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Disreputable Spaniards Versus Middle-Class Limeños: The Coloniality of Speech in Lima, Peru

At the height of the Spanish economic crisis that began in 2008, tens of thousands of Spanish migrants and Peruvian return migrants moved to Peru following openings in an unprecedentedly promising Peruvian job market. Tensions ensued; colonial history came to be more actively discussed by locals as the number of Spanish businesses increased. This article shows that extant notions of “local” and “foreign” emerge from sets of complex characterological figures defined by sign-clusters that index “Peruvianness” and “Spaniardness,” developed to uphold middle-class speech practices as quintessentially Peruvian. Three features are explored: excessive volume, the presence of the phoneme /θ/ in speech, and the perceived excessive use of expletives. Enregistering these features as “foreign,” middle class, nonmigrant Limeños sought to match their actualized upward mobility within the space of the city to the world stage, but in doing so, they ironically repurposed colonial forms of respectability to criticize the behaviors of Spanish migrants and return migrants who they found to be tainted by Spaniardness. This case demonstrates that while the specific colonial aspirational horizon (i.e., directly copying the metropole) may be gone, its ethos remains moored to nationalized ideologies of propriety, respectability, and class distinction. [Latin America, migration, Peru, postcolonialism, register, rhematization]

At the height of the Spanish economic crisis that began in 2008, unemployment rose to 25% in Spain, over 50% for the 18–24¹ set. Evictions skyrocketed and businesses across the country shuttered. Mass levels of migration from Spain were initially recorded in London, Paris, and Berlin, but many turned instead to Latin America; Mexico, Argentina, Chile, and Peru became important receiving locations. In the year 2000, the Peruvian National Institute for Statistics and Technology registered about 3,500 Spanish citizens living in Peru. By 2013, the number rose to 23,000, the vast majority arriving after 2011. Due to economic strife and tragic internal violence in Peru during the 1980s and 1990s, many locals had migrated to Spain. The new migration trajectory marked a stark reversal and a new chapter in the postcolonial relationships between the two regions that began with the Spanish conquest in the 16th century. In 2012, one Peruvian paper had a headline which read “Se voltea la torta” (“the script is flipped”), a tongue-in-cheek comment on the shift in national economies, between former colonial power and colony, former “receiving” country and “sending” country. At the time, Lima was being rebranded as an urban cosmopolis by city officials while state politicians courted foreign mining ventures at the tail end of a steep rise in the price of gold, copper, and zinc, minerals for which

Peru is a worldwide provider. As the construction bust brought Spain to the brink of collapse, the worldwide commodities boom welcomed by a neoliberal administration turned Peru into 2013's new "land of opportunity"².

During my fieldwork, I noticed many of the Spanish migrants I encountered had moved to affluent neighborhoods of Lima. The exchange rate from euros to soles highly favored them and, as one of my interlocutors told me, "these neighborhoods remind [them] the most of Madrid." Tensions ensued between migrants and locals; colonial history became more actively discussed by locals as the number of Spanish restaurants, small businesses, and offices of Spanish transatlantic corporations increased. Many *Limeños* I surveyed in these neighborhoods felt that these migrants challenged their prospects in the white collar job market; many others disliked the idea of becoming a satellite market for Spanish services and products. More than one stated that they viewed this as the "re-conquest" of Peru, linking these concerns to the historical overtaking of Peruvian land during colonization. Almost every single time I met new Peruvians and mentioned the topic of my research, they opened with a comment on the tragedy of Spanish colonization. However, their focus on geopolitical inequality as a colonial effect never included reflections on the colonial relations within Peruvian society. After all, Peru continues to see high degrees of racist discrimination against black and Indigenous citizens. Ultimately, it became clear that, to middle-class *Limeños*, discourses around rejecting the Spanish migrants served to bolster their bids for upward mobility, rather than contend seriously with the contemporary legacies of colonization.

I found that, through highly specific, widely circulating metapragmatic typifications, Peruvian critics of the migrants in the affluent districts identified a *Spaniard* register, following Agha's definition of register as "a linguistic repertoire that is associated, culture-internally, with particular social practices and with persons who engage in such practices" (2007, 26). Locals identified a *Spaniard*³ character indexed by this perceived register, from which they derived a "national"—and more virtuous—Peruvian character, in contrast. I explore its three most salient features in this article: *distinción* (the phonemic distinction of phonemes /θ/ and /s/, the first of which has merged with the second in almost all Latin American forms of Spanish), excessive volume in everyday speech, and the deployment of curses in traditionally formal settings. They rejected the phonemic, lexical, and pragmatic features, occasionally exaggerating and deriding them in private in what I have termed *Peruvian Mock Spaniard*. Upwardly mobile, middle-class *Limeños* contrasted these features with their own, pointing to a Peruvian urban middle classness performable and recognizable through opposing linguistic and paralinguistic diacritics, exposing behavioral regimes associated with politeness and reputability. Such regimes, ironically, can be linked to colonial modes of showing deference (not to mention the use of Spanish, itself a colonial language). Moreover, these *Limeños* both called out social transgression and refrained from engaging in it: in addition to their disapproval, they never cursed themselves, never raised their voices, demonstrating the public restraint they faulted the migrants for lacking. It might be tempting, given that all my local interlocutors led lives moving in upwardly mobile socioeconomic trajectories, to understand their policing of the Spanish migrants as merely a resistance to the Spaniards encroachment into their socioeconomic territory. This is partially true, but considering the historical relationship between the two nations, simple determinism of wage competition does not provide a full account of the discourses surrounding this migration surge. This rejection of Spaniard interactional forms by the Peruvian (post)colonial bourgeoisie almost 200 years after independence reveals how powerfully embedded colonial logics can become.

Furthermore, I show that extant notions of "Peruvianness" and "Spaniardness" are developed to uphold middle-class speech practices as quintessentially Peruvian. The locals posited their contrasting register as a projection of the nation, a photonegative of the figure of "the Spaniard," and made claims about the quintessential "Peruvian." In enregistering these figures, middle class, nonmigrant *Limeños* matched their

actualized upward mobility within the space of the city to the world stage. This involved the metapragmatic evaluation of a Spaniard register, pragmatic and lexical cues construed as undesirable characterological properties (Agha, 2007), anchored in discourses of national belonging. Gal and Irvine (2000, 2019) would characterize this as an instance of *rhematization*, whereby “linguistic features occurring at many levels of linguistic organization, along with their associated social images, are vertically integrated along an ideological axis that contrasts them with opposed features and images, according to the temperaments that supposedly ‘cause’ the differentiation” (2020, 43). Peruvian nonmigrants equated the quality of Spaniardness to a disregard for norms of aspirational middle-class propriety. The axis of differentiation is a colonial one, although for all the attention to historical colonization amid contemporary claims of “reinvansion,” its colonial origin remained unidentified. As Gal and Irvine also indicate, “often, the contrast itself is erased from attention, making it seem as though the qualities inherent in each entity by itself” (2019, 19). In other words, the process by which the colonial order and its enforced hierarchy came into existence has been rendered invisible to contemporary *Limeños*, in such a way that maintaining social distance through speech becomes an inherent quality of Peruvianness, and rudely violating it, a naturalized quality of disreputable Spaniards. It is part of what Quijano (2000) calls the *coloniality of power*: the maintenance of power structures by white and mixed-race (*mestizo*) elites post-independence who now—under global capitalism—continue their stronghold on intellectual and material modes production. That colonially derived ideas about social hierarchy can decant into class-based, nationalist discourses underscores the erasure of the sociohistoric processes that rhematize speech forms into registers. In this case, language ideologies around middle classness both sustain and obfuscate colonialism’s *longue durée*.

