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Who Owns the Language?

Lunfardo: Linguistic Boundaries and Attitudes Among *Porteño* Youth

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Hispanic Languages and Literatures

by

Adriana D'Adamo Guillén

Committee in charge:

Professor Viola G. Miglio, Chair

Professor Stefan Th. Gries

Professor Eric W. Campbell

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The dissertation of Adriana D'Adamo Guillén is approved.

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Stefan Th. Gries

_____

Eric W. Campbell

_____

Viola G. Miglio, Committee Chair

September 2019

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VITA OF ADRIANA D'ADAMO GUILLÉN

Summer 2019

EDUCATION

B.A. Department of Languages and Applied Linguistics, University of California, Santa Cruz, Major: Italian Studies, June 2012 (*magna cum laude*)

M.A. Department of Spanish and Portuguese, San Diego State University, Spanish, May 2016

Ph.D. Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of California, Santa Barbara, Hispanic Languages and Literatures (Iberian Linguistics), with additional emphasis in Applied Linguistics, *expected September 2019*

PUBLICATIONS

Guillén, Adriana. & Urzúa-Beltran, Alfredo (2018). Reconocimiento de lunfardismos entre hablantes de español porteño. *Signo y Seña*. *32*. Universidad de Buenos Aires.

Moosekian, Adriana (2016). "La literatura como recodificación de una nación traumatizada en *Una sola muerte numerosa*." *Lucero, 24*, University of California Berkeley. 29-38.

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Tim McGovern Research and Professional Accomplishments Award, UCSB (2018)
Doctoral Research Travel Award, UCSB (2018)
Doctoral Conference Grant, UCSB (2018)
The Dean and Faculty of the College of Arts and Letters Award, SDSU
Outstanding Master of Arts Student in Linguistics (2016)
Research Award for Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice
9th San Diego State University Student Research Symposium (2016)
Chicano/Latin American Studies Grant for Research in Latin America, SDSU (2016)
Tinker Foundation Grant for Research in Latin America, SDSU (2015)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"El lunfardo y percepciones de la identidad lingüística entre los argentinos: Un caso de estudio" Jornadas Internacionales: El cocoliche y el lunfardo. Universidad de Buenos Aires/ Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Buenos Aires, Argentina. (2018)

"Making the Most of Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom: Kinesthetic Language Learning Through Dance." Hispanic & Lusophone Graduate Student Conference, UCSB. (2018)

"Over 100 Years of *chamuyando*: The European Footprint in *Porteño* Spanish" Spanish in the U.S./Spanish in Contact with Other Languages, Provo, UT. (2017)

"Language Variations in the Dominican Republic" San Diego State University Student Research Symposium, San Diego State University. (2017)

"The *Porteño* Voice: A Study of Argentinian Linguistic Identities"
Humanities Education and Research Association (HERA), San Diego, CA. (2017)

"Lunfardo: A Contemporary Study of *Porteño* Spanish"
San Diego State University Research Symposium, San Diego State University. (2016)

"La recodificación de una memoria colectiva en *Una sola muerte numerosa*"
AATSP Conference Roger Anton Chapter, California State University Fullerton. (2016)

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Instructor/Graduate Teaching Assistant (Spanish 1-6, Spanish 16A) Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of California, Santa Barbara (Fall 2016-Spring 2019)

Instructor/Graduate Teaching Associate (Spanish 101-102) Department of Spanish and Portuguese, San Diego State University (Fall 2014-Spring 2016)

Instructor (Spanish Review, Spanish 1), Santa Barbara City College Extended Learning, (2017)

Graduate Teaching Assistant (Linguistics 20) Department of Linguistics, University of California, Santa Barbara (Winter 2019)

Reader (LAIS 102) Department of Latin American and Iberian Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara (Spring 2019)

Reader (Spanish 100) Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of California, Santa Barbara (Winter 2017)

U.S. Department of State Student Intern
United States Embassy to the Dominican Republic, Political and Economics Section (Summer 2015)

U.S. Department of State Student Intern
United States Embassy to the Holy See, Political Section (Summer 2016)

LANGUAGES

English (Native)
Spanish (Advanced / Near-native)
Italian (Intermediate)
Portuguese (Basic)

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Iberian Linguistics
Studies in Sociolinguistics
Studies in Applied Linguistics

ABSTRACT

Who Owns the Language?

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by

Adriana D'Adamo Guillén

The question of language status regarding use, attrition, and social dispersion is commonplace in the field of linguistics, and particularly in the study of vernaculars, informal non-standard speech. However, most research concerning substandard lexical phenomena has been dictated by varieties of English, with limited concentration in the Americas beyond its English-speaking regions. This project explores the sociolinguistic relationship of urban language and youth identities through the lens of Lunfardo—a dialectal Spanish variety of the Southern Cone's largest conurbation of Buenos Aires. Though a term subject to multiple definitions, Lunfardo is commonly considered an Argentinian vernacular that originated in the *conventillos* ('shantytowns') of Buenos Aires during massive European immigration waves at the turn of the 20th century and the golden age of tango. Its circumstantial origins among the lower social classes and its perceived ties to taboo and criminal jargon caused Lunfardo to be heavily stigmatized and even censored in its early conception and evolution. However, as is the case for many vernaculars, Lunfardo is said to have breached social and geographic limits such that it eventually became incorporated and indistinguishable from colloquial Argentinian

Spanish. Today, Lunfardo is considered by scholars to be a pillar of Argentinian identity with steadfast associations to its European immigration history, and to emblematic Argentinian cultural manifestations, such as tango. Still, major lacunae lie in research of quotidian Argentinian's perceptions of Lunfardo, especially among young adults.

With the intent to contribute conceptual innovation to the field of sociolinguistics, this study's primary objective is to unveil the status and language ideologies in place today of this historically disparaged language of marginalized *porteño* -resident of Buenos Aires- communities. The dissertation investigates and assesses young adult *porteños'* comprehension levels of historical and contemporary Lunfardo tokens, and taps into their language attitudes toward the variety. The project offers a mixed methods approach for the analysis of participants' knowledge of and attitudes towards Lunfardo, which are empirically tested through comprehension test surveys, language rating surveys, and questionnaires. As the dissertation explores the rich information contained in the quantitative and qualitative data, it argues that the contemporary *porteños* have extensive comprehension knowledge of the Lunfardo variety; that the concept of Lunfardo may be subdivided into several distinct prototypes that researchers cannot take for granted; and that the social boundaries of who owns the language may be surprising. This variety serves as a lens through which to examine the phenomenon of the young Argentinian generation's sense of linguistic identity, with the greater goal of casting light on vernacular progressions in historically marginalized speech communities shaped by immigrant groups. By employing a complex mixed methods approach, this study demonstrates the methodological rigor essential to deliver rich, substantive content from the Latin American linguistic milieu to the humanities and social sciences.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter 1

Introduction

On December 27th, 2012, Encuentro—an educational and cultural channel of the Federal System of Media and Public Content of Argentina—premiered a multi-episode public television program, *Lunfardo Argento*. Due to its lack of incorporation into the Argentinian public school curriculum, its primary objective was to educate Argentinians about a defining characteristic of their national language—Lunfardo. This was originally documented in the late-19th century as a criminal jargon from Buenos Aires that resulted from language contact between Argentinian Spanish and the languages of many European immigrants as well as internal migrants during the city's development. It is believed to have first expanded to the lower-classes, later diffused to the masses through tango, and is now debated as common language to all Argentinians. The program's narration interlaced interview fragments about the jargon's linguistic history and existing usage by experts in the field, including philologists, literary critics, journalists, and historians. It concentrated on Lunfardo's diverse semantic domains, including its appearance in everyday life, politics, media, and sporting environments, as well as in the underground spheres of rock music, sex, drugs, and nightlife. Though the show's purpose was clear—to instruct the average Argentinian about an important aspect of their national linguistic variety—it simultaneously provided a glimpse into the fundamental debate around Lunfardo,

demonstrating the local researchers' long-standing concern regarding what Lunfardo is and what is its significance to Argentinians today.

