Social Meaning within Contact Features in Miami English

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When does a contact feature become an identity marker?

Features of learner English (i.e. imposition) can be fossilized as identity markers.

(not just incomplete acquisition: social meaning!)

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/ɪ/ -> [i], e.g. [ɛ.ni.t i ŋ] '*anything*'

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🇲🇽 Sureñas - Spanish

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if just a contact effect, then Sureñas should have most /ɪ/ raising

BUT most core Sureñas AND Norteñas have most raising, peripheral members have less

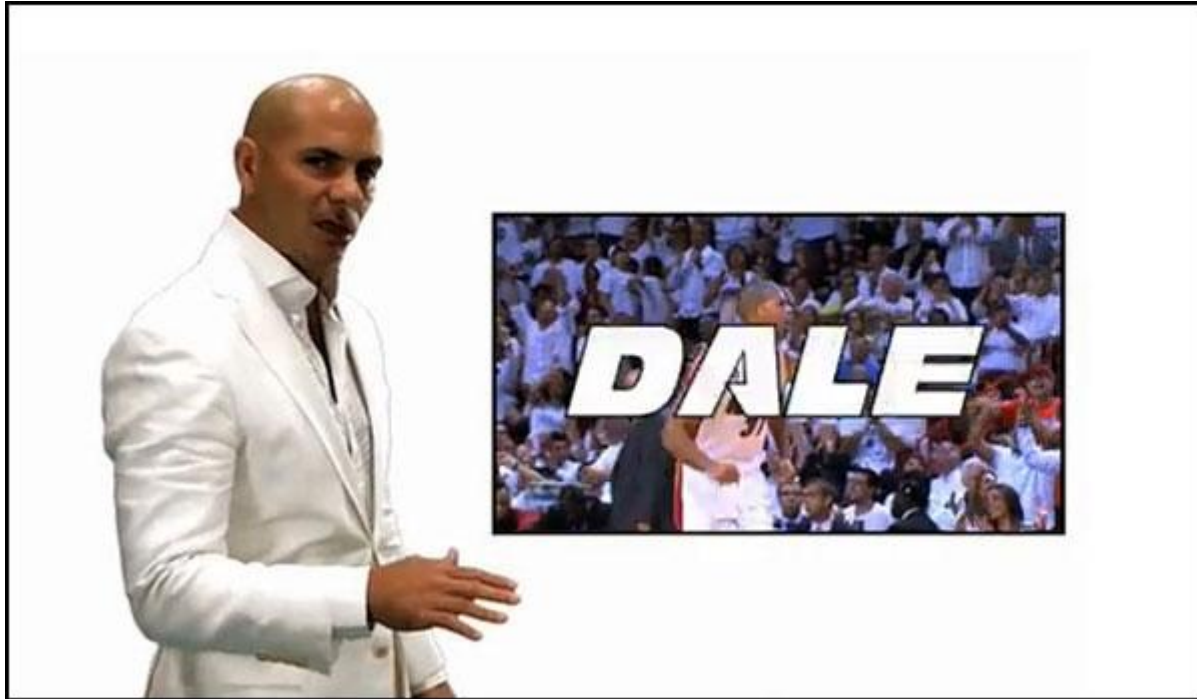Language contact feature has become identity marker

How does this process of **contact effect ➜ identity marker** happen?

Are some features more susceptible to this process than others?

How can we tell "pure" contact effects apart from identity markers?

