgivable violation, and how it has now become the yardstick against which other varieties are measured and deemed wrong, reveals how ephemeral and arbitrary the categorisations of standard/non-standard are. On the other hand, describing the features of CE for what it is, debunking common beliefs and explaining how internally efficient and coherent it is (as are most established varieties), was a way to do justice to a variety that is often looked down on, described from the viewpoint of its own detractors, presented as lacking, and used as integral part of Chicano stereotype construction.

Building on the reference framework of chapter 1 and the background knowledge of chapters 2, 3 and 4, the next chapters are the core of this research, focused on Chicano gangsters in films.

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[44] Fought translates this passage as: "It's like, that's how we- how the Chicanos speak, the Mexicans. The ones that live here. Like, the people in Mexico don't speak- don't know nothing about that, but people that live here do speak Chicano – 'Chicano language.'"

PART III – Film analysis

5 Chapter 5 – Facing the challenges: a framework for multimodal analysis of non-standard varieties in source and target films

As a teenager, the author of this work was a passionate fan of action movies and dramas, especially those related to gangsters and thug life. However, she did not realise the stereotyping potential of these audio-visual products, which are not supposed to be "cultural," until later, thanks to media studies, translation studies and critical linguistics. Going back to those movies with a different knowledge helped the author to understand how deeply they had affected her imagery. Indeed, movies made to "entertain" the audience might let a cultural message "trespass" conscious defences and sink deeply into their mind. It must not be forgotten that the power of media in forging human perception of reality goes beyond our consciousness. Cinema is a powerful means to shape and reinforce collective memory (Fluck 2003: 224) that transcends actual experience, as proved by the tendency to feel more afraid of crime when exposed to great amounts of crime-related audio-visual products than when experiencing actual crime in everyday life (Van den Bulck 2004: 247).

5.1 Films and Chicano gangsters

The main issue with the representation of Chicanos is its partiality. In fact, the media portrayals of Chicanos tend to represent them (all of them) as gangsters, as pointed out by Fought (2003: 6-7):

> [T]here is a tendency for those outside the community to associate Chicano English, particularly when it falls at the more non-standard end of the continuum, with gang members. Contributing to this effect are a number of movies with Latino casts that focus on the gang lifestyle, and which are exactly the movies where CE is most likely to be heard.

The movies portraying Chicanos are so often centred on gangs that they seem to establish an inevitable link between Mexican origin and natural "proclivity

towards criminality and violence" (Ramírez Berg 2002: 39), to the extent that gangbanging and "Mexicanness" become one.

According to Bender (2003), there may be a reason why Latinos/as (and Chicanos in particular) periodically become target of stereotyping in the media:

> Media tend to spotlight gangs and their supposed resurgence during any economic recession. Perhaps gangs serve as a handy clarion call to arms against the Latina/o community in times of economic strife, generating public hysteria and justifying enhanced border security and local policing measures. (Bender 2003: 38)

In this light, the ideological weight of the mediated stereotype becomes manifest. There is a substantial difference between an individual stereotype, existing as an abstract categorisation, and a mediated stereotype, projected on the screen as a "public commodity" (Ramírez Berg 2002: 38). The latter is made for repetition and sharing, to fulfil its social function. A mediated stereotype becomes a sign with a meaning, as any other mediated message, and as such it has different connotative layers that participate in its communicative meaning – Ramírez Berg's *semiotics of stereotyping* applied to Chicanos, as well as to other kinds of Latinos (2002: 39-41). A mediated stereotype contains several layers of meaning, conveyed by different kinds of data. Borrowing terms from semiotics and the aforementioned image of the *bandido* as an example, the image on screen is a signifier that has a denotation and a connotation (Ramírez Berg 2002: 39). While the denotation is "simply" that of a dark-skinned male wearing *sombrero* and *bandoleras*, the connotation goes way beyond, as it conveys information (*connotative data*, Ramírez Berg 2002: 39-41) at several levels.

First of all *racial* data, where the darker skin becomes a violation of the Anglo whiteness; *national* data – a Chicano is not identified as a "(North) American" (Ramírez Berg 2002: 40), and is therefore marked by otherness, which most often finds its strongest expression in the linguistic otherness (see Chapters 3 and 4); *narrative* data: a Chicano is most of the times a villain or a anti-hero;[45] *behavioural* data, which is to say the alleged inclination to antisocial and criminal

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[45] An anti-hero is the protagonist of any kind of story (novels, films etc.) "notably lacking in heroic qualities" (https://www.britannica.com/art/antihero last visited November 11th 2018).

attitudes; *psychological* data, linked to the behavioural aspect, which define the Chicano as an unstable sociopath, often addicted to alcohol or drugs; *moral* data: being villains or anti-heroes, the Chicanos are either immoral – recognising and despising righteous actions – or amoral – incapable of making a distinction between right and wrong; *ideological* data: thus configured, their very existence is a threat to the integrity of the white American ideology.

The most obvious question arising from such reflections is: why were Chicanos linked to crime? Bearing in mind the historical events explained in Chapter 2, it is likely that, at some point in history, those images (i.e. ethnotypes) have emerged from social and political tensions. Early historical facts were deformed and stripped of their original context to become universal mediated stereotypes; subsequently, more recent facts, filtered through existing prejudices, modernised the external features of an old idea, just to make it more contemporary. In the early days, this process originated the cinematic *bandido*, with his typical traits: "the unkempt appearance, the weaponry and *bandoleras*, the funny-looking sombrero, the sneering look" (Ramírez Berg 2002: 17). This set of characteristics has come to identify the rude and sociopathic villain of many Western movies set in the 1880s, while in historical reality this was the typical dress of the rebel fighters of the Revolutionary War of Mexico between 1910 and 1920, fighting against the dictator Porfirio Díaz by the side of Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata (Ramírez Berg 2002: 17-18, see chapter 2). This deformed image has later merged with the incidents in Los Angeles that hit the headlines between 1942 and 1943, marking the "eventual shift in media focus from the rural *bandido* […] to the urban Latina/o gang member or gangster" (Bender 2003: 3). More recently the zoot suits, forbidden after the riots, have been replaced by "gang colors and low-riders" (Bender 2003: 36) in the media imagery.

The importance of multimodality, as shown in the previous chapters, is a consequence of the central role of character design when it comes to media stereotyping. While several minorities are featured in gangster movies, the choice of Chicanos for this work depends on the following reasons. First, the Spanish competence of this author, allowing her to understand code switches and recognise phonetic heritage with relative ease. The author was also familiar with

Chicano literature and visual arts through her studies, which allowed her to better understand their history and culture. Another factor, external to the author's personal background, is the growing Mexican American community and their role in the political life of the United States – already explored in the previous chapters. Moreover, while it is very unlikely to imagine that there would be Anglo Americans who have never met a Mexican American in their whole life, Italy does not really have a developed community of Mexican origin. In fact, Italy has a far more recent history of multicultural contact and immigration, to the extent that the second generation immigrants have not entered the labour market yet (Reyneri 2011: 99-100). Only recently the existence of second-generation citizens of foreign origin was brought up in the political debate, with the discussion around *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis*.[46] Mexican immigration in Italy is rather limited and mainly concerns women, 67,3% of the 3.620 Mexicans registered in Italy in 2008 (Calvanese 2011: 34). Therefore, it is possible to assume that the media are an important source of (more or less distorted) information concerning Mexican Americans for numerous Italians.

5.2   Defining the corpus

As anticipated in the conclusion of Chapter 1, the literature review and the historical, theoretical and methodological background converged into the research carried out by this author. Chapter 1 provided the methodological key points guiding the analysis, Chapter 2 offered the historical background that allows debunking stereotypes, Chapters 3 and 4 served as a guide for the understanding of linguistic issues.

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[46] The attribution of citizenship in Italy generally follows the *ius sanguinis*. This means that the *conditio sine qua non* to be considered Italian is to have at least one Italian parent, regardless of the birth place. On the one hand, this choice keeps a "door open" for those who migrated *from* Italy, on the other it can be seen as discriminating against the offspring of those who migrate *to* Italy, who have to go through muddled and costly procedures to obtain citizenship. The debate on the topic started in the late 1990s and periodically re-emerges, but the recent political events in Italy seem to be postponing any concrete development in the direction of *ius soli* (Camilli 2017).

These were the necessary steps to attain an adequate framework of analysis and to elaborate the data in a satisfactory way.

The corpus was entirely built by this author, who has transcribed the texts of both source and target versions, and analysed semi-automatically. Alignment and tagging were carried out manually in a Microsoft Office Excel™ worksheet, while the calculations were made using the software MathCad™,[47] which was also used to generate most graphs and tables. The corpus specifications are based on Laviosa's typology (2002: 33-38):

Level 1

Sample – since the aim of this research is to learn more about character design, the analysis focuses on a selection of characters who respond to the "Chicano gangster" profile. Instead of indiscriminately analysing the whole text, the analysis takes each character separately, and then compares and combines the results.

Synchronic – the films selected were all released between 1988 and 1993 (the reasons are explained in the following paragraph).

General – although all of the characters are Chicano gangsters, they are portrayed in different contexts of their everyday life (school, street, home, jail, etc.).

Bilingual, English and Italian (but...) – the corpus includes the source text film in English and its dubbed version in Italian. However, both the source and the target version contain a third language, Mexican Spanish, in the form of code-switching.

Mixed written and spoken (but...) – the corpus contains transcriptions of both the source and the target text the way they appear in the films (without the pre-production screenplay as a reference), which means it is "written to be spoken as if not written" (Taylor 1999: 248). Also, it takes multimodal relations (Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki forthcoming, see chapter 1) into consideration, thus introducing a non-textual dimension in the corpus.

Level 2

Bilingual Parallel (and aligned) – the corpus is structured so that the two versions are in parallel. Given the fluid nature of speech and the absence of reference

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[47] The author wishes to thank the postgraduate students of Mechanical Engineering from the Polytechnic University of Bari for providing the training.

screenplays, the unit selected for the alignment was the *line*, intended as the utterance, however long or short, that a character would give before being interrupted by another element. The signals of line change follow the typical screenplay structure: someone else's taking turn (either talking or using body language to answer), long interruption during which something happens informing the character of something they did not know, change of scene (intended as "[a] unit of dramatic action by the unity of time and proximity of space," Gurskis 2006: 180).[48]

Level 3

Bilingual Parallel Mono-directional – as aforementioned, the corpus contained samples of source text and their translations.

Level 4

Translational Mono-source-language – since Chicano gangsters are not the most common characters in Italian cinema, only American source texts were included.

Before moving on to a more detailed analysis of the corpus, it is worth introducing the movies that made it to the final selection.

5.3   Applying filters

Once "movies featuring Chicano gangsters" had been decided upon as general object of study, it was crucial to apply filters to limit the scope of this research. On the one hand, it was necessary to limit the number of movies, in order to carry out a more detailed analysis, able to go one step beyond the observation of linguistic phenomena and of translational procedures. On the other hand, the selection of movies had to cover specific areas of interest that are relevant for the research topic. In this sense, both the plot of the movies and the time of release had an important role. In terms of character design, it was important to have examples of Chicano gangsters in different roles within the plot. Finally, real-life conditions such as the actual availability of the movies, especially of the Italian

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[48] Although this author tried to be as objective as possible in determining the units, she is aware that the unit scansion for dubbing is not as deterministic as, for example, dividing subtitle units following the spotting (e.g. Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki forthcoming). A more automatised scansion can definitely be an object of further research in the field.

versions, time at hand, and the fact that the work was carried out by one person alone, had to be taken into consideration.

A first comprehensive research of "movies featuring Chicano gangsters" brought to the author's attention numerous films of various types and from different periods, ranging from musicals to action, from the late 1970s to the decade in which this work is being written (2010s). It is important to specify that, while some movies are centred on Chicano gang banging, others only have Chicano gangsters in a marginal role: *Walk Proud* (1979), *Boulevard Nights* (1979), *Zoot Suit* (1981), *Stand and Deliver* (1988), *Colors* (1988), *American Me* (1992), *Blood in Blood Out (Bound by Honor)* (1993), *Mi vida Loca (My crazy life)* (1993), *Falling Down* (1993), *Con Air* (1997), *Training Day* (2001), *The Fast and the Furious* (2001), *End of Watch* (2012).[49]

It is worth explaining those filters in better detail, in order to show how the final selection of movies came to be.

5.3.1 Time frame

Time frame refers to various kinds of time-related features. The first decision concerned opting for either diachronic or synchronic analysis. Each offers specific advantages and imply specific methods of research. The limited number of movies, as well as their discontinuous releases, made diachronic research feel chaotic, at least without detailed research on factors that fall out of the scope of this work.[50] The alternative was synchronic research, whose aim is in general to capture a snap-shot of a specific moment. In order for this snap-shot to be meaningful, it is necessary to select a historical period that stands out for its peculiarities, both in terms of movie production and historical facts. As can be seen from the list reported here, the production of movies featuring Chicano gangsters concentrates in specific periods, and they happened to correspond with

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[49] More details on the non-selected films can be found in the Appendix to the chapter.

[50] This kind of analysis would involve a broader range of subjects involved than this thesis already tries to comprise, as it requires a solid background of cinema history and economics, as well as specific data about box office, VHS and DVD sales, streaming rates and downloads. Although relevant and thought-provoking, this would require a range of competences and specific research that would drift the work too far from its main focus.

the turn of each decade. This certainly captures the attention, and requires an explanation from history. Remembering a quote from Bender (2003: 38), "[p]erhaps gangs serve as a handy clarion call to arms against the Latina/o community in times of economic strife," as well as the historical events recalled in Chapter 2, it is possible that immigration trends may have a role.

And indeed, as can be seen by going back to Chapter 2, the decades between the 1970s and 2000s saw a deconstruction of the achievements of *El Movimiento*, mainly due to growing immigration, inequality, and education (Acuña 2000: 420-425; Gibson & Jung 2006: 110; Piketty and Saez 2003: 17, 37; Anderton et al. 1997: 515 see Chapter 2). While more specific historical research might provide a better overview of the correlation factors between historical events and cultural production, it is unavoidable to notice that the increase in the production of movies concerning Chicano gangsters concentrates at the turn of each decade. These expansion trends overlap with the exponential increase in immigration from Mexico recorded at the turn of each decade, with the waves of discrimination that, as seen in Chapter 2 (Zong and Batalova 2018), are encouraged by the media.

Given that the movies tend to concentrate on each turn of decade, the following step is to choose which of these would offer more data for the analysis.

5.3.2 *Data availability, relevance and coherence*

The 1970s-1980s passage would be historically relevant, as it follows the first set of setbacks for the Chicano community after the achievements of *El Movimiento* andwas the first time such movies appeared, replacing or just remodelling the *bandido* from western movies. However, there are problems in considering this period from the data point of view. First, only three movies were found. Out of these three, the two from 1979, *Boulevard Nights* and *Walk Proud*, were not available in Italian – at least, they have not been found by the author so far. Moreover, the other movie, *Zoot Suit* (1981) is actually in the author's movie collection, but it is completely different from all the other movies, as it is the only one belonging to the musical genre. This puts it on another level, both in terms of fictional language and of translation procedures, so that it is not really comparable with the others (Mateo 2012: 119).

Another possibility was to consider the passage between 1990s and 2000s. This passage would have the advantage of being closer to the present time, with more data at hand – both in terms of movie availability and contextual information. However, a quick look at the historical context reveals a first issue: the wake of the 2000s, with the Twin Towers attack and the War on Terror, saw the rise of Middle East terrorism as the new American Other, in the news as well as in entertainment media (Corbin 2017).[51] A further problem in considering this decade is that Chicano gangsters are not featured in main roles in any of the movies: this suggests that their existence is already assumed to be a given fact, undeserving of specific attention – probably because the previous movies had already created a recognisable profile. As a consequence, these movies offer a limited set of data for the analysis.

The disadvantages of those two passages were compensated for by the advantages of the remaining 1980s-1990s option. Firstly, this is the decade passage offering most movies. Moreover, in these films it is possible to find Chicano gangsters in a range of roles, going from main to minor. This option also includes movies that are especially focused on Chicano gangster identity and lifestyle, and a relative uniformity of genres, moving on a continuum between drama and crime, with some hints of action. Unfortunately, among the movies shot between 1988 and 1993, *Mi Vida Loca* (1993) and *Falling Down* (1993) were not available in Italian, and had to be discarded.

As a consequence, the author was left with four movies, about 9 hours for the source text, a value that doubles to 18 hours when counting in the target versions, out of which the samples (2,835 lines) were extracted. The chosen medium was the DVD, mainly for availability reasons, given the difficulty of finding working VHSs for both the versions of the movies, and the impossibility of retrieving

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[51] For example, IMDb lists no less than 38 titles under the category "Films about September 11 tragedy" (https://www.imdb.com/list/ls056745046/ last visited October 16th 2018), which includes both movies and documentaries, either about or related to the Twin Tower attack. The same happens in the news, as reported by a research by the University of Alabama quoted in *The Guardian*, according to which "Terror attacks by Muslims receive 357% more press attention" (Chalabi 2018).

movie theatre versions.[52] After the data gathering and analysis, the author managed to access partial VHS recordings, and found out that the DVD version was most likely not redubbed.[53] The time frame choice is also coherent with the translation technique choice. Italy relied heavily on dubbing for movies as well as TV series and sit-coms (see Chapter 1), thus the choice of dubbing is also coherent with the investigation into character profile. Gathering information about distant realities was more difficult than it is today: the Internet, for example, became broadly available to the Italian public during the late 1990s, and did not then contain the overwhelming amount of (constantly updated, not always reliable) information that is currently available online.[54]

5.4   The movies

The chosen movies are relevant from both a linguistic and a character design point of view. This paragraph aims at providing a synopsis of the films and an outline of the characters chosen for the analysis, while also explaining the relevance of each film to the research. It is important to describe the personalities of the characters, in order to better understand how these relate to their linguistic behaviour and multimodal relations (which will be described in the next chapter).

Stand and Deliver
Released: 1988
Genre: drama, biography, inspirational

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[52] While looking into the Italian versions of the movies, the author found that the distribution group of *Blood in Blood out* (Buena Vista Home Entertainment) had been bought by a much bigger company (Disney Home Video). When contacting this company, she was told that they kept no record of the movie.

[53] Therefore, the sociocultural context considered in the analysis will be the one of the original film release.

[54] Detailed information about the Internet spreading in Italy in the 1990s:
http://www.repubblica.it/tecnologia/2016/04/29/news/30_anni_di_internet_la_timeline-138625953/ last visited October 16th 2018, and
http://archiviostorico.telecomitalia.com/category/tags/anni-%E2%80%9990 last visited October 10th 2017.

Director: Ramón Menéndez

Time: 99m

Italian title: *La forza della Volontà* (will power)

Summary: The story of the inspiring teacher Jaime Escalante, who challenges Chicano student dropout in Los Angeles. The film is based on a true story of students who, supported by their math teacher, fight back against discrimination and poverty by achieving amazing results in calculus, which is a crucial step towards a valid university and a good career. The film was added to the National Film Registry of the Library of Congress in 2011.[55]

Characters analysed:

Angel, supporting role – portrayed by Lou Diamond Phillips, an actor of Filipino origin.[56] Angel is a young *cholo*, who lives alone with his ill grandmother and takes care of her. He initially does not care about school, but soon discovers that he is interested in mathematics thanks to his teacher Jaime Escalante. He has a dual nature: on the one hand, he is hot-headed and instinctive; on the other hand, he is good-natured and intelligent. The latter aspect emerges increasingly during the movie, although he also preserves part of his tough appearance.

Chuco, minor role – portrayed by Daniel Villarreal, a Chicano actor. Chuco is a young *cholo*, with no further background being provided. He does not want to study, and his only ambition is to become a criminal. He is a bully, and he initially challenges the teacher and pushes his friend Angel to do the same. When he understands that being in class requires serious effort he drops out, but respects Angel's choice to leave gangbanging, and in the end he helps renovate Escalante's car when he needs it to help his students.

Why it is relevant:

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[55] The film registry was established by a national law of the U.S., the National Film Preservation Act: "Under the terms of the National Film Preservation Act, each year the Librarian of Congress names 25 films to the National Film Registry that are "culturally, historically or aesthetically" significant. "These films are selected because of their enduring significance to American culture," said Billington. "Our film heritage must be protected because these cinematic treasures document our history and culture and reflect our hopes and dreams" https://www.loc.gov/item/prn-11-240/ last visited November 13th 2018.

[56] https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001617/?ref_=ttfc_fc_cl_t19 last visited November 13th 2018.

This film is based on a true story, it was awarded inclusion in the National Film Registry, and it portrays a broad range of Chicanos: out of the whole class only two are *homeboys*, and one decides to change his life thanks to education. Thus, although the way gangsters are portrayed still recalls that stereotypical imagery, it offers a less negative view of the East Los Angeles reality. Furthermore, since most movies featuring Chicano gangsters have crime as a central theme, this film offers a view of this character in a different context.

Colors

Released: 1988

Genre: Action, crime, drama

Director: Dennis Hopper

Time: 116m

Italian title: *Colors – Colori di Guerra* (war colours)

Brief plot: The story of two police officers fighting crime and gang violence in East Los Angeles. One is older and tries to dissuade gangbangers by establishing a relationship with them, the other is a hot-headed rookie who gets carried away too easily. They end up in the middle of a war among of African American and Latino gangs.

Characters analysed:

Frog, villain – portrayed by Trinidad Silva, a Chicano actor (1950-1989), who also starred in *Walk Proud* (1979). He is the leader of the mixed-race "21 street" gang, which initially is the underdog in the *barrio*, but towards the end of the movie they gain a better position avenging a drive-by shooting perpetrated by African Americans in their area. He always looks rather relaxed and makes use of drugs. He initially tries to stop his younger brother Felipe from entering the gang, but eventually is forced to jump him in.

Gato, villain – portrayed by Steven Camarillo. He is a hot-headed member of the "21 street" gang, no further background is provided for him. He is a drug addict, and sees gangbanging as something unavoidable for people from his *barrio*, and he is convinced his fellow gang members are his family.

Why is it relevant?

Although released in the same year as *Stand and Deliver*, this film has a completely different approach. It looks at gangsters from an external perspective, and hints at the fact that *cholos* do not really seek an alternative, as gangbanging is their only creed. The protagonists are white police officers fighting against hordes of African American and Latino gangsters, who do not know any better than murdering and using drugs.

American Me

Released: 1992

Genre: biography, crime, drama

Director: Edward James Olmos

Time: 121m

Italian title: *American Me – Rabbia di Vivere* (anger of living)

Brief plot: The rise and fall of a young Chicano becoming the leader of the Mexican Mafia. Partly inspired by the story of the gang leader Rodolfo Cadena (Rafael 2007). Olmos, director and lead actor of this movie, also plays Professor Escalante in *Stand and Deliver* and plays the protagonist of the musical *Zoot Suit* (1981), becoming a recurring presence in this kind of film until the early 1990s. The story is centred on gangbanging and shows the downward spiral that entering a gang implies: losing all those one cares about as well as one's own self.

Characters analysed:

Santana Montoya, main role – portrayed by Edward James Olmos, actor, director and producer of Mexican descent.[57] Santana is the son of a *pachuca* and the marine that raped her on the Zoot Suit Riots night. The repressed rancour of his stepfather (who had to watch the rape while was being beaten up by a group of marines), the latent pain of his mother, and their poverty drive Santana towards gangbanging. He is put in prison, where he becomes the leader of the Mexican Mafia, *la Eme*. Once out, he falls in love and sees what drug dealing does to his people. He wants to change his life, but loses control over the "business" and is eventually assassinated by his own gang.

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[57] https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001579/ last visited November 14th 2018.

J.D., villain – portrayed by William Forsythe. His character is inspired by Joe (Pegleg) Morgan, a Slavic-American who grew up in East Los Angeles and became a respected leader of the Mexican Mafia while in prison (Katz 1993). He is a white kid living in the *barrio*, and Santana's best friend and fellow gang member since a young age. He, too, is convicted and becomes Santana's right-hand person. He pushes Santana in a hopeless competition against the Italian mafia, which will cost *la Eme* several lives.[58] When he notices that Santana wants to change his life, he orders his murder.

Mundo, minor role – portrayed by the Mexican American Pepe Serna.[59] He is the last to join Santana's small gang outside jail, and he is convicted with them and participates in the building of *la Eme*. No background is given for his character, but he often does "dirty jobs" like murdering.

Puppet, minor role – portrayed by Danny De La Paz, who also starred in *Boulevard Nights* (1979).[60] The character is not given any particular background, apart from his family. His brother is the junior gang member Little Puppet, his cousins are Julie, the woman Santana falls in love with, and the young Neto, who dies because of uncut drugs. He had let his brother into the gang to protect him in prison, but will be forced to kill him when Little Puppet commits an "unforgivable" mistake.

Little Puppet, minor role – portrayed by Daniel Villarreal, which further indicates the tendency to have the same actors playing the same roles.[61] He is a tattoo artist who ends up in prison for a small crime, he uses drugs, and is introduced to *la Eme* by his older brother Puppet. When faced with the violence of gangbanging he

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[58] The Italian American mafia has been used as the symbol of undefeatable crime organisation in another movie focused on crime organisations, even though it was made outside Hollywood: the yakuza film *Brother* by Takeshi Kitano (2000). The Japanese clans fight each other with more or less equal forces, they take over from the Mexicans in Los Angeles, but when they "dare" challenge the Italian mafia, the protagonist's clan is completely wiped out.

[59] https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0346595/?ref_=nv_sr_1 last visited November 14th 2018.

[60] https://vimeo.com/32768140 last visited November 14th 2018.

[61] A notorious example of the same tendency in more recent years is Noel Guglielmi, a Mexican American actor who often plays the cholo, and whose character is often named Hector. https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0346595/?ref_=nv_sr_1 last visted November 14th 2018.

wants to quit, and when he accidentally causes Santana's arrest, he is killed by his own brother a few days after he gets married.

Why is it relevant?

American Me and *Blood In Blood Out* have similarities in the plots and some characters overlap. However, they have very different approaches to the same subject. *American Me* focuses on the dramatic aspects of gangbanging and on the personal path of a man (Santana) who realises he has made terrible mistakes that caused pain to himself and to others because of the grudge he inherited, which started before he was born, and also consumed his mother and father. The film portrays the encounter between young kids from the *barrio* and gangbanging as an inevitability, and shows the strength required to stay out of it.

From a screenplay point of view, *American Me* offers a range of characters, from one who is capable of introspection to the most peripheral ones, whose psychological profile is only sketched.

Blood in Blood Out (Bound by Honor)

Released: 1993

Genre: crime, drama

Director: Taylor Hackford

Time: 173m

Italian title: *Patto di Sangue* (blood oath)

Brief plot: The lives of three Chicanos from East Los Angeles, based on the life of the poet Jimmy Santiago Baca, screenwriter of the movie. Two half-brothers and a cousin start off in the same gang, until a series of unfortunate events and bad choices drive them onto very different paths. It is inspired by similar events as *American Me*, but the story is built in a more fictional way (e.g. the names of the existing gangs are modified).

Characters analysed:

Miklo Velka, main role – portrayed by Damian Chapa, an actor of Irish, Mexican, Italian and Native American descent.[62] Miklo has a violent Anglo father he hates, and a Mexican mother he loves. Despite his Mexican descent, he has Anglo

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[62] https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0152082/?ref_=nv_sr_1 last visited November 15th 2018.

features (like J.D. in *American Me*) that cause him discrimination in the Chicano community. He constantly feels the need to prove himself and wants to enter his cousins' gang, as he thinks of it as a consecration of his belonging. When he is arrested, he enters a powerful Mexican American gang (overcoming discrimination there, too). He is paroled, but the difficult conditions for former convicts push him into crime again, until his leg is shot off by his own ex-gangster cousin. He eliminates and replaces the former leader of the gang, who was also his mentor in jail. He finds his sense of belonging in the gang, which he sees as his family.

Paco Aguilar, main role – portrayed by Benjamin Bratt, who has a mixed ancestry where the only Latino heritage comes from his mother, a Peruvian Quechua[63]. At the beginning of the story, he is a short-tempered and proud young man with no love for hard work. He is the leader of the street gang *Vatos Locos*, and Miklo's cousin. After a series of negative events causes his and his cousin's arrest, he decides to avoid jail by serving in the army, and becomes a detective. After his little brother dies because of heroin, he decides to join the drug squad. When he finds out Miklo is involved in crime again after being paroled, he shoots his cousin while he is running away. He also fights with his half-brother, a drug addict who accidentally caused their little brother's death. He is divided between his sense of duty as an irreprehensible detective and his old bond with his former gang members, who are also part of his family. He dresses like a detective and acts according to his role, but does not lose his fiery and aggressive attitude, while finding a new sense of belonging in serving law and order.