Upwardly Mobile, Middle Class

I began my research following three Spanish migrants—whom I had met in Madrid and Barcelona—to their new homes in Lima’s wealthy “central neighborhoods” of Miraflores and Barranco, where I discovered a large number of migrants residing. They were mostly college-educated, between the ages of 25 and 45 (those most affected by the crisis). I found a high degree of regularity in the kinds of *Limeños* who spent time with the Spanish arrivals. Most of them had attended private elementary and secondary schools of mid to high-range cost. Along with the Spanish migrants, they patronized well-established cultural and economic elite spaces of the central districts, including museums, restaurants, and department stores. However, *all* the *Limeños* I quote in this article had moved into the central districts from their childhood homes, located a district or two over, in areas with comparatively lower median income, such as Surco and San Miguel. The arrows in Figure 1 illustrate this trajectory. Moreover, none of them wielded high disposable incomes: none of them owned their small- to medium-sized apartments, none owned vehicles, and they very seldom traveled out of the country. Most of them were grandchildren of migrants from the provinces. These were upwardly mobile locals, not established upper middle-class subjects; most of their income went directly toward keeping up with the demands of consuming goods in the central districts, from rent to groceries, to nightlife. Having spent my childhood and early adolescence in one of the adjacent neighborhoods myself, my register of Peruvian Spanish indexed a similar middle classness. This allowed me the privilege of entry into those circles that my Spanish interlocutors shared with aspirational middle-class Peruvians.

Recent work on global “middle classes” has produced what Donner identifies as “nuanced evidence of the processual nature of class formation. Class identities are always in the making and the ‘middle class’ is equally a site of belonging and a site of aspiration” (2017, 2). Drawing from multiple studies, Donner expands the notion of the symbolic power of middle-class practices to explain it as processual rather than factual, as a performance that requires cultivation. For upwardly mobile, middle-



Figure 1. Upward Class Mobility: Moving into Lima's Central Districts. [This figure appears in color in the online issue.]

class *Limeños*, we can think of aspiration as a mechanism in and by which belonging is achieved if all felicity conditions are met (e.g., maintaining the local phonemic repertoire, respectful volume in public, and avoiding curses in good company, among others). In policing the migrants' speech, they lay claim to the urban spaces they have worked their way into inhabiting. Liechty's (2003) expansion of the social power of the middle class, which is reliant on a self-styled moral high ground based on attachments to "tradition," fits well with both Bourdieu (1991) and Donner's understandings of class as an ultimately hegemonic politics, and interphases with contemporary neoliberal models of success, especially in South America (Dávila, 2016) and particularly in Peru. Pereyra (2014) has explained the recent transformations in what middle-class status has meant in contemporary Lima: moving toward

the central districts has meant a large class accomplishment, even though such a move has often been met with the disdain and mistrust of the “traditional” residents. The arrival of the Spanish migrants may have positioned the younger *limeño* renters, spending large portions of their salaries just to live there, as traditional dwellers by comparison. Given Gal and Irvine’s (2019) argument that moral character can be a key aspect of differentiation in instances of rhematization, we can see how Spanish incursion activated *limeño* anxieties about “national” norms of respect. If the Spaniards refused to assimilate, invading public space through performances of phonemic and lexical distinctions, the up-and-comers would be quick to call them out as disreputable and undesirable, defending their upward socioeconomic trajectory.

A Brief History of Class as Aspiration in Peru

As Cahill (1994) has indicated, race and economic possibility were completely interwoven in Peru under Spanish colonial dominance, beginning in the early 16th century, after the Spanish conquistador’s invasion. Anyone considered an *indio* would have to pay onerous contributions to the crown and live in parcels outside the cities; black subjects, trafficked from Africa, were enslaved. The emergence of populations of mixed race, *mestizos*, *mulatos*, and others, opened the door for complications within the dominant ideologies of race. Ganster (1981) thus explains that “Colonial Peruvians placed a great deal of importance on outward appearances, ceremonies, and social courtesies, as indicators of rank, power, prestige, and honor” (199-200) because dubious behaviors and murky family backgrounds could raise suspicion of dubious racial backgrounds. Twinam (1999) and Rojas Mayer (1998) state that this led to the proliferation of honorific terms such as “don/doña” (sir/madam) previously reserved for the Spanish nobility, to be taken up by mixed-race (*casta*) urban dwellers to refer to each other, thus commanding respect from Black and Indigenous locals in places like Lima. Walker indicates that “socioeconomic advancement experienced by *castas* during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries created a sense of identity crisis among Spaniards—particularly those of middling and lower socioeconomic status” (145) that led to a heightened attention to demanding forms of deference from those around them.

After independence in 1821, only some would benefit from upward mobility. Slavery was only abolished in 1854, and suffrage was not extended to non-white, non-mestizo Indigenous males until 1867. As late as 1889, Larson (2004) explains, government officials saw Indigenous people as being in the same “savage” state as they had been in the colonial period. Parker (1992, 1998) and De la Cadena’s (2000) accounts of the emerging urban middle class in the 1920s similarly present people continually obsessed with social difference, whose promise of upward mobility through trade or profession required the right combination of skin shade, style of dress, and speech, among other integuments of class. The championing of *mestizaje*—the highly circulating notion that racial mixing favoring the “best qualities” of Western civilization—prevailed in Latin America and allowed the emerging Peruvian middle class to no longer understand itself as racially inferior, as long as they comported themselves as Europeans (Wade, 2001).

Today, linguistic repertoire plays a significant part in perpetuating distinctions constituted under colonization. Research by linguists Cerrón Palomino (1989, 2003), Huayhua (2014) and Zavala and Córdova (2010) have demonstrated that racialization and class work hand in hand via specific forms of exclusion of Quechua bilinguals whose Spanish register includes Indigenous dialectal markers, lexical items, phonemic replacements and approximations, etc. that make them stand out as non-urban, “uneducated” subjects. *Motoseo*, for example, a stigmatized set of vocalic variations observable in highland Andean Spanish, stemming from contact with Quechua (Pérez Silva et al 2008), is a normal contact phenomenon which marks someone as “lacking proper education, possibly poor, with illiterate parents” (Zavala and Córdova 2010, 52). Most insidiously, as Huayhua (2018) states in her research into the

inferiorization of speakers from Quechua communities: “subordination is embedded in habitual forms of social interaction, forms that are used without either side necessarily being conscious of the ways in which they produce subordination” (234–235). While the researchers in these cases refer to the stigmatization of Indigenous language contact features, both phonemic and lexical, Huayhua’s point applies just as much to Spanish registers in Lima. Another example is the online circulation of a test titled *el cholómetro* (the cholo-meter), in the early aughts, which purportedly measured how “cholo” (a racializing term primarily used pejoratively to define a person as lower class or of Indigenous origin) one was via a checklist of indexical behaviors: pieces of clothing, etc. (cf. Swinehart, 2018, for engagement with parallel semiotics in Bolivia). Lexical items that transgressed social hierarchy and featured in the test included addressing strangers as “amigo/a” (“friend”) or women as “reina” (“queen”).⁴ Behaviors were assigned classist and racist characteristics (the test’s highest rating is “llama,” an animalizing racist term for highland Indigenous people). In the study I present, only one of the Peruvian locals cited here discussed the whiteness of Spaniards, later complaining that this racial positioning actually benefitted the migrants in their job search. While I did not inquire as to their racial self-identification, they most likely would have identified as either mestizo or white themselves (the one exception self-identifying as mestizo), given both their class background and the comparative pallidity of skin, both of which likely facilitated their escalating socioeconomic trajectory. However, this was not a competition over whiteness, nor was *mestizo* superiority ever invoked in critiques of the Spaniards. Class, therefore, becomes more emphasized in differentiation through talk of propriety, or “tradition,” to recall Liechty, and best suits the locals’ efforts to naturalize colonially constituted forms of distinction.