-> explore these questions using two features of Miami English

Miami English

Miami English

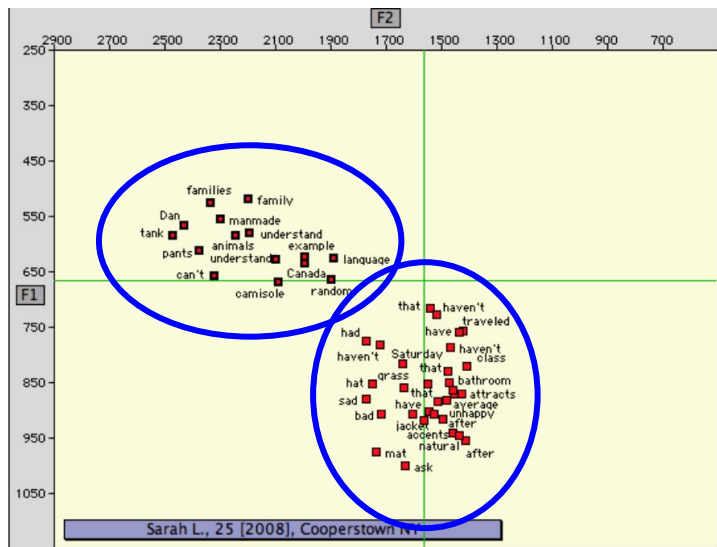ethnolect associated with Latinos in Miami

Miami:

- majority Latino
- Spanish & Spanish speakers relatively prestigious

Features:

- clear /l/, monophthongal /o/, syllable-timed rhythm, backer /ae/
- Spanish lexical borrowings (food names, etc.)
- Syntactic features: question inversion, e.g. "The police want to know where did you go."

Variables: /æN/

General American: allophonic split

(plot: Dinkin 2011)
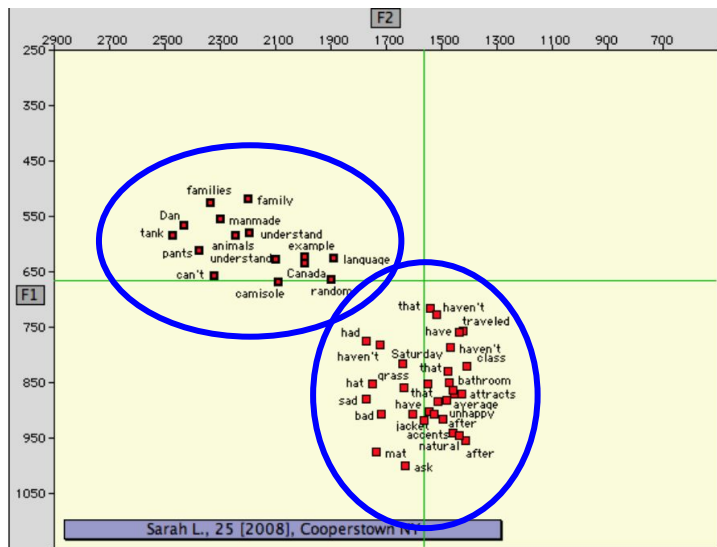
Latino English: smaller or no split

(Gordon 2000; Thomas, Carter, and Cogghsall 2006; Roeder 2010; Carter, Sims, and López 2015; Tseng 2015)

socially meaningful in at least some communities (DC: Tseng 2015)

In Miami: Latino speakers less raised; some have split & others don't

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 In Miami: Latino speakers less raised; some have split & others don't -- *what accounts for this variability?*