Cruz Candelaria, main role – portrayed by Jesse Borrego, a Chicano actor. He is Paco's half-brother, Miklo's cousin, and a member of *Vatos Locos*. He is a promising artist with a passion for Aztec culture and Mexican tradition, but after being attacked by a rival gang his spine is severely damaged, and he turns to heroin to ease the pain. While he is under the effect of heroin, his little brother tries his drugs and dies. His family will not talk to him for years (apart from Miklo), but eventually they forgive him, and he finds a way out of addiction. He

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[63] https://www.biography.com/people/benjamin-bratt-9542258 last visited November 13th 2018.

believes that a sense of belonging comes from never forgetting the bond created by surviving together the tough reality of the *barrio*.

Montana, supporting role – portrayed by Enrique Castillo. Montana has some features in common with Santana from *American Me*. Wise and contemplative, he is the leader of the jail gang *La Onda* and Miklo's mentor. During the film he reveals he has a daughter he has never met, because he has been in prison for a very long time. He starts studying, and realises that Chicanos need to stay out of jail and live honestly, but his moderation is perceived as a betrayal by his right-hand man Magic and Miklo. The two decide to murder him in secret, right on the day he would have met his daughter.

Popeye, villain – portrayed by Carlos Carrasco, an actor from Panama.[64] He fully embodies negative stereotypes: a drug addict who has no talent, he is a coward and he does not hesitate to take advantage of any opportunity to help his own interest, even by damaging others. He initially pretends to be Miklo's friend, but then tries to rape him and insults his white skin (Popeye is particularly dark). Once out of jail, he steals money from his fellow gang members and ill-manages the gang's "business," until Miklo takes his place.

Why is it relevant?

This film has a somewhat ambivalent approach towards gangbanging. While it certainly shows its negative aspects, it also leaves room for sympathising with the gangsters, or at least for understanding their point of view. It also opens the possibility of leaving gangbanging for good and changing one's life.

The film covers a long period of time and several topics: from the tragic escalation of violence when joining a gang, to gang violence, to the difficulties faced by former convicts in overcoming prejudice and living honestly, to drug addiction. It also shows an array of characters with different roles in the plot, each of them embodying at least part of the stereotypes on Chicanos. Also, given that it lasts nearly three hours, it is the one where most time is dedicated to outlining different characters.

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[64] https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0140033/?ref_=tt_cl_t8 last visited November 15th 2018.

5.5 The scheme of analysis

After presenting the corpus typology and providing an overview of the films chosen, the following step is to introduce the framework of analysis adopted. The main inspiration, as anticipated in Chapter 1, came from the work of Ramos Pinto (2017) and Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming). Although in the case of Portuguese subtitling of British English diastratic variation, their work had a multimodal approach for analysing non-standard speech in audiovisual products. In particular, their scheme included three dimensions of investigation: textual, looking for the "meanings associated to certain varieties" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 21); diegetic, concerned with the way "the non-standard varieties' communicative meanings and diegetic functions are constructed in a fictional audiovisual context" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 23); sociocultural, whose aim is to explore the sociocultural context, looking for the possible reasons behind the products and their translated versions.

The first two dimensions, in particular, are the focus of the product-based analysis of this thesis. The socio-cultural dimension, on which some hypotheses will be proposed here, would need further investigation through Toury's extratextual sources, e.g. interviews with the translators, adapters and dubbing actors; reception studies.[65]

5.5.1 Textual dimension

The textual dimension scheme is informed by the work of Brodovich (1997); Assis Rosa (2004; 2015); Ramos Pinto (2017) and Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming). While Chapter 4 aimed to illustrate the real features of Chicano English, the scheme of this study follows the concept of *fictolinguistics* (Ferguson 1998), where, rather than "evaluating the varieties' real-world accuracy and consistency," the aim of AVT study is to identify "the extralinguistic meanings associated with those same varieties […] then imported in the film's fictional world" (Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki, forthcoming). The necessity for this kind of

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[65] Given the amount of work the framework implementation and corpus analysis required, it was not possible to analyse the extratextual sources at this stage. Its importance, however, would require further research, based on the data and results gathered and analysed here.

shift depends on the nature of the audiovisual product, and even more on that of its translation. If, in fact, the source text is still more or less close to its real-world counterpart (Fought 2002: 212-225), the cultural specificity of a non-standard variety like Chicano English can hardly be rendered in a realistic way in a different linguistic context, as this author partly proved in her smaller pilot studies (Renna 2018a; Renna 2018b; Renna 2018c; Renna forthcoming).

Carmen Fought (2002) mentions *American Me* in her study of Chicano English – she explores a broader range of genres, the film by Olmos being the only gangster movie included in her analysis. Indeed, the movie was criticised by the Latino community (Berumen 1995: 238) for its focus on gangbanging. Fought (2002) has analysed Chicano English in real life and then its representation in a small number of movies and, in her opinion, *American Me* offers a partial view of Chicano English:

> The language in *American Me* is certainly affected by the gang theme. The varieties of English shown tend to be non-standard versions of CE […] This 'tough' portrayal of Mexican-Americans as gang members is also reinforced linguistically by a much higher use of taboo language […] The characters in this movie who are not gangsters are mostly non-native speakers. […] this type of pattern in films tends to reinforce the stereotype that CE is spoken by gang members, as well as the idea that other Mexican-Americans just speak 'broken' learner English. (Fought 2002: 218)

This suggests that the language of the movies, if they follow the pattern of *American Me* suggested by Fought (2002), will tend towards the non-standard end of the CE continuum. On the other hand, as mentioned in Chapter 1, Italian *dubbese* usually tends towards standardisation of the language (see chapter 1).

There is also another element complicating the picture: in this corpus, not only standardness or non-standardness of the language were to be taken into consideration, but also the fact that CE is characteristic of a certain ethno-cultural minority group. This group is composite: there are speakers who tend towards the California Anglo English standard, and others whose language is more vernacular. California Anglo English, too, can be spoken in a more prestigious sub-variety, or tend towards orality (Assis Rosa 2015) and substandardness.

Taking as a starting point Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki's scheme (forthcoming), based on British English and Portuguese subtitling language, helped this author in defining the specific categories she had to take into consideration. Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki imagine a scheme where on the one hand there is "Standard" language, whose main function is to convey high prestige, high sociocultural status and/or belonging to a central region. On the other hand, the non-standard dimension has a broader range of variation. First, it includes oral, containing features of oral speech such as contractions, which conveys a lower prestige and a colloquial and informal communicative context. Second, the non-standard varieties can be regional, when features signalling belonging to a peripheral region determine a lower prestige. Finally, the most complex category of non-standard is the sub-standard, which conveys the lowest prestige. It includes substandard regional varieties, conveying low sociocultural status and belonging to a peripheral region; substandard social, conveying low sociocultural status and low educational level; substandard social specific, which conveys the same low sociocultural status and low educational level, but also specific information that allows the audience to identify the character as member of a specific social group.

To the classification of varieties, Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming) add a second level of classification based on the realisation of these varieties, which allows the determination of which linguistic elements contribute to the identification of a certain variety. The features are divided among morpho-syntactic, lexical, phonetic, and orthographic (for subtitles).

In order to apply the logic of their scheme to the corpus of this thesis, it was necessary to make some changes in terms of integrations, substitutions, or small tweaks. The modifications stemmed from a series of factors that this author had to take into consideration:

- in this corpus, the variation is both social and ethnic, which doubles some categories while making others irrelevant. For example, in the source language both CE and Anglo English have their own standard and non-standard sub-varieties (although the standard of CE is perceived as less prestigious than the Anglo-standard, because it belongs to a discriminated minority);

- sometimes, in the target texts, a marker of belonging to a minority ethnic group can be added to an otherwise standard language that could also belong to a member of a dominant (white) ethnic group;

- sometimes the characters switch to Spanish for a whole line, instead of just using it in code-switching.

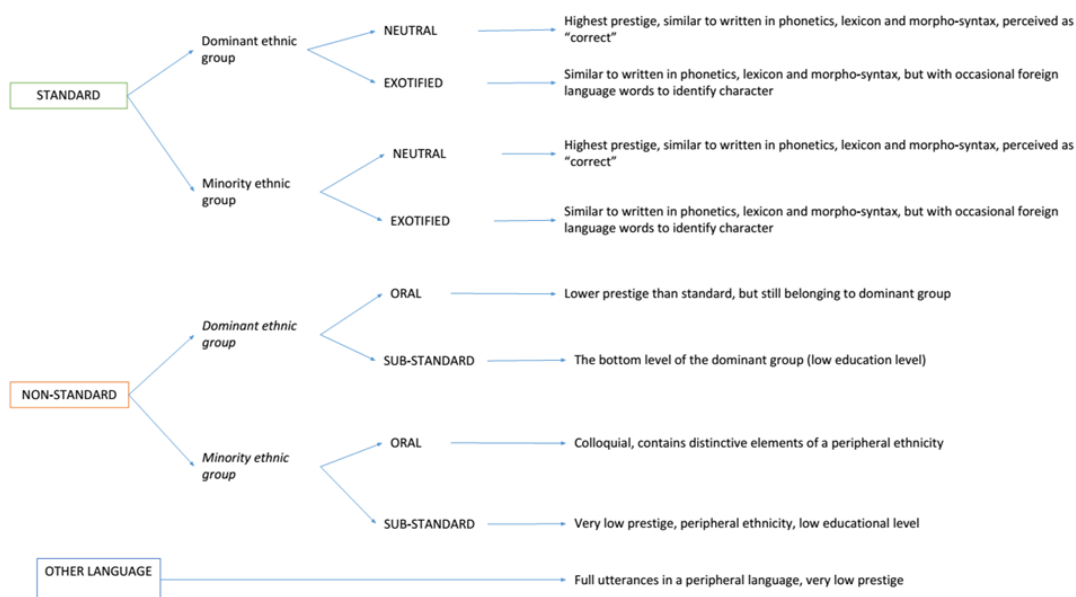The result was the following scheme (Figure 11):

Figure 11 Classification of the linguistic varieties

This classification was devised after having watched all the movies and their dubbed versions several times, in the attempt to cover all the varieties used in both the texts. It is worth noting again that the language analysed here is fictional, appositely constructed to convey sociocultural messages to the audience, rather than to represent the linguistic reality of the portrayed speakers. The terminology used for the definitions does not specifically refer to Chicanos and CE and/or Italian because a successful framework thus implemented would work with other minorities (especially those involved in diasporas and/or colonialism). Within a colonial system or any society that contains minorities, there is likely to be a local version of the "English with an accent" (Lippi-Green 1997), which denotes an ethno-cultural heritage considered as "Other" from the dominant one.

Here, the "standard" category is divided between dominant ethnic group and minority ethnic group. In the ST of this corpus, the first case is represented by Anglo English in its most prestigious variety, denoting the highest sociocultural status; the second case consists of the kind of CE that is "expected" from an educated Chicano, which approximates the dominant standard (see Chapters 3 and 4). In both cases, the category "exotified" was included: while, in fact, code mixing has its rules, passing from one language to another for lengthy parts of a discourse can be interpreted as a sign of incomplete knowledge of a language (Lippi-Green 1997; Gumperz 1982). However, a small instance of lexical code-switching that does not involve rude language and profanities can serve as "colouring," to give that particular line an "exotic" feeling for the audience. This can happen in both the standards, and can have an "emblematic" function (Poplack 1980: 589, see Chapters 3 and 4) or serve as a way to personalise communication or create solidarity with the interlocutor (Gumperz 1982; see Chapter 3) The presence of an "exotified" standard is the reason why its counterpart is called "neutral," as it does not have the same connotation resulting from the occasional code-switching.

What falls outside the realm of standard language generally belongs to non-standard that, in turn, is divided in subcategories. Once again, the first subdivision is between the non-standard language spoken by the dominant ethnic group (in this case Anglos) and the one spoken by the minority (in this case Chicanos). Both the dominant and the minority substandard, following Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming) are divided between oral and substandard. According to Assis Rosa (2015: 211), there are some morpho-syntactic and lexical features that distinguish an oral discourse from a standard one, and her distinguishing features were adopted by this author: exclamations (both clausal and phrasal), question tags, fillers (e.g. well, um), changes of topic, reformulations, false starts, stressing, hedging, backchannelling, forms of address, frequent deictics, low lexical density, high dependence on context, strong interpersonal component (vs. referential component). To these, the specific case or minority ethnic group oral requires adding the use of Mexican Spanish code mixing, but only when this includes words that are not rude (and could be considered no less than oral in Mexican

Spanish, too), for instance *casa*, *madre*, *vamonos* (house, mother, let us go). The phonetic traits of oral speech tend to diverge from California Anglo English more than in Standard CE, e.g. replacement of apico-dental fricatives [θ] and [ð] with the apico-dental stops [t̪] and [d̪] respectively (see chapter 3).

The lowest subtype of non-standard language is substandard, which indicates the lowest educational level and sociocultural prestige. In this corpus there are two kinds of substandard: one spoken by the dominant ethnic group, the other by the minority group. In both cases, some signals of substandardness are those linguistic features that fall within the definition of "non correct" grammar, usually denoting a lack of education, some examples common to both substandards being: 1) *grammar*: double negation, auxiliary omission or contraction, no third person *-s*, no marking of difference between present and past tense, no marking of difference between singular and plural, excess of prepositions; 2) *lexicon*: youth slang or sociolect slang; swearwords and profanities. In the case of minority substandard, additional features should be mentioned. The first is the use of vernacular AAVE items, e.g. existential BE, labelling: these are common in non-standard speech of other marginal communities (Renna 2015). The second is the code-switching of words that are not "acceptable" in the mixed language (in the case of this corpus, Mexican Spanish): some examples are swearwords e.g. *cabrón*, *chingao* (from *chingado* [fucked] used as an expression of disappointment), and "Spanglish" words such as *huacha* (or *wacha*), which is a "hispanification" of the verb *to watch*.

From the phonetic point of view, as seen in Chapter 4, phonetic traits tend to converge with California Anglo English in their more standard versions, while they acquire more elements in common with other non-standard dialects (e.g. AAVE) and with Spanish as they drift towards more vernacular forms, e.g. a tense realisation of [ɪ] slightly in other positions apart from the *-ing* suffix, common to all CE speakers. The difference is especially evident in terms of suprasegmental traits. An example that clearly shows the difference can be found towards the end of the film *Stand and Deliver*. The class is unfairly accused of having cheated to pass the calculus exam, as they all had good marks and made similar minor mistakes – but, really, it is because their marks are "too good" to be coming from

a school in East Los Angeles. Angel, who has already become a good student but still dresses like a *cholo*, uses prosody to mock the interiorised prejudice of his Chicano examiner, as he pretends to take the blame and, in so doing, suddenly switches to a much more vernacular prosody:

> Examiner: *Permiso*. I come from this neighborhood. *Yo vengo de este barrio*. I know that sometimes we're tempted to take shortcuts. Tell me the truth. What happened? *Dime la verdad*.
> Angel: Ok. We're busted. Why don't we just admit it?
> Examiner: How did you do it?
> Angel: I got the test ahead of time and passed it out to everyone else.
> Examiner: How did you get it?
> Angel: Mailman. <u>I strangled him. His body's decomposing in my lockeeeeer</u>.
> *all the students laugh*
> (*Stand and Deliver* 1988: 1:10:34-1:12:17)

Of course, Angel did not kill anyone, and his sudden change of prosody makes everyone realise he was mocking the examiner for his racism. The last sentence (underlined in the quotation) is pronounced quickly apart from the last word, with a growling voice and a strong syllable-timed prosody and the "circumflex" intonation pattern (Fought 2003: 72; Matluck 1952: 119; see Chapter 4). Normally, Angel does have phonological traits of Chicano English, but not as vernacular: in that sentence, his prosody recalls that of characters like Popeye (*Blood In Blood Out*), who embodies the most typical gangster stereotype.

Finally, the category "Other language" was needed for the sentences that are uttered in a language that is neither the SL nor the TL – in the case of this corpus, Mexican Spanish. In this category are included utterances in Spanish, utterances in Spanish with some code mixing in English (e.g. "*High roller* o qué? Mira, papá!" Cruz in *Blood In Blood Out*, 09.09-09.13), and sentences with reiteration code-switching (Gumperz 1982: 78-79) where the first sentence is uttered in Spanish.

As in Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming), the textual dimension analysis is completed by a level dedicated to the linguistic realisation of a variety, although a small modification was necessary: since the focus of this research is on dubbing,

the "orthography" section was discarded, and the "phonetics" section, including both phonemes and prosody traits, was repeated for both source and target text.

The categories thus obtained were included in a scheme, which was built in parallel for both source and target languages.

As already mentioned, the unit of analysis is the line, therefore the tagging was carried out on a line basis. Each line was attributed a value of one or zero, depending on whether a certain line could be considered as belonging to that variety or not. Then, value one was attributed to the categories phonetics/lexicon/morpho-syntax depending on whether one or more of these elements marked the belonging of a line to a certain linguistic variety.
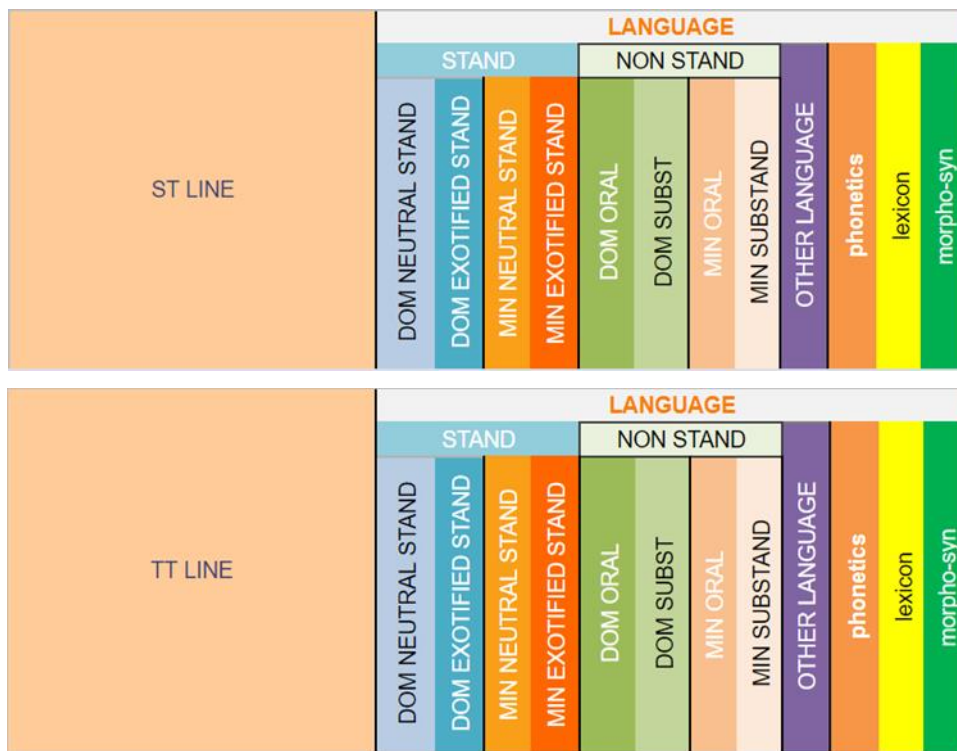

Figure 12 Scheme as arranged in the tables of analysis for source and target text respectively.

ST LINE	LANGUAGE								OTHER LANGUAGE	phonetics	lexicon	morpho-syn
	STAND				NON STAND							
	DOM NEUTRAL STAND	DOM EXOTIFIED STAND	MIN NEUTRAL STAND	MIN EXOTIFIED STAND	DOM ORAL	DOM SUBST	MIN ORAL	MIN SUBSTAND				
Fuck that, man. Cuz I'm a fuckin' Rambo, homes! See, I go, man. I'll go just like Larry. Fuck! Fucking vato psycho loco, homes. When I die, homes, I wanna go just like that, man.								1		1	1	1

Figure 13 Example of tagged line

The value 1 corresponds to a satisfied category, the empty space is a zero. In this line (Gato from *Colors*) all the linguistic elements hint at the "minority substandard" category. Attributing a certain category to the lines uttered by a character is more than an exercise of taxonomy: as previously discussed, each category provides information about the character's positioning in terms of ethnic and social belonging, sociocultural level and educational level. In this case, the whole structure of the utterance is recursive, filled with swearwords and labelling. The use of code-switching distinguishes a Chicano gangster from any other gangster (e.g. African Americans in *Colors*, but also whites in *American Me* and *Blood In Blood Out*). The linguistic realisation of a certain line provides further material in order to: 1) understand the use of fictional varieties; 2) see whether and to what extent the realisation in the dubbed version follows a similar pattern. For example, *Figure 14* is the dubbed version of the line by Gato (Colors): here, the language is equally substandard, but it lacks the marker of belonging to the minority ethnic group, since there is no code-switching, and pronunciation is the standard Italian dubbese.

TT LINE	LANGUAGE											
	STAND				NON STAND							
	DOM NEUTRAL STAND	DOM EXOTIFIED STAND	MIN NEUTRAL STAND	MIN EXOTIFIED STAND	DOM ORAL	DOM SUBST	MIN ORAL	MIN SUBSTAND	OTHER LANGUAGE	phonetics	lexicon	morpho-syn
E chissenefrega, tanto sono un cristo di Rambo anch'io. E anch'io me ne vado, me ne vado sicuro come Larry. Cazzo, come quel gran paraculo di svitato fratelli. Quando crepo fratello, voglio farlo esattamente in quel modo.						1					1	1

Figure 14 The same line (Gato from Colors) in the dubbed version

Comparing the different rendering of the source and the target text also allows another type of observation, which concerns the macro-level strategies that may have inspired the translators in the rendering of the ST varieties. Ramos Pinto (2009; 2017) identifies two main groups of strategies. The first is *neutralisation strategies*, including discourse *standardisation* (using standard language only) and discourse *dialectisation* (using non-standard variety only, see Chapter 1). The second group includes the *preservation* strategies: the first is *centralisation*, "in which the TT presents a lower frequency of non-standard features (or the choice for more prestigious feature/varieties in relation to the ST) and can thus be placed closer to the centre of prestige" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 23). It closely recalls Toury's law of growing standardisation (1995). Other preservation strategies are maintenance and decentralisation, "to illustrate, respectively, the cases in which the TT presents a similar or higher frequency of non-standard features in relation to the ST" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 23).

The two examples above serve to illustrate the way the table was filled, but it is important to remember that an analysis of a whole character is not best carried out on the basis of a single sentence with its translation. While in this sentence the low educational level of the character is still evident, his ethnic belonging is not. This does not, however, mean that the information cannot be retrieved from the

broader linguistic and non-linguistic context. That is why the next step will be illustrating how the diegetic dimension was built in this corpus.

5.5.2 Diegetic dimension

The diegetic dimension is the one that analyses the relationships between the textual dimension and the broader audiovisual context. Looking into these is the key to understanding the "communicative meanings and diegetic functions" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 23) of the varieties and the way these two dimensions interact in order to deliver a message that does not rely exclusively on one of the two, but stems from their relation. The analysis of these elements requires a certain familiarity with the language of films, which is worth detailing in order to clarify how the non-linguistic categories were selected.

In their analysis, Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming) include non-textual elements such as accent, costume and make-up, figure behaviour, and setting. For this study, however, it was crucial to intersect these categories with a specific research that has shed light on the Chicano gangster stereotype, carried out by Ramírez Berg (2002), using a scene from the film *Falling Down* (1993) as an example. He has investigated the audiovisual language of the Latino stereotype, and the observations of this author confirmed his analysis. In particular, he has classified all the cinematic elements that come into play when creating and establishing a mediated stereotype, what he calls the "poetics of stereotyping" (2002: 42). Among these, many can be found in the following corpus, and some examples will be reported here in order to show the multilayered structure of the cinematic text that, as stated by Chiaro, has a "polysemiotic nature" (2008: 143). As mentioned in Chapter 1, it is a compound of non-verbal and verbal, as well as of visual and acoustic elements that intertwine constantly. Among the non-verbal visual elements, Ramírez Berg (2002) includes scenery, lighting, costumes and make up, and body language; non-verbal acoustic elements include music, sound effects and body sounds. Verbal visual elements are anything that is written and visible to the audience, while verbal acoustic is the whole set of dialogues, and also in many cases the song lyrics.

While the cinematic analysis by Ramírez Berg contained a wide range of factors, the broader scope of this thesis required a simplification of his categories. First,

his analysis focuses on a single scene only, allowing for a more detailed look. Secondly, he does not focus on translation. Furthermore, some categories are especially relevant when the Latino characters are the antagonists of a white Anglo protagonist. Since most of the movies in this corpus have Chicanos at the centre of the diegesis, these categories will not be included in the subsequent analysis. One example is framing. In the movies where gangsters are secondary characters (and even more in classical Hollywood movies), framing has a pivotal role in defining power relations, since the main character occupies the "upper one-third and the central vertical third of the screen" (Bordwell 1985: 51). Ramírez Berg adds that the main character occupying this position is often a WASP male, whose personality and life path are narrated in detail, while the remaining space is "the realm of minor characters and stereotypes" (2002: 44), whose personalities and life stories remain flat, impersonal, or untold. An example can be found in *Figure 15*: the protagonist, the white police officer Danny McGavin, is in the middle of the screen, and he is searching two gangsters: one Chicano, one African American.

Figure 15 A screenshot from the film Colors (1988)

However, given that most movies are focused on the Chicano characters, and only have white characters as secondary, this author agrees with the choice of Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming: n.p.) to leave framing out, since it is not among the categories that "participate more closely in the lines of meaning to which the non-standard varieties contribute." The categories selected for this analysis are

hereby illustrated. The scheme is informed by the work of Ramírez Berg (2002), Pastra (2008), Ramos Pinto (2017), and Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming), and tailored to satisfy the needs of this research.

Setting

Elements like *mise-en-scène*, set design and lighting merge to create the right atmosphere for the scene to become a clearly identifiable narrative device. The corpus of films included in this thesis displays examples of the way the environment surrounding the gangsters is built to confirm and echo their dangerous life and violent nature. These categories, separated in Ramírez Berg (2002), are here merged under the name *setting*. The *mise-en-scène* concerns the way the scene is spatially staged. According to Ramírez Berg, the movies where non-whites are secondary characters (or villains) have a recurring pattern in terms of character disposition: "when a First World hero enters the Third World and confronts the native, two things are virtually guaranteed: he […] will be surrounded by a larger band of natives, and his […] immobility will contrast with their usually frenetic activity" (2002: 45). Stillness denotes intelligence and reflection, while frenetic activity reveals animal-like behaviour (Renna forthcoming).

Lighting is also very important, with dark and threatening nights and overly-lit exterior daytime scenes. Ramírez Berg underlines that lighting is usually "based on a white skin standard" (2002: 54), which often means that the reflection on paler skins is optimal, while it is not sufficient for darker-skinned actors, who in turn need extra lighting, which makes them look sweatier, and thus, more agitated, impetuous, and wilder overall.

Another element contributing to the visual environment surrounding the characters is set design and art direction. The setting of the films starring Chicano gangsters is usually East Los Angeles, and amongst the distinctive elements Ramírez Berg cites "deserted hill, amid the graffiti-laden[66] rubble of the decaying

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[66] The remarkable murals and paintings attributed to the character Cruz Candelaria in this movie were created by the self-taught Chicano artist Adan Hernandez: https://vimeo.com/73042148 (last visited October 8th 2017).

ghetto […] destroyed building, and […] crumbling concrete" as the signals that characters are in an "inner-city war zone" (2002: 51). In this respect, the inner-city war zone does have some similarities with the desert of the U.S. south-west and the Middle East, and with the jungles of Africa and South America – the "inherently hazardous" (Ramírez Berg 2002: 51) habitats of the cinematic Others. To the setting outlined by Ramírez Berg, this author would like to add some more, found in movies starring Chicano characters (both in this corpus and in her pilot studies Renna 2018a; Renna 2018b; Renna 2018c and Renna forthcoming). For what concerns exterior scenes, other possible settings are ghetto streets characterised, in a similar manner to the aforementioned deserted hills, by decaying buildings covered in graffiti, either in the form of Mexican-themed wall art (e.g. Holy Mary of Guadalupe, Aztec pyramids) or fuzzy gang signs. Humble stores with shop signs in Spanish are an integral part of the landscape, as they help to situate East Los Angeles as a non-American area (Landry & Bourhis 1997:25). Often green spaces are present, although they are usually untidy, to further hint at wilderness. In the corpus of this thesis, three films out of four begin with a journey through the ghetto, by car in *Colors* (1988) and *Stand and Deliver* (1988), and on foot in *Blood In Blood Out* (1993). In all cases, these scenes provide a quick but effective introduction to "a whole different country" (*Blood In Blood Out* 1993: 2.16-2.18). However, it is worth noting that the road trip in *Colors* assumes a clearly Anglo-like point of view, so the camera tends to linger on depressed areas rather than folkloric angles, and it is accompanied by white rock music. Conversely, the other two East Los Angeles tours are made from a more Latino-like point of view, and therefore also show more positive sides of East Los Angeles – distant, a little wild, but also taking pride in being Latinos and having created a corner of Mexico in the United States, (this is especially the case of the initial tour in *Blood in Blood Out,*) and accompanied by Mexican folk music.