Lunfardo's uncertain origins are highlighted in the documentary early-on, when Director of the *Academia Porteña del Lunfardo* (a non-profit institution of Lunfardo linguistic research, and the study of the evolution of colloquial speech in Buenos Aires and other Argentine cities), Oscar Conde, defends the quotidian non-delinquent setting in which Lunfardo originated: *En aquel primer momento, la formación creo que se da en los patios de los conventillos, en las esquinas, en los patios de las escuelas donde los hijos de inmigrantes se juntaban con los hijos de criollos, y no como [se] piensa…en la cárcel.* Conde's hypothesis counters the first official stance taken in the earliest Lunfardo documentation of the variety as a jargon used by criminals—a perspective that was seemingly so entrenched that scholars continue to fight it in the contemporary era. Then, historian Jorge Dubatti describes the early stigma of Lunfardo that even gave symbols of folklore a bad reputation: *Durante muchos años, el tango era visto como una mala palabra, y el sainete un género despreciable.* These two iconic manifestations of Lunfardo—the tango and sainete—are upheld today as important components of Argentinian history and folklore. However, this positive assessment is not as evident in the discussion of Lunfardo as a separate linguistic entity: this is apparent in the need of scholars to defend it as they do in this TV series. Another Lunfardist and member of the *Academia Porteña del Lunfardo*, Marcelo Oliveri, drives this point home: *Me parece que el lunfardo enriquece todo lo que forma parte del habla cultural de un país […] Hay que sacar de la cabeza que el lunfardo es sólo de las clases bajas, o que el lunfardo es sólo las malas palabras.*

The series continues with many instances by the narrator and interviewed scholars that claim Lunfardo's pertinence to the speech of all Argentinians. They uphold it as an inclusive national language and marker of national identity. Their tenets are founded on several assumptions:

(1) Lunfardo is a variety relevant to Buenos Aires and to all of Argentina.

(2) Lunfardo is a living argot-like vocabulary.

(3) Lunfardo is rooted in the Argentinian popular language and culture of the past and present.

Crucially, this documentary displays a pro-Lunfardo stance supported both by academic research and the federal governmental body that funded the project. Whether the primary purpose of the series was public education or a contribution to the variety, both suggest an intention behind the national thinkers and humanists of Argentina today. These advocates of the variety exhibit a sense of commitment to Lunfardo, and an obligation to correct the wrongs made against the variety over its history.

Despite the interviewed scholars' conviction of the variety's positive relevance to Argentinian society and their efforts to contribute to its prestige today, Lunfardo and its place among civilization clearly continues to embody controversy. This was made clear when the Argentinian Ministry of Education was suddenly obligated to remove the series *Lunfardo Argento* from the Encuentro channel. The show has not been accessible to the public since January of 2016, and justification for this removal remain concealed. After many unsuccessful attempts to communicate with the Argentinian Ministry of Education, Encuentro, and with the screenwriters, I asked Oscar Conde what he knew about the show's removal from the public eye. He described his discontent with the product:

> *Lunfardo Argento fue una gran idea, pero en parte malograda. ¿Por qué? Porque se hicieron 8 capítulos de media hora, pero entre las personas que participaron se eligió a algunos "mediáticos" que la van de "progress" y se la pasaron puteando y diciendo obscenidades innecesarias (confundiendo también –tanto ellos como los propios hacedores del documental– las malas palabras con el lunfardo). Siempre he tenido la ilusión de que la Academia Porteña del Lunfardo pudiera organizar un programa de este tipo, pero por ahora es una ilusión.* (personal communication, Feb. 1, 2017)

Lunfardo argento's ultimate removal from the depository of the Federal System of Media and Public Content of Argentina, only three years after its release, supports the view that there is a continued collision regarding Lunfardo's acceptance and its prestige (or lack thereof) in Argentinian society. Still, Conde, and other local scholars like him, proclaim: *Estudiar el lunfardo es mucho más provechoso para saber quiénes somos que leer diez libros de sociología argentina*. Clearly, the jargon's layered complexity compels a deeper investigation at the social/communal level going beyond academic dialogue to better understand the reality of Lunfardo currently in Argentinian society.

A. Statement of the Problem and Research Objectives

The variety known as Lunfardo is claimed by historians, linguists, and literary scholars to play an important role in the collective linguistic consciousness and identity of Argentina. However, this has been complicated by over a century of linguistic disgrace and mixed signals of appropriation. For purposes of this dissertation, Lunfardo will be referred to with a series of linguistic terms, which I use interchangeably and that are 1) variety, 2) jargon, or 3) vernacular. Though much of Lunfardo linguistic literature uses the term "lexicon" to refer to Lunfardo, this label will not be employed in this project to avoid confusion or generalization with the whole Argentinian lexicon.

Lunfardo is typically considered a vernacular that originated in the peripheral shantytowns of Buenos Aires at the turn of the 20th century. During one of the greatest influxes of human migration, Lunfardo emerged from the European diaspora in contact with other languages. Key languages included aboriginal and African languages, namely Quechua, the indigenous language of the Andean highlands of the Inca Empire, and varieties of Bantu, a general term for different ethnic groups in Africa sharing a common language family. Lunfardo's claimed origins among the lower social classes and its perceived ties to taboo and criminal jargon have triggered a heavy and enduring stigmatization ever since its first documentation by criminologists and members of the *porteño* police (Dellepiane 1894; Lugones 1878). It has influenced Argentina's national literature, music, and popular culture, including its most iconic cultural product, *tango* (Castro, 1990; Conde, 2011; Gobello, 1967; Kailuweit, 2014; Oliveri, 2013). Lunfardo was later subjected to a period of linguistic purification under military dictators, which led to its suffering 20 years of censorship in radio broadcasting, journalism, and public schools. Despite its biased history and the odds against its survival, Lunfardo has since been re-appropriated in scholarship and everyday usage as a pillar of Argentinian identity. It has been described as breaching its encoded social, ethnic, and geographic limits such that it is now indistinguishable from colloquial Argentinian Spanish.

Lunfardo studies today continue to be steadfastly associated to the nation's European diaspora, and emblematic of Argentinian cultural manifestations namely the tango, the national musical genre and dance of Argentina. Research is dominated by historical and literary analyses regarding Lunfardo's place in Argentinian music and folklore of the past. However, in the historical discourse, there is the propensity to neglect the true crux of

Lunfardo's critical sociolinguistic making. The few extant experimental studies have not demonstrated methodological rigor in Lunfardo analysis, and are limited largely to word lists or dictionaries. Linguistic research is limited to impressionistic assertions of its status represented by academics' intuitions, lacking any serious analysis of the actual speakers' attitudes. It is, therefore, imperative to shed light on the major lacunae in the research of Lunfardo's status in Argentina, especially from the point of view of underrepresented users of the language. Specifically, until now it is unclear to what extent Lunfardo is understood by the younger generations, the creators of most vernaculars. It is at present unclear whether Lunfardo is a stigmatized variety, or if it has quickly risen to become the prized component of national identity as claimed by local philologists and Hispanists at Argentinian universities.

While it is relatively easy to capitalize on natural interest in language, there is a greater need for this class of language study for understanding contexts of stigmatized language, and "changing the opinions and assumptions about language variation" (Wolfram *et al*., 2008, p. 1113). Incorporating data from non-expert judgements of experimental, naturalistically-informed, stimuli constructions makes this research timely to understand Lunfardo within the current Argentinian sociolinguistic framework, and to evaluate the nature of linguistic boundaries in speech communities with entrenched nationalistic threads. This project seeks to reorient research by observing and exploring the sociolinguistic realities and language ideologies behind Lunfardo as they exist across *porteño* social classes today. As such, the specific objectives of the dissertation are to:

1. *Determine the extent to which porteño youth understand Lunfardo.*
2. *Assess young porteño speakers' covert language attitudes towards Lunfardo.*

3. *Identify the socioeconomic factors that may indicate acceptability judgements and levels of Lunfardo comprehension among porteño youth.*
4. *Examine the language attitudes and metalinguistic perceptions/discursive impressions towards Lunfardo by porteño youth from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds around Lunfardo.*

I do not presume to know how young Argentinian social groups classify Lunfardo, or what words they would claim to be part of the jargon. For this research, words have been carefully selected from Lunfardo dictionaries published by Lunfardo research scholars and members of the *Academia Porteña del Lunfardo*. The purpose of this research is not to deconstruct the work of lexicographers, to argue what words pertain to the jargon or not, but rather to try and answer more general questions: Do young adult *porteños* understand words pertaining to Lunfardo? How do they perceive words that are labelled 'Lunfardo' by experts of the Lunfardo academic community? How do they talk about the jargon?

B. Overview of the Dissertation

This study employs a mixed methods approach to examine the posed research objectives most comprehensively. **Chapter 1 part 1** (above) presents a statement of the problem, and the rationale for the study. It includes an account of Lunfardo's history and its impact on Argentinian language and culture, followed by a description of the study objectives, conceptual framework, and methods for the present research. **Part 2** provides a working definition of Lunfardo and a detailed background of the jargon. It recounts its linguistic origins and contact with other languages, as well as its censorship, diffusion, and sociolinguistic attributes as described in literature. The chapter reviews Lunfardo's

journey from clandestine and stigmatized jargon to popular vernacular, and its explained vehicle of diffusion to the masses through cultural manifestations such as literature, theatre, and music (*tango*, Argentinian rock, and *cumbia villera*).