The economic crisis in Spain also prompted Peruvian nationals and Peruvians naturalized as Spanish citizens, to make the move back to Peru. This became relevant to my work because, as Yeh (2012) explains in her research on US return migrants to Mexico, bourgeois Tijuana locals voiced a “national *we*” that excluded the returnees, who fall outside of the image of the prosperous cosmopolitan elite. Yeh shows that nonmigrants claim a “true,” “rational” Mexico that excludes those who cross the US border undocumented, who are seen as contemptible. Similarly, the *Limeños* I met who were in constant contact with both Spaniards and Peruvian returnees from Spain often derided return migrant publics’ linguistic practices, which they viewed as foreign and therefore illegitimate. In doing so, they, as Yeh puts it, posited themselves as the national “public at large. This performative process, embedded in the give-and-take of interaction. . . is at the heart of how social groups, grounded in objective realities of social difference, become presupposable referents within which individuals may routinely locate themselves” (716). The stances taken by middle-class nonmigrants regarding the speech practices of arrivals from post-crisis Spain therefore accrue to a nationalist push to establish themselves as rightful keepers of city and country.

Reyes (2017) provides an important precedent for understanding the colonial semiotics of such virtuous middle-class reputability, and how it corresponds to postcolonial behaviors and expectations. She explains that “the postcolony is organized by colonial structures. . . because elements of these structures have been reformulated—not simply replicated—in fractally recursive configurations” (210), employing Gal and Irvine’s (1995) model. According to Reyes, the recursions of colonially derived aspiration give rise to the policing of what traditional middle-class Philippinos call *conyo*: a too-modern, materialistic, vapid, immoral comportment; in short, lacking the middle-class aesthetics of morality. The *Limeños* who interacted with Spanish migrants and Peruvian return migrants from Spain displayed similar apprehensions about the arrivals as excessive (too loud, too crass) or affected (in the case of the returnees), much like the class of Philippinos Reyes describes. Much like the “traditional” Philippine elite’s enregisterment of the *conyo* figure, middle-class nonmigrant Peruvians saw migrants as an “other against which a sensible, moral,

middle-class position can be constituted (Reyes 2017, 214). Reyes demonstrates that the “axis of differentiation” that renders the social world recognizable in the postcolonial space—can be exposed as a colonial structure despite its anti-colonial guise. It is not a coincidence that Mexico, the Philippines, and Peru are all former Spanish colonies. Bourgeois elites seek to position themselves as true stewards of the nation, rejecting incursions from tainted foreign influence: in Yeh’s case, undocumented Mexicans moving across the Tijuana border; in Reyes’, English-borrowing consumerists; in mine, the former colonizers themselves. All three cases rely upon colonial visions of propriety to claim such stewardship. In my case, this takes one further turn. As a reaction to a perceived potential recolonization of Peru via its absorption into the Spanish goods and services markets, there is a contradictory embrace and rejection. Spanish businesses popped up all around Lima, and almost all my Spanish informants indeed found steady work and income that allowed them to settle in middle-class and upper-class neighborhoods. The social hierarchies locals invoked to resist the encroachment of Spaniards and return migrants repurposed colonial holdovers. The proverbial colonial snake seems to devour its own tail: the upwardly mobile middle class of Lima draws its empowerment from a colonial hierarchical discourse by claiming it as point of national pride, in fact obscuring its colonial nature.

Features of Spaniard Register

We can begin by parsing the ideologies that constitute “Spaniardness” and “Peruvianness” as properties of the self, which give rise to the construction, entextualization, and potential enregisterment of different kinds of figures as they combine with individuals’ context and biographical information. The forms of disalignment I observed were crystalized in mock versions of Spaniard speech offered by my local interlocutors. Such mock performances (Hill, 2007) are not always indexical of attachments to the nation, yet always serve to distance the speaker from the characterological figure(s) linked to said language or register. I use the term *Peruvian Mock Spaniard* to describe the distal alignment that my Peruvian interlocutors perform vis-à-vis what they identify as *Spaniard* traits. However, Hill and others’ work on mock speech forms (Ronkin and Karn, 1999; Chun, 2004), where racialized populations see their speech forms derided by mainstream publics, contrasts with my case because for many Castilian Spanish remains the normative, ideal form for everything from global language ideologies to the maintenance of institutions such as the Royal Academy of Language of Madrid, the self-styled universal arbiter of Spanish linguistic “correctness.” In a global sense, Castilian Iberian Spanish is often recognized as the official variety. Yet in the case I lay out here, the aspiring postcolonial elite overtakes and ridicules the features of the metropole’s speech to institute itself as most respectable along a class axis. This mocking does not fall neatly into the power dynamics inherent to the cases mentioned above. My designation also highlights the common deemphasizing of distinctions between Iberian dialectal forms (of which Spanish nationals are keenly aware) by Peruvians, labeling any and all individuals exhibiting these markers as Spaniard, without regard to region, attitude regarding Spanish federalism, or even legal citizenship status. For example, the presence of the phoneme /ʎ/ in the speech of Catalonians, due to contact with Catalan, was entirely imperceptible to *Limeños*. Peruvians generally do not distinguish between such variations, or, say, Extremaduran and Galician Spanish forms, due to underexposure to the regional particularities involved in Iberian dialects.

The three main iconicized markers of Spaniardness I will discuss here are captured perfectly in the following Mock Spaniard performance by Pati, a Peruvian woman in her late 30s who has been living on the edge of the district of San Isidro (the most expensive in the country) for about 10 years, but who grew up in the more middle-class district of Surco. One night, after watching *Game of Thrones* at a friend’s apartment, I asked Pati what she thought about the recent migrant wave. Pati made

explicit her disapproval of items in Spaniard linguistic repertoires, culminating in the following utterance. Not only did lexical items play a significant role in her portrayal of Spanish migrants but also volume (marked below with exclamation points) and the exaggeration of a widely identified dialectal difference: the presence of the phoneme /θ/, which stands as a shibboleth of Spaniardness, as we shall see in the next subsection. This phoneme is present exclusively in Spanishes found in the Iberian Peninsula, contrasting with Latin American forms. Stress is underlined and [!] marks degrees of volume.

[!] los españoles y sus gritos y [!] “es que pues, coño [!]”
 Con hombre,
 [eθke poθombre koño]
 With the Spaniards and their yells and “so you know, man! Fuck!”

Pati’s Mock Spaniard performance accelerates and breaks down the contours of the phonetic string of the stereotypical phrase “es que pues hombre” (“come on, man”), reflecting her description of the Spanish migrants as loud and fast-talking. Not only does Pati explicitly typify Spaniards as “yelling” but her sudden outburst and the change in volume of her speech (marked in brackets) performs it, loudly emitting the phrase as [eθke poθombre]. The use of word-final /θ/ consonant in *es* and *pues* is exaggerated for effect, thrusting the tongue between the teeth and, more significantly, failing to correctly represent Castilian phonemics where /s/ is never replaceable with /θ/. “Hombre” as either a vocative or an expletive was regularly ascribed to Iberian speakers by my Peruvian informants. In addition, Pati employs “coño,” a vulgar reference to female genitalia used in Spain and in multiple areas in the Americas. While desexualized in much of Spain, its lack of use among Peruvian publics leads to its recognition as sexual expletive in Peru. The extraneous use of “coño” and the phrase [poθombre] (performed as such) was highly common in deployments of Mock Spaniard I witnessed. A comparison to the mocking of *motoseo* by middle-class locals and Peruvian Mock Spaniard can be illuminating: while the former has specifically racializing class implications, the latter recalibrates foreignness around a class axis.