When it comes to the rest of the exterior scenes, *Colors* tends to keep a negative perspective, *Blood In Blood Out* a more ambivalent one, *Stand and Deliver* a positive one (which becomes more negative at night), and *American Me* tends to outline a neat separation between the scenes in East Los Angeles and the setting where most parts of the film takes place, which will be discussed later on.

Figure 16 Exterior daylight and night scenes in Colors (1988)

Figure 17 Exterior daylight and night scenes in Stand and Deliver (1988)

Figure 18 Exterior daylight and night scenes in Blood In Blood Out (1988)

Not only exterior scenes but interior ones tend to repeat similar patterns, especially when it comes to houses. There are two main kinds of houses in these movies. One is the *casa*, which is inhabited by the members of the *familia*. It is usually a crime-free zone, where non-gangbanging people live a simple life, bound to the traditional Mexican values of family and religion, but these houses are usually also poor, and crowded with multiple generations. This kind of image reflects the stereotypical situation of immigrant families – living in ghetto areas, with large households sharing relatively small spaces, (García 2002: 58;

Bustamante & Winton Reynolds 1992: 291). This kind of house is humbly furnished, and religious icons are often visible in the background – outside the house there often is a shared courtyard, where old men sit in the sun and younger children play, but only until they become young gang members.

Opposed to the *casa* there is the *pad*, which is the base from the gangsters carry out their illegal activities, e.g. cutting drugs, having gang meetings or drug parties. This house can be furnished like the *casa*, but often looks more cluttered: here women are usually not admitted unless they are gang members or prostitutes. Thus, since the *macho* stereotype prevents a man from having a tidy house without "a woman's touch," the *pad* is usually messy and dirty. Sometimes, instead of a *pad*, the gang will meet in an abandoned building or in an even more improvised location – e.g. a family vault in a cemetery. It is interesting to note that the jarring contrast between the idyllic *casa* and the crime-ready *pad* confirms both Ramírez Berg's idea of stereotyping as vague and imprecise (2002) and the principle proposed by van Doorslaer et al. (2016), according to whom different (and opposed) stereotypes overlap because they were born in response to different needs at different times (see paragraph 1.3).

Figure 19 Religious and humble casas (from above: American Me, Blood In Blood Out, Stand and Deliver)

Figure 20 The gang's pad in an abandoned building in the movie Colors (1988)

Figure 21 The cluttered and poorly lit pad where the gang prepares drugs for sale in American Me (1992), the only situation where a Chicano male is "expected" to make any use of utensils such as a blender.

Figure 22 A dirty and squalid pad used for promiscuous drug parties and gang meetings in Blood In Blood Out (1993).

Another setting that dominates *American Me* (1992), is persistent in *Blood in Blood Out* (1993) and makes its appearance in *Colors* (1988) is the prison. In *American Me*, the protagonist and his crime partners are first inmates of a juvenile prison, then pass on to Folsom. Except for one of the three (the white Chicano J.D.), that is the place where they spend most of their lives. The protagonist of *Blood In Blood Out* is jailed in San Quentin, and there he finds a new and strong

gang that he becomes part of – he and his fellows spend most of their lives there, too. In *Colors*, the leader of one of the gangs ends up in an indefinite jail for not paying parking tickets, while his major crimes will only be punished at the end. The only film where a prison does not appear is *Stand and Deliver* (1988), since the main *homeboy* is "saved" by the school, and in particular by discovering he has a talent for maths – his best friend is too lazy or not intelligent enough, so he drops out.

Going back to the prison scenery, many parts of the prison appear on screen, from claustrophobic cells and narrow tier corridors to noisy and dangerous common rooms, from the sunburnt and crowded prison yards to the visit rooms and less typical areas such as kitchens, libraries, and stockrooms. In *American Me* and *Blood In Blood Out* prison life is shown from various points of view. On the one hand is the cruelty: the heavy bullying newcomers have to undergo, sexual violence as a form of establishing dominance, racial hatred, the impossibility of trusting anyone, and careless homicides. On the other hand is (a distorted vision of) manhood and solidarity: the opportunity of climbing the social ladder and leading a gang, of earning money through illegal activities e.g. gambling, contraband or drug dealing, and the possibility of finding loyalty at least in some of the fellow gang members. From a more figurative point of view, the jails are bare and austere, while at times cells are made more personal through pictures, drawings or holy icons. The yards are equipped with minimalist gym gear (especially for weight lifting) and monitored by armed guards from a distance (which does not really prevent anyone from committing crimes in the daylight during the movies).

While these locations can be considered the cinematic gangsters' "habitat," the gangsters occasionally visit other settings: school (*Stand and Deliver*), hospital, Mexican stores or small restaurants, and police stations. In these places, the gangster character might be more or less "out of place" and decide whether to act accordingly or not.

Figure 23 Exercising in the yard (Blood In Blood Out to the left, American Me to the right)

Figure 24 Common area scenes (American Me, to the right, Blood In Blood Out, to the left)

Figure 25 A recurring topos is the visit to the inmates: either through a glass (Blood In Blood Out) or at tables, supervised by jail personnel (American Me)
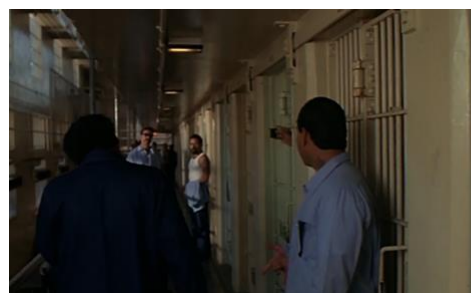

Figure 26 Typical tier corridor shots: either from a walking perspective (Blood In Blood Out) or through a mirror, from inside the closed cell (American Me)

Music

Music, either in the background or played by the characters, often contributes to the setting. Ramírez Berg (2002: 48) maintains that its characterising power depends on "decades of Hollywood's conventionalized and imperialistic portrayals of others." The most-often-heard types of music in this corpus are:

- African American music from the 1970s and 1980s: the movies are set in a period ranging from the 1950s to the 1990s. The fact that black music is played so often when Chicanos are on screen confirms the homogenisation of anything that is *not white*. For example, the main soundtrack of *Colors* (1988) is composed by an important African American artist, Herbie Hancock.[67] Apart from in *Stand and Deliver*, African American music of various genres can be heard across the movies, going from Big Daddy Kane (*Colors*), to Garnett Mimms and the Enchanters (*American Me*) to Jimi Hendrix (*Blood In Blood Out*).

- Music with *mariachi* or western influences or Mexican folk music: trumpets and *guitarras* dominate, connecting the contemporary gangster with the *bandido* tradition (Ramírez Berg 2002: 17). The main soundtrack of *Blood In Blood Out* (1993) composed by Bill Conti is a relevant example. In *American Me* two songs are performed by a band whose name is *Mariachi Sol de Mexico*. *Stand and Deliver* is especially rich in songs with a strong Latino influence.

- Rap, although much less than younger audience might expect today, probably because most movies are set before the 1990s, and rap only became popular in the late 1980s (Campbell 2012: 327). While rap music only appears at the end of both *American Me* and *Blood In Blood Out*, its presence is more constant in *Colors*, and there is no sign of it in *Stand and Deliver*.

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[67] With a long career and a long list of awards, Herbie Hancock might not be extremely famous in Italy, but certainly needs no presentation in the U.S. (Wendell 2018).

- Tribal, Caribbean or ritual-sounding music: a good example is "K'in Sventa Ch'ul Me'tik Kwadalupe,"[68] soundtrack of the *Dia de los Muertos*[69] celebration in *Blood In Blood Out*. Although in a more commercial way, the main theme of *Stand and Deliver*, composed by Craig Safan, has a Caribbean sound to it, blended in a generally typical 1980s sound.

- More conventional film soundtrack melodies, e.g. music conveying a sense of danger, victory or drama. These can keep some Mexican or western-like influence or come from the Anglo mainstream. The latter is the case when it comes to the final song of *Stand and Deliver*, performed by the Californian and white band Mr. Mister.

It is worth noting that some songs are used in more than one film, confirming their function as part of the scenery, and a reflection of the characters' personalities and lives. One example is "Lowrider" by War, which can be found in three films out of four (all but *Stand and Deliver*). This is probably due to the fact that the "lowrider," the car to which the song is dedicated, is the car with a lowered chassis, often sporting artistic paintings on the body, which has been typical of Mexican American neighbourhoods since the time of the zoot suiters (Chappel 2012), and has also become a common part of the Chicano gangster mediated stereotype. *War* are also the artists behind another recurring song, "Slippin' into Darkness," which can be found in both *American Me* and *Blood In Blood Out*. The song lyrics suggest a bad habit or an addiction that gradually make someone lose their mental sanity. Since both movies tell stories of people becoming increasingly involved in the gangbanging lifestyle, they seem particularly fitting. The two aforementioned movies have some other artists in common, although with different songs. One is Santana, present in *American me* with the notorious

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[68] Ritual music for the worship of Holy Mary of Guadalupe. In the film, only the first 40 seconds can be heard, amplifying its evocatory power. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oospWucgxac last visited November 12th 2018.

[69] *El Dia de los Muertos*, or Day of the Dead, is "on November 1 and 2, the dates of the Roman Catholic celebration of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. A syncretic mix of Catholic beliefs and indigenous practices of honoring the ancestors, the two days are considered as one holiday throughout Latin America" (Marchi 2006: 262).

"Oye Como Va" and in *Blood In Blood Out* with "Jin-Go-Lo-Ba;" the other is the Chicano rapper Kid Frost, chosen for the ending theme for both *American Me* and *Blood In Blood Out*, with "No Sunshine" and "La Raza" respectively. Los Lobos are common performers to *Colors* and *American Me*, with "One Time One Night" in the former and "Shotgun" in the latter.

After considering the environment in which the characters are immersed, the next step is an analysis of the components of the "poetics of stereotyping" that concern the characters themselves and the way they appear and behave on screen, as well as their interlocutors.

Behaviour

Ramírez Berg defines "acting conventions" (2002: 53) specifically codified behaviours of the gangsters who, most of the time, seem to portray perfectly "the facial scowl, the aggressive attitude" and "the simmering hostility" that are typical of the "tough homeboy," whose state of mind is usually "unstable, irrational, combustible" (Ramírez Berg 2002: 53-54). This is evident in parts of the plot of each of the movies, and some examples can clarify this point. In *Stand and Deliver*, when Angel finds out his exam results are at risk, he acts unreasonably, provoking a police officer and causing an argument with his best friend; he seems to think "if people do not believe I can be good citizen, then I am going to act like a bully." In *Colors*, while the main gang is talking to a former gangbanger who is trying to convince them to give up on crime, they switch without warning from a largely friendly attitude to an aggressive one. In *American Me*, Santana is assassinated by his own gang members because he is losing the aggressive attitude that turned him into a gang leader, and a more aggressive gang member takes his place. In *Blood In Blood Out*, all the tragedies hitting the main characters are due to a series of wrong choices prompted by a mix of irrationality and machismo – nonetheless, they tend to fall into the same pattern over and over again. This confirms the aforementioned layers of the stereotype – in particular, moral data, psychological data, and ideological data.

Figure 27 Examples of facial expressions denoting the behaviour of the gangsters. (minor characters from Blood In Blood Out).

Phenotype

According to Ramírez Berg, casting has today the same function that make up had in the Blackface era (2002: 50). The skin of the characters is part of the narrative device that classes them in specific roles before they can say or do anything. It is not necessary for the characters to be portrayed by actual Chicanos – sometimes they are, e.g. Edward James Olmos, sometimes they are not (or not exactly), e.g. Benjamin Bratt and Lou Diamond Phillips. In a case outside this corpus, the film *Training Day* (2001), the main gangster is played by Cliff Curtis, a New Zealander actor of Maori descent (Renna forthcoming). In two of the movies, there is at least one white Chicano who eventually becomes the leader of the gang. The historical origin of the white Chicano gangster image is Joe (Pegleg) Morgan (Katz 1993). The fact that in both the movies the white Chicano becomes the gang leader by betraying the Chicano who was his mentor can be interpreted in different ways. On the one hand, it can show the cruel and ruthless nature of Anglos, who take advantage of Chicanos by being even more cruel and pitiless. On the other hand, the fact that a white man can decide to be a Chicano gangster and reach a leading position in the gang can suggest interiorised racism, since the Chicanos need a white leader to become stronger and united; moreover, a white man can do *anything* he wants, even "play the Chicano," and he will still do it "better" than any other non-white.

The reason why this category was called "phenotype" is the debate concerning the meaning of ethnicity (see section 3.3.2). In a movie, the real origin of a character

is not important for the audience, who are only looking for a certain series of phenotypical traits that they may make the character *look like* s/he belongs to a certain ethnic group – regardless of whether these people are actually Chicanos, or Peruvians, or Filipinos – which once more shows the (colonial) continuity with the Blackface make-up.

Costumes and make-up

When it comes to costumes, the women (the only film where they actually gangbang in this corpus is *Colors*) tend to wear heavy and dark make up, as well as cheap-looking and sometimes revealing clothes. They tend to have brown to black hair (some bleached or with highlights).

The men look like a visual representation of the general gangster identikit provided by the Los Angeles Police Department in the page "How Gangs Are Identified:"

> Most gang members are proud of their gang and freely admit their membership. Many display tattoos openly and dress in a style identifying their particular gang. […] The uniform of Hispanic gangs is standard and easily recognizable. Most gang members adopt a basic style that includes white T-shirts, thin belts, baggy pants with split cuffs, a black or blue knit cap (beanie) or a bandana tied around the forehead similar to a sweat band. […] Gang clothing styles can be easily detected because of the specific way gang members wear their clothing. Examples are preferences for wearing baggy or "sagging" pants or having baseball caps turned at an angle. […] some gangs like to wear plaid shirts in either blue, brown, black or red. These shirts are worn loosely and untucked. […] Other signs that youngsters may have joined gangs include […] specific hairstyles (such as shaving their heads bald, hair nets, rollers or braids).[70]

Examples of these features – in terms of behaviour, phenotypes, and costumes and make up – can be found in all the movies. Of course, another typical clothing option is the convict uniform – sometimes worn neatly, others customised to have a "tougher" look. By make-up, it is important to note, this author also includes the

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[70] "How Gangs are Identified," from the Official Site of the Los Angeles Police Department: http://www.lapdonline.org/get_informed/content_basic_view/23468 (Last visited January 10th, 2017)

scenic make-up that conveys the physical/mental state of the character (e.g. deep dark eye circles, a hollowed face, oily hair, and an underweight body identify a character as a drug addict). This implies a series of behavioural features, including irresponsible actions, mood swings, and dependency on substances to face the pain, both physical and emotional.

Figure 28 At the beginning of Stand and Deliver, the gang surrounds the new teacher acting like bullies. Angel wears a plaid shirt with only the first two buttons fastened, a hair net and a pair of dark sunglasses. His fellow gang members wear similar garments.

Figure 29 Even when he decides to become a good student (Stand and Deliver), Angel keeps part of his tough attitude (evident in his body language), and wears distinctive cholo signs like the bandana on his forehead.

Figure 30 While he is being fined and reproached by a police officer, Chuco (Stand and Deliver) shows his disrespect through body language. The name on the gang, La Maravilla, is embroidered on his coat (not visible in the screenshot).

Figure 31 The young kid Felipe (laying on the floor in the left picture) is being "jumped in" (introduced in the gang through a group beating), while the rest of the gang is watching (Colors)

Figure 32 The evolution of Paco (Blood In Blood Out). From leader of the street gang Vatos Locos to Marine Corporal – and then drug squad detective).

Figure 33 The heroin-addicted look of Cruz (Blood In Blood Out).

Figure 34 Typical jail outfit in two group pictures (American Me to the left, Blood In Blood Out to the right). Straw hat and sunglasses are common to both pictures. American Me is set earlier than Blood In Blood Out, which explains the "tidier" look of the inmates in Olmos' movie.

Interlocutors

The interlocutor has a crucial role in determining the way a speaker selects which variety is required in conversation. Not adapting one's communication to the interlocutor in a fictional context sends the audience specific messages about the character. For example, a fictional *cholo* using a substandard variety with someone representing authority may be a challenge to the system (e.g. *Stand and Deliver*) or confirm the intellectual inferiority of the character (e.g. *Colors*). The main representatives of authority (very often white, but not only white) are: police officers, jail wardens, legal authorities (e.g. parole officers, lawyers), and teachers. Other possible interlocutors are the other gang members, who are expected to share the same cultural background, but not necessarily the status within the organisation, since gangs in the movies of this corpus are more or less rigidly hierarchical. In *Blood In Blood Out*, for example, the structure of the jail gang *La Onda* is explained in detail: the founders are called *capitanes*, and the *jefe* is their elected spokesperson. Under them are the *soldados*, who usually do the "dirty" jobs e.g. killing. Rival gang members are also common interlocutors. It could be other Chicano gangs or gangs of other ethnicities, especially white (which they call the "polar bears") or African American (referred to as *mayates*).

One last option is non-gang Chicanos, most often members of the family or, in the case of *Stand and Deliver*, other classmates. With family members they usually have intense relationships, both in terms of affection and of arguments. The oldest members of the family can be immigrants from Mexico with a limited command of the English language (quite stereotypical). In *American Me* there is also a girlfriend.

The scheme of intermodal relations

The aforementioned parts of the audiovisual stereotype (setting, costumes and make-up, phenotype, interlocutors, music, and behaviour) are turned into just as many categories in the scheme of analysis of the corpus. The subsequent step is to put these categories in relation to the categories from the textual dimension. To do so, this author followed Pastra (2008) and Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming), who simplified Pastra's categories to make the classification fit for translation work: "an extra category of confirmation […] in order to account for the fact that the choice of strategy or procedure is often mediated by the consideration of having the same meaning expressed in modes other than the speech mode" (Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki forthcoming: n.p.). This means that, when it is impossible to convey a certain meaning through speech in a given situation, the translator may conclude that other modes will convey the information in an efficient way.

In other words, when intersecting the linguistic categories with the other modes, there can be a relation of *contradiction*, when the two modes do not have anything to do with each other. Otherwise, the relation is of *confirmation*, and it is further divided between *equivalence*, when the two modes convey the same message, and complementarity, when one mode *completes* the other.
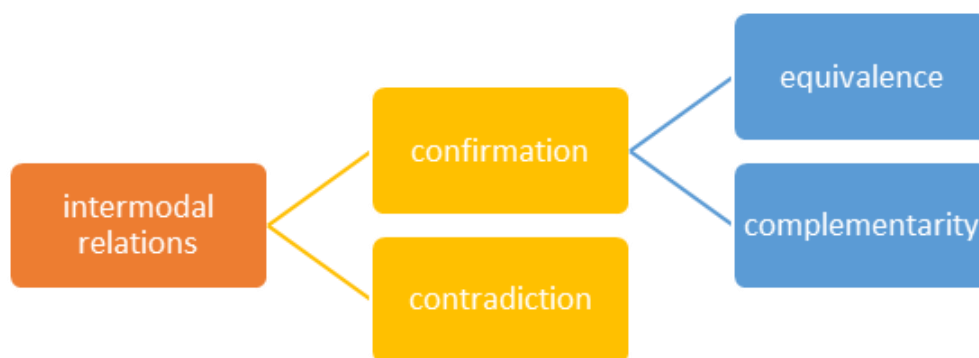

Figure 35 Model of intermodal relations, drawn from Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming).

These relations are applied to each intermodal category, which shows how each line is placed in relation to each non-textual element of the diegesis.
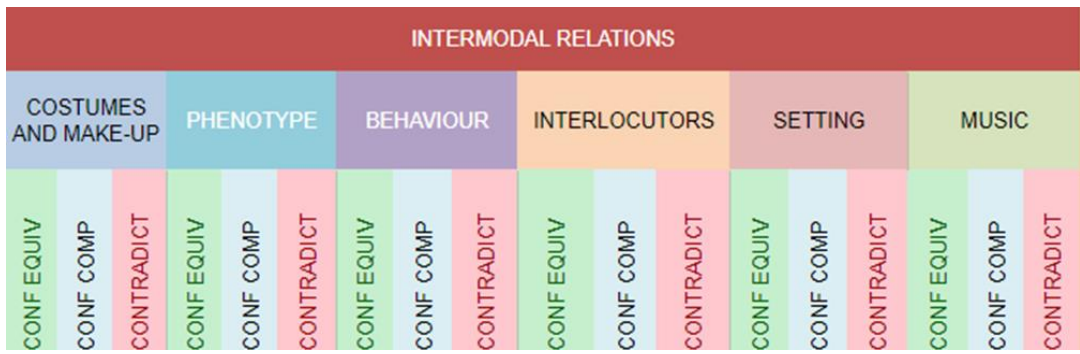
INTERMODAL RELATIONS

COSTUMES AND MAKE-UP | PHENOTYPE | BEHAVIOUR | INTERLOCUTORS | SETTING | MUSIC

CONF EQUIV | CONF COMP | CONTRADICT | CONF EQUIV | CONF COMP | CONTRADICT | CONF EQUIV | CONF COMP | CONTRADICT | CONF EQUIV | CONF COMP | CONTRADICT | CONF EQUIV | CONF COMP | CONTRADICT | CONF EQUIV | CONF COMP | CONTRADICT

Figure 36 Intermodal relations in the scheme.

This part is integrated with the one concerning the linguistic dimension of the corpus, and repeated once for the source text and once for the target text. This shows how the intermodal relations are independently built; subsequently it is possible to compare the two versions in order to see whether the relations have changed, and to infer how this might potentially have changed or kept the overall message in the text.

Figure 37 Tagged line uttered by Gato (Colors) with the intermodal relations in the scheme.

The logic of the scheme is to associate a certain variety with the surrounding non-textual elements to see how they are related. In this example, Gato is using a minority substandard language – vernacular CE. He is wearing the typical gangster outfit (plaid shirt, bandana) and is holding his rifle. He has been drinking and smoking (presumably marijuana) with his fellow gang members after a revenge shootout where Larry, a respected member of the gang, was killed. This triggered thoughts about the transient life of a gangster in Gato. As if he were an urban warrior (Rambo), he expresses the wish to die in battle, i.e. during a shootout. A gang member is playing a Mexican-like melody on his guitar, and they are on a deserted hill (part of their territory), filled with abandoned objects (a

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van can be seen on the right) in a dark night, lit only by their bonfire and by the city lights of Los Angeles from afar.

Figure 38 Scene in the scheme.

His minority substandard (vernacular CE) language can be considered equivalent to his gangster outfit, to his behaviour (smoking and drinking, holding a gun, seconds later he tries to stand up and falls to the ground), to his interlocutors (fellow gang members acting and talking just like him), and to the setting (as mentioned above, an abandoned hill is a typical place for gang meetings). It is complementary with the phenotype: indeed, the audience can expect the character to speak a minority variety due to his phenotypical traits, but the colour of his skin does not imply anything about his educational level, which is revealed only through his low-prestige speech. In fact, a fairly racist audience might well assume that Gato can only speak Spanish. A less racist audience might not be prejudicial and think that a Latino could well be educated. The skin alone does not provide definite information on the language, and it needs other elements to provide more specific coordinates. For similar reasons, the variety is complementary with music: while the music is traditional Mexican mariachi-style, the character is a modern-era Chicano. This means that the music accounts for the character's ethnic heritage, but not necessarily for his educational level or urban "habitat." Does such a chain of relations change in the target version?

TT LINE	LANGUAGE								OTHER LANGUAGE	phonetics	lexicon	morpho-syn	INTERMODAL RELATIONS																	
	STAND				NON STAND								COSTUMES AND MAKE-UP			PHENOTYPE			BEHAVIOUR			INTERLOCUTORS			SETTING			MUSIC		
	DOM NEUTRAL STAND	DOM EXOTIFIED STAND	MIN NEUTRAL STAND	MIN EXOTIFIED STAND	DOM ORAL	DOM SUBST	MIN ORAL	MIN SUBSTAND					CONF EQUIV	CONF COMP	CONTRADICT	CONF EQUIV	CONF COMP	CONTRADICT	CONF EQUIV	CONF COMP	CONTRADICT	CONF EQUIV	CONF COMP	CONTRADICT	CONF EQUIV	CONF COMP	CONTRADICT	CONF EQUIV	CONF COMP	CONTRADICT
E chissenefrega, tanto sono un cristo di Rambo anch'io. E anch'io me ne vado, me ne vado sicuro come Larry. Cazzo, come quel gran paraculo di svitato fratelli. Quando crepo fratello, voglio farlo esattamente in quel modo.						1					1	1	1						1	1		1			1					1

Figure 39 Gato's tagged line with intermodal relations in the target version.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the target line is still substandard, but the distinctive traits of Gato's belonging to a minority are not visible anymore, so it is a dominant substandard. The substandard speech is still equivalent to his behaviour and to the setting: he acts like a thug and is in a typical thug meeting place. It contradicts his phenotypical traits and the music because he is talking like a white person (uneducated, but white). It is complementary with his clothing and interlocutors, because he talks like a "general" gangster, but his outfit and his fellow gang members surrounding him confirm that he belongs to a specific type of gang (a mostly Chicano gang that also accepts members from other ethnic groups).

Can this change of relations mean the translator has "failed" in passing the message? The purpose of this corpus is not to evaluate the work of the translator, but to describe what happened in the passage to the TT. And, in doing so, it is fundamental to make sure all elements are taken into consideration. First, this single line is part of a whole, and the impression about a character comes from the overall rendering and not just from a single line. Furthermore, the fact that the relations have changed does not imply that the audience doesn't have other ways to retrieve the intended meaning. This once again confirms the importance of having a corpus rather than a single case.

Certainly, this author has tried to be as "objective" as possible in attributing certain values to the varieties and their intermodal relations with the rest of the film, and while objectivity is an impossible achievement, here the attempt was to

take more points of view into consideration before tagging. However, judgement can always be biased by culture or assumptions, which makes product-based studies difficult and stimulating at the same time. Undoubtedly, it would be even better to compare the observations coming from a "young" academic who has long studied the history and culture of Chicanos with the opinions of the supposed audience, who may or may not have knowledge about the minorities portrayed in these movies. Indeed, a reception study would be the best outcome for the work carried out by this author, as will be explained more in detail at the end of this work.

For now, after having explained how the analysis was structured, the following step will be showing its hands-on application to the corpus.

APPENDIX – synopses of non-selected Chicano gangster films (1979-2012)

Walk Proud

Released: 1979

Genre: Drama

Italian title: *La scelta* (the choice)

Brief plot: A young Chicano from Los Angeles experiences the difficulties of abandoning a gang.

Chicano gangster role(s): main

Director: Robert L. Collins

Boulevard Nights

Reselased: 1979

Genre: crime, drama

Italian title: *Boulevard Nights*

Brief Plot: The lives of two young brothers from East Los Angeles, and how these are affected by gangs.

Chicano gangster role(s): main

Director: Michael Pressman

Zoot Suit

Released: 1981

Genre: musical, drama

Italian title: *Zoot Suit*

Brief plot: A group of pachucos is wrongfully imprisoned for racist reasons, and activist lawyers challenge the verdict. Inspired by the stories behind the Zoot Suit riots (see chapter 3).

Chicano gangster role(s): main

Director: Luis Valdez

Mi vida Loca (My crazy life)

Released: 1993

Genre: crime, drama

Italian title: *Mi vida loca*

Brief plot: The stories of two young female gang members from Los Angeles, amid violence, poverty and early motherhood.

Chicano gangster role(s): main, supporting, minor

Director: Allison Anders

Falling Down

Released: 1993

Genre: crime, drama, thriller

Italian title: *Un giorno di ordinaria follia* (one day of ordinary insanity)

Brief plot: A defense worker, having been rendered unemployed, starts acting with psychotic violence against what he does not like about society.

Chicano gangster role(s): one scene

Director: Joel Schumacher

Con Air

Released: 1997

Genre: Action, crime

Italian title: *Con Air*

Brief plot: Criminal passengers with different backgrounds take control of a plane transporting convicts.

Chicano gangster role(s): minor

Director: Simon West

Training Day

Released: 2001

Genre: crime, drama, thriller

Italian title: *Training Day*

Brief plot: A rookie cop finds out that his mentor is no better than the gangsters he arrests.

Chicano gangster role(s): one scene

Director: Antoine Fuqua

The Fast and the Furious

Released: 2001

Genre: action, crime, thriller

Italian title: *Fast and Furious*

Brief plot: A police officer undercover becomes involved in the illegal street racing world he was meant to dismantle.

Chicano gangster role(s): supporting, minor

Director: Rob Cohen

End of Watch

Released: 2012

Genre: action, crime, drama

Italian title: *End of Watch – Tolleranza zero* (zero tolerance)

Brief plot: Two police officers, an Anglo and a Chicano, patrol the dangerous streets of Los Angeles, and stumble into a dangerous Chicano gang maneuvered by the Mexican narc-traffickers.