Chapter 2 presents relevant themes of Lunfardo as they have been expressed in literature as a symbol of Argentinian identity. It positions this idea within theories of language ideology and the inherent relationship between language and identity. It reviews the history of Argentinian social thought during the construction of the Argentinian nation and the intellectual concern for a national identity. The chapter traces the demographics of European immigration waves to Buenos Aires in the late 19th century, and examines the immigration law of the time to understand the foundation upon which the Argentinian State was built, including its early views and acceptance of certain immigrant groups and their languages. It finishes with an account of the censorship placed on Lunfardo and other regionalisms during pre-Peronism, and the sociopolitical situation during the censorship lift.

Chapter 3 comprises the quantitative portion of the study that examines the actual status of Lunfardo among young adult *porteños* insomuch as their comprehension of Lunfardo tokens and their perceived acceptability. This chapter describes the method and rationale for the selection of Lunfardo lexical items included in the survey instruments. It then provides a description of the entire data collection process, including survey design, piloting, data collection sites, and participants. Then, it outlines the Lunfardo comprehension survey and attitudinal ratings survey, and employs advanced statistical methods for their analyses. The surveys aim at revealing overt and covert language

attitudes prior to conducting the interview/questionnaire analyzed in the following chapter.

Chapter 4 describes the qualitative portion of the study approached from social representation theory and language ideology. It describes the design of the data collection instruments as well as the method used to collect data and examine participant discourse that targeted the discovery of Lunfardo language attitudes among young adult *porteños*. Recurring responses are tagged as widespread beliefs about Lunfardo and what the variety represents to the young *porteño* generation of today. The qualitative data are evaluated in connection to the historical analysis and quantitative data results examined in the previous chapters.

Chapter 5 summarizes the conclusions and implications of the study. It discusses the effects of the dissertation's results from both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analyses as they pertain to concepts of Argentinian identity. Based on the dissertation findings, the chapter closes with propositions for future directions in Lunfardo studies as informed by this rare mixed methods approach to the field.

C. Literature Review of Lunfardo Studies

The study of Lunfardo has interested many fields, from linguists, sociologists, and historians; to literary authors, critics, documentarians, and musicians. Its ties to Argentinian history have motivated the evolution of an extensive body of literature concerned primarily with language documentation and etymologies, as well as literary, music, and theatre analyses. The following subsections review prominent work in

Lunfardo studies and highlight gaps in its scholarship that the dissertation serves to address.

1. Lunfardo's Origins: From Marginal to Boom

Like many vernaculars or slangs, Lunfardo's origins of linguistic influence have been heavily debated among scholars. Numerous etymological studies have been taken on by Lunfardo experts (Gobello, 1977; 2004; Conde, 1998; 2004), who demonstrate the tracing of many prevalent words to a multitude of linguistic origins reflected in word borrowings from various Romance languages, as well as African, aboriginal and English language varieties. Lunfardo's overall composition is approximately 92% from Spanish and Italian varietal borrowings (Conde, 2011). Conde describes the particularly overwhelming Italian influence in Lunfardo's making: *El lunfardo tiene que ver con la inmigración europea, yo diría en grandísima medida con la inmigración itálica. Es decir que en las primeras décadas del lunfardo, en los 1900, 1910, parte de las palabras del léxico son préstamos de alguna lengua itálica* (*Lunfardo argento*, 2012). Though Conde describes the presence of Italian languages as crucial in the manifestation of Lunfardo, the linguist equally maintains Lunfardo's traceable influence from indigenous languages: *Hay una marca de la inmigración no solamente externa sino interna también […] Hay una incorporación también de las lenguas aborígenes a través de los préstamos al habla urbana […].* He makes various references to evidence the indigenous traces of common everyday borrowed Lunfardo words: *Por ejemplo, 'pucho' del quichua para 'colilla de un cigarillo', 'pilcha' del araucano para 'ropas', 'che' del mapuche para 'gente'.* Even though the documented African and aboriginal borrowings represent a small but resilient

number of Lunfardo words, some are so iconic in Argentinian language and culture that they have reached an international scale of recognition and identification to the Argentinian, especially among other Spanish speakers. Such iconic Africanisms pertaining to Lunfardo include: *milonga, tango, fulo, quilombo;* Quechua borrowings include: *pucho*, *guacho*; Guaraní and Mapuche borrowings: *matete, mate, che*. Still, the very word that assumes the name of the argot, *lunfardo*, has been derived from the standard Italian word *lombardo* (someone/something from Lombardy), or conversely, from the Romanesco word *lombardo*, meaning *ladrón* or 'thief'. This meaning later limited its semantic value to mean a *porteño* thief, and thereafter to finally designate the Argentinian variety of Lunfardo (Conde, 2004).

Despite the history of diverse languages in contact that Lunfardo conveys, a steadfast association to its European ancestry dominates in its scholarship (and observably in the general *porteño* consciousness). Whether by chance or deliberately, this strong European connection that foregrounds Lunfardo's study has obscured any African and aboriginal contributions to near invisibility in the history of Argentina and its language (Helg, 1990; Luongo, 2014; Savigliano, 2018). Nevertheless, the erasure of the Afro-Argentinian component from history does not affect the vast presence of Europeans, especially Italians, in the Rio de la Plata region at the time of the variety's beginning. While the historical influence of Spain is plainly evoked in Argentina, impacts from the Italic Peninsula seem perpetually endorsed in the context of Lunfardo, despite the rivaling numbers of immigrants from both regions at the time of language contact and Lunfardo's consequential formation. Such prizing of its Italian heritage and yet desertion of what is aboriginal or African in its memory may have implications in the present study's pursuit

to uncover the status of Lunfardo in the consciousness of Argentinian speakers and their attitudes toward the historical variety today. Foregrounding the sociolinguistic environment of the jargon diachronically will be essential to then analyzing the primary contribution of this study, the synchronic data collected in Buenos Aires. To arrive at the heart of these multi-layered questions, this research aims to first reconstruct the history of Argentinian social thought and immigration policies leading up to Lunfardo's inception. These issues will be discussed in detail in chapter 2.

2. Formalizing Lunfardo Studies: A Descriptive Approach

The *Academia Porteña del Lunfardo* has played a central role in the documentation and discussion of Lunfardo's place in the *porteño* community and in Argentinian society at large since its foundation in 1962. Its first president and executive secretary, José Gobello, was a central figure and pioneer of modern Lunfardo studies. However, prior to arriving to his passion for research of *porteño costumbrismo*, he was an outspoken *peronista*, which later brought him to provisional incarceration in Buenos Aires under a military coup d'état in 1955. He later went on to become a journalist, as well as a researcher of *tango* and Lunfardo. His first Lunfardo publication (*Lunfardía,* 1953), as well as a series short stories that he composed during his time spent in the Buenos Aires prison (*Historia de ladrones,* 1956) were the beginning of a life and career dedicated to the authorship of many contributions to Lunfardo scholarship, including: *Breve diccionario lunfardo* (1960), *Nueva antología lunfarda* (1972), *Nuevo diccionario lunfardo* (1990), *Tangos, letras y letristas Volumes II-VI* (1992-1996), *Aproximación al lunfardo* (1996), *Costumbrismo lunfardo* (2004), and *Curso básico de lunfardo* (Gobello

and Oliveri, 2004). His publications have impacted all subsequent work on Lunfardo among scholars today who understand and claim the jargon as no longer relevant simply to the speakers of Buenos Aires, but to the national language of Argentina in general.

In its early phase and prior to the formation of the *Academia Porteña del Lunfardo*, the Lunfardo argot was not perceived to be a complex linguistic system, but rather a stigmatized sociolect associated with criminals and the immigrant lower classes of Buenos Aires (Castro, 1941; Dellepiane, 1897). While establishing an academy for its formal study could not entirely rid Lunfardo of its negative historical connotation, creating a space for its research was a considerable step in transmitting a sense of importance and acknowledgement to the jargon, at least in the academic world. By placing Lunfardo on the academic platform of Argentinian language and culture, scholars have since observed the variety's spread beyond a single social class, as it trickles into popular Argentinian speech in general. This point of Lunfardo's resurgence is exuberantly contended in Conde (2011), who soundly states that 'Lunfardo was formed as a linguistic synthesis, a living memory of the history of Buenos Aires that recognizes the diversity of past social groups, which first contributed to configuring the Rioplatense dialect, and then the speech of all of Argentina' (my translation p. 109). This viewpoint is also interpreted in the words of Martorell de Laconi (2002), who defines Lunfardo broadly as 1) a variation of registers, and 2) associated with lower social classes, despite its wide integration into middle and upper social classes. These two definitions, it should be observed, do not consider Lunfardo as an exclusively *porteño* phenomenon, but rather extend its presence in Argentina to the national rather than regional level.