In what follows, I will further explore the three features present in Pati’s phrase: the incorporation (and overuse) of the phoneme /θ/, increased volume, and the perceived excessive use of expletives. I will also describe their indexical qualities, as well as the stance-taking practices of my Peruvian interlocutors around these features, in order to explore the (re)production of the postcolonial ideologies behind reputable “Peruvianness” versus disreputable “Spaniardness.”

“Spitting”

Probably the most iconic feature that identifies individuals as Spaniards in Peru, and perhaps in all of Latin America, is the realization/nonrealization of the phoneme /θ/. The realization of < s>, < c>, and < z> as the same phoneme /s/ (called *seseo*) is a feature of Latin American Spanish dialects. In contrast, *distinción* is the realization of < z> as /θ/, present almost exclusively in Iberian Spanish dialects. The debate among linguists regarding dialectal differences across the Atlantic was for a long time entirely centered upon this divide, pointing to its highly enregistered quality. Entire traditions of study followed it. The “Andalusian” theory of the loss of the /s/-/θ/ distinction in Latin America, developed in the first half of the 20th century, states that the majority of the Spanish colonists in the Americas came from Andalusia, remains the most accepted. In Andalusian dialect, this distinction is weak, closer to a /s/-/ç/ distinction and so, the theory states, over time the lack of connection with the Peninsula led to a merge. At around the same time, linguists who posited the *polygenetic* theory contended instead that colonists came from all areas of the Iberian

Peninsula, and the distinction took place due to drift and variations in encounters between them. This debate continues to be of interest in popular videos on platforms such as YouTube and Facebook, telling each side as entertaining educational bit pieces. For a summary of these debates, see Kania and Kauffeld (2005).

One Lima nonmigrant referred to the interdental fricative as “spitting,” albeit probably due to his own hyper-pronunciation of /θ/ in his Peruvian Mock Spaniard performances. At a gathering, some of my Peruvian family members introduced me to a gentleman in his late 60s, José, who had worked as a doctor in Spain for 40 years. José was a return migrant who left his adopted home of Valencia to return to Lima, his place of birth, and move into La Molina, a middle-class neighborhood where home prices have been on the rise for the last decade. They mentioned to him that I had spent time in Spain as part of my research plan and we exchanged pleasantries about Spanish omelettes and *tinto de verano*, a refreshing blend of red wine, citrus, and ice. “Me apetecería uno ahora, de hecho” (“I would like one right now, actually”), he shared, to the delight of the group, who pointed out how hard it was for him to get rid of his Spaniardness, which he had displayed by his use of the verb *apetecer*, for the verb “to want.” In Peru, expressing desire or preference for an object is accomplished by employing the verb *gustar* (i.e., “Me gustaría uno, de hecho”). At least, the group joked boisterously, José had not formed the interdental fricative, as the third intervocalic consonant. Pronouncing the Iberian term as /apeteθer/, instead of /apeteser/, his friends informed him, would have meant performing excessive “Spanishness.” Employing it would have been transgressive, his friends warned, albeit in a jolly tone. “That would be the last straw,” one of the doctor’s contemporaries stated.

This vignette evinces the heavy weight of the phonemic distinction: the party goers cautioned what they might have done had he gone “too far.” Although they did not indict him as such, the figure of the *limeño alienado* (literally, “alienated”)—the aspirational Peruvian seeking to present themselves as foreign (at worst) or exaggeratedly cosmopolitan (at best)—would have been available to the Peruvians in the room. As its cognate in English implies, *alienado* refers to a disalignment with the (Peruvian) nation and a proximity to a foreign, more geopolitically successful one. The verb *apetecer* is used in very rare occasions by *Limeños*, to whom it might sound overly formal. By contrast, it is a common token in Iberian Spanish. Had his pronunciation of the word-token co-occurred with the markedly Iberian phoneme it would have crossed the threshold of permissible foreignness, and would have made José look ridiculous (“it would have been the last straw”), by trying to self-raise by affecting Europeaness. I would wager that José narrowly avoided being typified as an *alienado* by excluding, whether purposefully or not, the intervocalic interdental fricative from his response to my comment about the *tinto de verano*.

My family members, living in an apartment in the district of Miraflores (among the most expensive in the city) after a lifetime in Surco (like Pati), also often mockingly referred to a neighbor of theirs, another Peruvian return migrant, as *La Española* (“the Spanish Woman”), positioning her more in line with the figure of the *alienado*. Unlike José, the woman had incorporated the interdental fricative into her repertoire after 15 years in Spain. In private, my family often used her as inspiration for performances of Mock Spaniard, adding an air of haughtiness that was absent in my few interactions with her. While this phonemic partial carries no specific negative valence when employed by a Spanish citizen, it had evident deleterious qualities when deployed by someone otherwise known to be, via knowledge of biographical information, Peruvian. I find parallels in Koven’s (2013) discussion of the situation of French lusophone Portuguese migrants and children of migrants, who perform French-inflected Portuguese forms. Koven explains that the use of French—in this case, the more geopolitically successful country—by these émigrés in Portugal is not taken up as an achievement of “affluence and modernity. As such, some [Portuguese] may read emigrants’ French and its links to status as illegitimate, inauthentic, and

pretentious" (2013, 329). My upwardly mobile middle-class interlocutors similarly reject the notion that someone, such as *La Española*, would unintentionally incorporate such markedly Spaniard features: it must be a willful attempt to exhibit foreign cache to appear European. To them, it was a purposeful distancing from Peruvianness, which they found humorous precisely because they found it objectionable. The added airs of importance are telling. Given the geopolitical divide between "developed" and "developing" nations, an *alienado* might be trying to enlist Europeanness as a means toward elevating themselves, but to an audience of Peruvians it rings hollow. In other words, they do not pass as more cosmopolitan or whiter. Moreover, their status as return migrants acts as metonymy for the "flipping of the script": the failing of the Spanish economy—the falling of the mighty—is also the failing of the aspirational migrant. In Europe, small town Spain occupies a similar position as "backward," as Divita (2014) has shown. It might be tempting to claim that nonmigrant locals could be responding to this intra-continental hierarchy, but I must point out that none of my interlocutors mentioned this in our conversations.

Excess Volume

Loudness emerged as a less neutral partial for migrants of Iberian provenance. My conversation with Mario (Table 1) involves the particulars of the alleged volume quality of Spaniard speech. This aspect of the Spaniard register, specifically, seemed to occupy space in the city, much like the Spanish-owned restaurants and businesses popping up since 2012. Mario, a 34-year-old Peruvian nonmigrant, was working at an art space and renting an apartment in Miraflores—known for its fine dining, hotels, and glitzy night life—after having grown up in San Miguel, a middle-class/lower middle-class district also adjacent to the central ones. You can see, therefore, the trajectory that defines the middle-class aspiration I mention: a young professional moving from a stable, middle-class area, into a more bustling, affluent neighborhood, albeit paying rent rather and sharing with two others, all in the hopes of one day, a decade or so in the future, owning their own apartment. Throughout our conversation, Mario generalizes the behaviors of Spanish migrants as demonstrating a lack of boundaries and an inferior degree of "propriety" in the way they conducted themselves publicly in his neighborhood.

In discussing Spanish migrants' "particular way of being," he stresses that Spanish folks "yell" in conversation (lines 3-4), loudly intervening in any space that surrounds them. He describes their speech as "excitable, they get too excited" (lines 4-5). Mario also identifies a specific context here that makes the change in volume transgressive: public space. In line 4, we see the hyperbolic use of "always" ("siempre"), making loudness a constant feature of Spaniardness. Loudness becomes linked to the figure of the Spaniard, whom Mario describes throughout as boisterous, making themselves too present in a space that is not their own, echoing what Pati (on page 14) signaled in her Mock Spaniard. Mario states that he "does not like" what he typifies as Spanish behavior, given "how *Limeños* are" ("como somos los Limeños," line 6). This is poetically reinforced via the repetition of the third person (highlighted {-n} verb forms in lines 1-5). The repetition makes starkly clear that there is an unquestionable opposition at play (a "them" and an "us"). There was a restrained intensity to his explanations, Mario having evident strong opinions on the matter but not wanting to get too agitated. Despite knowing him relatively well, and positioning myself as a fellow *limeño* (in line 9), allowing for the candid expression of his rejection, Mario kept his emotions in line. This emerges especially in his stressing of the verb "yell" ("gritan"), underlined in the transcript. What Pati entextualized through performance (page 14), Mario does via metapragmatic evaluation. He highlights Spaniard excitability and, via contrast, entextualizes *limeño* behaviors as more respectful.