Chicano gangster role(s): villains, minor

Director: David Ayer

6 Chapter 6 – Analysis, results and discussion

After explaining in detail how the categories for the analysis were designed, and having explored the ratio of the tagging, this chapter will be dedicated to the analysis of the corpus. The lines in the ST and TT were not always the same: sometimes some ST lines were left untranslated, but most often TT lines were added. This especially happens to fill silences (a sort of *horror vacui*) or by attributing a line to the wrong character in scenes where many people talk at the same time and/or the lips of the speakers cannot be seen clearly. That is why, in the following tables, the number of lines for the ST and TT of each character are reported separately.

There was a change of software between the tagging and the data elaboration. The former was carried out with Microsoft Office Excel, whereas for the latter the software Mathcad was chosen. This author had used Excel for the tagging as she had a certain familiarity with its basic functions, but found its data elaboration quite rigid. After communicating with the postgraduate students of the Mechanical Engineering department of the Polytechnic University of Bari,[71] this author decided to switch to Mathcad for the data elaboration. Mathcad is primarily used in the field of engineering, and it is a powerful means to perform and analyse calculations: while its potential goes far beyond the needs of this research, it has non-negligible advantages compared to Excel.

First, its interface simulates that of a notebook, in the sense that it has a fluid structure (while Excel has a rigid row/column organisation), which makes it possible to alternate text lines, formulas and graphs. This makes sheet writing and reading simpler and more intuitive. Intuitiveness is also the key to another advantage of Mathcad: instead of having its own semiotics (like Excel), it uses the standard universal mathematical language. As a consequence, it works with the very same formulas as the ones taken from any book of mathematics (e.g. means,

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[71] The elaboration of the data was only possible thanks to the patient help and support of this Department. This non-structured collaboration served as a further proof of the unlimited potential of joining the forces of humanities and scientific departments.

percentages etc.). Furthermore, Mathcad allows the generating of graphs with personalised variables, and it can use data from Excel as a starting point.

Indeed, the first step was importing the tagged data from Excel, and preparing it for Mathcad elaboration. Subsequently, formulas were designed to answer the questions concerning the textual and the diegetic dimension:

- Which linguistic categories were used for each character in the source and the target text? This requires hypothesising the overall strategies used by the translators and answering another question: which strategies might have been behind the change?

- What were the most common features for conveying a certain type of language? Did they change from ST to TT?

- How did these varieties build intermodal relations with the other elements of the film? Did the relations change from ST to TT, and to what extent?

6.1 Characters in *Stand and Deliver*

As mentioned in the last chapter, *Stand and Deliver* (1988) has two characters in the role of gangsters. One, Angel, is more moderate and leaves gangbanging to become a good student; the other, Chuco, is a typical *cholo*, but not a totally "bad" one: he respects Angel's choice and, in the end, he fixes Professor Escalante's car with his *vatos* and Angel himself.

6.1.1 Textual dimension

In terms of linguistic categories, Angel's ST and TT were thus distributed:

Angel	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (64 lines)	0%	0%	3.1%	0%	0%	0%	32.8%	45.3%	18.8%	100%
TT (63 lines)	27.9%	0%	0%	0%	59%	1.6%	3.3%	0%	8.2%	100%

The source text does not include any use of the dominant ethnic group language, which is to say California Anglo English – in any of its possible categories. There is a slight use of the minority neutral standard and a significant use of Spanish (Other language), but the most used varieties are minority oral (32.8%) and minority substandard (45.3%), which is used in nearly half of the utterances by Angel. Indeed, even when he explains difficult concepts concerning science or mathematics, he does so with his usual *cholo* language, like in the following example, when he explains what the stars really are to his non-educated friend Chuco:[72]

> The stars aren't really there, *ese*. What you're looking at is where they used to be, *man*. It takes the light ...1,000 years to reach the earth. *You know*? For all we know, they burned out a long time ago, <u>*maaan*</u>. God pulled the plug on us. *He didn't <u>teeell</u> <u>nooobody</u>*. (Stand and Deliver 1988: 1.06.34-1.06.57)

Conversely, his language shifts towards the dominant ethnic group in the TT, with most of his lines (59%) in the dominant oral category, and a relevant 27.9% of lines in the most prestigious group: the dominant neutral standard. Although halved, not all of the Spanish has disappeared, scoring 8.2% in the TT.

Chuco embodies more closely the stereotypes mentioned in the previous chapter, as he is a bully and drops out of school: he gives up on any hope of a different future even before trying.

Chuco	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (18 lines)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	31.6%	63.2%	5.3%	100%
TT (17 lines)	5.6%	0%	5.6%	0%	61.1%	11.1%	0%	11.1%	5.6%	100%

His ST speech is clearly in the minority non-standard zone, with a significant 63.2% in the substandard followed, at a distance, by the minority oral (31.6%). He also uses some Spanish, but not to a particularly relevant extent. The linguistic

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[72] The lexical and morpho-syntactic features are visible in the example, and the phonetics, too, tend towards vernacular CE.

profile changes quite significantly in the TT, where most of his speech is in the dominant oral category. Chuco's speech pattern, however, seems more scattered than in the ST, as the TT substandard of both dominant and minority group have the same frequency – a rather low 11.1%. Other three categories have the same score of 5.6%, and are quite different from each other: dominant neutral standard, minority neutral standard and Spanish.

The next question concerns the linguistic realisation of the characters' profiles in both the ST and the TT. As mentioned in the previous chapter, in this case more than one feature can be attributed to each line, since any utterance contains elements coming from lexicon, phonetics and morpho-syntax alike. This may also trigger the question: since almost all sentences of any language contain all the elements above, what is the point of this classification? In this case the effort was to identify the features that the audience may perceive as "marked," distinctive of a certain linguistic category.[73] As the numbers in the tables below show, the percentages associated with phonetics, lexicon, and morpho-syntax aim to show the frequency of their presence in the realisation of a specific category, not the extent to which one of these indexes contributes more or less than the others when more than one is present. This, in fact, cannot be evaluated objectively based on individual perception.

ANGEL	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	64.7%	70.6%	100%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%

[73] By its own nature, the identification of linguistic features depends on who is watching/listening/reading. The most important thing is to be aware of one's own biases and be ready to accept different views, especially when they come from a reception study. By self-analysing her own media language perception, this author suggests that some features may be particularly influential in the process. One is *age*: this author was born in 1989, which implies she is somewhere in between old and new media and both have an influence on her perception of language. Another is *education and training*: with an education that specialised in media studies and subsequently in lingua-cultural mediation, foreign languages and translation (and AVT in particular), this author may perceive as "important" elements that might not make a difference for other types of audience. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, this author attempted to assume different points of view while tagging and analysing the data.

	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Min. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	0%	22.2%	91.7%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Min. Oral	100%	28.6%	57%	0%	100%	100%
Min. Subst.	96.5%	79.3%	82.7%	0%	0%	0%
Other language	100%	100%	58.3%	100%	100%	40%
Weighted Average	**98.4%**	**67.2%**	**70.3%**	**25.4%**	**44.4%**	**88.9%**

In grey text are the varieties that were not used. The averages are weighted, in order to take into consideration the actual number of lines within each category: some linguistic categories were only used a few times, and should not have the same weight as the most common ones.

CHUCO	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	0%	54.5%	90.9%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	100%
Min. Oral	100%	50%	66.7%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Subst.	100%	75%	75%	0%	0%	100%
Other language	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Weighted Average	**100%**	**68.4%**	**73.7%**	**16.7%**	**66.7%**	**94.4%**

What is striking in both tables is the different role each type of feature plays in ST and TT. One example is phonetics, which should not be too surprising, given that the rules of Italian *dubbese* tend to impose a standardised "non-regional" pronunciation: a "proper elocution" dubbing actors are specifically trained to achieve. Indeed, the only times phonetics had a role in both Angel's and Chuco's TT is in defining the dominant neutral standard and the use of Spanish – the "Other" language. The weighted average of Angel's TT phonetics is much lower than the one of the ST, where it is clearly a predominant feature, always scoring between 96.5% and 100% in the varieties that were used. The difference becomes

even more evident in TT Chuco, who speaks very little standard and certainly less Spanish than his friend – a fact which makes his use of phonetics fall below 20%. Conversely, ST Chuco makes a constant use of vernacular CE phonetics as his main linguistic marker.

Moving on to the other categories, they play an especially important role in the TT, which has to "do without" phonetics in all the categories apart from dominant neutral standard. The morpho-syntax seems particularly relevant in TT Angel, as it is present as a marked element in most cases, with a weighted average of 88.9%. The only place where morpho-syntax does not have a central role is the category "Other language," which is also the case in the ST – in these cases, the line in Spanish may not constitute a grammatical sentence. Morpho-syntax has an important role in the ST as well (weighted average 70.3%), although to a lesser extent than the TT. As for Chuco, morpho-syntax is the predominant feature in the ST and even more in the TT – further confirming its role in drawing speech away from standard.

Finally, Angel's lexical features score differently from ST to TT, as they are slightly lower than morpho-syntax in the former, and below 50% in the latter. It is central to the realisation of Spanish in both ST and TT. However, apart from that category, lexicon is particularly important in the realisation of minority substandard in the ST – the reason being the use of specific words signalling the belonging to a Chicano gang orcode-switching of substandard words (e.g. *cabrón, chingón*). In Chuco's speech, lexicon plays a similar role in both ST and TT, being slightly more present in the former (68.4% and 66.7% respectively).

Overall, both the translated characters seem to follow a similar pattern for what concerns the marking of linguistic variation: the TT counterbalances a lack of phonetic nonstandardness with an increased resort to morpho-syntax markers of orality and, to a lesser extent, to lexicon.

In order to understand the strategies adopted in the translation, it is useful to visualise the way that the concentration of linguistic varieties changes from source to target text in the course of the film for the two characters:
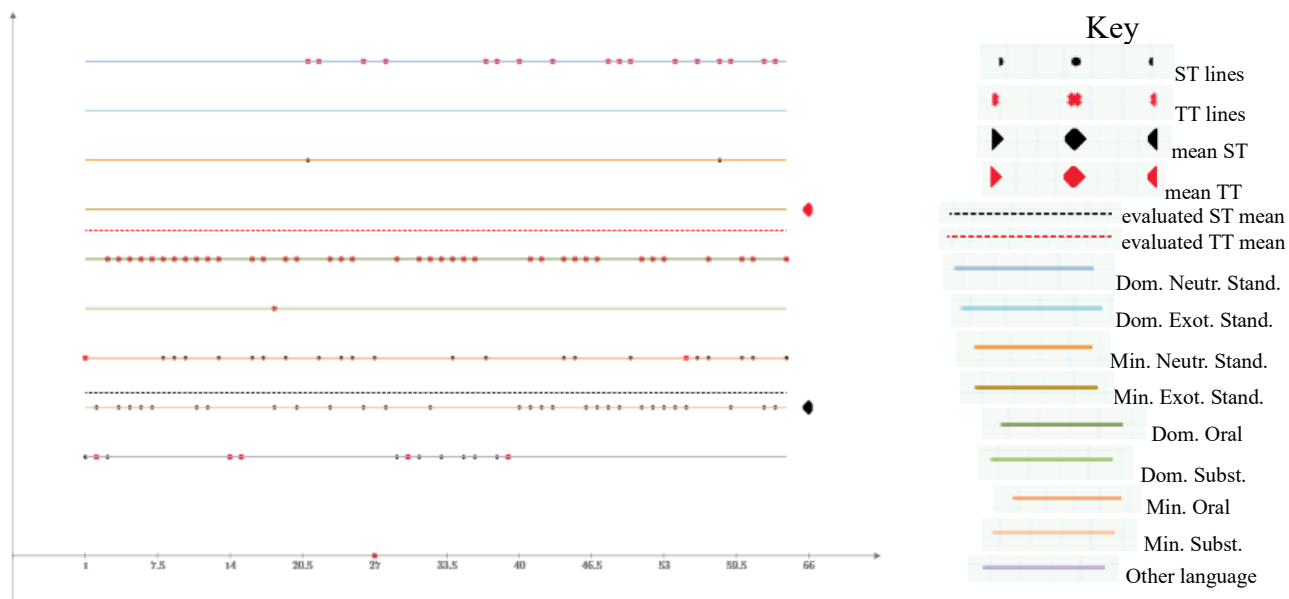
Figure 40 Angel's textual scatter plot.

In the graph above, each black dot represents a ST line, and each red dot a TT line, and the film proceeds chronologically from the left to the right (the red dot on the x-axis represents a line that was omitted in the target text, while black dots on the axis represent lines that were added in the TT). The ST shows a clear use of the minority substandard at the beginning, when he is a "bad boy," and has another substantial increase before the end, when he acts irresponsibly because of his disappointment. For the rest of the time, his lines are fairly balanced between oral and substandard. Only two lines are in the minority standard, both used ironically in dialogues with Professor Escalante. Spanish is instead concentrated in specific moments in which his Spanish-speaking grandmother is in the scene. This causes ST Angel's speech pattern to remain on the minority substandard category: the black dotted line shows where Angel's average lines actually are, while the large black dot shows the category that is closer to the average of his speech.

Overall, it can be inferred that ST Angel speaks a vernacular variety of CE, but he is bilingual, as he is able to switch to Spanish, and also occasionally to "elevate" his language, although never concealing his ethnic background. When it comes to

the target text, the speech follows a different, and somewhat ambiguous trend. Quite consistently through the film, most lines are positioned in the dominant oral category. However, after the first scenes and increasingly more towards the end of the movie, coinciding with Angel's full "redemption" and transformation, there is a significant increase of the dominant neutral standard. The TT Spanish lines are in the same position as the ST ones, but in lesser amount. Overall, TT Angel generally speaks the oral language of the dominant group, associated with lesser prestige than the standard, but he gradually upgrades towards target language during the movie. TT Angel very rarely shows linguistic signs of belonging to his ethnic group, but he is also able to speak some Spanish when required.

Looking at Chuco's trends, a substantial difference emerges between ST and TT. In the source text, Chuco's speech pattern is regular, and clearly shows his sociocultural role and educational level, as well as his ethnic background. In the target text, although most lines are concentrated in the dominant oral category, the constant fluctuation among lower-prestige categories generates an anomaly in the mathematical means, so that his speech pattern tends towards the dominant substandard category. This may well mean that there was been a strategy behind the work of the translators.
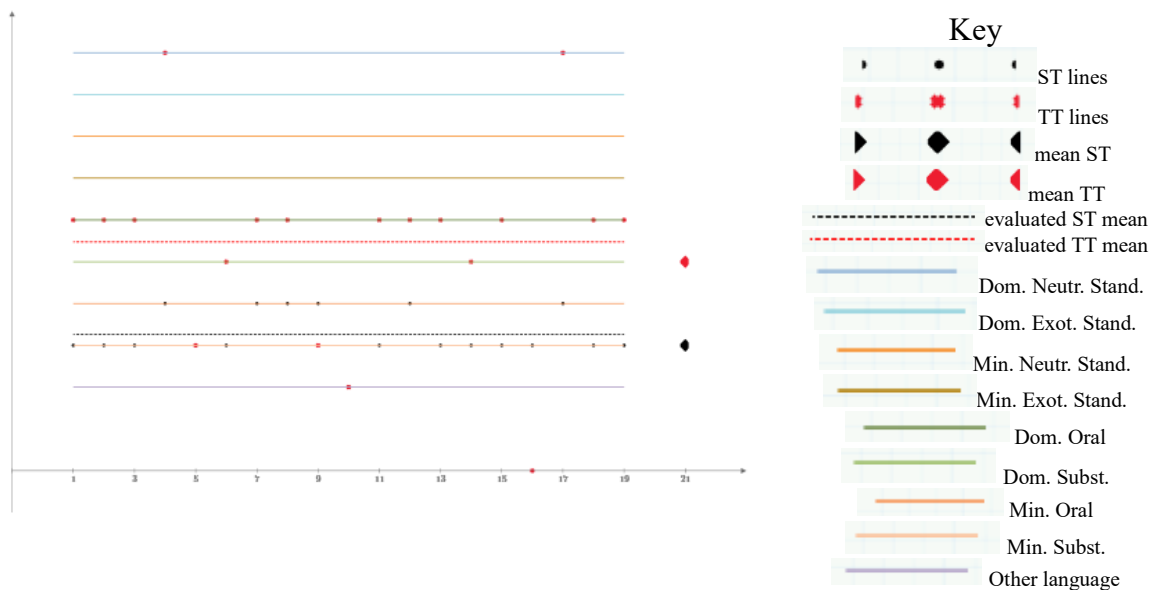
Figure 41 Chuco's textual scatter plot.

In fact, following Ramos Pinto (2017), it is possible to infer what type of strategies might have been adopted in translating the textual dimension of the film. Angel's translation shows instances of both centralisation and discourse standardisation. Centralisation is what lies behind the shift from minority substandard/oral to dominant group oral, while discourse standardisation was applied in the passage from minority substandard/oral to dominant neutral standard, the category furthest up the prestige scale. While his ST version mainly points at linguistic authenticity of the ethnotype (portraying a *cholo* from East Los Angeles), the TT version seems to concentrate on the rendering of his life path and role in the plot: he symbolises the liberation from ghetto life through education. Chuco was mainly translated through centralisation: the overall impression is still that of a less educated person, especially when compared to his friend. His speech pattern includes "inaccuracies" aimed at showing his lack of education, e.g. when describing a starry sky, he says: "certo che quelle stelle lassù non sono inquinate" (surely those stars up there are not polluted), attributing the pollution to the stars rather than to the air. However, his language was not rendered completely, as his ethnic heritage only occasionally emerges, and mostly at the beginning (see the first red dots on the graph), when the character has just been introduced in the film.

A multimodal text analysis, however, would be incomplete without a look at the broader context in which the characters are immersed.

6.1.2 Diegetic dimension

The subsequent step consists of looking at the way that the changes of linguistic categories affected the intermodal relations. In other words, were the relations of confirmation and contradiction kept, partially kept, or substantially altered?

Intermodal relations ST Angel
Confirmation ■ Contradiction

Intermodal relations TT Angel
Confirmation ■ Contradiction

Intermodal relations ST Chuco
Confirmation ■ Contradiction

Intermodal relations TT Chuco
Confirmation ■ Contradiction
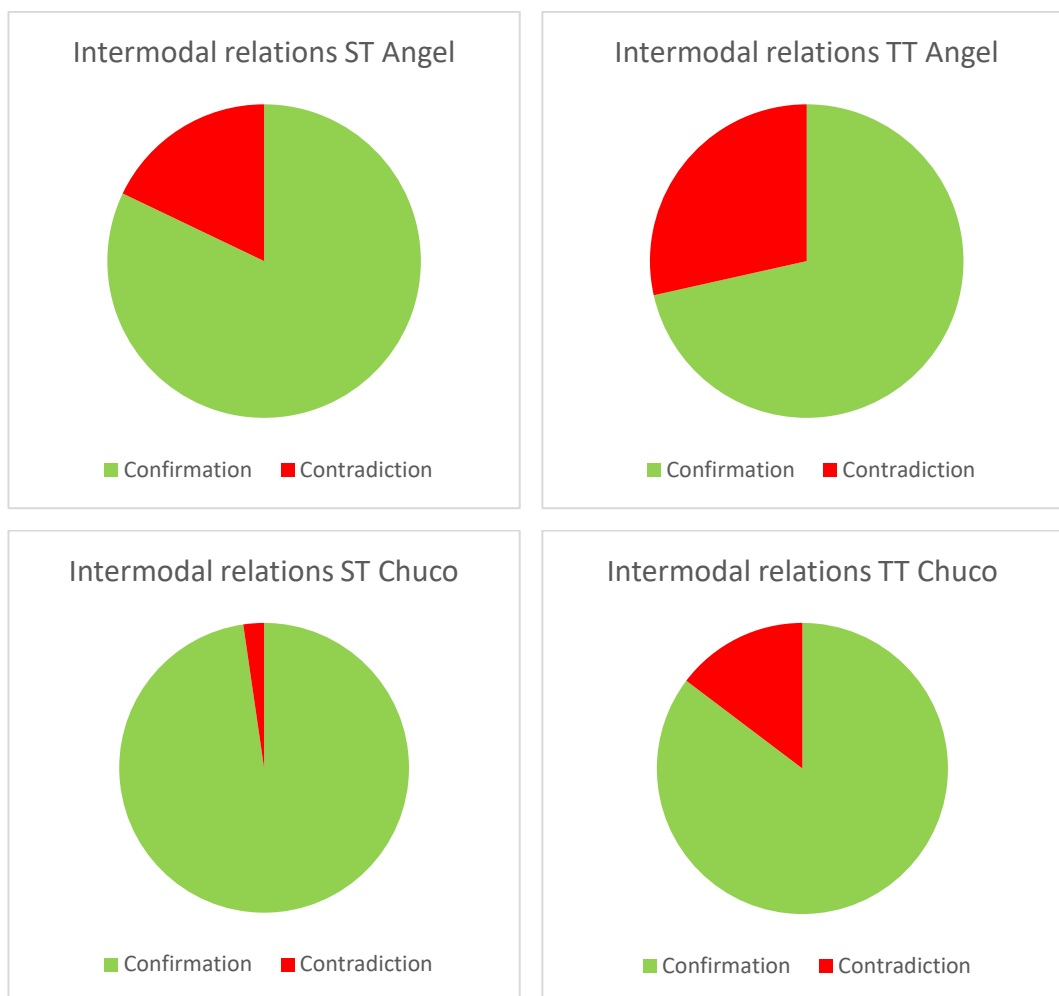
The graphs above show the overall proportion of confirmation and contradiction for the two characters. TT Angel has a larger portion of contradiction compared to the source text: in the ST, confirmation between textual and non-textual is attained in 82.1% of the lines, while contradiction happens in 17.9% of the lines; in the TT, confirmation can be found in 71.5% of the cases versus 28.5% of contradiction. The same happens with Chuco – in the ST he nearly constantly speaks in confirmation with the other modes (costumes and make-up, phenotype, behaviour, setting, interlocutors, and music). This proportion is less blatant in the TT, where the 98% vs 2% proportion becomes 85% vs 15%. The relation has changed, but was not completely subverted.

Figure 42 Angel's ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.

The graph with bars visualises the way confirmation (both equivalent and complementary) and contradiction alternate during the film. The x-axis represents the film chronologically, beginning on the left and ending on the right, while each bar represents a line uttered by Angel. Confirmation equivalence was attributed a value +1, complementarity 0 and contradiction -1. For each line, the values of each non-textual mode (see previous chapter) were added: overall positive results are expressed by green bars, negative ones by red bars. The taller the green bar, the more equivalence has been achieved; red bars plunging below indicate more contradiction.

In the source version, the contradictory lines are specifically linked to the plot. For example, the initial lines are contradictory because he acts like a *cholo* in a context, the school, where students are not expected to act like thugs, or disregard authority. Another ST moment of contradiction, right at the beginning of the second half, happens when Angel is at the clinic for his grandmother, and speaks to the non-Latina nurse either in a too informal way or in Spanish.

The target version has a more significant amount of contradiction right after the beginning, when Angel is asking his professor to help him study while still pretending to be a "tough" anti-school gangster. In the TT, his formal language contrasts with his behaviour, although not completely, as it reflects his intentions. The contradictions in the second third of the line reflect the ones of the ST, although to a lesser extent. Towards the end, a series of contradictions appear: his irresponsible behaviour after the exam invalidation and his pretend-*cholo* mockery with the investigators are not rendered with a gangster-like speech,

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which creates a contradiction with his appearance, but also with the context around him.
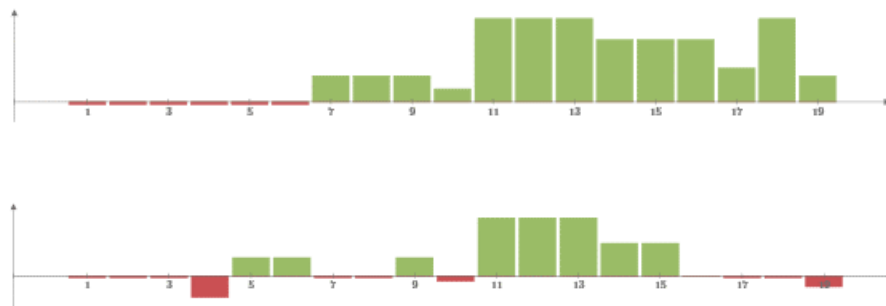
Figure 43 Chuco's ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.

Chuco is less present throughout the film. His initial role is to disrupt the tranquillity of the class, acting like a bully with the professor and ignoring the rules – that is why his initial ST contradictions are deliberate. When he drops out of school, his stereotypical *cholo* language is in harmony with both his own attitude and the surroundings. In the Italian version, the pattern is generally kept, although in a less evident way. The real increase in TT contradiction happens towards the end, in his last appearance on the screen: he has fixed Escalante's car with Angel and the other gang members, and his TT speech is too "formal" for his appearance, behaviour and context.

6.1.3   Sociocultural dimension

Overall, it does not seem like the heavy change in terms of linguistic varieties has made the characters completely unrecognisable, as just looking at the language might have suggested. Although contradiction was often present between the dominant group language used in the TT and Angel's phenotypical features and costumes, it is more coherent with other aspects, such as interlocutors and setting, and also at times compensated for by the complementary relations. Rather than on coherence with the socio-cultural context of East Los Angeles, the target text seems focused on conveying plot-related aspects such as Angel's "good nature" and behavioural evolution. Chuco's character is just sketched in both versions,

although in a different way. In the source text, he simply replicates the stereotypes presented in the previous chapter, although in a somewhat "sugar-coated" way: he is never seen committing serious crimes, and respects – and even supports – his friend's decision to become a good student. In the target text, his superficial rendering may be due to his minor role: the only section of the movie where his speech is more accurately translated is the beginning, when he is on the scene to develop the plot by showing the difficulties of teaching in a rough area like East Los Angeles – but also to show Escalante is not easily intimidated.

When it comes to the dimension in which the ST originated, it is worth noting again that the 1980s witnessed the emergence of the English-only movement and its racism against people of Latino heritage, which long pervaded the debate on education (see Chapter 2). The film appears to respond to the subtle discriminating insinuation that Latinos are somehow "less intelligent" than Anglos, by showing that, when given trust and quality teaching, Latinos can achieve amazing results. To do so, the film draws from a true story (see previous chapter) that took place about ten years before, which also inspired a book on the teacher Jaime Escalante (Mathews 1989). The commitment of the film to the topic of Latino and Chicano discrimination at school is confirmed by a small tribute to the L.A. walkouts of 1968 (García and Castro 2011): when unfairly accused of cheating, the character Javier (Patrick Baca) stands up and walks out of the class to show his indignation. His action inspires Angel to react against the investigators. From a cinematic point of view, the "inspirational teacher movie" genre was quite in fashion in that period, as shown by the numerous films with a similar plot released between the 1980s and 1990s.[74]

The target audience cannot be assumed to know much about the specific historical references, especially since, as previously discussed, the film was released in a period that did not allow for the gathering of information on foreign events with

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[74] Some "inspirational teacher movie" examples from the same period are: *Teachers* (1984), *Lean on me* (1989), *Dead Poets Society* (1989), *Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit* (1993), *Dangerous Minds* (1995). Certainly, however, the genre was not "invented" in that period, as there are other examples much earlier, e.g. *Goodbye, Mr. Chips* (1939), and some during the 1960s, such as *The Miracle Worker* (1962), *To Sir, with Love* (1967) and *Up the Down Staircase* (1967).

the same ease as today. It must also be reminded that those in charge of creating the Italian dialogues are generally not trained as translators and do not see themselves as such (Pavesi and Perego 2006), one of their main tasks being to make the script speakable and performable for the dubbing actors. That probably explains the choice to privilege plot rendering rather than the authenticity of ghetto linguistic features. Given the strict rules of *dubbese*, it might have seemed more important to convey and emphasise through language only the linguistic information that is functional for understanding the plot. Indeed, the audience can probably see for themselves that the whole class belongs to a non-white (thus potentially discriminated against) ethnicity in a poor area, and the teacher Escalante explains that studying mathematics is a way to defy discrimination because it is a science that speaks for itself. Surely, the Italian audience needs a greater "suspension of disbelief" (Chiaro 2008) in order to believe a *cholo* from the ghetto can have an elevated vocabulary or, even more, a perfectly standard accent. However, as just seen above, the whole product conveys a certain amount of information that should prevent the researcher from assuming that everything was just "lost in translation."

6.2   Characters in *Colors*

Having white police officers as protagonists, as well as a white director (Dennis Hopper) and screenwriter (Michael Schiffer), *Colors* is the film in the selection that dedicates least space to looking into the Chicanos' psychology. The non-white characters are almost exclusively gangsters or immigrants.