Since sociocriminologist Antonio Dellepiane introduced the first Lunfardo dictionary in 1897 (consisting of approximately 400 lexical entries), the variety has continued to be well-documented in much larger dictionaries (Cammarota, 1963; Casullo, 1964; Conde, 2004; Escobar, 2004; Espindola, 2002; Gobello, 2014; Gobello & Payet, 1959; Gottero, 2009; Rodríguez, 1987; Villamayor, 1915). In addition to linguists, the work of sociologists and historians has also examined Lunfardo's history and evolution in contact primarily with Italian dialects (Di Tullio, 2011; Scalabrini Ortiz, 1931). While varieties of Italian have made numerous linguistic contributions to Lunfardo, the quantity of Italianisms is second only to the influence from Spanish language varieties, which are said to account for approximately 78% of all borrowings and derivations in Lunfardo (del Valle, 1966).[1]

In addition to literary and musical analysis, Lunfardo research has also benefitted from a small number of publications that undertake the description of its linguistic (phonological and morphological) characteristics, and draw comparisons with standard Spanish features. Lunfardo has prompted the study of its various mechanisms for word creation via metathesis and processes of metaphor, including metonymy and synecdoche (Bargetto, 2003; Conde, 2011; Gonzalez, 2016b). In one of the most comprehensive sources of Lunfardo's linguistic description, *Lunfardo: un estudio sobre el habla popular de los argentinos* (2011), Conde traces Lunfardo borrowings not only to Italian, Spanish, aboriginal, and African varieties, but also to colonial varieties of French, Portuguese, and the globalization influence of English.

[1] The most recognized Lunfardo words in Guillen & Urzua B. (2017) have been traced to Italian varieties, suggesting the salience of Italian sources in Lunfardo.

Within its academic literature, there is also a surprising number of publications that confront the fundamental yet fiercely disputed task of defining what Lunfardo is. Evidence of this debate began with early writers and investigators who labelled Lunfardo as the codified and deformed speech of criminals and the lower classes, often specifically Italian immigrants, in Buenos Aires. This stance is evident in one of the earliest Lunfardo publications, *Antología del Lunfardo,* in which Soler Cañas claimed, *El lunfardo no es otra cosa que un amasijo de dialectos italianos de inteligencia común y utilizado por los ladrones del país* (1976, p. 21). Modern leading linguists on these topics such as Beatriz Lavandera (1976), Maria Fontanella de Weinberg (1983), and Susana Martorell de Laconi (1997; 1998; 2000; 2002), have also fortified such claims of its criminal and lower-class genesis. Even Jorge Luis Borges, patron of Argentinian fiction, formally questioned Lunfardo's authenticity, denouncing it as *una jerga artificial, una especie de broma* (in Ricci, 1973).

Based on a series of differing hypotheses, researchers have approached a refined definition that discusses Lunfardo's origin and extension beyond the Rio de la Plata. Gobello (1989) offers a broader definition, declaring Lunfardo to be:

> …a lexical repertoire that formed with dialectal words brought by external immigration of primarily European descent (namely Italian and Spanish, and also Portuguese and French) and internal migration from the Provinces to the Greater Buenos Aires (some aboriginal and creole); and that through theater, tango, popular literature, and in immigrant homes, has spread to the popular colloquial speech of Buenos Aires and other Argentinian and Uruguayan cities. (my translation)

Conde (2011) accepts Gobello's words, taking them a step further. He denounces many past scholarly arguments that restrict Lunfardo as a jargon or a spectacle of the past; instead, he upholds Lunfardo as a currently thriving jargon:

> *El lunfardo no es un vocabulario cerrado, ni un fenómeno de tiempos idos, sino por completo vigente, dado que, una vez concluida la oleada inmigratoria europea, se amplió y se sigue ampliando generosamente con palabras provenientes de diversos ámbitos, casi todas ellas de creación local, la mayoría formadas sobre la base de la lengua española (132).*

Despite the conclusion of mass European immigration nearly a century ago, Conde points to Lunfardo's extension and continuous development of new words in diverse ambits as sufficient evidence of its continued dynamic role in Argentinian Spanish today.

D. Theoretical Framework

Because vernacular studies lack methodological consensus, an approach informed by the interdisciplinary humanities is necessary to position and explore the thereby listed research questions. The gap within the original research in Lunfardo studies using human subjects further highlights the need for the application of an interdisciplinary framework to analyze the sociolinguistic questions at hand. The present analysis is interdisciplinary in nature, drawing primarily from the subfields of sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. As such, it synthesizes prior understandings of the Argentinian language as culture, and at the same time allows for a multitude of new voices to begin a new discourse on the status and meaning of Lunfardo in today's Argentina.

1. Language and Identity

The evaluation of the comprehension levels and metalinguistic perceptions of young adult Argentinians is comprised of three main parts. The first part of the study investigates Research Objective 1 (*Determine the extent to which porteño youth understand Lunfardo*) and Objective 2 (*Assess young porteño speakers' covert language attitudes towards*

Lunfardo) and Objective 3 (*Identify the socioeconomic factors that may indicate acceptability judgements and levels of Lunfardo comprehension among porteño youth*) by testing levels of Lunfardo lexical comprehension according to social factors such as gender and class (the latter are determined by the participant's education attainment and occupation, as well as that of their parents). The second part of the study will investigate Objective 4 (*Examine the language attitudes and metalinguistic perceptions/discursive impressions towards Lunfardo by porteño youth from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds around Lunfardo*) which aims to explore Lunfardo's place in the consciousness of young adult *porteños* through the analysis of participants' 1) language attitudes towards the tested Lunfardo words, and 2) metalinguistic perceptions of the variety as a whole, as revealed in interviews.

Perspectives from various disciplines are crucial to carrying out the multi-faceted nature of Lunfardo's status in the perception of young adult *porteños*. Whether viewed from sociolinguistics or linguistic anthropology, there is interdisciplinary consensus that language is central to considerations of social status and identity, and is situated on continuums of power and prestige (Trudgill, 1972). In sociolinguistics, linguistic membership within speech communities or communities of practice is often central to the relationship of language variety and social stratification (Chambers, 2008). While sociolinguistic practices call upon social variables such as gender, age, socioeconomic status, level of educational attainment, ethnic status, and context or situation (Bayley et al., 2013; Pharies, 2007) to find correlations with linguistic variables (which tend to be phonetic or morphosyntactic), the present study also assumes social factors as fundamental from a lexical perspective aligned with social dialectology. The nature of

Lunfardo tied to a strong association and inclusion of taboo themes makes the study of its use precarious and problematic for elicitation. Considering these factors, it is therefore necessary for research goals to evaluate language comprehension levels rather than language use. Though participants may be reluctant to show their knowledge of a stigmatized variety (Chelliah & de Reuse, 2011; Crowley, 2007, p. 87), studies have also shown that when a nonstandard variety constructs in-group membership (Allan & Burridge, 2006; Bucholtz, 2011; Eble, 1996; Eckert, 1988; El Falakay, 2016), tapping into it increases the speakers' potential social power due to covert linguistic prestige (Trudgill, 1972), even in cases where the language or dialect is stigmatized. This notion of in-group membership maintains a cycle of "ever-changing and fashionable vocabulary of sociability" (Eble, 1996, p. 1), which may prove crucial to the understanding of Lunfardo's survival in transitioning from originally a criminal sociolect, to its wide diffusion and incorporation as a purported integral part of Argentinian Spanish and *argentinidad* ('Argentinian-ness').

The connection between language and identity has been discussed as a fundamental component of the human experience that is in constant renegotiation through interaction (Llamas & Watt, 2010). A language's connection to its speakers' identity has been claimed to be so intimate that it "not only reflects who we are, in some sense it *is* who we are, and its use defines us both directly and indirectly" (Llamas & Watt, 2010, p. 1). Like language and identity, the implicit relationship between language and culture from the point of view of sociocultural linguistics is so firmly intertwined that the two are often conceptualized as one and the same. This point resonates with Michael Silverstein's orders of indexicality introduced in linguistic anthropology, which he argues are

"necessary to showing us how to relate the micro-social to the macro-social frames of analysis of any sociolinguistic phenomenon" (2003, p. 193). In the evaluation of Lunfardo among young adult *porteños*, it is important to consider the phenomena that 1) linguistic forms shape identity, 2) culture is inextricably linked to language and identity, and 3) speech events can index non-linguistic referentials (e.g., social class).

2. Language Ideology

One of the primary objectives of the project is to evaluate the present ideologies around Lunfardo, to reformulate and re-document the process of language in society and its progression. Thus, the historical production and reproduction of language ideology is crucial to the present project, and benefits from a vast theoretical body of literature. Discussions of language ideology are ever-pressing today for their intrinsic relation to language, politics and identity (see Woolard, 1992; 1998 for an overview). Standard language ideology is often positioned as the site of conflict between elites and non-elites that bridges the research of language structure and language policy (Irvine & Gal, 2009; Lippi-Green, 1997; Milroy, 2000; Woolard, 1992).