Local Lima behaviors would be, according to Mario, more "*pacato*, closed off, quiet" (line 10), a distinction he claims he does not see as one of better or worse, but

Table 1
Spaniard volume

1. M: No me gusta cómo se expresan, en primer	1. M: I don't like how they way that they talk,
2. lugar. Van por la calle, generalmente van	2. first of all. They go around in the street, usually
3. <u>gritando</u> . No conversan, sino que <u>gritan</u> . Hablan	3. <u>yelling</u> . They don't chat, rather they <u>yell</u> . They
4. de sus cosas siempre <u>gritando</u> . Es como que muy	4. always talk about their stuff <u>yelling</u> . It's like,
5. sanguíneo—se emocionan demasiado. Y	5. very excitable—they get too excited. And I
6. particularmente, no sé, como somos los limeños	6. don't know, in particular, the way we Limeños
7. me parece que se hace un gran contraste. Y a	7. are, it seems to me that it's a big contrast. And
8. mí, a mí no me gusta.	8. I, I don't like it.
9. D: ¿Cómo somos los limeños según tú?	9. D: What are Limeños like, in your view?
10. M: Más, esté, <i>pacatos</i> , cerrados, esté,	10. M: More uhm, <i>pacatos</i> , closed off, uhm,
11. callados, como que... A lo que me refiero, no	11. quiet, sort of... What I mean is, I'm not
12. te digo que esté bien una cosa o esté mal la otra.	12. saying one thing is right and the other is wrong.
13. D: Claro, es relativo.	13. D: Sure, it's relative.
[...]	[...]
14. M: Y van así, como que estuvieran en su casa.	14. M: They go around like they were at home.
15. Y no es su casa, para nada. No lo es. Su casa	15. And this is not their home, not at all. It's not.
16. será, pues, Barcelona, Madrid, lo que tú	16. Their home is, well, Barcelona or Madrid or
17. quieras, pero acá en Miraflores por lo menos,	17. whatever, but here in Miraflores, at least, you
18. siempre te encuentras con cualquier español en	18. always run into some Spaniard on the street
19. la calle y está con otros españoles y siempre	19. and he's with other Spaniards and they always
20. hablan muy fuerte o van gritando por la calle.	20. talk very loudly, they go yelling in the street.

simply as one of difference (line 12). Nevertheless, he does state that this indicates foreignness in Lima. Most readily translatable to “highly reserved,” upper crust, or “prissy,” *pacato* is often used to describe elite society attitudes in Lima as conservative or old fashioned. Ricardo Palma, an elite chronicler of the late 1800s, would describe the gentry of Lima society as *gente pacata*: reserved to a fault, in his *Tradiciones Peruanas* (1872), a series of tongue-in-cheek chronicles of city life in Peru. Recently, the term has taken on a more negative implication, often used with overtly sardonic intent, in opinion pieces, news articles and blogs, to refer to uptight, old fashioned bourgeois denizens of the city. Regardless, to describe Lima locals this way means to invoke middle classness and its values as extant social formations, to link localness to bourgeoisness; it might even be a self-aware description of his class positioning. Mario's stance toward the adjective was neutral, or at least not entirely negative, including himself (“somos”) in the designation. It is a yet another entextualization of a projection of a typification of Peruvianness: his own behaviors as a dweller of the central districts, an up-and-coming participant in artistic circles, becoming the metric for Peruvianness at large—Yeh's “national we” once again, based on contrast with

the Iberian migrants. His condemnation of their behavior becomes explicitly about distance, cultural and geographical, informing his perception of their overtaking of Lima, his home. Many of my Peruvian interlocutors made similar remarks about the volume of Spanish migrants' voices in conversation. Indubitably, being loud is evidently not an exclusive feature of Spanish citizens; similarly, not all Peruvians are quiet and demure. Nevertheless, the transgression is naturalized as Spaniard, much like the interdental fricative, reinforcing the linguistic ideology of belonging that posits an incommensurable distance between nationals, a distance that Mario ascribes to his vision of proper Peruvianness.

The Spanish occupation of public space is linked, in Mario's description, to a level of comfort that is unearned, of a literal taking over of the streets of the city (lines 14–15), and Miraflores specifically, through the volume of their speech. According to Mario, Spaniards are transgressive specifically because their loudness breaks with the participation frameworks deemed appropriate for the context of public space. This lack of discretion Mario identifies as a Spanish feature indicates that despite the shared linguistic code, paralinguistic features, such as volume, index not only foreignness but a lack of ability—perhaps desire—to assimilate into Lima society. Spanishness becomes invasive. Mario positions himself as a stand-in for the average *limeño*, disregarding the heterogeneous nature of the social cityscape, including a vast array of Peruvian characterological figures he himself could probably name: the loud street food vendor, the uneducated bus driver, the classless (*pacharaca*) woman. The specificity of the location of their presence (both Mario's and that of the Spanish migrant Mario describes) in line 17 is also important. In Mario's account, Miraflores metonymically stands in for the city of Lima, listed next to Barcelona and Madrid (line 16). The positioning of cities and neighborhoods on a similar distributional plane reinforces this generalizing move, whereby he and his neighborhood emerges as representative of the city of Lima, just as the Spaniards he observes are deemed representative of their respective cities. In line with his lack of recognition of Iberian regional linguistic and sociolinguistic patterns, practices, and ideologies, Mario labels all the Spanish migrants, regardless of their provenance, as equally sharing the transgressive quality of "loud" Spaniardness. In the Philippines, Reyes tells us, one of the key critiques leveled against the *nouveau riche* lies in their excess. To the "respectable" middle-class public, they are maudlin, tawdry (perhaps, as Mario would say, "too excitable" as in Table 1). The fact that both countries share a colonial metropole should not be lost on us.

Once, when I interceded with him on behalf of an unemployed Spanish friend (and interlocutor) of mine who had worked in the arts in Madrid for years prior to the crisis, Mario told me that he would much rather hire a local. Mario's concern with foreign encroachment into public spaces mirrors *limeño* anxieties about labor migrants in the labor market. In Mario's view, Peruvian passers-by like himself become unwittingly incorporated into the speech acts of the Spanish migrants, an interpellation that clashes with what he pinpoints as national mores. The volume of Spaniard speech emerges as an invasive feature of their register, which Mario finds not only objectionable, but indexical of their disregard for local status quo. To Mario, their "yelling" demonstrates how foreign they are, how little they belong in the neighborhood, yet how strongly they make their presence felt. In fact, as I show in the following subsection, the transgression of the public/private divide emerges as a critical Lima middle-class norm.