/æN/ dependent variable: Pillai score

measures how distinct two distributions are
(Hay et al. 2006; Hall-Lew 2010)
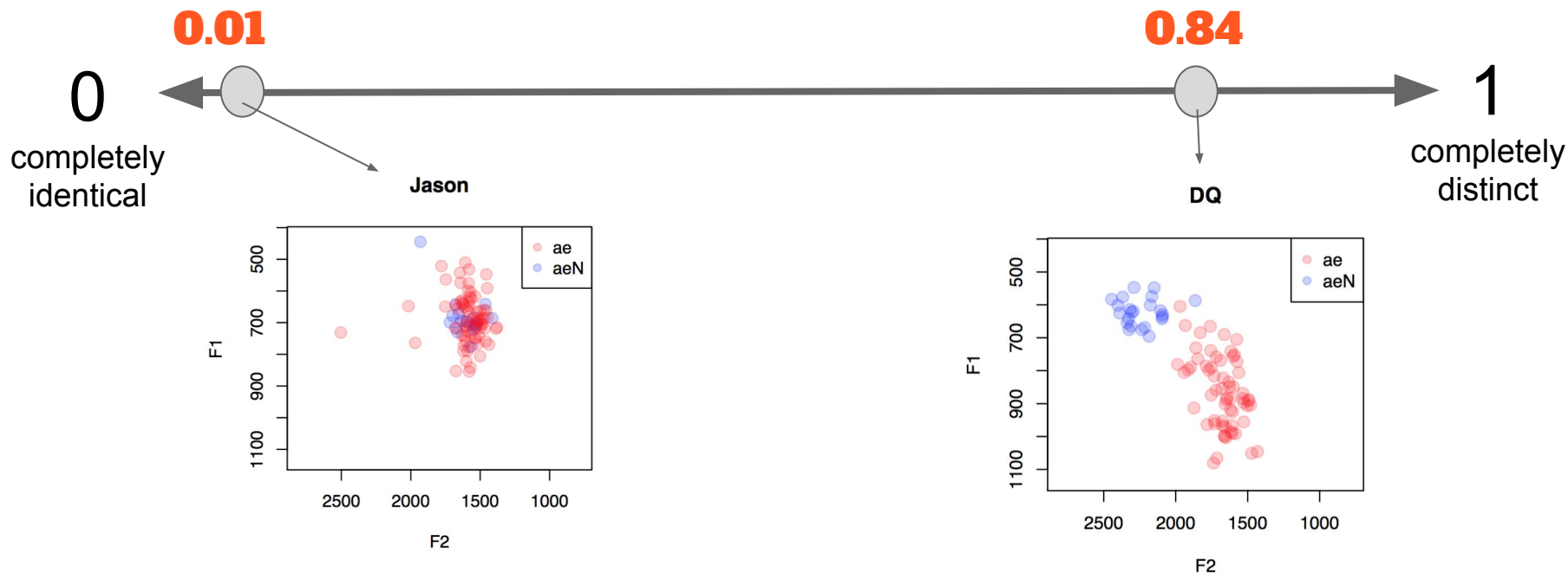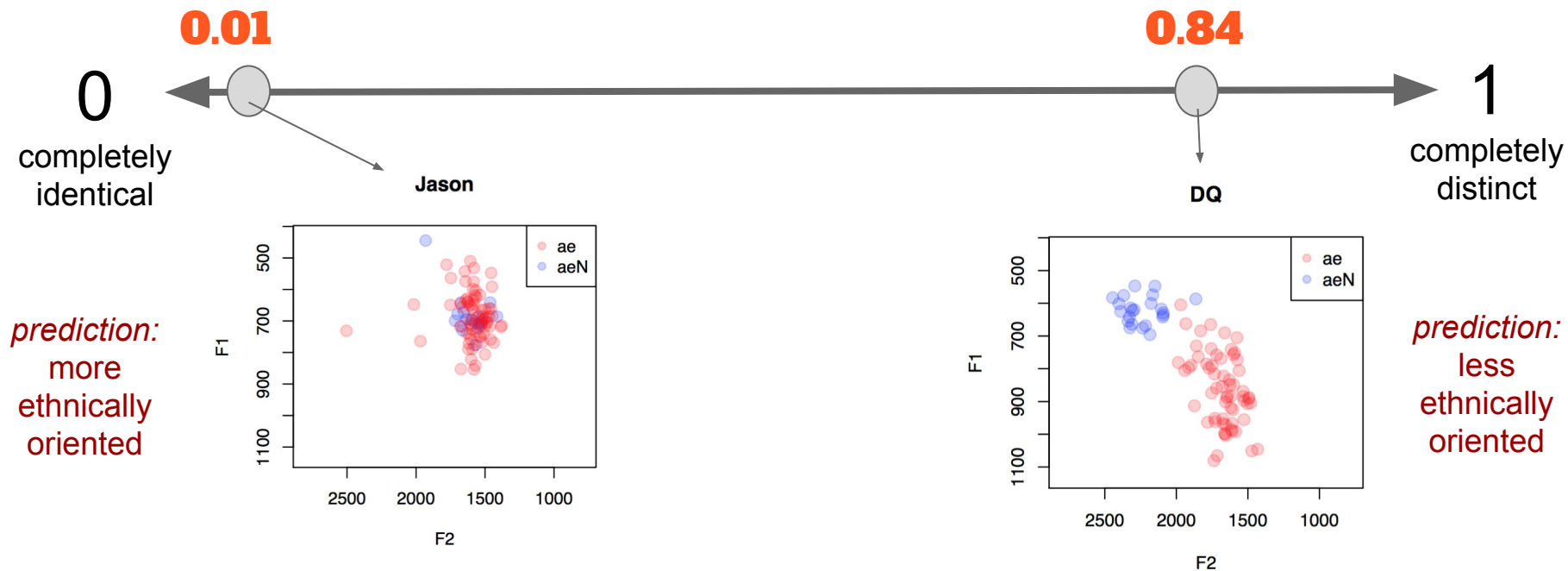