Many overlapping definitions have been provided in language ideology theory. Silverstein (1979) describes language ideologies as "sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use" (193). In this definition, speakers' ideas about language and discourse are the central point of dialogue with various social phenomena. Lippi-Green describes language ideology as valuing the "salient feature of conformity and suppression of variety of the abstracted, idealized standard" (2012, p. 7). Contextualizing Lunfardo's history of

censorship and consequential stigmatization calls upon notions of language ideology, whose relationship with linguistic suppression has been founded in aesthetic or moral judgements about language often tied to sociopolitical and socioeconomic interests (Kroskrity, 2004, pp. 502-03). Blommaert (1999) reviews that various debates of language situations have been:

> …organized around issues of purity and impurity of language, the social 'value' of some languages over another/others, the sociopolitical desirability of the use of one language or variety over another, the symbolic 'quality' of languages and varieties as emblems of nationhood, cultural authenticity, progress, modernity, democracy, self-respect, freedom, socialism, equality… (2).

Historical thought around language ideology did not always accept language as the site of political process (Joseph & Taylor, 1990; Kroskrity, Schieffelin & Woolard, 1992; Schieffelin, Woolard & Kroskrity, 1998; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). Boas (1911) and Bloomfield (1944), two of the most respected fathers of linguistics and anthropology concerned with both language description and evolution, disregarded attending directly to the members of a linguistic community due to their "false consciousness" or inaccurate knowledge systems of metalinguistic rationalizations. Kroskrity (2000) demonstrates a contrasting modern view within linguistic anthropology that has been foregrounded in this project on Lunfardo. He highlights the need to recognize the connection between the linguistic practices of real speakers (i.e., human subjects) and the political-economic activity that has served as a precedent to linguistic inequality and forms of linguistic stratification.

The discussion around the sociopolitical processes of language ideology and the language ideology role in such developments has been studied in the linguistic context of many minority languages that maintain varying degrees of prestige, including Catalan

(Woolard, 1992; 2016), African American English (Cargile, Takai & Rodriguez, 2008; Fogel & Ehri, 2006; Miller, 2012), Quechua (Hornberger, 1988; Manley, 2008; Wolck, 1973), Corsican (Jaffe, 1999), among others. English-only legislation in education, proposed in much of the United States to date, has also been a central topic sparking the language ideology debate regarding minority languages, such as Spanish (Shannon, 1999) and non-standard vernaculars, especially AAVE (Collins, 1999). The process of deconstructing language ideologies in these language situations goes hand in hand with hegemonic processes and debates, which may be more fully understood when analyzing the relation between normalization and institutionalization in 1) the broad sense of conventional practices and ideas, or 2) through narrow channels of formal authority and control (Blommaert, 1999, p. 11). The outcomes of these discussions connect with broad sociopolitical and historical considerations of power, inequality, and discrimination among groups of speakers (Briggs, 1996; 1997; Heller, 1994; Hymes, 1996) via linguistic constraint, which too often results in stigmatization and negative associative labelling of certain language varieties. It is precisely these historical processes of language normalization/stigmatization that give Lunfardo the sociopolitical scope from which to analyze its social capital among common speakers.

3. Slang and Other Vernaculars

Although the research presents questions that have not yet been studied in Lunfardo linguistic scholarship, various slangs of the world have been investigated and thus merit a descriptive overview to better position and clarify this study. The following section presents many alternative jargons who share linguistic characteristics also present in

Lunfardo. In its traditional sense, slang is understood as a created, stylistic, alternative language whose function is embedded in terms that mark individuality and group identity. In English, slang has condemnatory ancestries, especially in its early phases, though it sometimes can take on celebratory meaning (Coleman, 2012, p. 71) depending on its context and sociopolitical history. Regional English varieties have received perhaps the most scholarly attention of all slangs (largely in traditional dialectal research, though there are also some more recent sociolinguistic slants). This research has focused on one main regional division: usage in the United Kingdom and the United States. English Cant and Flash originated in the mid-16th Century, and were characterized as improper language of beggars and thieves that connoted low social status and "undignified behavior" (Coleman, 2012). Both sociolects are considered precursors of London East End's Cockney, a variety famous for its language games such as rhyming "back slang" and its use of metaphor as a means of relating the experience of one unlike thing to another, often producing a humorous effect (e.g., *trouble and strife* > 'wife'; *apples and pears* > 'stairs') (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). A common feature of many alternative jargons, Cockney's roots are dubious, but its first function is often assessed as having "originated in the desire to create a 'secret' language" for communication among lower classes and criminals (Freen, 2012). Today a proud though disappearing component of London English, Cockney reflects realms of poverty, cynicism, and humor (Matthews, 1970).

Similar to Cockney in its secretive origins is neighboring Irish Travellers Cant. Maria Rieder (2016) investigated Irish Cant, also known as Shelta. Once a nomadic form of communication, Rieder discovered that older generations perceive Cant to have lost the secretive marker of the Traveller culture that it once possessed. Among Rieder's findings,

younger generations still treat Cant as an identity marker by using it to distinguish themselves from non-Travellers; however, children can no longer distinguish Cant from Irish slang as a guarded contextual code, indicating the gradual demise of the variety.

Polari is another example of a distinct linguistic variety that, like Cockney, appeared in London and other British cities. It developed in underground gay subcultures in the 18th-20th centuries (Lucas, 1997, p. 85), and derives from rhyming slang, backslang, Romany and criminal Cant. It started as "a theatrical maneuver with which to confuse and confound the *naff omees* ('straight men')" (Lucas, 1997, p. 86). Most commonly associated with gay men, Polari was unequivocally stigmatized, especially since homosexuality in the UK was only decriminalized in the second half of the 20th century (1967 for England and Wales, followed by Scotland and Northern Ireland in the 1980s). The variety was maintained in secrecy among group members until approximately the 1960's through a comedy series in radio broadcasting, exposing the public to its humor and thereby stripping its exclusivity (Baker, 2002). Leading Polari scholar, Paul Baker (2002) investigated the modern status of the jargon, and found its use to be marked by age (50's and older), and restricted to private rather than public gay spaces (108).

As displayed in Cockney and Polari, a common tactic in alternative slang varieties around the world is to create new words through syllable inversion. This technique is the primary strategy employed among French youth in Verlan. Lefkowitz (1989) investigated sociolinguistic as well as descriptive linguistic data of Verlan among Parisian youth, and determined that its appropriate lexical domains included obscenity, taboo and controversy issues, as well as topics of daily life. As one might expect the case for any vernacular,

youth informants rated Verlan to be unacceptable in settings of formality or in interactions with figures of authority or respect.

Examples of more recently studied youth peer languages are Kenyan Sheng and Engsh. These modern varieties are the mixing of Swahili and English structure and vocabulary that have resulted through varying degrees of contact and exposure to a cosmopolitan urban culture in Nairobi. Sheng is Swahili-dominant spoken by youth living in the less-affluent and impoverished areas of East Nairobi; Engsh is spoken by English-dominant youth living in the richer suburbs of West Nairobi (Abdulaziz & Osinde, 1997; Samper, 2002). There is little scholarship on the two varieties to date.

Part of what has been interpreted from the study of Lunfardo is that the language of the present can often mirror the linguistic habits of the people of the past. Such is the case of Boontling, a language unique to the small community in Boonville, California, claimed to have been structured phonologically through word borrowings from regional Appalachian, Spanish, and the local Pomo Indian language. This alternative jargon, as well as others mentioned above, were most likely developed to "confuse outsiders".[2] Boontling speakers later diversified their processes for creating meaning to include figures of speech, extension of meaning, onomatopoeia, and other neologisms. While there is limited scholarship on Boontling, Charles C. Adams published its only dictionary to date, *Boontling: An American Lingo* (1971), which includes a linguistic description of the slang.

[2] https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2015/07/16/rout-the-kimmie-in-the-boat/

Though Lunfardo and these many vernaculars have come into existence in diverse regions and communities of practice at various moments in time, they have all been regarded at one time or another as pertaining to subcultures, and functioning as a secret code. They employ similar linguistic and semantic strategies to create new linguistic meanings that do not quite exist in the standard language, or whose standard meaning is intended to be concealed from non-group members. Cockney and other English varieties have been more substantially studied, while literature about the latter varieties has remained limited. Such limited scholarship of slang varieties points to marginalization in the face of standardization and language norms, and may reflect the workings of language ideology or the underpinnings of covert prestige. The implications of this body of work suggest for Lunfardo that it is necessary to study language with community members to better understand its status and language ideologies in place.

4. Language Attitudes

The second part of the proposed investigation (Objectives 2, 3, and 4) will be the first Lunfardo study of its kind to incorporate a language attitude approach that is concerned specifically with the status of the jargon and its speakers. To frame these objectives—Objective 2 (*Assess young porteño speakers' covert language attitudes towards Lunfardo*), Objective 3 (*Identify the socioeconomic factors that may indicate acceptability judgements and levels of Lunfardo comprehension among porteño youth*), and Objective 4 (*Examine the language attitudes and metalinguistic perceptions/discursive impressions towards Lunfardo by porteño youth from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds around Lunfardo*)—it is fundamental to connect language ideology research to that of language

attitudes. Collecting these data will involve speakers' self-reports of their perceptions of Lunfardo and their situational usage of the variety via oral and written questionnaires (Milroy & Milroy, 1999; Milroy & Gordon, 2003). While this framework is not suitable for the examination of linguistic usage, studying metalinguistic reflections is a practical sequence to understand the language ideologies of a speech community (Milroy & Gordon, 2003).