However, the fact that Mario specifically claims that generalization is quite difficult and demonstrates an awareness of the difficult nature of making sociological claims about large groups of individuals (lines 11–12 in Table 1) speaks to a cultivation of gentility that reinforces his own position as a cosmopolitan, yet staunchly "Peruvian," subject. Although Mario is voicing a very clear opposition to his typification of Spaniards in Lima, he reminds me that he is not claiming superiority; he is advocating for foreigners to perform respect for local mores. Mario's harsh comments are tempered by that aside, one which brings a new stance into our

understanding of his alignment: he chocks distinctions up to national identities, but he is careful to not appear xenophobic. Reyes writes that the iconization of excessiveness invents “distinctions among Philippine elite types, producing an ‘elite bifurcation’ that recursively constitutes colonial hierarchies: positioning conyo elites (not middle-class elites) as acting as colonists whose supposedly mixed and excessive qualities are regarded as immoral, overly modern” (2017, 212). In Mario’s case, the excess would be in temperament, in excitability. By modulating his critique, he maintains a moral high ground, consistent with middle-class *limeño* rejections of transgressive Spaniard behaviors—as we will see in the following section. If Spanish arrivals to the elite and aspirational site of Miraflores represent a colonial incursion, it is not met with radical reimaginings of sociality. Instead, it is countered by a cultivation of restraint so similar (even by Mario’s account) to those 19th-century *pacato* snobs Palma wrote about and who, themselves, had learned their own genteel Spanish from their parents and grandparents, the members of the creole (*criollo*) colonial elite who took the reins of government after independence, but whose outlook remained indubitably colonial.

“Not in the Office”

The third perceived diacritic of Spaniard register is the employment of expletives in interaction in ways that Peruvians find transgressive. The excerpt below captures an interaction between group of Peruvians conversing with a Spanish co-worker about socio-pragmatic differences between national speech forms. Everyone in this interaction (Juan Pablo, Franco, and Bernardo) is in their 30s and has a postgraduate degree, received in Peru, Ecuador, and Spain, respectively. The offices are in Surco; all interactants live either in a different area of Surco or one of the next districts over, westward, in the direction of Miraflores. Franco, specifically, had grown up in the middle-class and lower middle-class neighborhood of San Miguel, and had managed to rent a new place in one of those westward areas after landing this job. It is a white-collar environment, in a middle-management position, where small groups share a medium-sized open space. Franco, one of the coworkers, and a friend of a Peruvian friend, had put me in touch with one of his officemates, Bernardo, a Spanish man who had migrated in search of a job two years earlier. Bernardo welcomed me to his workplace. During one of my visits, he brought me up to his desk, and we struck up a friendly conversation regarding the differences between office behavior in Spain and Peru.

In this interaction, Bernardo has just finished recounting a story about his prior job situation. The conversation revolves around the metapragmatic evaluation of the use of the injurious lexical items *coño* (which we recall from Pati’s Mock Spaniard on page 13) and *joder* (most efficiently translated as “fuck”), which become entextualized as tokens of Spaniard register in Juan Pablo and Franco’s explanations. The interaction began with Bernardo confessing to feeling slight annoyance at the repercussions he had faced after cursing at a coworker at his previous job. His coworker had delayed delivery of an important report for 2 months, delaying, in turn, Bernardo’s own report. In his own words, Bernardo had told her “*joder*, I’ve been waiting for three months, I wouldn’t be surprised if you’d forgotten, *coño*.” Freely recounting his open use of expletives *joder* and *coño*—both perceived as sexual expletives by Peruvians—Bernardo lays out the importance of “directness” in managing an office, which included the possibility of such strongly worded requests. His Peruvian coworkers argued against this point. Note, however, how Franco and Juan Pablo work, much like Mario, cultivate a *limeño* ethos of propriety, respect, staunchly critiquing without raising their voices or insulting Bernardo (Table 2A).

Specifically, Franco and Juan Pablo agreed that Bernardo’s use of curse words in an office setting was thoroughly inappropriate. Bernardo’s use of them denoted, to the group, a break in acceptable workplace conduct and a “complete lack of respect” (line 10). Franco suggests greater diplomacy, which he self-corrects into “political

Table 2A
Spaniard cursing practices

1. F: En el Perú no podemos ser tan explícitos y	1. F: In Peru we can't be that explicit and often times
2. muchas veces en nuestras relaciones necesitas-	2. in our relationships you need—
3. JP: Tú dices una cosa así, mira alguien se	3. JP: You say something like that, look someone
4. refiere a mí—	4. refers to me like that
5. F: Necesitas ser dip—políticamente correcto ¿no?	5. F: You need to be dip—politically correct, right?
6. JP: Yo lo reviento.	6. JP: I'd beat them up.
7. B: ¿Sí? ↑	7. B: Really? ↑
[...]	[...]
8. JP: Porque una persona me dice una cosa así en mi cara	8. JP: Because someone says something like that to my face
9. F: Ya	9. F: Yeah
10. JP: Para mí es una falta de respeto total	10. JP: To me, it's a complete lack of respect.
11. F: Obvio, pero, por eso digo o sea, en Perú	11. F: Obviously but, that's why I'm saying, in Peru
12. tienes que cuidarte más de otra forma [...]	12. you have to be more careful in another way [...]
13. JP: Pero es que hay formas.	13. JP: But there are ways.
14. M: Hay formas.	14. M: There are ways.
15. JP: Y en el Perú se respetan las formas	15. JP: And in Peru these ways are respected

correctness" (line 5). The deployment of pronouns in the co-construction of Juan Pablo and Franco's argument is significant in terms of the overlapping roles they assign both Bernardo and themselves in their efforts to contrast Peruvian and Spaniard mores as a means to provide guidance to their foreign coworker. Both Franco and Juan Pablo use the second person informal *tú* and attached verbal morpheme -s (in bold in lines 2, 3, and 5) in their explanations of social mores in Peru. The use of the second person here addresses an unspecified, generalizable subject, where "you" stands in for any and all individuals, in order to make a normative argument about what an individual should do. Thus, they do not directly and exclusively interpellate Bernardo. The pair critique his behavior, though gently, speaking to a proverbial "you" and only implicitly to the second pair part in an interaction, using the figure of the former as a caution without overly chiding the actualization of behavior by the latter. This avoids the imperative mood, whose verbal forms are distinct and unmistakably different in both form and inflection. Here, Franco and Pablo let Bernardo know that when someone dares to "say things like that" (line 3) they run a great risk, and thus one might "need to be more politically correct" (line 5). In Juan Pablo's switch to the unspecified third person ("alguien"—"somebody"—in line 3 and "una persona" in line 8), the more general normative argument becomes a sort of warning. The three forms interpellating Bernardo in lines 1, 3, 5, and 8, with each shift in direct referent, achieve a non-accusatory tone.

A certain low-burning tension was, nevertheless, evident for a moment in Juan Pablo's voice, especially in line 6, which elicited some surprise from Bernardo in the moment, since the two of them had enjoyed (and continued to enjoy, at least during my time in Lima) a very friendly relationship. Juan Pablo, slightly older than Franco and Bernardo, asserts that he would be offended to the point of initiating a physical altercation, literally stating he would "beat someone up" (line 6). This surprises Bernardo, as evinced by his questioning tone, a quick and pointed rising intonation,

marked in line 7 with an upward arrow mark ↑. Franco does not disagree. Ultimately, Juan Pablo echoes what Franco sets up by moving away from the “national we” (“*En el Perú no podemos [1Pl] ser tan explícitos*”—“we cannot be so explicit”—line 1) into a depersonalized passive voice of heavy deontic charge: “*en el Perú se respetan las formas*” (“in Peru we respect the ways”), in line 15. The passive (i.e., “*se respetan*”) is another means to enforce a norm, which fits well with Juan Pablo’s indirect warning of potential violence. He explains to Bernardo first under the terms of how “we Peruvians” do things differently here, much like in Mario’s evaluation (Table 1, lines 6–7), contrasting singular national polities as units, and then making a powerfully normative, factual claim about what might even be possible within national territory.