0
completely
identical

1
completely
distinct

/æN/ dependent variable: Pillai score

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/æN/ dependent variable: **Pillai score**

measures how distinct two distributions are
(Hay et al. 2006; Hall-Lew 2010)

0.01

0.84

0
completely
identical

1
completely
distinct

prediction:
more
ethnically
oriented

prediction:
less
ethnically
oriented

Jason

DQ

Variables: Prosodic Rhythm

Syllable-timed vs stress-timed languages

Spanish - syllable-timed; English - stress-timed

transfer effects persist into 3rd generation (Thomas & Carter 2006)

Miami: white speakers use syllable-timing to distance themselves from their parents (Enzinna 2016)

Rhythm dependent variable: PVI

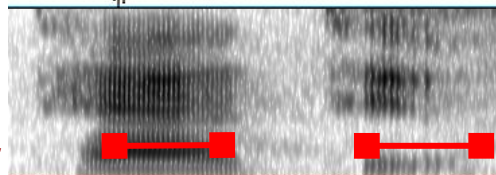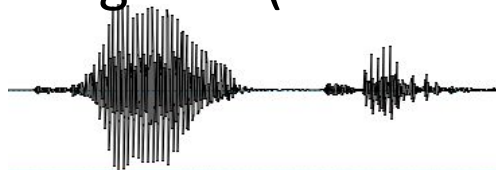$$rPVI = \left[\sum_{k=1}^{m-1} |d_k - d_{k+1}| / (m-1) \right]$$

measures degree of stress- or syllable-timing while controlling for speaking rate (Low and Grabe 1995)