Language attitudes have been a cornerstone in the study of social psychology since the 1960's (Edwards, 1994, p. 97); however, the notion of "attitude" has been integral to the study of sociolinguistics since Labov's study on the social stratification of English in New York City (1966) and Lambert et al.'s language attitude study in Montreal (1960). Language attitudes research is particularly productive in language ideology and policy (Woolard, 1992; 2016). Preston (1993b) argues that:

> What linguists believe about standards matters very little; what non-linguists believe constitutes precisely that cognitive reality which needs to be described in a responsible sociolinguistics—one which takes speech-community attitudes and perception (as well as performance) into account (26).

Language attitudes are evaluative responses to different language varieties that reflect "sequential cognitive processes of social categorization and stereotyping by using linguistic cues (morphosyntactic, phonological, lexical) to infer the guised speakers' social group membership(s)" (Dragojevic, 2017). Most sociolinguistic research today that investigates language attitudinal data is commonly anchored in a quantitative approach known as the matched-guise technique, as mentioned in Dragojevic's definition above. This strategy, developed by Lambert *et al.* (1960), has most commonly been implemented to call participants (hearers) to rate guised (meaning 'accented') voice samples of bilingual or multilingual speakers on a series of judgment statements of opposite pairs that

principally reveal perceptions of 1) status (e.g. educated, wealthy), or 2) solidarity (e.g. pleasant, friendly) using different types of scales, though typically a Likert scale.

In perceptual dialectology, a subfield that crosses sociolinguistics and dialectology, another paradigm is provided in which observable linguistic behaviors are prompted by elicitation (Calaza Díaz *et al.*, 2015; Milroy, 2003; Montgomery, 2007; Preston, 1999). Under this branch, language ideology is understood as stemming from the facts of language attitudinal data that point to beliefs of "correctness" (or power) and "pleasantness", where speakers of "correct" dialects do not believe they speak dialects and speakers of stigmatized varieties derive solidarity from their distinct cultural and linguistic behaviors (Preston & Robinson, 2005). Many language attitude studies that are grounded in these principles have focused on attitudes and perceptions of English varieties (Alford & Strother, 1990; Eisenchlas & Tsurutani, 2011; Giles, 1970; Ruben, 1992). An abundance of work has also investigated varieties of Spanish among monolinguals, bilinguals, and multilinguals (Alfaraz, 2002; Castellanos, 1980; Loureiro-Rodriguez *et al.*, 2012), as well as L2 learners (Artamonova, 2017; Muchnick & Wolfe, 1982; Yager, 1998).

A language attitudes approach serves to meet various research goals. It aims to tap into the hearers' covert perceptions toward: the motivation toward learning of L1 or L2; language shift within a community; loyalty to one's own language; minority groups' non-standard linguistic variety; and the status of a language, its speakers, or its use in certain (new or non-traditional) domains. By investigating participants' attitudes towards Lunfardo, the second part of the investigation (Objective #3) concerns the final goal of language attitude research. By collecting data of speakers' comprehension and attitudes of

Lunfardo stimuli, as well as their metalinguistic perceptions of the variety, the project reveals an informed evaluation of Lunfardo's status among the target population of young adult *porteños*, and envisages where the future of the jargon lies.

E. Chapter Summary

My goal is to understand the various ways that the study of Lunfardo can be approached and explained in the context of linguistics, and to offer some sense of how the points of view provided by different, related disciplines (linguistics and anthropology), as well as actual speakers' usage, fit into the larger analysis of culture and identity. I defamiliarize the world of language stigmatization, then reconstruct it using small narratives based on local Argentinian cultures, social positions, or particular identity problems. Through narratives with Argentinian speakers, the subjects are creating meaning, which is both true to their experience and anchored in a recognizable tradition. There is a push and pull to higher education as old tools – ways of thinking and seeing: what Mary Douglas calls "institutions"—are used to make sense of new realities. We need to understand that while we use these tools to define reality, the world is a slippery, living, moving thing that needs to be reconsidered and reassessed all the time. This revealing study uses different tools to redirect opinions and assumptions about language variation and ideology. By studying contexts in which linguistic hegemony and stigma are in place, the dissertation allows to better understand and explain highly ritualized and transmitted linguistic phenomena such as Lunfardo, and the complex relationship of language and society, and speakers' intersectionality. It aims to cast light on vernacular gradual movement and evolution in marginalized Latin American speech communities. This

language variety serves as a lens to examine Argentinian youth identity directly from relegated bordering areas of Argentina's capital city. I hone in on these sites from which the dialect emerged and extended, and whose composition of people through immigration patterns has staggeringly changed over the last century.

This research is situated within prior work on ethnic and diasporic identities, and the sociopolitical identity construction of the Argentinian nation. However, the project's greatest contribution is that it incorporates groundbreaking data from everyday Argentinian Spanish speakers, and it analyzes language in context. It uses naturalistic linguistic construction stimuli as well as an experimental design based on both quantitative and qualitative data, employing ethnographic and statistical methods. This type of mixed method approach in humanities research is timely, and sets the groundwork to show how it is indispensable to interpret Lunfardo within the current Argentinian societal framework. The project's interdisciplinary nature will bring to the forefront Lunfardo research, contributing not only to the field of sociolinguistics, but to our understanding of linguistics. This study clearly shows that language is a linguistic phenomenon, but even more so a social one.

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Chapter 2

The Quest for a National Identity:

A Legacy of Argentinian Social Thought

Argentina is a presidential representative democratic republic. It was first colonized by Europeans in the 16th century and became independent from Spain in 1816. In the 19th-20th century it received waves of European immigration from Southern Europe, especially from Spain and Italy. Among them, single working-class males were the most significant component, who settled in Buenos Aires, the capital city and fastest growing urban hub of the time. Regional language varieties of Spanish and Italian came into contact, yielding a unique lexical variety that would come to be known as Lunfardo—a jargon of thieves. This caused concern among previous *porteño* oligarchs who held the most wealth and power in the region. It is therefore important not just to recap the most important historical events that provide the background for a study on Lunfardo and sociolinguistic attitudes towards it, but also peruse the political discourse that may have swayed what the population thought about Lunfardo and the people who used it.

To position the diachronic portion of this study, the present chapter calls upon historical data drawn from Argentinian national figures to examine their rhetorical influence on social and language politics that existed when Lunfardo came into being. The first part surveys the individuals in positions of power from post-colonial independence to the development of the early republic, with a concentration on their philosophical stances [or 'proposals'] for the young Argentinian nation. Nation-forming discourse is often replete with terms of ethnic and linguistic identity, which thus become factors that are inextricable from the discussion of Lunfardo. The diachronic exploration continues in the second part with analysis of the late-19th century massive European immigration waves to Argentina. The third part concludes with a review of the censorship of Lunfardo in the mid-20th century. By surveying political and sociological discourse data that span nearly 150 years, this chapter traces the underpinnings of Lunfardo's historical stigma in order to situate the data in subsequent chapters regarding Lunfardo's status among young Argentinian generations today.

A. Nationalizing Argentina: From Independence to Republic

Europeanism was an esteemed fashion valued in Argentina long before its state was yet a concept. However, Argentina's history of contact with Spanish colonizers predisposed admiration for a specific type of European. The port of Buenos Aires was formally founded on behalf of the Spanish Crown in 1580 (by Captain Juan de Garay). Despite the official colonial authority in the Southern Atlantic, the Spanish settlers' power in the River Plate area was marginal, with limited oversight or assistance from the Crown, who only sent its emissaries to visit the region every two years (Felix, 1994). Trade routes with goods from Spain traveled to the Americas first through the Caribbean and Panamá

to the Pacific Coast, where they were finally distributed to colonies upon arrival to the Vice Royal center of Lima. Neglecting the Southern Atlantic colonies brought the establishment and rise of a contraband culture in Buenos Aires, opening a commerce market in the Rio de la Plata that brought new opportunities for foreign traders, artisans, sailors, and young workers. This flourishing trade was finally legalized in 1776 due to established concessions with the Viceroyalty of the Rio de la Plata for the exportation of salted meat. And cowhides (Rock, 1987).

Such weak foreign leadership and neglect by the Crown in the River Plate region contributed to a stance that would prize northern over southern European culture in the 18th and 19th centuries. Argentinian *criollos*[3] viewed Spanish colonizers as a hindrance to Argentinian political, social, and economic advancement. Locals interpreted the Spanish disregard for the River Plate as a weaker force to reckon with, and instead looked to Great Britain, France, and North America as models (Jeffrey, 1952; Kerr, 2017).