6.2.1   Textual dimension

The analysed characters are members of the "21 street gang," the only gang whose members are on screen for any real period of time: the older leader Frog and the young and fiery Gato (whose name means "cat" in Spanish). Both are drug addicts, with no intention of leaving gangbanging. In the following tables are the linguistic frequencies for each character:

Frog	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (50 lines)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	24%	68%	9%	100%
TT (52 lines)	2%	2%	5.9%	2%	0%	0%	25.5%	47.1%	15.7%	100%

Gato	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (20 lines)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	15%	85%	0%	100%
TT (21 lines)	9.5%	0%	0%	0%	28.6%	57.1%	0%	4.8%	0%	100%

In the ST, the two characters have fairly similar profiles. Both have no occurrence of standard language, and their speech patterns are constantly marked by their ethnic belonging. Both ST Frog and ST Gato have most of their lines in the minority substandard category (68% and 85% respectively). However, the speech of ST Frog is slightly more diversified than ST Gato, with 24% of minority oral and some lines in Spanish (9%). ST Gato has only a small number of lines in the minority oral category and does not seem able to speak Spanish (0%).

The TT version of the characters has been handled in opposite ways from each other. TT Frog lines are more or less in the same categories as his ST counterpart, with a slight use of minority standard (5.9% minority neutral and 2% minority exotified) and an increase of Spanish, whose use nearly doubled in the TT. TT Gato's use of minority substandard drops from 85% to less than 5%. Most of his lines are located in the dominant substandard category (57.1%) and some in the dominant oral (28.6%), while nearly 10% of his lines are in the dominant neutral standard category.

How were those results obtained linguistically?

FROG	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Oral	100%	58.3%	33.3%	100%	69.2%	76.9%
Min. Subst.	97%	94.1%	79.4%	95.8%	95.8%	70.8%
Other language	100%	100%	50%	100%	100%	100%
Weighted Average	**98%**	**86%**	**66%**	**96.1%**	**82.4%**	**68.6%**

GATO	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	0%	16.7%	100%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	83.3%
Min. Oral	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Subst.	100%	100%	82.3%	0%	100%	100%
Other language	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Weighted Average	**100%**	**85%**	**85%**	**9.5%**	**76.2%**	**90.5%**

Something that immediately stands out while looking at Frog's use of linguistic features is the fact that both ST and TT show similar uses of lexical, morpho-syntactic and lexical features. This use of phonetics in the TT is especially unusual: TT Frog is the only translated character of the whole corpus to keep phonetic features ascribable to his ethnic heritage in non-Spanish speech. It must be specified, however, that the TT phonetics that mark Frog as belonging to a minority are not those of Chicano English, but of Italian spoken with a fictional Spanish accent.

In TT Gato, the role of phonetics has nearly disappeared (falling from 100% of ST to 9.5% in the TT), as they only identify the dominant standard category. Although less dramatically, the role of lexicon also decreases. Vice versa, the role

of morpho-syntax grows slightly from ST to TT, confirming the trend observed in *Stand and Deliver* (1988).

The graphs below visualise the linguistic trends for both characters:
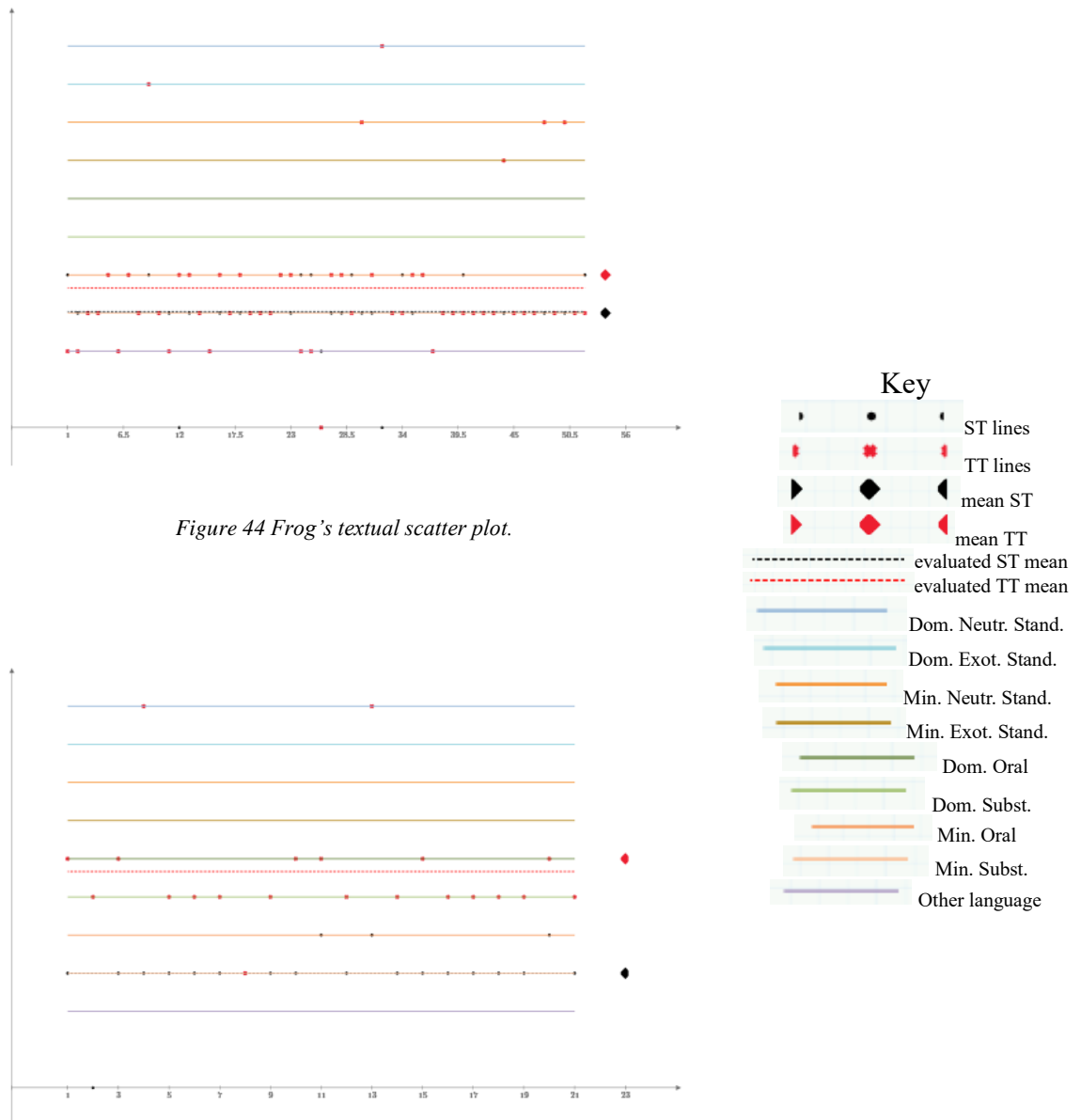
Figure 44 Frog's textual scatter plot.

Figure 45 Gato's textual scatter plot.

Frog's graph shows the increase of Spanish items in the TT (red dots), as well as the relative proximity of ST and TT items in general – although a few TT lines expand higher up towards more prestigious varieties. Gato's lines seem more

scattered along different lines, with almost no occurrence in the non-standard language of the minority he belongs to. In the ST, the only difference between the two is that Gato does not seem able to switch to Spanish, while the ST audience may assume Frog has some degree of bilingual ability. In the TT, Frog's bilingualism is emphasised, while Gato's speech pattern drifts away from his Mexican heritage.

In the light of these results, it can be assumed that different strategies have been used for the two characters. TT Frog's speech patterns were clearly reconstructed using maintenance, but also a form of decentralisation. Two elements hint at this strategy for TT Frog: the increase of Spanish items, and the use of a foreign accent instead of the vernacular CE one. TT Gato, on the other hand, was mainly translated through discourse standardisation and centralisation.

6.2.2   *Diegetic dimension*

Since the two characters perform differently from a linguistic point of view, it would be likely for them to build different intermodal relations, too.

Intermodal relations ST Frog   Intermodal relations TT Frog
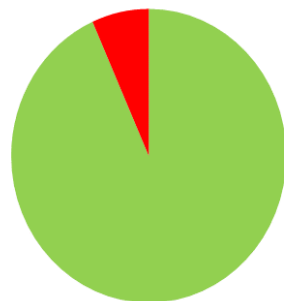
■ Confirmation   ■ Contradiction   ■ Confirmation   ■ Contradiction

Intermodal relations ST Gato Intermodal relations TT Gato
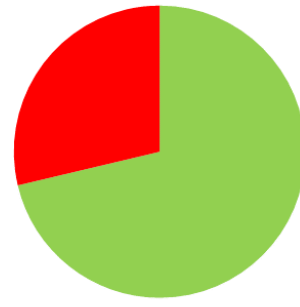
■ Confirmation ■ Contradiction ■ Confirmation ■ Contradiction

The graphs above confirm the differences between the two characters. Frog's intermodal relations are kept approximately unvaried, in contrast to the results of the characters in *Stand and Deliver*. The contradiction generated by the few more standardised lines is often counterbalanced by the resorting to Spanish as a form of compensation.

The ST contradiction in Frog's speech often derives from his non-adaptation to different interlocutors, which in some cases has a diegetic function in the plot. Frog has, for example, a friendly relation with Hodges, one of the two protagonist police officers, and talks to him without trying to adjust his register. In other situations, e.g. when he is arrested, he acts and speaks to the police officers as if they were his fellow gang members, e.g. calling them *homes*, which is short for *homeboy* (a way to address a friend/comrade, drawn from AAVE, Cagliero and Spallino 2010: 369-370). This inability to adapt to the context around him seems partly due to his use of drugs, which often makes his speech sound drawled, a feature that is particularly marked in the source version.
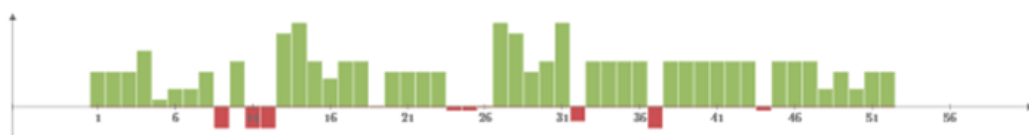
Figure 46 Frog's ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.

On the other hand, Gato's contradiction increases significantly. None of his few lines seemed contradictory in the ST, but contradiction increases to 29% in the TT. That is due to the fact that he barely ever uses any linguistic feature showing his ethnic background, and at times he uses dominant standard language. Both tendencies are especially in contrast with his costumes and make-up, which fully correspond to the ethnotype, but also with his main interlocutors – his fellow gang members.
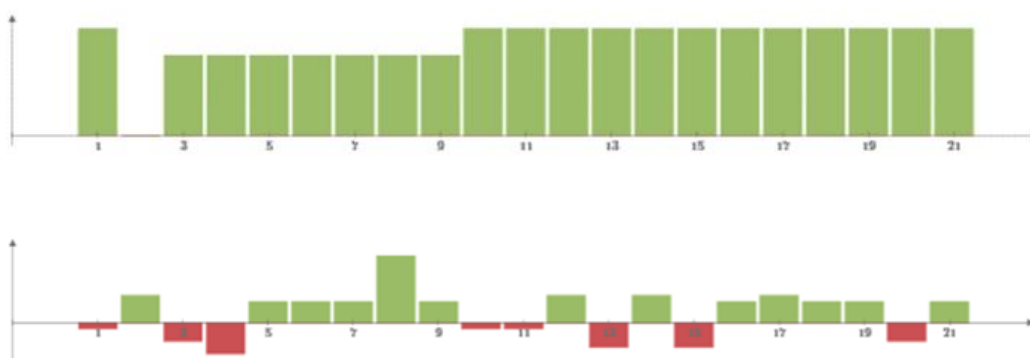
Figure 47 Gato's ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.

6.2.3   Sociocultural dimension

Colors aims at showing the difficult situation caused by the gang war in Los Angeles, as confirmed by the disclaimer aired before the film starts:

> The Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff' each has a gang crime division. The Police Department's division is called C.R.A.S.H. (Community Resources Against Street Hoodlums) and the Sheriff's division is called O.S.S. (Operation Safe Streets). The combined anti-gang force numbers 250 men and women.

In the greater Los Angeles area there are over 600 street gangs with almost 70,000 members.

Last year there were 387 gang-related killings. (*Colors*, 1988: 00.24-00.43)

The uneven distribution of forces and the number of killings reported in the disclaimer contribute to generating a sense of an impossible and dangerous task for the police officers even before the characters appear on screen. Indeed, the movie follows the daily routines of the police officer protagonists, only occasionally showing a little more of the gangsters' lives. Without getting to know them, the Chicano characters simply remain part of a general, broad threat. In this sense, by creating such an intimidating atmosphere, the film seems perfectly in line with the generation of "public hysteria" activated by the media in periods of economic recession and social struggles (Bender 2002: 38). As previously discussed (see Chapter 2 and 5), increased migration is often involved in public debates about border security and domestic policing alike. With only one white gang member in the whole *barrio*, *Colors* seems to align itself with the idea that non-whites have some degree of criminality in their DNA or their culture while, if and when Anglo gangs are ever mentioned, their behaviour is not "attached" to the whole ethnic group. The Anglo criminals "are dismissed as wayward youth, as disturbed adults" (Bender 2002: 39), the bad apples of an otherwise civilised society.

From this context, ST Frog and Gato emerge as two-dimensional, stereotyped drug-addicted gang members who are not willing to change their ways – Frog initially tries to keep his young brother Felipe out of real gangbanging, but eventually gives in and lets him become a member. No personal background is provided, so that the audience does not know how these people decided to become gangbangers – the characters seem to believe the gang is their family, and they embrace the idea of being killed in a shootout.

As already mentioned by this author in other studies on the Chicano gangsters (Renna 2018a; Renna 2018b; Renna 2018c and Renna forthcoming), the Italian audience of the late 1980s and early 1990s could not really relate to such a situation, as second-generation immigrants were not a crucial issue (see Chapter

5) and criminality hitting the headlines was often domestic (e.g. Italian organised crime, cfr. Pasquini 2016).

This lack of socio-political affinity between the U.S. and Italy, however, can possibly be compensated for by attaching the stereotype of *Colors* with the *bandido* from the western movies. This could be the reason for making Frog sound like a first-generation immigrant (rather than a Chicano), but there is also another contextual element. Frog was dubbed by Francisco Javier Moriones, AKA Saverio Moriones, an Italian-Spanish dubbing actor who has often voiced Latino actors and characters.[75] It must be remembered that dubbing actors have an important role in the Italian dubbing world, to the extent that they have their say on the way their characters will be interpreted (Chiaro 2008: 145; Antonini 2099: 99; Renna forthcoming). In this case, it is impossible to say by just watching the dubbed film whether Moriones decided to emphasise the character's Latino phonetics or was hired because the dubbing manager knew Moriones could act "with an accent."

Conversely, TT Gato's speech patterns do not seem to have been a primary preoccupation for the adapters, possibly because the character has a minor role in the movie (he only utters about 20 lines), along with limited time and resources (Zabalbeascoa 2009) to accurately study a character who is only sketched out in the ST to begin with. In this sense, TT Frog seems to "compensate" for TT Gato, whose belonging to the gang is only evident because of his extremely stereotypical *cholo* attire. Taken together and within their context, the two translated characters still convey the ST racial stereotyping, albeit adapting it to make it more comprehensible for the audience.

6.3   Characters in *American Me*

American Me aimed to show the dramatic life of East Los Angeles Chicanos, affected by discrimination, poverty and omnipresent crime and drugs. Gangbanging is presented as a sort of virus that, sooner or later, can be contracted by anyone (even those who seem far from or against it). Escaping it is shown as a

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[75] https://www.antoniogenna.net/doppiaggio/voci/vocism.htm last visited November 29th 2018.

nearly impossible task, despite the tragic suffering it heralds for gangbangers and their loved ones.

6.3.1 Textual dimension

The analysed characters are all members of *la Eme*, the Mexican mafia: the protagonist, Santana, his best friend J.D. (who eventually becomes his antagonist), their other friend Mundo, and the two brothers Puppet and Little Puppet.

The main character is Santana, who shows a leader's attitude from the very beginning of the movie: he reacts to his non-idyllic family situation setting up his own gang, which becomes much larger after he is convicted. In *la Eme*, he is the one everyone looks up to, the one who has the final say when it comes to important decisions, such as executions. That is, until he realises the damage gangbanging causes to Chicanos. It is relevant to specify that Santana is the narrating voice in the film. However, since the context from which he is telling his story remains undisclosed until the end (when the audience finds out it is his last love letter before being assassinated in jail), those lines were not considered in his statistics because, since they are isolated from non-textual context, they are not comparable with the lines uttered in the scene by the rest of the characters, and they only become clear in their purpose at the very end of the film.

Santana	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (219 lines)	0%	0%	5.1%	0.5%	0%	0%	38.2%	47%	9.2%	100%
TT (221 lines)	20%	3.6%	0%	0%	52.7%	7.7%	4.5%	4.5%	6.8%	100%

ST Santana mainly speaks minority substandard, shortly followed by minority oral (47% vs 38.2%). Some of his lines registered in the category of minority neutral standard and minority exotified standard, and he also switches to Spanish in some occasions. Conversely, TT Santana's lines are mainly positioned in the dominant oral category, with a significant number of lines in the dominant neutral standard and some in Spanish – although less than ST Santana.

While Santana is certainly the main character, he is often seen side by side with his friend, the Anglo J.D.:

J.D.	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (61 lines)	0%	0%	8.3%	1.7%	0%	0%	10%	60%	20%	100%
TT (60 lines)	13.3%	3.3%	0%	0%	35%	18.3%	1.7%	13.3%	15%	100%

The ST speech of J.D. tends even more clearly towards minority substandard, and there are a considerable number of Spanish switches in his lines (20%). minority oral and minority neutral standard are also present on more occasions. J.D.'s TT speech follows the already observed tendency to be scattered across different categories, the most recurrent being dominant oral, followed by dominant oral and Spanish. Paradoxically, dominant neutral standard and minority substandard share the same frequency (13.3%), despite being at the opposite ends of the continuum. The other characters have a smaller space (and number of lines) in the film. Mundo has been Santana and J.D.'s friend from their teenage years. Initially the weakest, he is often in charge of executions.

Mundo	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (34 lines)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	12.1%	57.6%	30.3%	100%
TT (34 lines)	5.9%	0%	0%	0%	50%	14.7%	5.9%	11.8%	11.8%	100%

ST Mundo has a clearly low social positioning, with more than half of his lines in the minority substandard category. Another element of his ST speech should not be ignored: he speaks Spanish in more than 30% of his lines, making him the most bilingual character of the entire corpus. TT Mundo, however, seems to have been

translated in a similar way to J.D., with most of his lines in the dominant oral category (50%) and the rest scattered across different categories.

The other two characters are Puppet and Little Puppet, two Chicano brothers with a tragic destiny (the elder will be forced to kill his young sibling by the gang).

Puppet	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (22 lines)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	31.8%	59.1%	9.1%	100%
TT (22 lines)	18.2%	4.5%	0%	0%	31.8%	9.1%	13.6%	13.6%	9.1%	100%

Little Puppet	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (27 lines)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	18.5%	66.7%	14.8%	100%
TT (27 lines)	3.7%	3.7%	0%	0%	33.3%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%	3.7%	100%

In both cases, the ST Puppet brothers' speech patterns fall prevalently into the minority substandard category (59.1% Puppet, 66.7% for Little Puppet). Puppet uses minority oral more often than his younger brother, who in turn switches to Spanish more often. None of the two uses any more prestigious varieties.

The two brothers take different paths in the TT. There, Puppet's lines are mainly in the dominant oral category, followed by dominant neutral standard. His Spanish remains unchanged (a steady 9.1%). Most TT Little Puppet's lines fall into either the dominant oral or dominant substandard category, followed at a distance by minority oral and minority substandard. The number of Spanish lines is significantly decreased, while some dominant standard (both neutral and exotified) appear.

SANTANA	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	87.5%	12.5%
Min. Neut. Stand.	100%	0%	8.3%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	0%	29.3%	94.8%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	94.1%	88.2%
Min. Oral	100%	18.1%	100%	0%	100%	100%
Min. Subst.	100%	75.5%	92.2%	0%	100%	90%
Other language	95%	95%	50%	93.3%	100%	46.7%
Weighted Average	**100%**	**51.2%**	**87.1%**	**26.4%**	**61.8%**	**89.5%**

J.D	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	0%	38.1%	100%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	90.9%	81.8%
Min. Oral	100%	16.7%	83.3%	0%	100%	100%
Min. Subst.	100%	88.9%	91.7%	0%	100%	87.5%
Other language	100%	100%	25%	100%	100%	44.4%
Weighted Average	**100%**	**76.7%**	**68.3%**	**28.3%**	**76.7%**	**83.3%**

As seen in the other ST texts analysed so far, ST Santana's language relies heavily on phonetics for its realisation (100%), followed by morpho-syntax. Lexicon is only indicative of status in 51.2% of the lines. As usual, the lexical features nearly disappear in the TT, as they only have a role in defining the dominant neutral standard and the Spanish lines. The most important feature in TT Santana's speech is morpho-syntax (89.5%), followed by lexicon. J.D. follows a very similar pattern, with a dramatic decrease of lexical items from ST to TT, compensated for by an even greater increase of marked morpho-syntactical items, while the importance of lexical features remains unvaried.

MUNDO	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	0%	58.8%	94.1%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Min. Oral	100%	25%	100%	0%	100%	50%
Min. Subst.	100%	89.5%	89.5%	0%	100%	100%
Other language	100%	100%	80%	100%	100%	25%
Weighted Average	**100%**	**84.8%**	**87.9%**	**17.6%**	**79.4%**	**85.3%**

LITTLE PUPPET	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	0%	33.3%	88.9%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Min. Oral	100%	60%	100%	0%	100%	100%
Min. Subst.	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%
Other language	100%	75%	75%	100%	100%	0%
Weighted Average	**100%**	**88.9%**	**96.3%**	**7.4%**	**77.8%**	**88.9%**

Mundo's ST realisation is similar to that of his fellow gang members from the street gang *La Primera* (Santana and J.D.), although the importance of lexicon significantly increases in his speech pattern. However, the TT realisation seems generally more "insipid," as the usual decrease in phonetics does not seem compensated for by the increase of other items. All of the categories have a lower frequency (morpho-syntax being the most recurrent), which means that each line has fewer characterising elements compared to those of Mundo's fellows. In this sense, it is similar to Little Puppet's TT rendering, where all the elements have a diminished frequency – especially evident for phonetics, but also present in the other two groups.

PUPPET	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	0%	42.9%	100%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Min. Oral	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	66.7%
Min. Subst.	100%	92.3%	100%	0%	100%	100%
Other language	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Weighted Average	**100%**	**63.6%**	**90.9%**	**27.3%**	**81.8%**	**90.9%**

Puppet follows a pattern of his own, being the only one in the film whose TT rendering sees an increase of lexical items, while the importance of morpho-syntax remains unchanged.

The sharp decrease in the importance of phonetical items is a constant trait, only interrupted by *Colors*' TT Frog. The TT sharp increase in the use of morpho-syntax is widespread. It should not be forgotten, however, that the three characters without an augmented morpho-syntax are minor ones, and they all still have morpho-syntax far higher than 50%, which is still a higher value than TT phonetics. Lexicon fluctuates slightly, never going below 50%.

The next step is attempting to identify the possible strategies behind the characters.
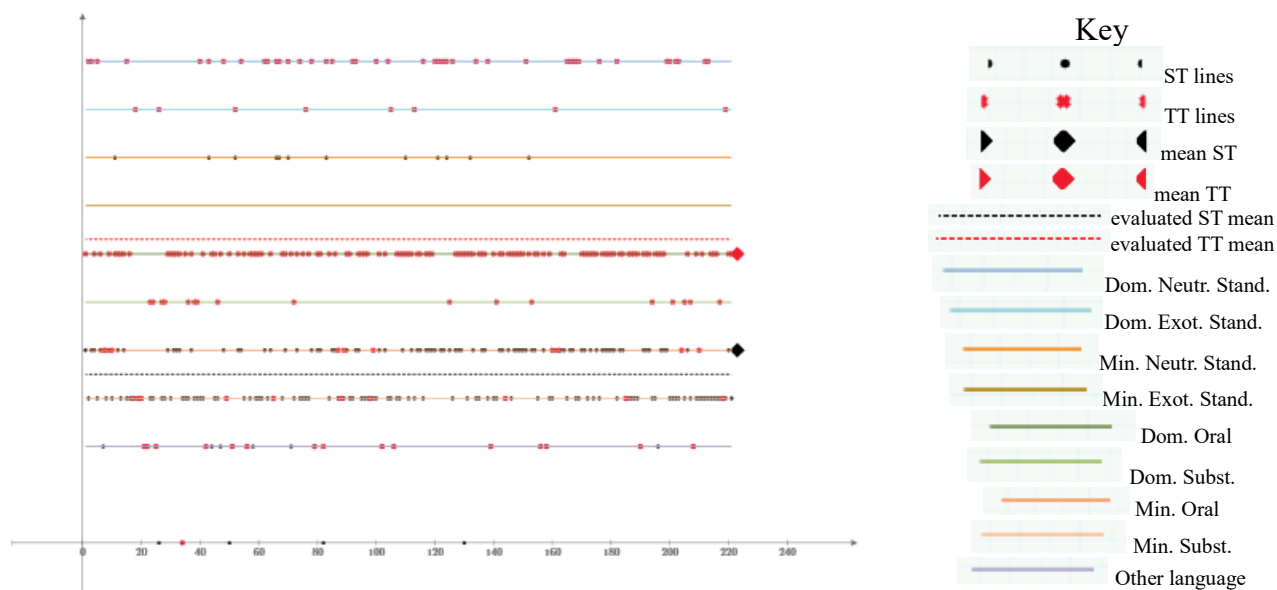
Figure 48 Santana's textual scatter plot.

ST Santana's speech pattern falls between minority oral and minority substandard, although his recurrent resorting to a higher register (minority standard) pulls his speech towards a "higher" level. In the film, he declares he has studied history and Chicano culture in jail, and at the beginning he is seen reading a book by Lev Tolstoj. He is a charismatic leader, followed by the others for his wisdom and rationality (the same characteristics which lead him to change his opinion of gangbanging and drug trafficking when he sees their effects on the *barrio*). ST Santana's minority neutral standard lines are mostly used after he has already grown up, and especially when he speaks to non-gangsters e.g. his father or his girlfriend Julie, which testifies to his personal development.

Although some lines are scattered across the whole range, most of TT Santana's lines are placed in the dominant oral category, placing his speech somewhere in between TT Angel and TT Gato. Overall, it seems like the most used strategy for Santana was centralisation and a certain amount of discourse standardisation. In fact, his ST speech pattern is somewhere in between minority oral and minority substandard, with a slight preference for minority oral. The TT decreases the signs

of his ethnic heritage, though not brushing them off completely, and it also elevates his speech to the dominant standard category.

Key

ST lines
TT lines
mean ST
mean TT
evaluated ST mean
evaluated TT mean
Dom. Neutr. Stand.
Dom. Exot. Stand.
Min. Neutr. Stand.
Min. Exot. Stand.
Dom. Oral
Dom. Subst.
Min. Oral
Min. Subst.
Other language
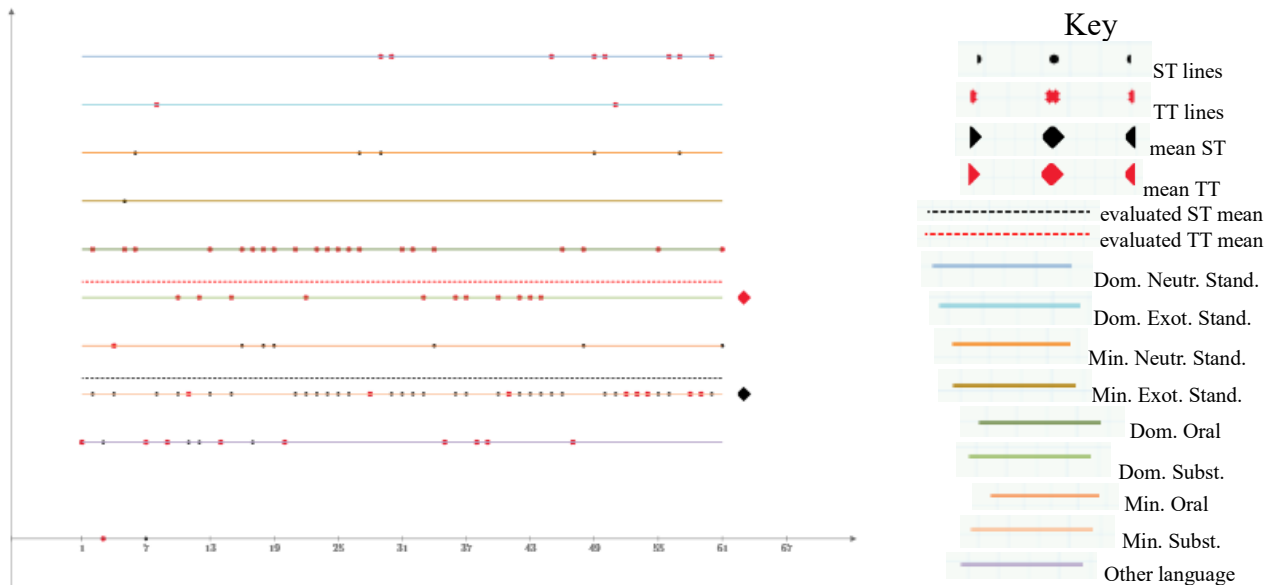
Figure 49 J.D.'s textual scatter plot.