The moment of tension passed quickly, Juan Pablo perhaps realizing his overstep, as shown in Franco and Juan Pablo’s effective further use of implicature as opposed to explicit command forms or admonishments. Their use of the copula in lines 13 and 14 (“there are ways”), reinforced by the unspecified referent actor in line 16, act both as non-confrontational naturalization and performance of Peruvian middle-class respect. Refraining from further aggravating the situation via an open indictment, Franco and Juan Pablo offer national-cultural evaluations of behavior. The Peruvians thus state their case and demonstrate it in their speech. They achieve both a metapragmatic typification of their own speech forms and its instantiation, a message heavily packed with overt and covert forms of stance-taking as a lesson on how to effectively assimilate in the workplace. Despite Juan Pablo’s warning, they do not raise their voice. Even in line 6, the use of the third person in the foretelling of potential aggression, non-specifying pronouns such as “someone,” rather than a prediction of future action, all leave out direct condemnation leveled at Bernardo. While this restrained outburst from Juan Pablo threatened to rupture his own respectability, it was quickly contained. Perhaps because of masculine expectations of aggression in response to disrespect this appeared less transgressive, but more than that, Juan Pablo quickly returned to more self-possessed engagement.

This was an instance of what Fleming and Lempert (2011) have identified as *taboo language*, which under particular “proscriptive regimes” defy the norms of immediate participation frameworks. They write that “one can’t even innocently ‘mention’ a taboo expression, by embedding the wayward curse in a quote, for instance, without the utterance counting as a taboo ‘use’” (6). When recounting his tale, Bernardo had attacked the “ways” of *limeño* middle classness. The term *formas* (lines 12–15) refers both to a manner of accomplishing tasks and means of showing deference, or respect. Elsewhere, I have heard the term used in the latter fashion in discussions of protocol for official meetings or ceremonies. Franco’s initial attempt to use the word “*diplomático*” before switching to “*políticamente correcto*” fits with this general approach to the situation. A bit later on in the conversation, shown in Table 2B, Franco and Juan Pablo try to further recontextualize Bernardo’s words to make his transgression clear; it is not the use of the words *per se*, rather, the space in which they were uttered.

The “national we” reappears here bolstered in Franco and Juan Pablo’s co-constructed metapragmatic evaluation of “Peruvian” speech. The two finish each other’s sentences, some turns at talk beginning with conjunctions and prepositions, opening up linked clauses that finish the statements the prior speaker made. We see this in lines 17–21, where Juan Pablo’s initial statement “everyone is super vulgar” comes to be qualified by Franco, then by Juan Pablo himself, and once again by Franco. In addition, the repetition and response in lines 21, 25, 26, and 29 (“no” as tag question and confirmation) and the trading “claro” as a strong affirmative in lines 29 and 31 figurate complete agreement, both in the poetics and the denotational content of their speech. The use of the tag question “no?” has little to do with negation; instead, it requests (and assumes) confirmation prefiguring further agreement from the addressee. Franco and Juan Pablo’s duet of agreement reaches its apex with the latter’s decided “yes, of course” (line 32), the product of multiple turns of agreement,

Table 2B
Spaniard cursing practices (cont.)

17. JP: Bueno, en realidad todos son super groseros.	17. JP: Well, actually, everyone is super vulgar.
18. F: Pero en tu entorno.	18. F: But in your space.
19. JP: Pero todo depende de en qué momento—	19. JP: But it all depends on what moment—
20. hay momentos.	20. there are moments.
21. F: De tu grupo, ¿no? De tu entorno. De tu	21. F: In your group, right? In your space. In
22. círculo de confianza.	22. your very close circle.
23. JP: Agarras y dices, “en este momento puedo	23. JP: You just go and you say, “In this
24. decirlo sin ningún problema.” En otro	24. moment I can say it no problem.” In another
25. momento, no.	25. moment, not.
26. F: No, pues, no.	26. F: No, so, no.
27. JP: O sea, yo puedo agarrar y ser super grosero	27. JP: I mean, I can go and be super vulgar
28. con mi jefe si estamos en la calle	28. with my boss if we’re out having lunch
almorzando.	
29. F: Con confianza, claro.	29. F: And there’s trust. Sure.
30. JP: ¿No? Tranquilos. Pero yo regreso acá	30. JP: Right? Relaxed. But I come back here
31. F: Claro, en su oficina.	31. F: Sure, to his office.
32. JP: Sí, por supuesto. Y no me voy a referir de	32. JP: Yes, of course. And I’m not going to
33. la misma manera porque no hay forma.	33. refer to him in the same manner because there is no way.

in which the “Peruvian way” becomes entextualized through their interactional poetics.

The emphasis that Franco and Juan Pablo place on context-specific permissibility, such as the personal, intimate, extra-professional “group” (lines 21–24), makes it clear from their account that transgression does not lie in the deployment of *joder* and *coño* as expletives per se; rather, it is about context, or the “moment,” as Juan Pablo says in lines 19 and 20, when one is around certain people, “your space. . . your group,” as Franco puts it in lines 18 and 21. Franco’s use of “entorno” (“milieu”) in line 21 combines both space and company. Combined with the second person possessive pronoun, he delimits the place for “vulgarity” (line 17) to a more private space owned by the speaker, where there might be *confianza* (“trust”) in line 22, and notions of formality and rules of propriety might be foregone. “Tener confianza” also means, more generally, to feel comfortable enough around someone to perform certain speech acts, including but not restricted to: using informal means of pronominal address, using first names, speaking out of turn, not being careful in the content of one’s speech, etc. Often, when middle-class Peruvians feel offended by any of these practices, they will chastise their interlocutor by warning them that they have not “given them the trust” (dado confianza) that might allow them to speak thus. Franco and Juan Pablo do not even relegate expletives to instances of extreme anger, despair, or urgency. There is simply a place and a time to be “super vulgar” (line 27), as Juan Pablo explains, even with your boss if you are, say, out having lunch. However, co-presence in the space of the office changes the interactional framework into one of deference and mutually constituted respect, upheld by interactional repertoires that exclude expletives. There would be, as Juan Pablo indicates and Franco concurs, “no way” (line 33) to speak in such terms to the boss once lunch was over and regular working hours had recommenced.

Although Bernardo faced this exegesis on regimented deference with certain surprise, this exchange is emblematic of the hierarchical nature of social relations that middle-class Peruvians themselves—such as the coworkers in this interaction—often recognize, one reproduced in expectations and performances of reciprocal formality, which are often in contrast to Spaniards. The Peruvian coworkers see marking boundaries between participation frameworks as something both evident and necessary. Furthermore, they attempt to convey to Bernardo that norms of propriety in interaction can shift from formal to informal even in situations that incorporate individuals with whom you generally share formal, official settings (e.g., someone in a more elevated position in a well-defined hierarchy, such as your boss). These middle-class typifications foster an isolation of the domains of intimacy or solidarity, locations and contexts in which deference is required, and of which Spaniards are unaware.

To break down these boundaries, therefore, is the true transgression. Franco and Juan Pablo's response to Bernardo's story illustrates how ways of speaking within the confines of the office space are perceived as crucial to the production of a respectful, convivial work situation. Moreover, the assertion that cursing is acceptable only within a specific, bound time and place is reminiscent of Mario's statements about the Peruvian "way" of discreetness in the streets (Table 1, lines 6–11/18–20). Thus, to Mario, Juan Pablo, and Franco, the features of respectful Peruvianness—keeping a low volume in open air settings and refraining from cursing in the office—established via contrast with Spaniard features, are national rules of engagement. We can thus recover a discourse surrounding the ideal performance of forms of middle-class respect, breakable only under rules of intimacy, a construction of privacy in the correct interactional context, even in an ostensibly public space, extrapolated and entextualized as a national divide in the moment. In establishing differences between "right" and "wrong" forms of engagement across particular spaces (the street, the office) and with individuals fulfilling particular interactional roles (strangers, colleagues, and bosses), my interlocutors entextualize national characterological figures in interaction: the demure Peruvian and the brash Spaniard, reinstantiating and therefore further enregistering these as recognizable social types. Gal (2002) argues that public and private spaces can also be fractally parsed into further subspaces either public or private through discursive means. In this case, they are norms of propriety within locations of labor relations: discursively isolating the public (the office) from the private (social lunch) thus further identifies the policing of behavior as a middle-class notion, whereby respect and deference must be kept in a public, ritual space of productivity, which must be protected from (private) deployment of improprieties. But Gal's insight even further relates to Reyes's on this point: the enforcement of the public/private divide stems precisely from a European 18th- into 19th-century set of ideals, then passed onto the colonial territories, where it continues alive and well today.