By 1810, Argentina was on the cusp of independence, joining a greater Latin American movement that sought liberation from Spain. As nations moved towards independence from the Spanish Crown, a large body of republican thought opposed any project which might substitute a new king for the old Spanish ruler (Jeffrey, 1952, p. 16). At the head of the Argentinian Independence movement was General Belgrano, a Jacobin member of the French Revolutionary Democratic Club in Paris. An enthusiast of British politics, Belgrano proposed a revolutionary idea in the Argentinian Declaration of

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[3] The *criollo* is an Argentinian-born citizen of Spanish progeny. More generally, *criollo* is conventionally used in Latin America to denote a person of mixed Spanish and Native American ancestry, irrespective of where the person was born.

Independence (1816) that called to replace absolutism with a constitutional monarchy (Sabsay & Pérez, 1973, p. 108).[4] Though the plan ultimately failed, a new political order looked admiringly towards Northern Europe and North America in the post-independence era.

1. Indigenous Displacement and the First Argentinian Railway

Despite the dominant vision of Argentina as an auxiliary European nation with mere remnants of native culture, Lunfardo reveals a footprint of Argentina's indigenous past. Prior to the arrival of the Spanish colonizers, Argentina's inhabitants were dominated by indigenous peoples, including the Diaguita, Querandí, Pampas, Huilliche, Mapuche, and Tehuelche tribes. Described as "unconquerable and untamable" compared to their indigenous counterparts in the Mexican and Andean viceroyalties, the natives of Argentina proved resilient. They triumphed over the arrival of the first Spanish expeditions in 1516, who then would not return for the following twenty years (Rodriguez, 2006, p. 11). At the end of the 16th century, more than half of the 25 Spanish settlements in Buenos Aires were destroyed by the Querandí natives. However, with new expeditions in the 17th century, the population of Buenos Aires grew from 1,000

[4] The Declaration of Independence called for a South American Monarchy as a solution to the unification with Cuzco, as the proposed royal seat to restore the legitimacy of the Incan Empire overthrown by the Spanish colonizers. The declaration was signed on July 9th, 1816 by the United Provinces of South America (still today one of the legal names of the Argentinian Republic) at the Congress of Tucumán. (Jeffrey, 1952, p. 16).

inhabitants dominated by natives, to 4,000 people made up of approximately even numbers of Spaniards and *criollos* (Rodriguez 2006: 13).[5]

The displacement and elimination of Argentina's many indigenous peoples are ascribed to a series of historical events of the recently liberated republic that sought territorial expansion of the country's only remaining unsettled geographic margins: the Pampas and Patagonia. The Desert Campaign of 1833-1834 brought Juan Manuel de Rosas, a successful military leader and national dictator from the Province of Buenos Aires, as well as other military leaders from the Cuyo region[6], to coordinate offensives determined to eliminate the indigenous tribes defying the government's plot to occupy the lands of the new republic beyond Buenos Aires (Lynch, 2001, p. 18). Though Rosas enticed some natives to comply with gifts and foodstuffs, most in the extreme south were resistant, and so it was ordered to invade the region and exterminate them (Lynch, 2001, p. 18).

The subsequent part of the mission came in the 1870's with a campaign to annihilate native villages that obstructed the greed of wealthy cattle ranchers. Deemed the Conquest of the Desert, this campaign was led by General and future President Julio Argentino Roca who hunted the Mapuche people as well as Chilean competitors for Argentinian dominance in the southern territory of Patagonia. This conflict has been controversially labelled as an attempt to carry out the genocide of the Amerindians (Trinchero, 2006),

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[5] Compared to Mexico and Brazil, Argentina had very few African slaves, though they accounted for approximately one-third of the Buenos Aires total population in the 18th century (about 7,000). With the gradual European immigration of Spanish and Italian explorers and mariners to the region, the population spiked to 42,000 in 1810; by 1887, *Afro*-Argentinians only represented 2% of the *porteño* population (Rodriguez, 2006, p. 13).

[6] The Cuyo region of the time includes modern-day Mendoza, San Juan, and San Luis Provinces.

especially those who rebelled against submitting to Argentinian law (Rock, 2002). This perspective is supported by an account from General Roca, during his 1878 campaign:

> Our self-respect as a virile people obliges us to put down as soon as possible, by reason or by force, this handful of savages who destroy our wealth and prevent us from definitely occupying, in the name of law, progress and our own security, the richest and most fertile lands of the Republic (1878).

Argentina's demographics continued to go through drastic change as European expansion transformed the less populated Pampas region in the west. This territory's development accelerated with the onset of the first railway construction in Argentina in 1855 to meet new population demands (Gandolfo, 2006). It connected remote parts of the country to the developing urban centers and boomtowns, and facilitated the necessities of agricultural industries and interests in the transportation of food products and cattle in the Province of Buenos Aires. While it contributed to the formation of the modern nation-state, it did so at the expense of the many native peoples of the country, subjecting them to near extermination.[7] Few communities were spared, typically only those who were geographically isolated from European pioneer communities.

2. Argentinian Civil War and Governor Juan Manuel de Rosas's Dictatorship

The end of the colonial system in Argentina in 1824 was followed by a long period of civil war based on provincial conflictive views over national organization and the role of Buenos Aires in it. Lingering without a promising presidential candidate, the Governors of

[7] According to the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) 2004 Complementary Indigenous Survey, there remain approximately 166,000 households of the Toba, Kolla, Guaraní and Wichí people combined in the extreme northwestern provinces (Salta, Jujuy Chaco, and Formosa) and approximately 76,000 households of the Mapuche people in the extreme southern provinces (Chubut, Neuquén, Rio Negro and Tierra del Fuego).

Buenos Aires were given the power to control and manage international relations for the Argentinian confederacy. At that time, the son of a wealthy *porteño* ranching family, General Juan Manuel de Rosas, rose to power in 1829, and his xenophobic dictatorship continued to rule the Province of Buenos Aires for over twenty years (1829-1852).

A *caudillo*[8] in style and method, Juan Manuel de Rosas set out for the frontier to build up his wealth (in the meat-salting business), manning huge estates with many criminals and outlaws that were all fervently loyal to him (Jeffery, 1952). Though Governor Rosas began his career a devout federalist, he soon transitioned to fervent nationalism, as he justified obliterating entire villages of native Argentinians in the name of preserving a national identity that had yet to be clearly conceptualized. He carried out many victorious military expeditions against native tribes in the South, which gained him the support and heroic admiration in Buenos Aires for having ended the "Indian threat" (Jeffrey, 1952, p. 20). Rosas's dominance in military action together with his rural origins contributed to his developing national image as a proud *caudillo* of *gaucho*[9] origin, which came to represent a peculiar yet robust Argentinian identity. This embodiment of the prototypical Argentinian was rejected by liberals in the early stages of the Republic, but would reappear later and be important for the survival of Lunfardo, and to the continued questioning of an imported Eurocentric identity present in Argentinian sociopolitical thought since Independence.

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[8] In Latin America, a *caudillo* was a violent colonizer and adventurer of Spanish descent. The *caudillos* were considered the first "politicians" of the nation, as they controlled large estates in the interior of Argentina.

[9] The *gaucho* is an admired Argentinian cowboy in folklore and literature and is considered a national symbol in Argentina.

3. Rosas's Decline: The Era of the Immigrant

Rosas's rejection of the Constitution of 1826 and his reluctance to call for a new assembly to write a new constitution led liberal leaders to turn against him. The Battle of Caseros in 1852 brought the end of Rosas's autocracy, and opened a period of national reorganization under Justo José de Urquiza and Bartolome Mitre as central players. Their first stride in reformation called for an assembly to establish the first permanent constitution in 1853,[10] which recognized the fundamental rights of its citizens. It abolished slavery and nobility titles to address juridical equality, extending the protection of the law to all Argentinian citizens. As a strategy to stimulate immigration, the ultimate objective was to settle the vast Argentinian interior. This protection is explicit in Article 25 as the official promotion of immigration, a measure that would permit millions of Southern European immigrants to enter the country just twenty years after the constitution had been ratified. In response to ridding the nation of its native "backwardness", the Argentinian elites of the post-independence period aimed to counterbalance social economics by luring people from Europe as immigrants, though only to later typify them as barbarians of another kind. In addition, Argentina's joining the War of the Triple Alliance under Mitre in 1865 (to annex the modern Misiones territory from Paraguay) saw outbreaks of yellow fever and cholera from returning soldiers, which resulted in 400,000 deaths—the deadliest and bloodiest war in Latin America's history. This period of war and civil unrest since

[10] The first part of the Constitution of 1853, entitled *Declaraciones, Derechos y Garantías*, established the foundation of the political regime, visibly contrasting in this way from the Constitution of 1826 which authorized Rosas to reject it. The Constitution of 1853 introduced the division of powers of the republican system and the political representation; it established a federal capital, and provided the authority of each province to dictate its own constitution and their autonomy in domestic issues.

post-independence (1816) lasted through the 1860's, bringing about the need to populate the country to compensate for the high death loss of native and *criollo* people.