ST lines in J.D.'s speech reflect his need to "sound" Chicano although he is not. In the film it appears that it took him some time to become proficient in Spanish. The audience identifies him as a non-Chicano immediately because he is white and blond, but also because his very first line in the film (greeting Santana) is an awkward Spanish mistake, immediately self-corrected: "*Orale! Qué traes de huevos?* I mean *de nuevo*" (*qué traes de nuevo?* is a greeting comparable to "what's up?," while *huevos* means "eggs" but can also be a rude reference to male intimate parts). He does speak a fair amount of Spanish throughout the film, although less than Mundo, and emphasises his association with Chicanos through the use of a vernacular subvariety of CE.

J.D.'s lines in the TT follow the general tendency observed so far: they shift towards the non-standard language of the dominant group, although a fair number of lines are still in the minority substandard and most of his Spanish is kept. This somewhat compensates for the loss of CE affiliation in his normal speech. Overall, J.D. has undergone some degree of centralisation, while discourse

standardisation is only occasional, and never happens at the beginning, when the audience has to recognise J.D. as a (white) member of a Chicano gang.
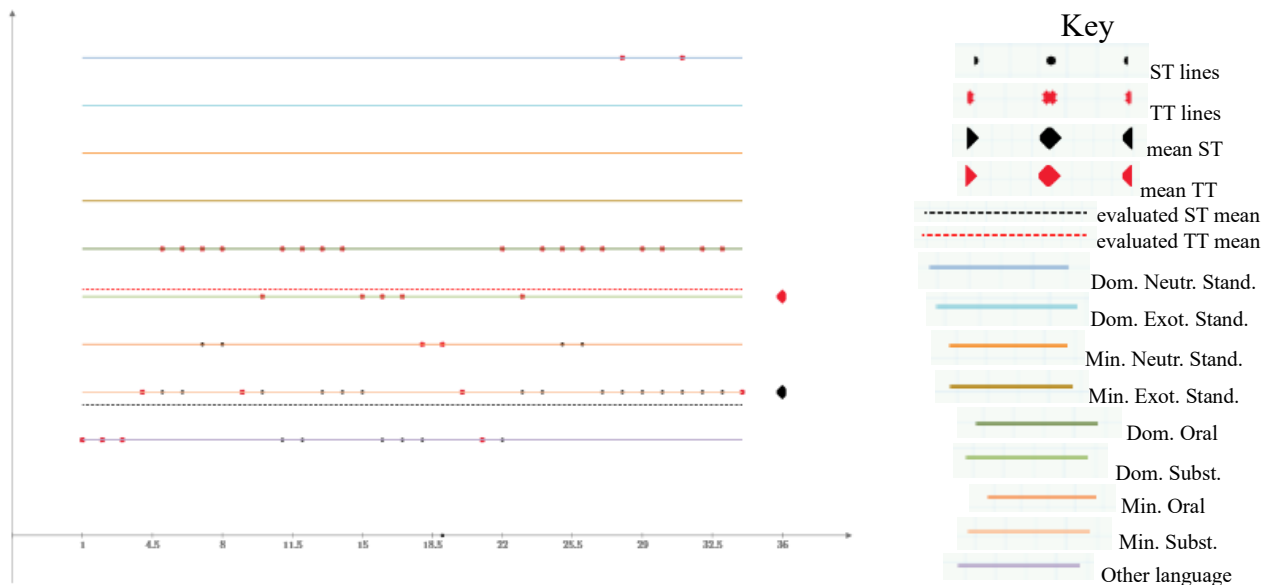
Figure 50 Mundo's textual scatter plot.

The categorisation of Mundo's speech pattern is rather neat in both ST and TT. ST Mundo is clearly a minority substandard speaker, although his frequent use of Spanish draws his speech slightly lower, towards the Other language category. Indeed, ST Mundo often utters whole sentences in Spanish: in two scenes, he never says anything in English: he appears to be the most proficient bilingual in the film, although his English does not hint at a high cultural level. TT Mundo loses most of these ethnic markers, which somewhat distinguished him from the rest of the group. However, one of his full-Spanish scenes is kept: although it is the one in which he utters shorter lines, its positioning right at the beginning serves to a certain extent to counterpoise the absence of Spanish switches in the rest of the film. Mundo was mainly dealt with through centralisation: his speech remains substandard, but loses the ethnic markers that make him sound like a Chicano.
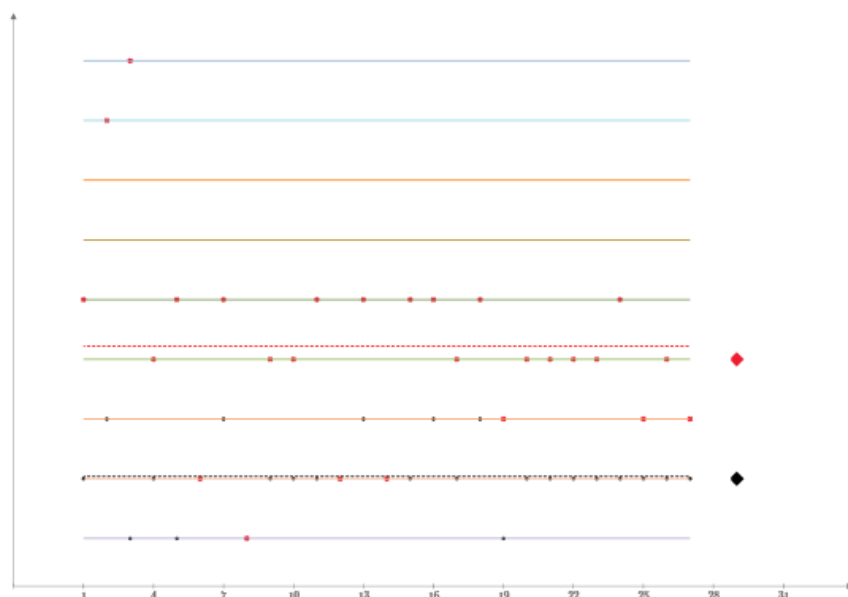
Figure 51 Puppet's textual scatter plot.
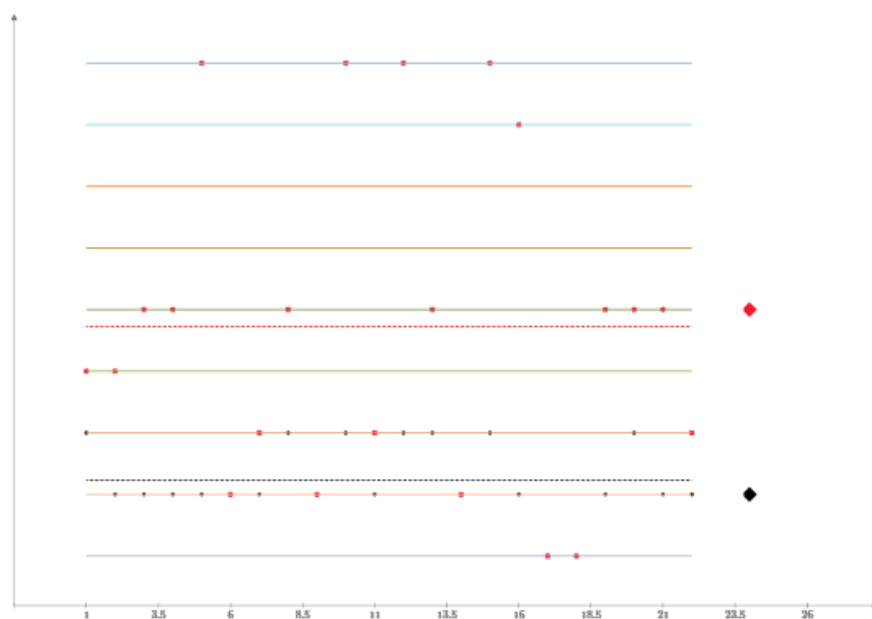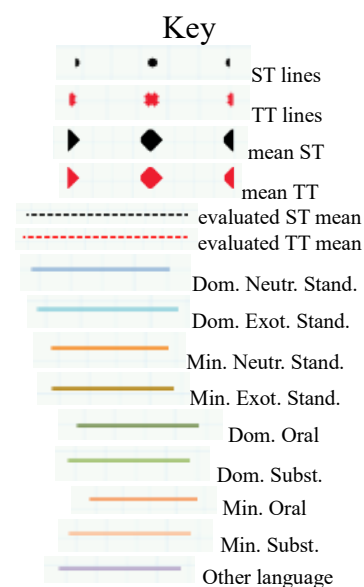
Figure 52 Little Puppet's textual scatter plot.

Although they have a similar profile in the ST, the Puppet Brothers are translated in a slightly different way. ST Puppet and Little Puppet appear to have a similar sociocultural and educational background, the elder showing a slightly higher level of linguistic prestige. This difference is accentuated in the TT, where Puppet

gets up to dominant oral, while Little Puppet passes on to the dominant substandard. Both, however, keep some of their minority substandard lines. The linguistic choices of the translators reflect the brothers' different functions in the plot. Puppet is centralised and, to some extent, also subject to discourse standardisation. He seems to participate in *la Eme* mainly for protection, as he is aware that jail life can be very difficult without some kind of affiliation. That is also why he lets his younger brother into the gang, but then realises his mistake: Little Puppet is not as cold-blooded as a gangster should be. Indeed, the little brother is uneducated and disingenuous, fundamentally a "good" kid who probably only meant to be a tattoo artist in the first place. The TT choice to simply centralise Little Puppet's speech without standardising it implies that he does not have the intellectual/rational means to decide for himself.

All of the characters in the films have been extensively, although not completely, "white-washed" in the TT. How does this change the intermodal relations?

6.3.2   *Diegetic dimension*

Here, too, there is likely to be an increase in contradiction in the TT. Indeed, all the characters follow a similar pattern:

Intermodal relations ST Santana   Intermodal relations TT Santana
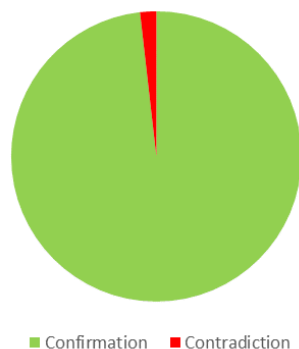
■ Confirmation   ■ Contradiction   ■ Confirmation   ■ Contradiction
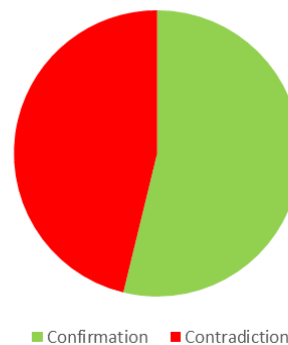
Intermodal relations ST J.D.
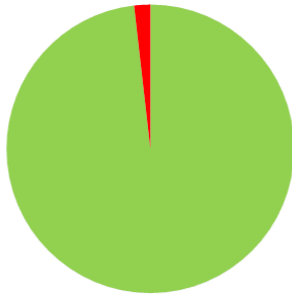
■ Confirmation ■ Contradiction

Intermodal relations TT J.D.
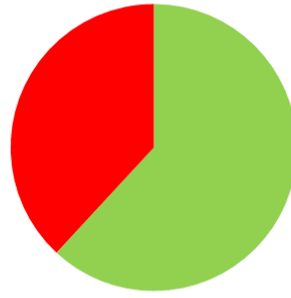
■ Confirmation ■ Contradiction

Intermodal relations ST Mundo
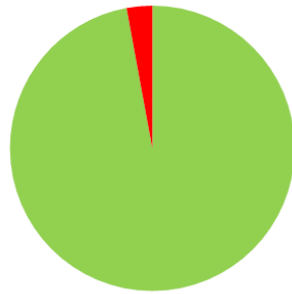
■ Confirmation ■ Contradiction

Intermodal relations TT Mundo
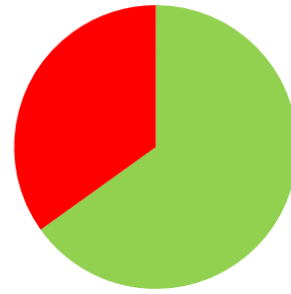
■ Confirmation ■ Contradiction

Intermodal relations ST Puppet

■ Confirmation ■ Contradiction

Intermodal relations TT Lil'Puppet
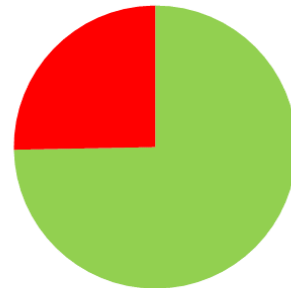
■ Confirmation ■ Contradiction

Intermodal relations ST Lil'Puppet Intermodal relations TT Puppet

■ Confirmation ■ Contradiction
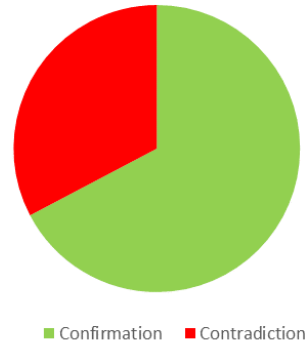
All the ST characters have a high confirmation frequency, in all cases scoring between 100% and 97.1%. As far as the TT is concerned, it seems that the more important the character, the more the percentage of contradiction increases, with Santana having 46.2% of lines in contradiction with the other modes and Little Puppet 25.3%.

Looking at the way the different proportions are distributed along the film sheds some light on this phenomenon.
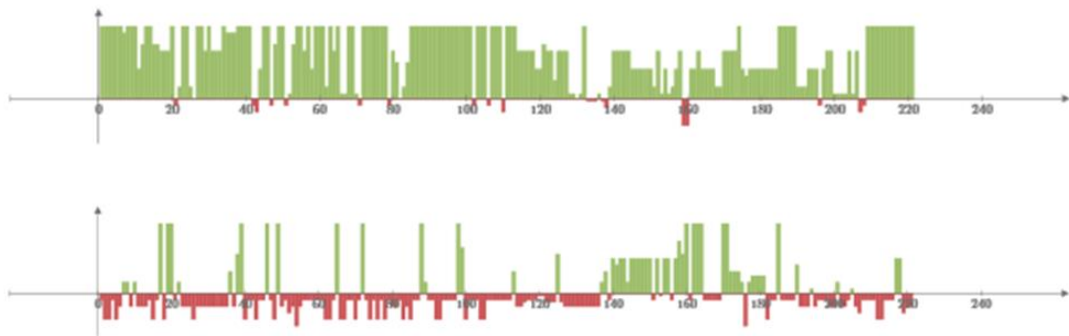
Figure 53 Santana's ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.

As previously discussed, short red bars represent a line that is mainly contradictory with the rest of the modes, but with some degree of confirmation. From the density of the bars, it is easy to see that Santana is the character who has the most lines in the film, as well having one of the highest number of lines in the whole corpus. The only solid confirmation block in TT is obtained when Santana, out of jail, tones down his gangster looks and attitude to interact with family

members and his beloved Julie – she does not like gangbanging, and by the end of the film the audience finds out that she used to be a homegirl herself.

The increase in TT intermodal contradiction derives from the fact that, especially while in jail, he acts like a gang member, dresses like a gang member, only interacts with thugs and drug addicts, but speaks a rather prestigious variety. Certainly, it is not impossible for a criminal to have a high education – and that is why in many cases the contradiction levels are quite low – but TT Santana does not always seem in line with his interlocutors and his speech, at times, diverges from his behaviour. Furthermore, his TT speech pattern does not always have a relation to his phenotypical traits. Indeed, while the amount of contradiction has significantly grown, the balance between confirmation and contradiction has not been subverted. The intention was probably similar to the one behind the translational choices of *Stand and Deliver*. Rather than contextual authenticity, the rendering of Santana seems to pursue a (stereotypical) correspondence with the plot: because he is wiser than the typical jail inmate, he speaks a more prestigious variety.
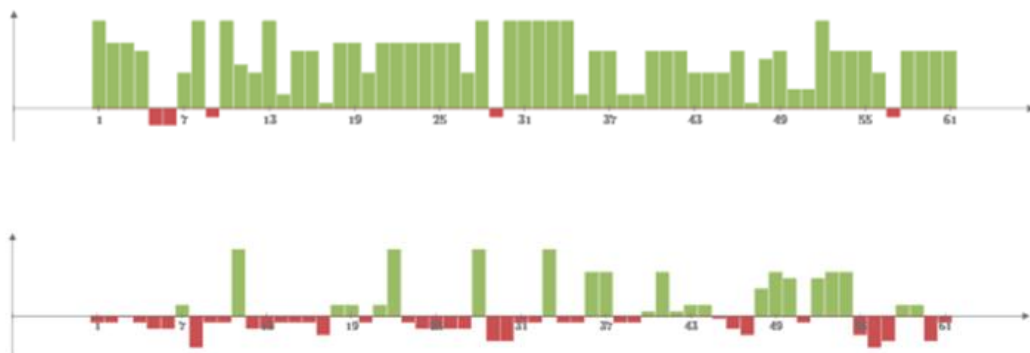
Figure 54 J.D.'s ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.

J.D.'s increased TT contradiction is not as dramatic, a detail explained by the fact that speaking a dominant group variety establishes a relation of confirmation with his phenotypical traits, although it is still contrasting with his interlocutors, behaviour and settings. Conversely, in the ST, he manages to overcome the contrast between his language and his phenotype by acting like a Chicano

gangster even more than the other gang members – eventually he proves to be far crueller than Santana.

Mundo and the Puppet brothers, having a smaller number of lines, experience similar changes in the intermodal relations, although to different extents:
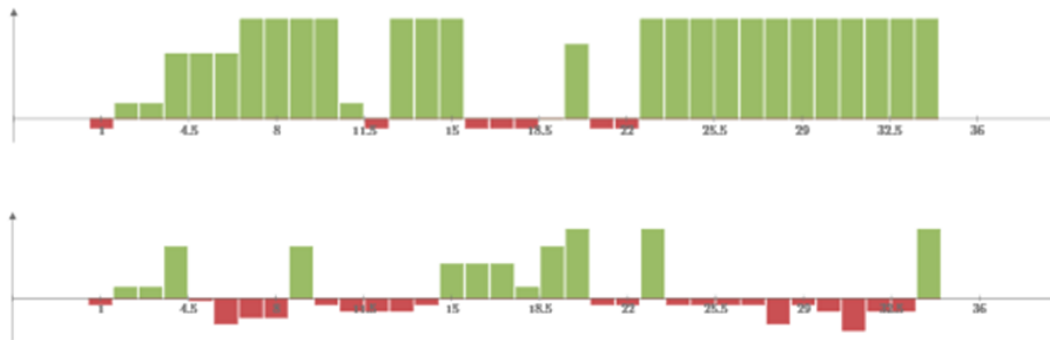

Figure 55 Mundo's ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.
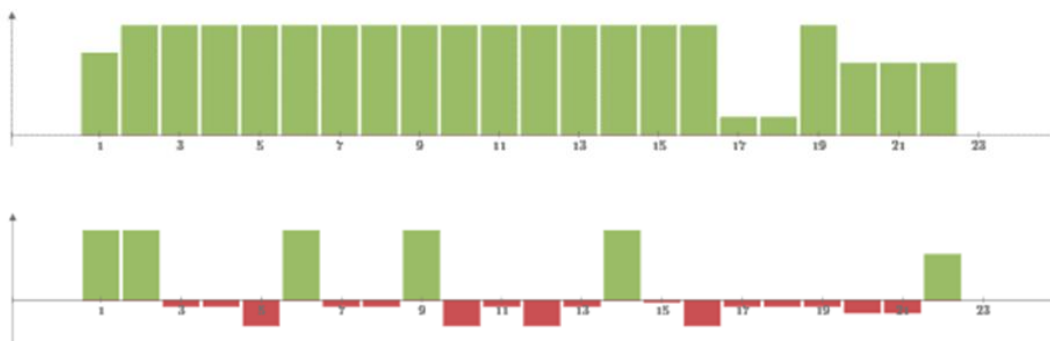

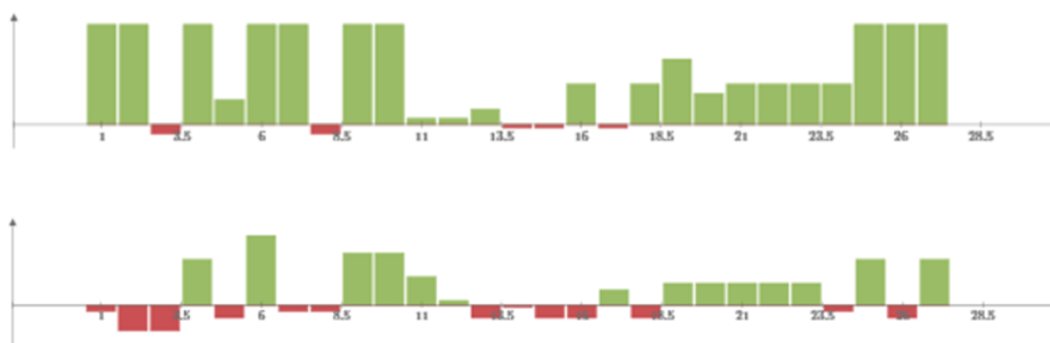*Figure 56 Puppet's ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.*

Figure 57 Little Puppet's ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.

TT Mundo's longest row of lines that contradict the other modes happen when he and the other gang members in jail are about to kill the son of the Italian mafia boss. In the ST they create a very informal situation to deceive Scagnelli's son

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and make him lower his guard. That is why they all act in a friendly, spontaneous manner, but also use many references to CE and Chicano culture in order to confuse him. In the TT, the contradiction is given by his formal language, which contrasts with the whole atmosphere.

ST Puppet nearly always acts according to the context. Only towards the end the confirmation is slightly lower, because he acts unnaturally with his brother (just before killing him). This unnaturalness is dramatized in the TT.

Little Puppet's confirming attitude lowers from the middle of the film, starting with his wedding ceremony. He realises he does not want to be a gangster anymore, gets (stereotypically enough) drunk and high, and acts in a way that is completely out of place, embarrassing his bride and fellow gang members alike. In the ST he does so while still using his vernacular CE, while in the TT he uses a formal language that is in complete contrast with his uncontrolled behaviour.

6.3.3   Sociocultural dimension

American Me is a gangster movie, centred on gangsters' life, particularly its most dramatic aspects. Edward James Olmos, who portrays Santana and is also the director of the film, had already starred in *Stand and Deliver* and *Zoot Suits*. It is possible to hypothesise that the intention was to show that joining a gang is a youth "mistake," caused by the inevitability of encountering gangbanging in the *barrio* as probably the only form of socialisation and peer cohesion. The protagonists state several times that gangbanging is about gaining and keeping respect, and proving themselves to the others. While of course this is the perception they have during their youth, some of them change their mind growing up (Santana and, eventually, the Puppet brothers), but unfortunately organised crime is not something that is easy to extricate oneself from, and they are all invested in a destiny they chose without understanding the consequences – an error that most young kids seem destined to repeat. The film, in fact, ends with the gang initiation rite of a child: he receives his *placa* (the gang tattoo on the hand palm), takes drugs and is taken to his first drive-by shooting. The whole film appears to be conceived to be a painfully "realistic" portrait of the life in the barrio – although the lack of alternative life paths it shows seem to stereotype Chicanos even more even as it attempts to explain their behaviour. This intention

behind the film was probably what motivated the ST linguistic choices: most characters speak a vernacular CE variety, and the only one having the ability to use a more prestigious variety is Santana, who declares that he spent his jail time reading and acquiring awareness on *la raza* and Chicano history and identity. He tries to defend his criminal life by saying that it is a way to defend his people in jail, but eventually he has to admit that Julie is right in saying he is nothing more than "a fucking dope dealer" (American Me 1.35.52).

His main counterpart is J.D., who does anything to be one of the Chicanos, overcoming the initial prejudice of the other Chicanos thanks to Santana's support – but this will not stop J.D. from eventually ordering his friend's killing. J.D.'s desperate attempt to be part of the gang is reflected in his vernacular CE speech patterns and his exaggerated embodiment of an idea of machismo that eventually seems to reflect the distorted idea white people have of what it means to be a Chicano.

The other characters have little space in the film, are less characterised, and their minority substandard speech patterns in the ST echo and resonate with each other and reinforce the visual stereotypes presented in the films (see Chapter 5).

Gangs composed by ethnic minorities of domestic citizens are not the main concern of 1992's Italy, and Mexicans are not a notable ethnic group in Italy (see previous chapter). Consequently, the ethnic aspects of the context might have seemed a minor concern to the translators. Of course, they could count on the fact that most Italians are likely to be familiar with narrations of organised crime with a familiar or local base, be they fictional or coming from the news. In the same year the film was released, the strenuous fight against the Italian mafia carried out by the brave magistrates Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino had culminated in the killing of both in tragic attacks (Pasquini 2016). In fiction, the successful TV series *La Piovra* (the octopus, referring to the numerous tentacles of mafia) had been showing Italians the issue of organised crime's inhumanity. From the United States' cinematic tradition, Italian audiences could count on the image of the *bandido* from the western movies as well as on successful films such as *The Godfather* (1972) and *Goodfellas* (1990), both of which focused on Italian American organised crime. At the same time, Italy had just started dealing with

mass immigration, with the first arrivals of refugees from Albania in 1991 (King and Mai 2013).

From a more translational point of view, the standardising power of the Italian dubbing tradition cannot be underestimated. It was unlikely for a main character to repeatedly violate grammar rules in an audiovisual translated text, because this would have affected the sense of responsibility towards viewers, and "especially young children" (Pavesi and Perego 2006: 106), which was strongly felt by Italian film translators. This probably explains the general tendency to elevating the linguistic prestige of the characters' speech patterns. Nevertheless, the translators of *American Me* have left some traces of the characters' otherness, keeping at least the proportion between multimodal confirmation and contradiction. Given the context, even a little non-standardness may be enough to grasp the communicative meaning and the diegetic functions of the characters.

6.4   Characters in *Blood In Blood Out*

The last film analysed in this corpus displays, as seen in Chapter 5, numerous common points with *American Me*. Both are gangster films, centred on the life of gangbanging Chicanos, and some of the characters between the two films have some overlapping aspects. There are, however, some substantial differences. *Blood In Blood Out*, that centres on the half Chicano Miklo Velka, also follows the life stories of two former gang members who have chosen diverging life paths. The result is a three-hour-long film that relies on several Latino/Chicano stereotypes and presents an ambivalent vision of gangbanging and what it means to be a Chicano from a *barrio*, opening to more possible answers.

6.4.1   Textual dimension

The main characters are Miklo and his two cousins, the half-brothers Cruz and Paco. When Miklo is convicted, he encounters a number of gangsters from different ethnic backgrounds (including the white Aryan Vanguard) – despite his white skin, he wants to join the Chicano gang. Cruz, after being attacked and severely injured by a rival gang, suffers from constant back pain. He deals with it by becoming addicted to heroin, which costs him his opportunity to become a

famous artist and the life of his younger brother Juanito. Paco prefers joining the army to being convicted, which will turn his former friends into enemies and generate identity issues in him. Montana is Miklo's mentor in jail (his character overlaps with Santana in many respects). When he realises that crime is wrong, he will be betrayed and killed by the ones he trusted the most. Popeye is a despicable and slimy gangster, only interested in his personal profit, who develops a deep hatred for Miklo.