low PVI: more syllable-timed

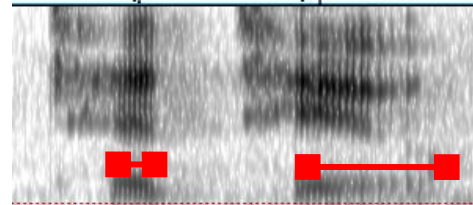high PVI: more stress-timed
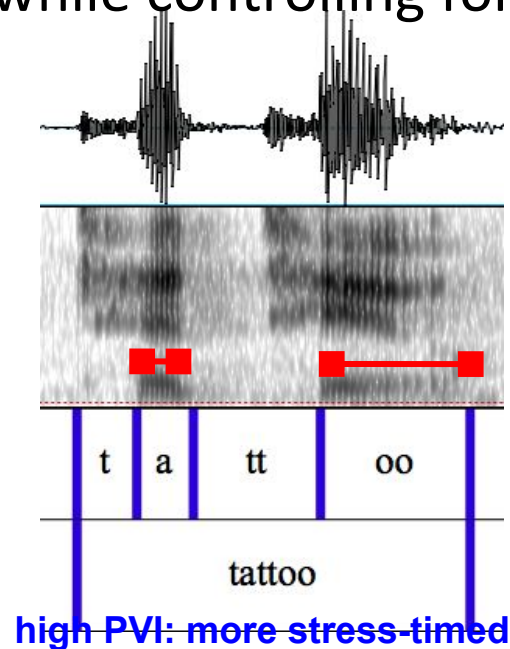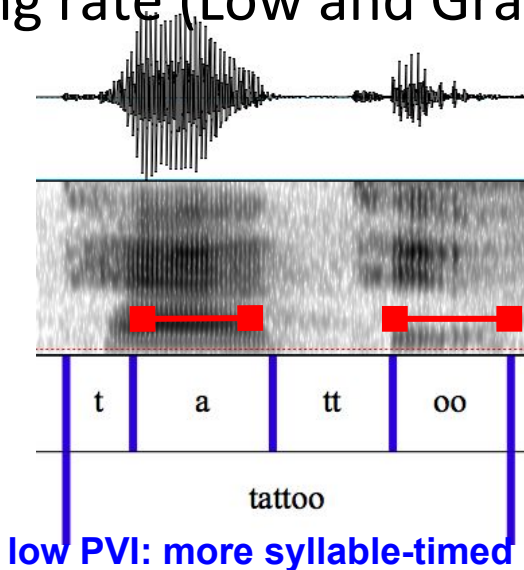
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prediction:
more
ethnically
oriented

low PVI: more syllable-timed

prediction:
less
ethnically
oriented

high PVI: more stress-timed

Methods

Data

Interviews conducted in 2014

23 Participants

    Hispanic of various ethnicities

    Born and raised in Miami, or moved to Miami before age 3

    18-30

10 minutes / interview, FAVE

Measuring Ethnic Orientation

Questionnaire modified from Hoffman & Walker (2010)

measures the degree to which an individual personally identifies with their ethnicity

Questionnaire split into categories based on theme:

Language   **Ethnic Identification**   Institutional Language

Language Choice   Cultural Heritage

Parents   Culture

Participants' answers to these questions are numbered on a scale of 1-3

1 ←――――――――――――――――→ 3

Least
engagement
with ethnicity

Most
engagement
with ethnicity

Ethnic identification Question #2: Are most of your friends Cuban?

Yes - 3, some - 2, no - 1

Parents Question #1: Do/did your parents speak Spanish? English?