Colonizers/Labor Migrants

Throughout, Bernardo seemed to comprehend the cultural divide, no offense taken. This was often the reaction from my Spanish interlocutors: a recognition of difference, but never a lack of agency. The delivery of critiques was usually similar to Juan Pablo and Franco's, who, like Mario, modulate their approach to maintain decorum, not only because of their attachment to middle-class deference but perhaps also because they perceived the migrants as successful cosmopolitans. This is a stark contrast to the experience of Latin American migrants in Spain. Multiple studies show that Ecuadorian, Dominican, and other migrants often feel pressured to adapt their linguistic practices in everyday settings in Spain (Corona and Kelsall, 2016; Peralta Cespedes, 2014; Sancho Pascual, 2013). It is not entirely coincidence that the term *distinción* in Hispanic linguistics refers to the distinction between /θ/ and /s/ (Penny, 2000; 2002) present exclusively in Iberian forms of Spanish. In these cases, as

Martín Rojo and Márquez Reiter (2019) explain, the prestige of features such as *distinción* reinforces colonial power relations flagged by Latin American migrants themselves. None of the more than 40 Spanish migrants I interviewed felt discriminated against because of issues of refinement or class, and if encumbered by Lima speech norms, they were able to shrug them off. When asked about their opinion about the colonial relationship between Peru and Spain, most found it absurd to even discuss. The asymmetry in these experiences of migration must be underscored.

The generalized perception of Spaniards as uncouth did not impede them from finding work. In this sense, their positioning is radically different from that of Latin American migrants in Iberia. Often, their European credentials were understood to be superior to Peruvian university degrees, sometimes even by Peruvians themselves. More than one of my *limeño* informants told me they had worked in environments where hiring committees specifically chose European or North American foreigners over Peruvian candidates or gave these elite migrants greater leeway in their responsibilities. Franco and Mario had no proof, but strongly believed this was the case of recent hires in their own offices. Of the many Spanish migrants I met, the only one who had been unemployed for an extended period of time while in Lima was my friend the former gallery assistant, and this was primarily because she had no urgent need: she owned an apartment in Madrid for which she received rent payments in euro. Many of them also held positions that would have been unavailable to them back in Spain due to lack of work experience, even pre-crisis. On the other hand, Peruvian return migrants, who exhibited some aspects of Spaniard register, could potentially face outright social rejection, not because they lacked etiquette, but because they appeared to be putting on foreign or cosmopolitan airs. Performing foreignness before nonmigrants increased the latter's anxieties about the threat of parvenus into their spaces in the city; the indexicals of failed national and class belonging are related to the shortcomings of the "new middle class" of former rural/working class migrants, prone to *motoseo*, making themselves heard loudly in *pacato* public space, even deploying forms stigmatized in circulating media like the *cholometro*. It demonstrates a policing of an aspiration perceived as unwarranted and, due to the migrants' relative economic success, perhaps one of their main recourses to compete.

Their critiques were never about a conscious aspiration toward Europeaness (evident in the typifications of José and *La Española*) but rather an aspiration toward a localized ideology of middle classness. While the origin is indeed colonial, as concerns about deference and private versus public performance are traceable to colonial hierarchy, middle-class Peruvian nonmigrants cultivate it with a national orientation. What we see in this case is not, therefore, a reversal of the colonial relation, but rather an example of the complex nature of class in postcolonial societies, in which historical processes maintain ideologies of propriety and success. The aspiring Peruvian middle-class laminates colonial aspirational sensibilities (of propriety and respect) onto discourses of national exceptionalism (the virtuous "national we") to face the sociopolitical, macroeconomic world hierarchy. Not only that: with the 2008 Spanish crisis, Peru's place in the ranking—the saying went—could be improving.

Conclusion

By exposing the colonial aspects of class-based nationalism, this study expands how scholars theorize coloniality as experienced and formulated by those ostensibly on their way to join the bourgeois elite. In the case I lay out here, (post)colonial characterological figures emerge in unexpected and sometimes seemingly contradictory ways, as upwardly mobile *Limeños* redefine extant categories of higher social standing ("European," "middle class," "respectable") by differently iconizing behaviors indexing Spanish qualities ("Spaniard," "foreign," "uncouth,"

“aspirational”) to carve out their own positioning vis-a-vis the social and economic landscape of the city. As labor competition between migrants and nonmigrants intensifies and economic crises potentially shift imaginaries around geopolitical hierarchies, the profound irony of the (post)colonial becomes quite evident: the perceived re-invasion of Peruvian economic sovereignty by Spaniard figures is resisted by local rising elites via the language of colonial reputability and respect. Fears of Spanish incursion into Lima’s goods and services market might be sustained, but whether this could be correctly designated neocolonialism elides the colonial relations that middle-class and non-middle-class Lima locals already engage in, naturalize, nationalize, and thus render invisible.

In expounding on the roles of proper participation in the Peruvian polity, reflecting how the socioeconomic tides occasionally ebb in former empires and flow in former colonies, my nonmigrant middle-class interlocutors were never positing any sort of revolutionary stance. As *Limeños* hone their “traditional” roles, thereby becoming economically empowered, they resort to a self-fashioning whose colonial design (from linguistic code to its paralinguistic features) sought to exclude and discriminate. While the specific colonial aspirational horizon (i.e., directly copying the metropole) may be gone, its logics remain moored to colonial ideologies of propriety, respectability, and social distance. At the macro level, invoking the trope of reconquest might prove illuminating, but its deployment by elites in fact serves to obfuscate their attachment to those performative means of power.

While economic shifts can be quite real, it would take much more sustained upheaval (or restructuring) at a global level for a transcendental reversal in geopolitics and therefore in the political economy that shapes (post)colonial relations between migrants and nonmigrants to and from Peru and Spain. As we can see in this case, coloniality organizes a set of sociopolitical identities through its hierarchizing logic in complex and insidious ways. Even in wresting ownership of linguistic code by elevating the status of a local dialect, upwardly mobile elites invoke a norm of performative respectability that cultivates an image of a middle class filled with virtuous, decorous citizens. In rejecting declassé former colonizers, their tactics build upon forms that historically and currently work to exclude Spanishes shaped by Indigenous language contact or working-class registers of multiple stripes (registers which often overlap). Thus, studying coloniality must go beyond its vocabulary, with an attention to reproduction via encoding and decoding practices—to its logic.

Notes

1. Buregn, S. (2013). “Spain youth unemployment reaches record 56.1%” *The Guardian*, 30 Aug. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2013/aug/30/spain-youth-unemployment-record-high>.
2. Gacs, D. (2014). “How Peru Could Survive The End Of The Commodities Supercycle.” *Business Insider*, 7 Jan. <https://www.businessinsider.com/peru-after-the-end-of-commodities-boom-2014-1>.
3. I used *Spaniard* instead of Spanish to refer to the migrants both to avoid confusion and to highlight the colonial relationship.
4. “El Cholometro. . .el oficial. . .el peruano.” (2008). <http://el-rincon-del-perrito.blogspot.com/2008/10/el-cholometroel-oficial-el-peruano.html> [Online 10/30/2020].

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