Miklo	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (293 lines)	0%	0%	6.6%	1%	3.4%	1.4%	28.3%	49%	10.3%	100%
TT (298 lines)	23%	2.4%	0%	0%	42.9%	16.2%	3.7%	9.5%	2.4%	100%

Miklo has the looks of his white father, but he feels that the blood of his Chicana mother is what really determines his identity. That is why he desperately tries to be accepted by the *Vatos Locos*, the Chicano gang led by his cousin Paco, and later on decides to join the Chicano jail gang *La Onda* from San Quentin. The situation, however, seems to be much more difficult in jail. In fact, once his blood ties with other Chicanos and his gang-like clothing are taken away, no one is initially willing to recognise him as a Chicano. There are only two elements left to make him recognisable as part of the Chicano group: his Vatos Locos tattoo and his linguistic behaviour. That is why nearly 80% of ST Miklo's language is divided between minority oral and minority substandard (28.3% and 49% respectively). He also makes strategic use of Spanish code switching whenever he is required to prove his loyalty to *La Onda* and to his Chicano identity (Renna 2018b). If 10% may not seem much, it is important to bear in mind that Miklo utters around 300 lines in total (making him the most "prolific" character of the corpus). His use of Spanish, not always fluid but used as a means to create solidarity with other Chicanos, echoes the bilingual semi-speaker profile (see

Chapter 3). He sometimes uses the more prestigious minority neutral or exotified standard, especially when he interacts with the authorities (e.g. his parole officers). Miklo is also the only ST character to use dominant speech, although to a minimum extent (dominant oral 3.4% and dominant substandard 1.4%). He only does so when he needs to deceive a member of the Aryan Vanguard to obtain advantages for *La Onda*.

TT Miklo has less than 3% of Spanish utterances, and his speech patterns are shifted to dominant oral (42.9%), followed by dominant neutral standard (23%). Part of his lines remain in the minority area (nearly 15% between minority oral and minority substandard).

Paco	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (241 lines)	0%	0%	8.4%	1.7%	0%	0%	20.5%	61.9%	7.5%	100%
TT (248 lines)	24.2%	1.2%	0%	0%	40.7%	15.3%	2%	14.5%	2%	100%

Despite becoming a detective and a "respectable" member of the society by giving up on gangbanging, ST Paco still has over 80% of his lines falling into minority oral and minority substandard (20.5% and 61.9% respectively). He also adds some minority standard (both neutral and exotified), which remains around 10% of his lines. He does switch to Spanish, although slightly less than his cousin. Linguistically speaking, the two cousins do not seem too far away from each other in the ST. Indeed, at the end of the film, Cruz will point out that Miklo has become the leader of a powerful jail gang in a desperate attempt to imitate Paco's young age deeds (when he was the leader of the *Vatos Locos*). The situation does not change much in the TT, where the two protagonists seem even more similar to each other in terms of frequencies. TT Paco, just like his cousin, has his highest frequency in the dominant oral category, followed by dominant neutral standard. He also keeps some degree of minority oral and substandard (around 15% altogether).

Cruz	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (201 lines)	0%	0%	4%	3%	0%	0%	22.1%	49.2%	21.6%	100%
TT (204 lines)	19.2%	2%	0%	0%	42.4%	11.8%	6.9%	15.8%	2%	100%

ST Cruz's speech pattern is concentrated in the linguistic categories showing off his ethnic heritage. He feels himself to be a proud descendant of Quetzalcoatl (a legendary Aztec divinity, Portillo et al. 1982), and often makes references to the Mexican tradition. Most of his speech is in the minority substandard category (49.2%), but minority oral and Spanish register nearly the same frequency (22.1% and 21.6% respectively). TT Cruz follows a similar pattern to those of his TT half-brother and cousin. Most of his lines are in the dominant oral category, followed by dominant neutral standard, with a sharp fall in his Spanish competence (only 2%). The only notable difference is that more lines were left in the minority oral and substandard categories (slightly less than 25% altogether). Of the three protagonists, he is the one scoring highest in these categories.

Montana	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (79 lines)	0%	0%	24.4%	2.6%	0%	0%	26.9%	30.8%	15.4%	100%
TT (80 lines)	55.7%	5.1%	0%	0%	22.8%	3.8%	0%	10.1%	2.5%	100%

Popeye	Dominant neutral standard	Dominant exotified standard	Minority neutral standard	Minority exotified standard	Dominant oral	Dominant substandard	Minority oral	Minority substandard	Other language	Total
ST (79 lines)	0%	0%	0%	3.3%	0%	0%	8.3%	76.7%	11.7%	100%
TT (80 lines)	16.4%	1.6%	0%	1.6%	27.9%	6.6%	6.6%	32.8%	6.6%	100%

Montana and Popeye are supporting characters with very different roles. Their differences are fully reflected in their ST line categorisation. Montana, like *American Me*'s Santana, is a charismatic leader who has decided to study while in jail. Miklo finds out that he has written an essay about jail reform and is about to write a book about the difficult conditions of Chicanos. Montana speaks an even more prestigious language than Santana, as over 25% of his lines are in the minority standard categories, letting the ST audience presume he has some level of education. Nevertheless, he also has more than 50% of his lines in the minority non-standard categories (26.9% minority oral, 30.8% minority substandard). With 15.4% of lines in Spanish, it is also likely that Montana is bilingual, given that he is able to utter rather complex sentences, e.g. "Quinientos anos hemos sufrido la opresion de nuestra raza. Pero aqui, entre nosotros, vamos a parar ese desmadre. Porque esta tierra es de nosotros! Sangre por sagre!" (For five hundred years we endured the oppression of our race. But now, here, among ourselves, we are going to mend this disaster. Because this land is ours! Blood in, blood out!).

Conversely, as anticipated in the previous chapter, Popeye represents the most odious example of gangster stereotype. In line with the above-mentioned poetics of stereotyping, this means that ST Popeye's lines are almost entirely classifiable as minority substandard (76.7%). Around 10% is registered for both minority oral and Spanish, while the rare instances of minority exotified standard are generally used ironically.

TT Montana is taken to a whole other level, with 55.7% of his lines in the dominant neutral standard category, followed by 22.8% in the dominant oral and

10.1% in the minority substandard. TT Popeye scores highest in the minority substandard category (32.8%), shortly followed by dominant oral (27.9%) and, albeit more distantly, by dominant neutral standard (16.4%).

How were those results obtained?

MIKLO	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	97.1%	98.5%	97.1%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	100%	5.3%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Oral	100%	10%	100%	0%	33.1%	89%
Dom. Subst.	100%	100%	25%	0%	93.8%	56.3%
Min. Oral	97.6%	30.5%	78%	0%	72.7%	54.5%
Min. Subst.	100%	78.2%	82.4%	0%	96.4%	82.1%
Other language	100%	100%	86.7%	85.7%	85.7%	85.7%
Weighted Average	**100%**	**60.7%**	**75.9%**	**24.3%**	**68.2%**	**81.8%**

Miklo follows the pattern already observed in other cases. Phonetics passes from the most recurrent marked feature of his speech to a minor one (from 100% to 24.3%). As a compensation, both lexical and morpho-syntactic items increase their frequency, although acquiring less than 10%. Once again, the TT seems to rely on morpho-syntax to characterise orality.

PACO	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	81.7%	81.7%	81.7%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	100%	5%	10%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	100%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	0%	27.7%	91.1%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	78.9%	55.3%
Min. Oral	98%	32.7%	87.8%	0%	100%	100%
Min. Subst.	100%	87.2%	89.9%	2.8%	91.7%	72.2%
Other language	83.3%	83.3%	72.2%	40%	60%	20%
Weighted Average	**98.7%**	**68.6%**	**80.3%**	**21%**	**60.9%**	**78.2%**

CRUZ	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	100%	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	100%	83.3%	50%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	1.2%	34.9%	88.4%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	87.5%	58.3%
Min. Oral	95.5%	38.6%	88.6%	0%	100%	78.6%
Min. Subst.	100%	91.8%	95.9%	3.1%	93.8%	71.9%
Other language	97.7%	97.7%	83.7%	75%	75%	75%
Weighted Average	**99%**	**79.9%**	**88.9%**	**21.7%**	**69.5%**	**81.8%**

Paco, like *American Me*'s Mundo and Little Puppet, undergoes a general toning down, as all his marked features lose some degree of importance: lexicon drops from nearly 100% to just above 20%. While Mundo's less marked translation may be a consequence of his secondary role, in Paco's case it might be an attempt to take his role change into account – from gangster to detective. A similar destiny, however, is followed by TT Cruz, whose rendering is generally toned down. In both cases, the TT has the highest frequencies in the morpho-syntax.

MONTANA	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	75%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	78.9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	0%	22.2%	83.3%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	33.3%
Min. Oral	100%	33.3%	85.7%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Subst.	100%	83.3%	66.7%	0%	100%	50%
Other language	75%	75%	66.7%	100%	100%	100%
Weighted Average	**91%**	**48.7%**	**53.8%**	**58.2%**	**81%**	**83.5%**

POPEYE	Phonetics ST	Lexicon ST	Morpho-syntax ST	Phonetics TT	Lexicon TT	Morpho-syntax TT
Dom. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Dom. Exot. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Min. Neut. Stand.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Min. Exot. Stand.	100%	50%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Dom. Oral	0%	0%	0%	0%	29.4%	100%
Dom. Subst.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	75%
Min. Oral	100%	40%	80%	25%	100%	100%
Min. Subst.	100%	95.7%	95.7%	5%	95%	90%
Other language	100%	100%	85.7%	100%	100%	100%
Weighted Average	100%	90%	90%	26.2%	78.7%	93.4%

TT Montana seems to follow the general trend of compensating for the lack of phonetics with an increased morpho-syntax. However, given that most of his lines are in the dominant neutral standard, his phonetic value is decreased but not as dramatically as in other cases so far analysed. Furthermore, both morpho-syntactic and lexical elements have sensibly increased in the target version. TT Popeye has only a slight increase of TT morpho-syntax, a trend in contrast with phonetic and lexical items – both having a lower frequency in the TT.
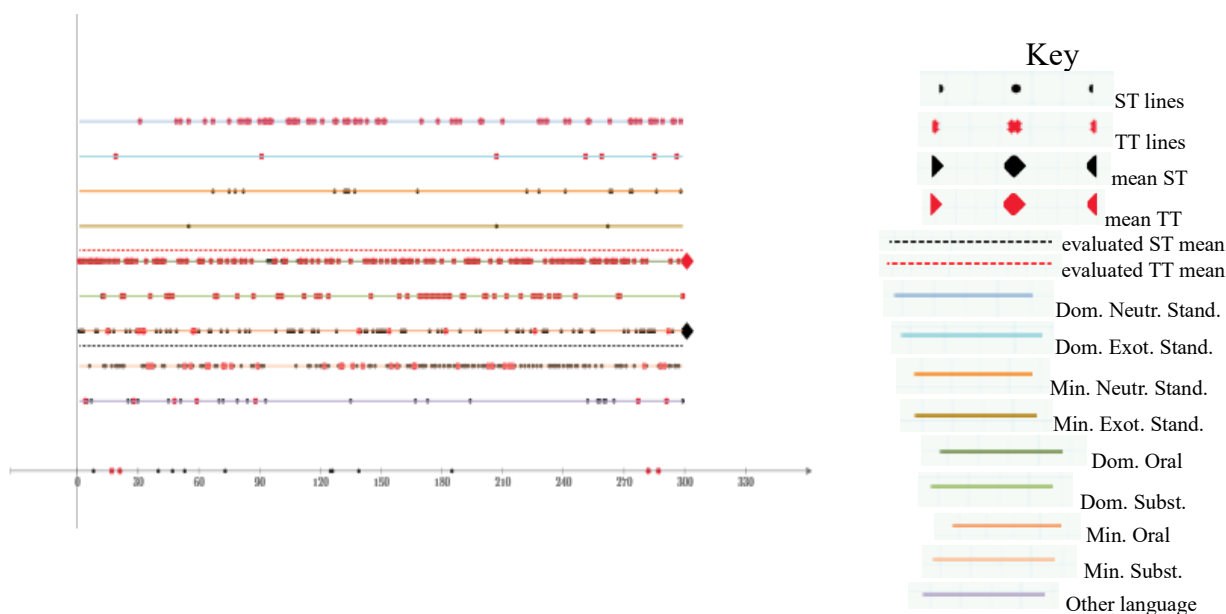
Figure 58 Miklo's textual scatter plot.

ST Miklo's lines are generally split between minority substandard and minority oral, although his use of more prestigious categories pushes his average speech slightly closer to the minority oral. The positioning of the black dots on the graph above demonstrates the way in which the other varieties are used in specific moments, thus underlining their diegetic function in the plot. Miklo uses minority neutral standard when trying to persuade the parole officer of his successful rehabilitation in jail, and Spanish when trying to enter Vatos Locos and then *La Onda*, and towards the end as well when affirming his leadership of La Onda. The few TT dominant lines correspond to his infiltration in the Aryan Vanguard to kill one of their most dangerous members. TT Miklo's lines (the red dots) are widespread, reaching almost every line in the graph – which means he used at least one of almost all the varieties included in the scheme. However, the highest concentration of lines is in the dominant oral category, as shown clearly by the position of his average values. The results suggest that Miklo might have been translated through the use of centralisation and, to a minor extent, discourse standardisation, as proven by the evident increase in dominant neutral standard.
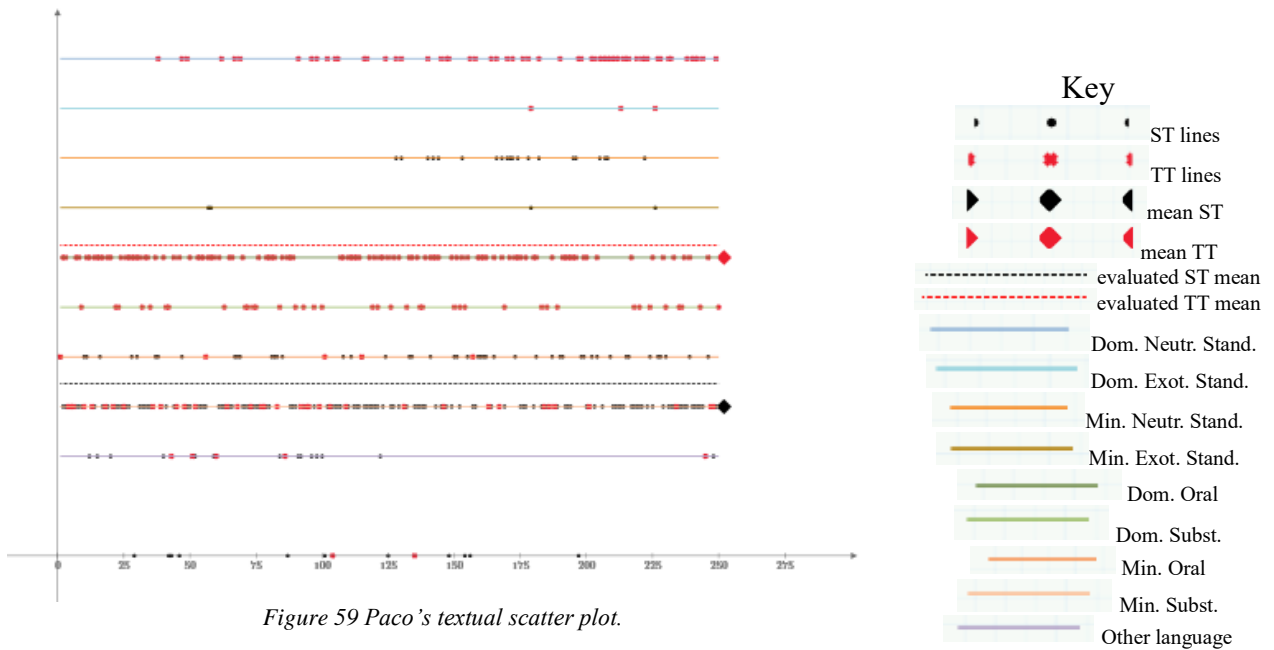
Figure 59 Paco's textual scatter plot.
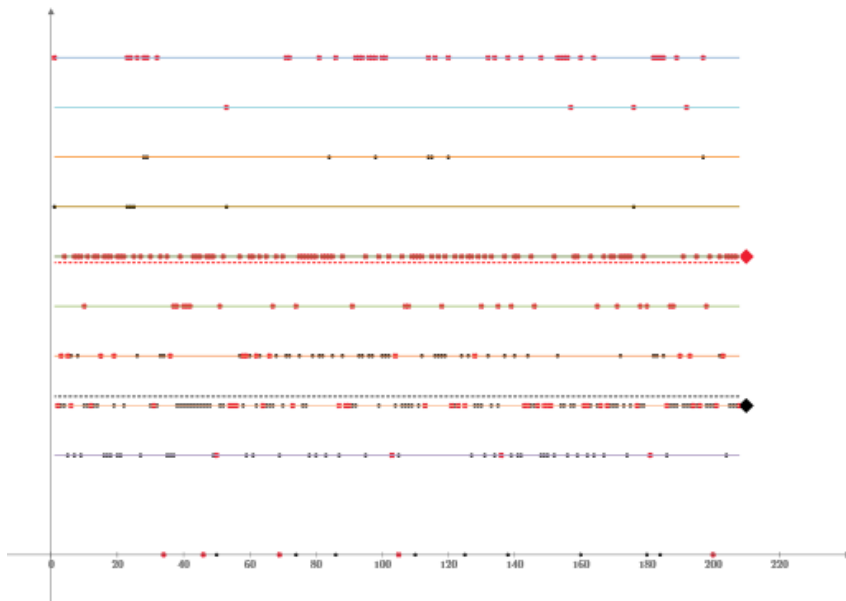
Figure 60 Cruz's textual scatter plot.

The two half-brothers Paco and Cruz were translated similarly to the main character Miklo. None of the two, however, ever speaks a dominant variety in the ST. Paco, despite his change of status, does not significantly change his way of speaking. In the same way he does not really change his attitude, but only directs it towards a more noble cause. The scatter plot visualises the fact that, shortly after his "conversion" to honest citizenship, Paco stops using Spanish.

Cruz passes from *cholo* to promising painter from the *barrio*, then to heroin addict. Eventually, after obtaining his family's forgiveness, he manages to quit drugs and tries to inspire Paco to let go of his anger and sense of guilt. Indeed, both Miklo imprisoning and disablement (Paco shoots Miklo's leg off during a theft carried out by the latter) and Cruz's spine damage and heroin addiction are more or less directly caused by Paco's youthful rashness.

Both the half-brothers have been translated, like Miklo, through centralisation and, to a minor extent, through discourse standardisation.

Figure 61 Montana's textual scatter plot.

Figure 62 Popeye's textual scatter plot.
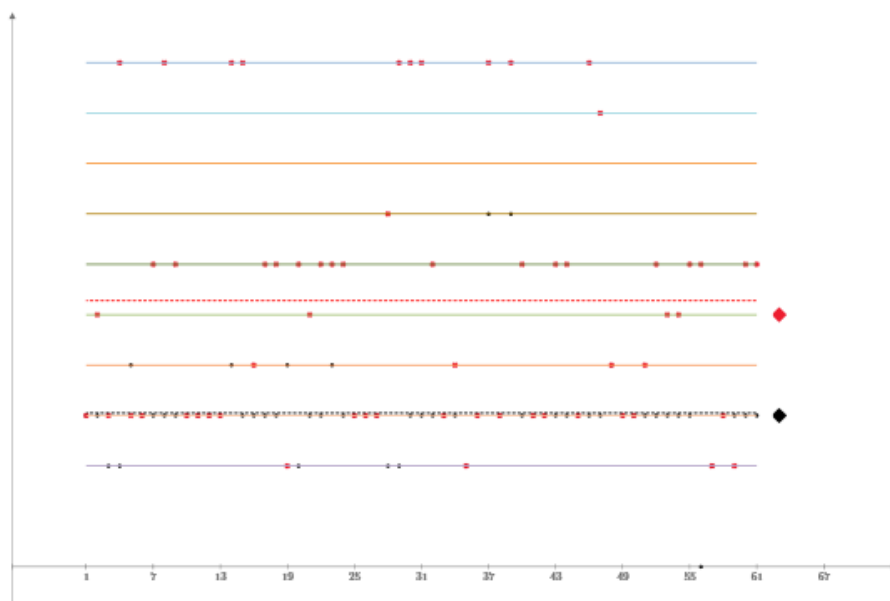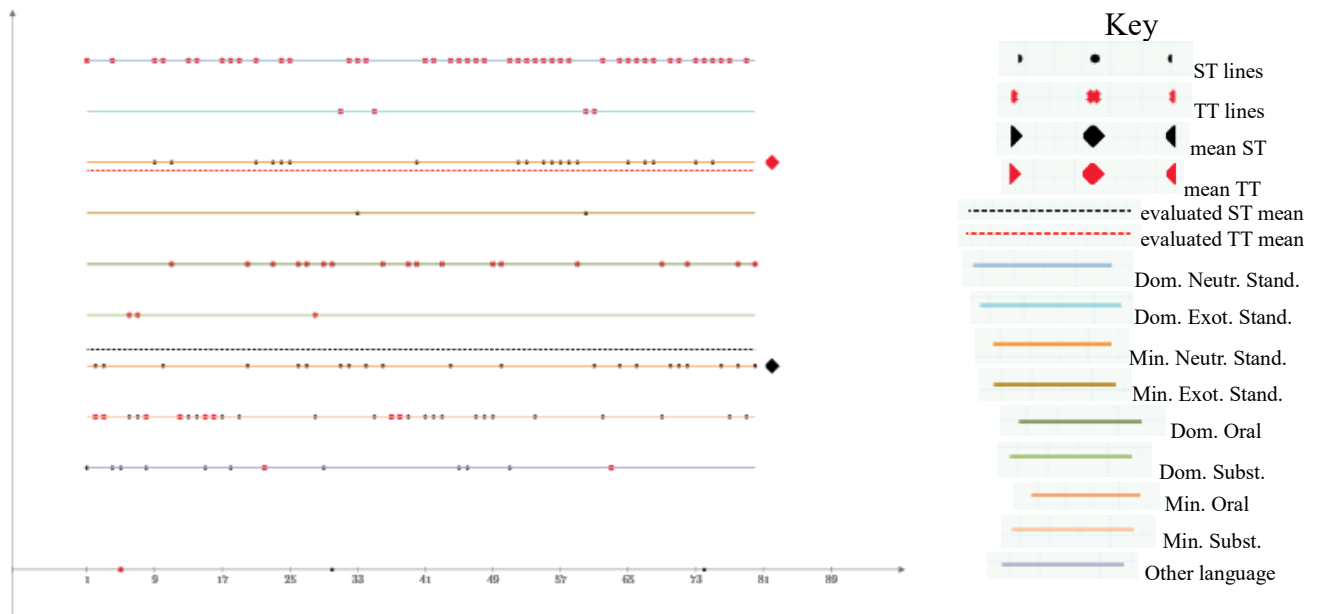
Montana is the character that has undergone the most dramatic transformation, since most of his TT lines are in the dominant neutral standard category. However, many of his lines are positioned further down the prestige scale: this ensures that some traces of non-standardness are left in his TT speech pattern.

Overall, the way his lines were translated is not consistent: the extreme fluctuation of his lines generates an anomaly in the calculation, which places his average TT speech in a position where no TT lines can actually be found in the scatter plot. This mathematical phenomenon (the graphs are generated automatically by Mathcad) might trigger reflection concerning the way such a dichotomic translation is perceived by the target audience.

Popeye's translated version has a certain degree of fluctuation as well. However, the fact that many of his lines were left in the minority substandard category ensures that his average TT speech does not go any further than dominant substandard.

This means that Popeye was translated with a not-so-strong centralisation strategy, while Montana has mainly been dealt with through discourse standardisation, although some centralisation has taken place, leaving traces of Montana's ST speech.

6.4.2 Diegetic dimension

Did the textual results imply modifications in the intermodal relations? So far, the only character able to maintain the same relationships between textual and non-textual in both ST and TT was *Colors*' Frog.
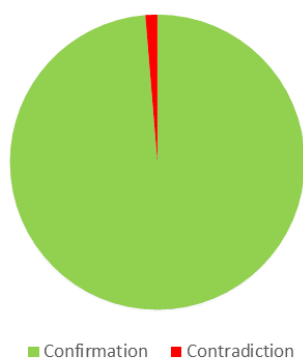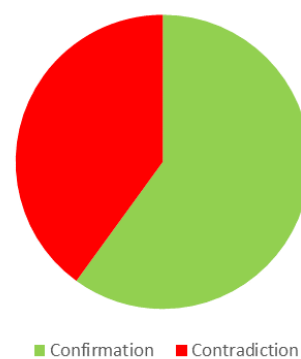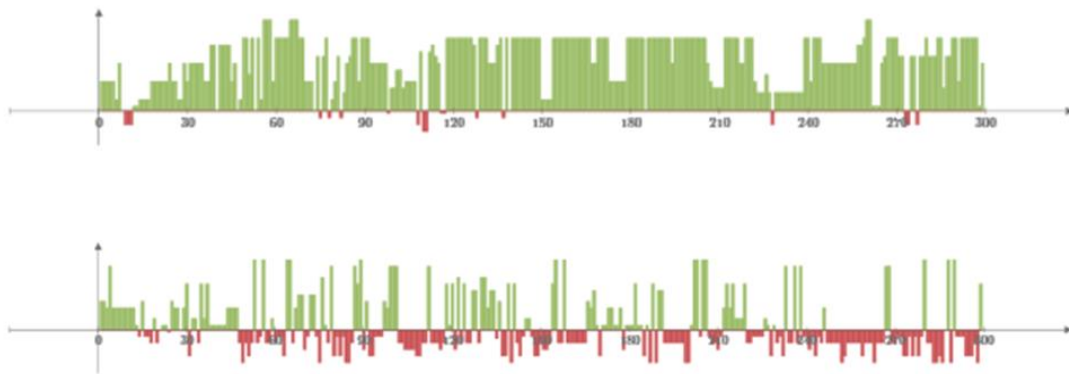
Figure 63 Miklo's ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.
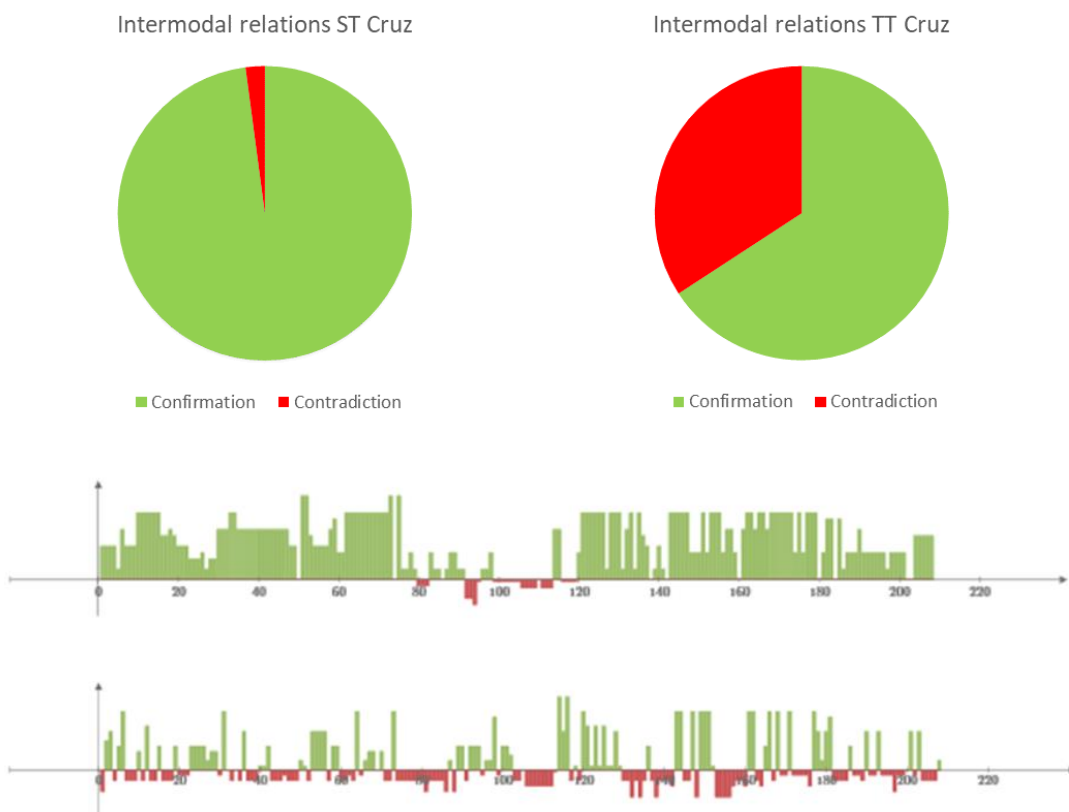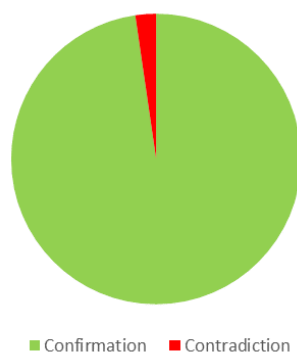

Figure 64 Cruz's ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.