Spanish - 3; both - 2; English - 1

Factor Analysis

3 Factors:

Spanish Language Use

- Language > Language Choice > Parents > Institutional Language

Generation

- Cultural Heritage > Parents

Spanish Resistance

- Parents > <u>negative</u> Language

+ Gender

+ Ethnic Identification
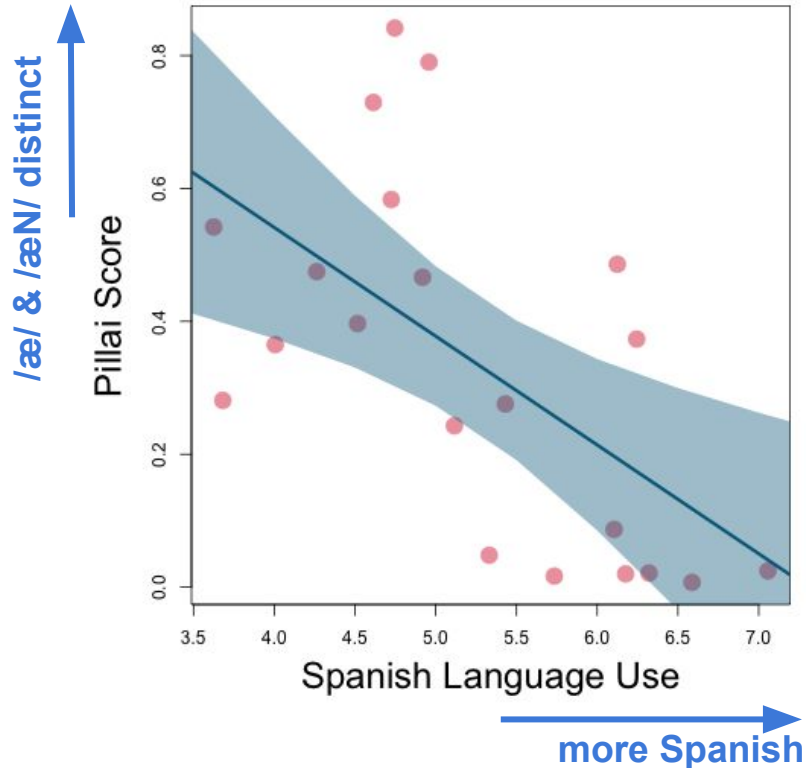
Results: /æN/

Linear regression

Not significant:

- gender
- ethnic identification
- generation
- Spanish resistance

Significant:

- **Spanish language use** (p = 0.001 **)

Results: /æN/

more Spanish =

less distinction between /æ/ & /æN/
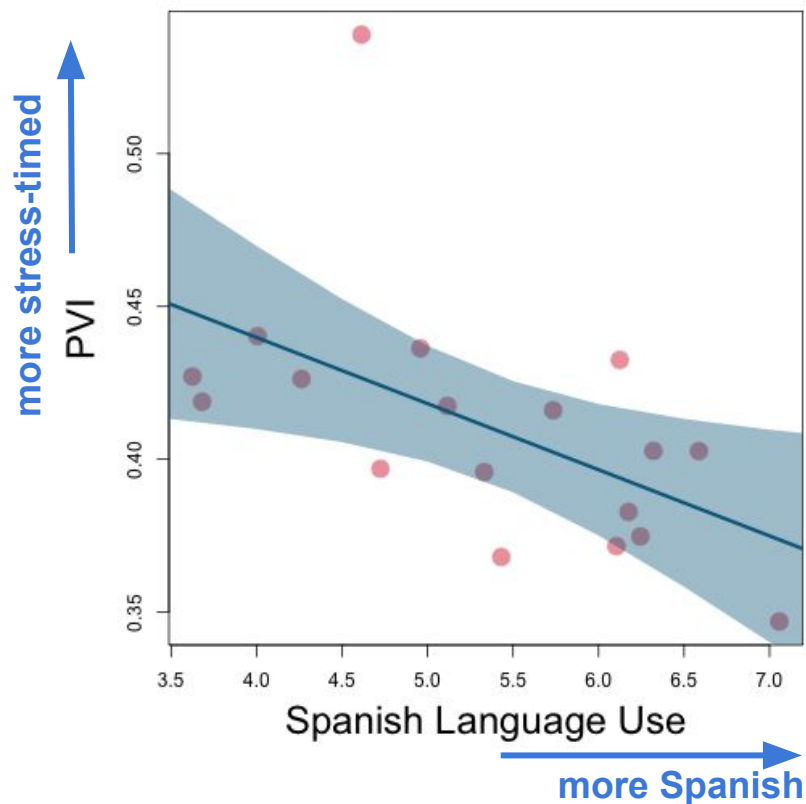
Results: Prosodic Rhythm

Linear regression

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- gender
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- generation
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Significant:

- **Spanish language use** (p = 0.01 *)

Results: Prosodic Rhythm

more Spanish =

less stress-timed
(more syllable-timed)

Conclusion

In Miami, speakers do NOT seem to use /æN/ or prosodic rhythm to mark ethnic identity.

- Rather, these features seem to be a direct effect of language contact/interference
- BUT it's possible that ethnic identity correlates with Spanish use, & that our ethnic orientation scores can't distinguish between these things
- Future work: new interviews with focus on identity; look at extreme tokens

Thanks!

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1
Least
engagement
with ethnicity

3
Most
engagement
with ethnicity

Basin
Born in Miami

Maria
Born in Cuba