Despite the fact that TT Miklo speaks a dominant variety that may seem more suited to his phenotypical trait, it is still in contradiction with other elements such as costumes and make-up, setting, interlocutors, behaviour, and music (which has a greater role in this film than in the others). That is why Miklo's contradiction has shot up to 40% in the TT from the very low percentage of the ST (1.3%). Miklo spends the whole film behaving like a Chicano gangster, interacting with

them and sharing their same spaces. Indeed, phenotype is most often the only contrasting element in the ST, which explains the low contradiction frequency. Although at risk, however, the proportion has not been subverted. Looking at the alternation of confirmation and contradiction during the film, it is possible to observe that TT contradictions are almost always counterbalanced by high confirmation bars – although the perception of Miklo's TT confirmation might be somewhat influenced by his phenotypical traits. The only longer block of TT contradiction happens in the last quarter, when Miklo argues with Montana and then persuades Magic to conspire against their leader, who has lost his strength (just like *American Me*'s Santana). In the ST Miklo alternates minority substandard and Spanish, while the TT lines are further up in the prestige scale.

Passing from 2.1% to 34.2%, Cruz's contradiction percentage changed in a similar way to Miklo's. The growth in contradictory relations are due to Cruz's full and constant visual immersion in the environment of East Los Angeles, as well as to his behaviour and usual attire. In ST Cruz, the only long moments of contradiction are part of the plot and happen when Cruz, who has nearly made it as a painter, launches his first exhibition. He interacts with white people in an elegant building and tries his best to be credible, but then his friends from the *barrio* visit him, hoping to be given some cash to buy drugs. The situation causes a series of contradictions aiming at underlining the awkwardness of adapting to a different social environment. Just like TT Miklo, TT Cruz alternates confirmation and contradiction throughout the film.
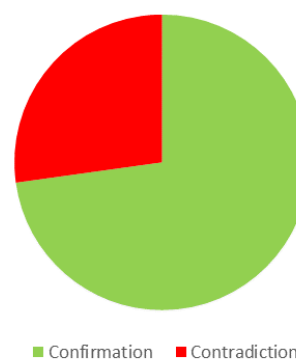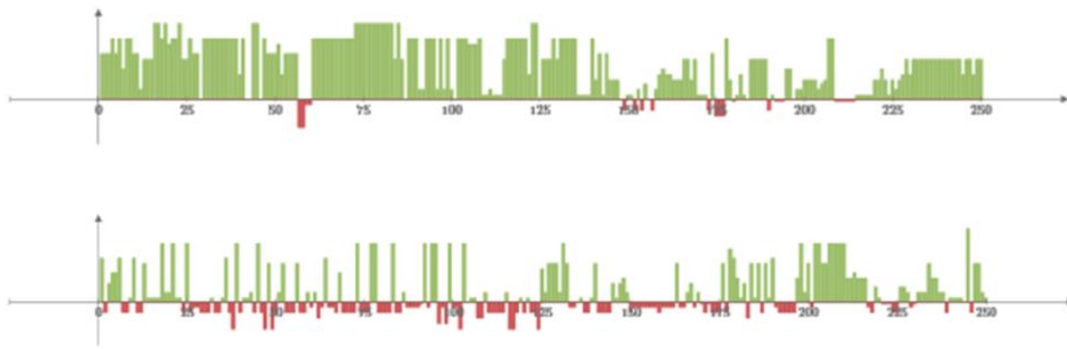
Figure 65 Paco's ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.
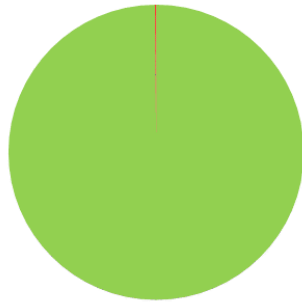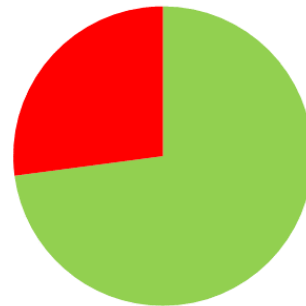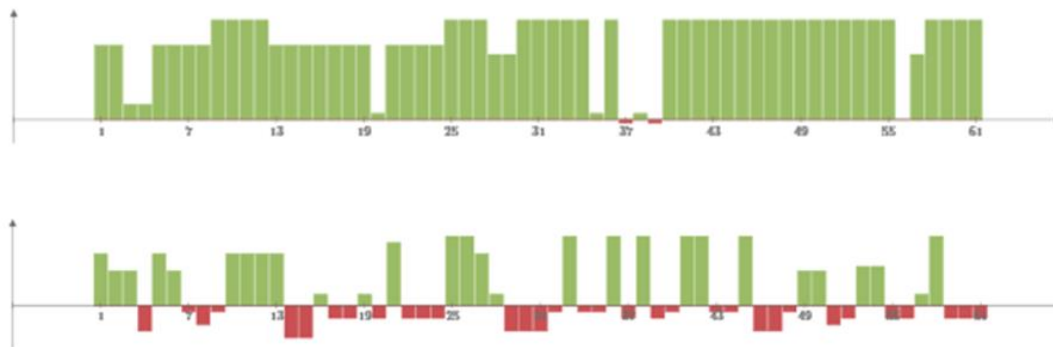

Figure 66 Popeye's ST and TT alternation of intermodal confirmation and contradiction in the film.

Paco and Popeye have scored similarly, although for different reasons. Despite his Anglo fashion attire after abandoning the gang, Paco's interlocutors, as well as the settings he moves in, are, for the most part, still the same as they were when he led the *Vatos Locos*. He only seldom sits at his desk at the Police Department, and he is most often "out on the streets." This ensures that his ST minority substandard average speech is in confirmation with his surroundings, as well as

with his own behaviour. He still keeps his aggressive attitude, and is often seen being particularly rude to criminals – almost as if through mistreating them he was punishing himself for what he used to be.

ST Popeye is barely ever in contradiction with the other modes: he acts and speaks like a stereotypical Chicano thug, and he is either in jail, in a squalid pad (under the effect of drugs), or trying to act like a boss on the streets – when he does not really have much talent and only manages to deceive his own *carnales,* who trust him. The only time he uses a higher-prestige language he does so ironically, pretending to be innocent while being searched by Paco. TT Popeye, like the other characters of the film, constantly fluctuates between confirmation and contradiction.

6.4.3   Sociocultural dimension

Blood In Blood Out was released just one year after *American Me*, and both share several themes and inspirations (see previous chapter). The two films thus come from the same historical background and are immersed in the same target context. However, *Blood In Blood Out* offers some of psychological insight into more than one character, each of them embodying some stereotypes about Chicanos. Miklo is the "white guy" who wants to be Chicano: in his mind, to be a Chicano means to be a gangster, and he manages to become the best, the most powerful of them all. This shows that white people can be just as cruel and ruthless, while indirectly implying that white people are so superior that they can become the leaders of a Chicano gang (see previous chapter). Another interpretation is that Miklo embodies the white prejudice associating Chicano lifestyle with gangbanging, while his two Chicano cousins eventually move away from the stereotype. Popeye is the most stereotyped, close to those ruthless and de-humanised *bandidos* from the western tradition (Renna 2018c), while also being comedic in his exaggerated behaviours, e.g. before attempting to rape[76] Miklo, he pushes him to the ground and exclaims: "All right, you white bitch. Gimme some *chon chon*!"[77] Cruz

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[76] In *American Me*, there are three rape scenes, much more tragic than the one in *Blood In Blood Out*, where Popeye is interrupted by Montana before he can do anything to Miklo, and in general rapes in the film are only a threat, which never actually happen.

[77] Presumably from Spanish *cojones* (testicles), from which *chones* (underwear), it is a rude

embodies the psychological weakness of Chicanos who, unable to take the pain, have to resort to drugs – often causing tragic events. Paco represents the aggressiveness and the machismo of Chicano males: even after becoming a police officer, rather than pursuing justice with a rational attitude (i.e. like a stereotypical white hero), he remains short-tempered, and at times bullies the gangsters. Montana, who has acquired a remarkable cultural level and tries to preach liberation of the Chicano from the chains of organised crime, is assassinated by those he was trying to save.

Blood In Blood Out seems overall less dramatic in its depiction of gangbanging. Two out of three protagonists find their way out of gangbanging, while the third one deliberately decides to remain a gangbanger because he has found a new "family" in *La Onda*.

Given the different realities of the two audiences, the translated stereotype had to rely on new backgrounds. The original stereotype is strongly ethno-linguistic and culturally embedded. It is centred on the idea of *La Raza*: derived from the theory of *La Raza Cósmica* by Vasconcelos (1925, 1979), this term has come to represent people of Mexican descent, wherever they were born and live, and it also embodies the idea of solidarity among Mexican Americans. That is why Miklo, once discriminated against for his skin colour and then leader of a Chicano gang, says to his cousin Paco that he thanks him for sending him to jail, because it is there that he found "the strength of *La Raza*." In a pilot study that is a qualitative/quantitative analysis of some aspects of Miklo's speech patterns, this author discovered an abundant use of family-related terms in his TT version (Renna 2018b: 262). This corroborates the hypothesis already proposed for *American Me*: associating the Chicano gangsters with the more familiar Italian and Italian American organised crime may have had some role in the choice of

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invitation to have a sexual intercourse (cfr. Cagliero and Spallino 2010: 154). This somewhat ridiculous line seems to have attracted the U.S. audience's attention: when looking up the expression on the online *Urban Dictionary*, the first three entries all make reference to Popeye's line: https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=chon+chon (last visited November 30th 2018).

centralising the gangsters towards the dominant ethnic group, while keeping their language below standard.

After analysing the films one by one, it is possible to draw some more general conclusions about the whole corpus.

6.5   Some considerations on the overall results

The framework set out for this thesis has produced relevant information concerning these films and the way they were translated into Italian.

However, in no way should the differences between ST and TT be considered a "failure" of the translation – at least, not before this has been proved by reception studies on all possible kinds of audience. Having analysed most of the movies featuring the Chicano gangster character in the 1988-1993 period, it is possible to suggest some generalisations about the whole corpus that can serve as a starting point rather than as a definitive conclusion.

From a textual point of view, the fourteen characters analysed across the 4 films behaved in similar ways across all of the source versions. Most of their speech patterns are positioned in the minority substandard category in quite a clear-cut way, with only a few exceptions: Santana (*American Me*) and Montana (*Blood In Blood Out*) speak a more prestigious variety: Santana's average speech is somewhere in between dominant substandard and dominant oral, while Montana's average is positioned on the minority oral. Mundo from *American Me*, with his recurrent Spanish switches, tends slightly towards the "Other language" category. All the others, despite their (more or less occasional) variation, remain in the minority substandard. This confirms Fought's (2002) view on films starring Chicanos: they often portray gangsters, and they are particularly keen on reproducing the most vernacular subvarieties of CE possible.

The TT results are less regular. Two cases behave in completely different ways from the rest and from each other: *Colors*' TT Frog is the only one steadily remaining in the minority non-standard area, with an average b1etween oral and substandard. Conversely, *Blood In Blood Out*'s Montana scores are much higher, as his average speech is in the standard spectrum. Another case of its own is Angel from *Stand and Deliver*, whose TT lines are in the dominant oral category,

but also tend towards the Standard area. All other TT characters are usually divided between dominant oral and dominant substandard. In particular, the main characters (Angel, Santana, Miklo, Paco and Cruz) are more or less evidently placed in the dominant oral category, while many among the secondary ones, e.g. J.D., Mundo, Little Puppet and Popeye, are in the dominant substandard category. The only secondary characters in different categories are the above-mentioned Montana, Puppet, whose average is dominant oral, and Chuco, somewhere in between dominant oral and substandard.

The way these linguistic categories were linguistically rendered shows another regularity as well: the source texts rely on phonetics to represent the linguistic non-standardness of the characters, as the overall weighted average of the ST recurrence of phonetics is 98.9%. Considering that most of the characters speak far below standard, this indicates that phonetics is seen as an effective marker of low socio-cultural and educational level, confirming (at least in the fictional worlds created in these films) the critical linguistic theories identifying the perception of "accent" as a potential cause of discrimination against minorities (Lippi-Green 1997; Macedo et al. 2003). However, all the ST linguistic features are quite recurrent: the overall morpho-syntax weighted average use is 79.6%, while with a 72.9%. the lexicon is just slightly lower.

The TT versions have their specificities. Firstly, the most recurrent variety is more prestigious than the one of the ST; secondly, *dubbese* phonetics hardly manages to represent any variety apart from its own standardised fictional non-localised self; lastly, *dubbese* imposes other linguistic boundaries (which will be discussed later in this paragraph). The study carried out here has shown that the linguistic feature most used to convey a certain TT fictional linguistic variety in this corpus is morpho-syntax, with an overall weighted average of 85.6%, in agreement with previous studies on the frequent use of morpho-syntactic features (especially dislocation) in Italian dubbing as a marker of orality (Pavesi and Perego, 2006). Lexical items, which do not seem to have significantly changed from those of the ST, follow with an overall weighted average of 71.8%. The pilot studies carried out by this author had already shown a tendency to keep the distinguishing lexicon of the Chicano gangster more or less unchanged (Renna 2018a; Renna

2018b; Renna forthcoming). The most evident change is the one in the use of phonetics in the TT: given that *dubbese* has a rather strict set of non-written rules imposing a non-localised elocution to the dubbing actors, it does not seem surprising that phonetics is only a marker of standardness (with the sole exception of Moriones dubbing Frog), thus scoring a rather low 29% overall weighted average.

In the light of these results, it is possible to hypothesise that most characters were translated with two strategies in mind. The first is centralisation: as previously discussed, it is a preservation strategy that diminishes the number of non-standard linguistic features of the character, while still leaving some traces of his lower socio-cultural positioning. The only evident exception is Frog, translated alternating maintenance and even decentralisation: the dubbed character, rather than a Chicano, may sound like a stereotyped immigrant of Hispanic origin.

Centralisation is the main strategy for eleven characters out of fourteen. The second recurrent strategy was discourse standardisation, but its use is not omnipresent. Thus, it would be wrong to assume that these characters speak like highly educated professionals from a dominant ethnic group: several traces of non-standardness and even some traces of their ethnic belonging were left for the audience to create a link with the rest of the audiovisual product.

The connection between the language and the other modes was also taken into consideration. The ST has an overwhelming majority of lines in confirmation with costumes and make-up, phenotype, behaviour, setting, interlocutors, and music. Confirmation in the ST scored 97% against a mere 3% of contradiction. This does not mean that there are no contradictions whatsoever. While the contradictory elements may exist, they are almost always counterbalanced by others that confirm or complement the use of a certain linguistic variety. For example, when the white Miklo or J.D. talk like Chicanos, this is in constant contradiction with their phenotypical traits: however, all the other elements confirm and validate their use of vernacular CE as the most adequate variety to use, for example, at a Chicano gang meeting in an East Los Angeles *barrio*. Usually, ST contradiction is required by the plot: for example, when Angel and Chuco enter Escalante's class late, acting and talking like thugs, their contradictory relation with the

surroundings has a specific communicative meaning, as it expresses the incompatibility between gangbanging attitudes and a successful education.

Growing contradiction in the TT, however, might imply some degrees of danger. An excess of contradiction may create a disruption between textual and diegetic dimensions, breaking the non-written agreement between translators and audience. Where is the threshold? Is it really possible to draw a line beyond which a translated text is nonsense? Probably the answer depends on what genre, product and audience are taken into consideration.

In the films analysed here, there is undoubtedly a growth in contradictory relations. However, apart from Montana's case, the ratio is kept: 68% confirmation versus 32% of contradiction. Certainly, contradiction happens around ten times more often in the TT, but confirmation is still achieved in most of the lines. There is room to suggest that the translation has conveyed at least part of the communicative meaning of the source.

In order to understand translation choices, however, it is important to look at the broader sociocultural context that has generated a certain translation. Ramos Pinto (2017) suggests taking some aspects into consideration, and they are all relevant to this study.

The first one is the *ideological context* that generated the translation, which may or may not "be supportive of creative uses of discourse" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 30). Research so far carried out on the Italian dubbing culture has shown that, at least in the period considered here, it strongly hinged upon a non-written set of rules and conventions that limit the liberties in TT implementing (Chaume 2004; Freddi and Perego 2006; Antonini 2008; Bucaria 2008). Another important factor to take into consideration is the status granted to dubbing translators: "where the translator is assumed to be a creative agent, s/he will feel more comfortable to recreate non-standard discourse in the TT than in contexts where the translator fears that the deviation encountered in the TT will be interpreted as a bad translation" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 30). This factor often works together with the translators' working condition in creating a more or less favourable environment for innovation. As explained by Chiaro, while "the first translation is usually word for word […] it is the adaptor or 'dubbing translator' who subsequently adjusts

the rough translation to make it sound like natural target language dialogue" (Chiaro 2008: 145). Although these two processes may be carried out by the same person, they are still part of a sort of industrial project directed by a manager, who has to negotiate concrete aspects such as time schedule and costs; she/he also is in charge of casting for dubbing actors. Moreover, the dubbing actors usually have the freedom to make their own changes to the screenplay they are given, and the dubbing directors can always intervene with their opinion about the text. Thus, can be hard to attribute the dubbed film to a specific person, as it is the product of a complex apparatus, where each part acts according to different purposes. Often, those purposes tend to drift very far away from textual accuracy or quality and to penalise the translators with fairly harsh working conditions, including tight deadlines and low wages (Antonini 2008: 99).[78] "Legibility and intelligibility challenges" (Ramos Pinto 2017: 30) are also crucial: as anticipated in the previous paragraph, the main objective in creating a script for dubbing is speakability and performability for the dubbing actors, which is crucial to save time and money in the dubbing phase (Freddi and Perego 2006: 106). In this sense, elements like a comfortable lip-sync may be more urgent than linguistic accuracy in representing a linguistic minority.

Other elements expand even beyond the dubbing industry itself. One example is the difference between source and target cultures (Hatim 1990; Ramos Pinto 2017). As previously discussed, the average Italian audience have little or no knowledge of the Chicanos, and also have a relatively new experience of immigration in the contemporary era: they cannot be assumed to be particularly familiar with contact varieties developing among local peoples of foreign descent.

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[78] Although the issue of the working conditions of audiovisual translation workers deserves a study of its own, it is possible to mention one example of how their expertise and work are overlooked: the Italian collective national contract of dubbing workers does not foresee the existence of the professional figure of the "translator", as it only mentions those of: dubbing actor, dubbing director, dubbing assistant and dialogue adapter:

http://www.saislc.cgil.it/

index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=41&Itemid=97 (last visited October 10th, 2017).

Moreover, as seen in the previous chapter, Italy has a different migration history where Mexicans play a minor role (Reyneri 2011: 99–100; Calvanese 2011: 34).

Other important factors concern the target audience's profile (Rosa 2004) and the expected function of target product (Ramos Pinto 2010), whose specificities for this corpus can only be hypothesised, and deserve specific historical/sociocultural research to be answered properly. Profiling the target audience is a complex process of paramount importance for the translator. If the people behind the translation of the movies in this corpus expected the audience not to be too concerned with linguistic authenticity, this might further justify opting for leaving just enough traces for the audience to understand that some kind of low sociocultural level minority group was involved. This is especially true if the imagined function of the product is first of all entertainment, as is easy to assume with action or crime films, or even for a film like *Stand and Deliver*, that follows an established and stereotyped genre tradition.

Overall, the understanding of an audiovisual product is a composite process (see Chapter 5), which means that a whole product can be more than a mere sum of its parts or, as Ramos Pinto (2017: 27) puts it: "Despite the lack of empirical evidence on how viewers would interpret this scene […], our experience as viewers tells us that there is room for the intended interpretation of both the communicative meanings and associated functions to be accomplished."

Conclusion

The design of a stereotyped character in an audiovisual product is a complex and multi-layered process, which passes through both textual and non-textual modes. Its translation for a new context requires strategies that take all the modes into consideration.

This thesis was aimed to learn more about character (re)design from source to target multimodal text, taking the stereotype of the Chicano gangster as a case study. The sociocultural context generating the source text is not the same as the one in which the target text will be presented. Similarly, each language has its own ways to display varying degrees of prestige, and each fictional language has its rules and conventions. The analysis of the communicative meaning carried out here has shown that this fact has influenced the way the Chicano gangster stereotype was presented in the American and the Italian context, but not to the extent that it is completely misrepresented in the target version.

This study took several aspects into account in order to avoid simplistic judgements based on partial elements, in compliance with the guidelines offered by descriptive translation studies and corpus linguistics. It was necessary to build a framework able to analyse the character design and redesign in source and target text in a corpus of films, considering both textual and non-textual aspects of the audiovisual product at the same time. This required the construction of a corpus, selected through precise criteria, the transcription of both the source and target versions, and the implementation of a tagging system that put the different modes of the films in relation. This allowed the answering of the initial questions, at least regarding the Chicano gangster stereotype between 1988 and 1993.

The first question concerned the variety used in the source and target text. The analysis carried out here showed that the source text tends to create a fictional Chicano English that is accurate, but partial: in most cases, the gangsters spoke a low-prestige variety, whose communicative function was to show their educational and sociocultural positioning at the margin of the American society – a Hallidayan "anti-society" (1978), embodying the antithesis to the Anglo American values. The target text version was not as consistently marginalised as the source text: Indeed, the Italian Chicano gangsters' speech tends to fluctuate

from the most standardised and prestigious varieties to the least prestigious ones, resulting in a fictional orality that, although mostly deprived of its ethnic markers, still preserves some traces of the Mexican heritage of its speakers.

The second question concerned the strategies used by the translators to import the Chicano gangsters into a different sociocultural context. The data analysed here showed that most often the strategies created a tension between neutralisation, in the form of discourse standardisation, and preservation, in the form of centralisation. Centralisation proved to be the most used strategy, and retaining non-standard elements of the source text, but in smaller quantities or reducing their impact.

The answer to the first two questions, however, required the answering of another question concerning the type of features that marked a certain line as belonging to a specific variety. The source text showed a strong reliance on phonetics, omnipresent testifiers of Chicanos as speakers of "English with an accent" (Lippi-Green 1997), but the other features were also recurrent. The target text, certainly because of the influence of the dubbese tradition, rarely relied on phonetics, revealing a strong preference for morpho-syntax as the marker of non-standardness, followed by lexicon. Lexicon, on the contrary, did not change much in frequency from source to target text.

These questions concerned the textual dimension, and the following step of the work consisted in putting text in relation with the other modes of the film, identified through the analysis of Chapter 5. The relations between different modes in both source and target text constituted the diegetic dimension. The relations considered were contradiction and confirmation, the latter further divided between equivalence and complementarity.

The data analysed in this thesis showed that the source versions most often put textual and non-textual in confirmation with each other: the characters, talking, looking, and acting exactly like the stereotype they embodied, were most often situated in stereotypical environments, surrounded by stereotypical interlocutors and stereotypical music. This high frequency of confirmation was partly changed in the target text, where the contradictory relations sensibly increased in most characters. However, almost never was the ratio between confirmation and

contradiction completely subverted: the textual tension between centralisation and standardisation resulted in a less extreme Chicano gangster stereotype, which still managed not to detach from its diegetic context. Once again, this author wishes to underline here that this work did not aim to analyse the real language of Chicanos, which has been done through on-field research by other authors (e.g. Fought 2003), but to explore the communicative meaning of a fictional version of Chicano English in a fictional context, and its recreation into a fictional Italian. The real-life language is a starting point, a term of comparison to understand how the language was deployed in the cinematic context here analysed.

According to Ramos Pinto (2017) and Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming), the analysis would be completed by another dimension: the sociocultural dimension, focusing on the extratextual elements that influence the translators in their work. Since this thesis was mainly aimed at constructing a framework for product-based analysis, however, the sociocultural dimension was only suggested here, based on what is already known in terms of history of the source and target cultures and of dubbing tradition and conventions in Italy. Certainly, this study would immensely benefit from a more thorough investigation on this dimension, which could be carried out in various ways. Firstly, finding the professionals who worked on these films and interviewing them could add precious contextual information on the way the translations were carried out. However, finding the actual people that worked on these projects could turn out time-consuming, costly, and these professionals would not necessarily be available for an interview or even be possible to find. Should this be impossible, an alternative could be interviewing people who worked on similar and/or contemporary projects (between the late 1980s and early 1990s), and asking them for more general information concerning the dubbing policies. A sociocultural context, however, does not only consist of translators/dubbing actors, as the audience is also key to understanding whether the results obtained here correspond to the viewers' perception. In this sense, a reception study would be invaluable for this research. A relevant option is searching for people that could belong to the imagined audience of the films, e.g. men between 25 and 55 years of age, dividing them among those who already know about Chicanos and gangbanging and those who

do not. Once they have shown the films, questions about the characters could be asked. For example, those who do not know about Chicanos could be asked whether they understood to which minority group the characters belong, and what they learned about them.[79] Those who already know about Chicanos could instead be asked how they learned about them (e.g. other films, literature, visiting the U.S.), and whether and why they think the portrayal in the films is accurate according to their perception. All of them can be asked questions about the language of the characters. A more language-focused type of survey could further divide the audience into those who understand English and those who do not. The former could be shown both versions of the films, and asked to give their impressions on the translation, or only be shown the source version and asked about the way they perceive the variety used by the characters.[80] Those who do not understand English could be asked questions about the language used in the target version. Both monolingual and English-proficient audiences could be asked about their linguistic perception of the way language shows the characters' sociocultural positioning, and what features they think are key to the identification. They could also be asked directly whether they think language and non-textual elements are in contrast or make sense with each other, and how this changes from source to target text.

Another way of proceeding in this study would be to work on the framework, in order to further improve it. Indeed, as this is among the first attempts in this direction, there are certainly several ways to make the framework more functional, for example by working with software developers in order to automatise, at least partially, the tagging procedure. This could enable the taking of a broader corpus into consideration, and obtaining more general and possibly more reliable results. Further studies, especially those on translation agents and audience, may also

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[79] This may seem a silly question, but when this author spoke to Italian people about her case study, "Chicano gangster films," she often had answers like: "Oh, so you are studying *Carlito's Way* and *Scarface*!" – many people she met did not realise that the former is of Puerto Rican and the latter is of Cuban origin, while Chicanos are Mexican Americans.

[80] In this author's experience, not all the Italian people who had some ability in English were able to understand the CE spoken in the films – the people with more limited abilities even struggled to understand that the language spoken was a type of English.

reveal that other modes impact more on the relation with language than the ones used here, or that the prestige attribution depends on completely different linguistic factors or is divided into completely different categories.

While these recommendations are specifically linked to the study carried out here and would definitely make it more complete, other developments could work on the textual and diegetic dimension, expanding them in other directions. For example, the same stereotype can be analysed expanding the time frame, or taking another type of product into consideration, e.g. TV series. Another time-related expansion could consist of a comparison between the Chicano gangster and his forefather, the *bandido* from western films (Renna 2018c).

Another way to broaden the scope of the study would be experimenting with using the framework on other linguistic/ethnic minorities: African Americans, other Latinos (e.g. Puerto Ricans, Salvadorians, Colombians etc.), or other immigrant minorities (e.g. Chinese Americans, Italian Americans etc.). Furthermore, other stereotyped groups could be tested, e.g. people from a certain region or social class, or even from discriminated social groups of other kinds, e.g. based on religion, gender, sexual orientation/identity, or profession. This could certainly require modifying the categories, but the framework is general and flexible enough to allow its use on other types of multimodal corpus.

Changing the source culture can also offer different perspectives: it can be another English-speaking context (e.g. Britain) or a completely different source language. Similarly, a different target culture/language can be useful to understand whether certain translational behaviours are typical of a culture or can be found in different contexts.

Another possible way to expand the research is to investigate other audiovisual translation types, including subtitles and translation for the sight and/or hearing impaired. This would definitely require some changes to the categories, just as this study edited the categories selected by Ramos Pinto and Mubaraki (forthcoming), who work on subtitling.

Overall, the work carried out in this thesis pointed the way towards directions that this author believes to be of paramount importance for the development of the discipline.

First, this thesis is a further step towards research in audiovisual translation that does not turn a blind eye to multimodality, embracing it as a central feature of the audiovisual text, and finding ways to include it into the analysis. This is particularly important in today's society, whose widespread use of technological devices opens the door to infinite possibilities concerning the multimodal use of entertainment products.

Secondly, the work here carried out showed once more that understanding translation is better achieved through a descriptive approach, letting go of judgements about the success of a translation, and not assuming that the communicative meaning of an audiovisual product is necessarily lost in translation. Indeed, this thesis proved that a multimodal text is a complex object, where the text is just a part of the entire message, which is conveyed through a variety of communicative layers that may work as an obstacle, but also as a complement to the target audience understanding.

Furthermore, this thesis did not consider an isolated case, but analysed a number of characters from different films of a certain period, in order to infer hypotheses on the specific case taken into consideration. Thus, what was stated here can be considered a valid starting point for any contrastive analysis with comparable corpora or for broadened research on the same topic. This could only be done through the aid of technology: the results obtained showed the vast array of possibilities opened by applying digital tools to humanities.

Certainly, this author does not presume to have provided definitive answers nor absolute truths: rather, the aim of this thesis was to offer a spark to build upon, confirming, confuting, improving this author's finding in the never-ending pursuit of knowledge that research should never cease to be.

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