A republic was on the horizon, envisioned from a period of modern civilization that had been stirred by a philosophical and scientific movement in England, the United States, and France: the Enlightenment. The convergence of ideas circulated among Europe and North America, eventually making their way to Argentina as notions of human progress that could be manifested only through the civilization, moralization, and socialization of a nation's people.

4. The Port of Buenos Aires and the Genoese

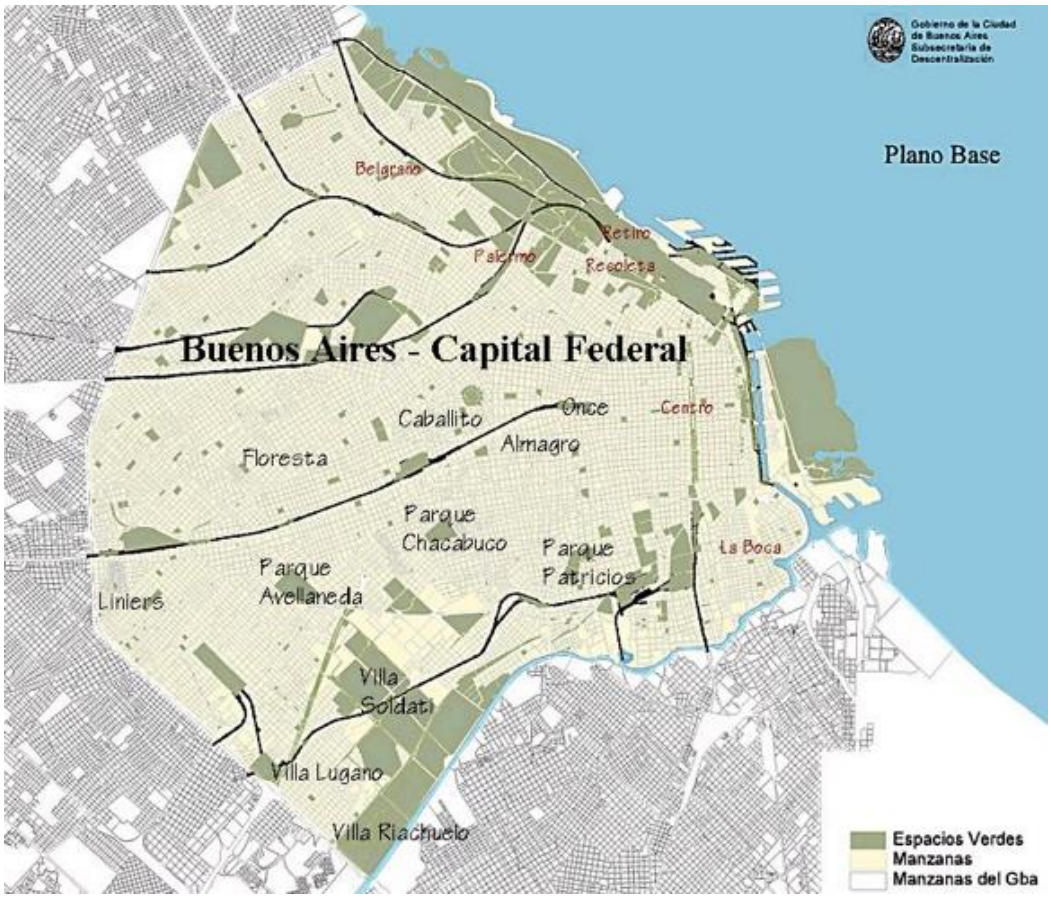
Northern Italian groups had anticipated the voyage to South America's Atlantic coast even before Argentina's constitutional plea for European immigrants in the mid-20th century. As far back as the 16th Century, during the rule of the Spanish Crown, maritime Ligurians were recorded as sailors and captains aboard ships of the conquistadors (1530-1555). Many expeditions departed from Ligurian ports in Genoa or Varazze, and were funded by the Republic of Genoa. At the end of the colonial period (marked by the declaration of independence on July 9, 1816, and the defeat of the Spanish Empire in 1824), the Ligurian presence in the Rio de la Plata was encouraged by the opportunities in Argentina after the obliteration of the working-age population due to of the war of independence and the forced recruitment of native men to fight in civil wars (Bailey & Miguez, 2003, p. 38). Though Genoa was a lucrative maritime republic and important commercial hub, there were pressures at home, including the secular fragmentation of property, threatening fiscal burdens, agrarian debt (devaluation of land value by one

third), a decline in the silk industry, and geographic obstacles with population growth. Increasingly harsh conditions combined with economic opportunities in the still unsettled Argentinian frontier enticed Ligurians and other northern Italian groups to make the journey across the Atlantic.

By 1825-1830, the Genoese began their first slow transatlantic movement to the Rio de la Plata, with the first registered "italianos" consisting of 80 percent Genoese and 94.5 percent males (Devoto, 2008, p. 30-31). Unlike the previous agrarian Irish and Basque settlers, the Genoese preferred to establish themselves in urban areas in the Littoral Triangle of Asunción (modern-day Paraguay) and the Rio de la Plata (Buenos Aires and Montevideo), as well as in river towns (e.g., San Nicolás de los Arroyos, Rosario, Paraná, Corrientes). Most Genoese immigrants were illiterate, and spoke Genoese rather than standard Italian. They owned, however, 83 percent of registered ships in the Rio de la Plata (1843-1853) and specialized in trade and transport of fruits and vegetables to riverside cities, construction and ship repair. In Buenos Aires, they docked their ships in the natural refuge of La Boca del Riachuelo, the river that separates the capital of Buenos Aires from the southern suburbs (see Figure XX). Its northern bordering neighborhood known today as "La Boca", is the postulated site of Lunfardo's birth, and the region where the Genoese initially settled.

Figure 1. Map of Argentina, The World Factbook, 2019

Figure 2. ***Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, Subsecretaria de Descentralización, 2019***



While La Boca was advantageous for commerce and repairs, as a low zone it was subject to flooding, sewage contamination, and isolation from the northern residents of the underdeveloped city. By 1855, La Boca supported 1,500 inhabitants, of which 94 percent were Genoese (Devoto, 2008, p. 45). Though Buenos Aires's Italian population was diverse, Devoto (2008) describes the essence of Rio de la Plata urban area during this time as predominantly Genoese: 'In this context, the Genoese were the only thing that resembled a community in Buenos Aires, or a relatively dense group with intense

interpersonal relationships and with a certain awareness of belonging' (my translation, p. 45).

By the 1870's, however, Ligurians were closely followed in numbers by Lombards and Piedmontese. Piedmont and Lombardy's economies were driven by sharecropper agriculture of primarily rice, wine, and silk products. They had minimal urban channels, and in the 1840's-1870's, higher land taxes were imposed and land ownership was fragmented, leading to protests and the beginning of emigration from these regions. The greatest impact on emigration from these regions, nevertheless, was the European crisis of 1875. With crashing product prices, Lombardy and Piedmont's integrated agriculture industries dependent on exports were suddenly no longer competitive (Devoto, 2008, p. 112) and were forced out of the international market.

As the Rio de la Plata grew, the Province of Buenos Aires saw further development of additional city centers well-situated along the Paraná river that connected Buenos Aires to the West: San Nicolás de los Arroyos and Rosario. In the 1860's-1870's, these developing communities were also dominated by *italianos y genoveses* ('Italians and Genoese') who participated in the exchange of goods with the capital of Buenos Aires to the east, Santa Fe to the south, and Cordoba to the north. It is not strange to mention 'Italians and Genoese' as two separate people, since Italy was itself a new concept, with unification occurring in 1861 and the annexation of Rome in 1870. Not even the 'founding fathers' (Garibaldi, Cavour, D'Azeglio) spoke Italian, because at the time 'Italian' itself did not exist. By the early 1870's, this greater Littoral region manifested progress and expansion in other ways, with the first railway system, an increase in the number of ports, and the creation of state institutions, bureaucracy, and a judicial system (Devoto, 2008, p. 95).

5. Builders of a Nation: The Founders of Argentinian Social Thought

Finally, with a stable constitution in place, the first president of the unified country took the stage in 1862. From a rugged *porteño* pioneer family of criollo lineage, Bartolomé Mitre embodied national prestige as an educated *porteño*. He represented the heart and brain of the country for which he advocated, Buenos Aires. For the first time, Argentina had a truly democratic government under Mitre's presidency (1862-1868) committed to liberal laws that resisted the tyranny of the not so distant memory of Rosas.

Compared to his interior countrymen, Mitre was the first national leader to fully embody national progress through economic and civic enhancement. Many measures were implemented to stabilize the economy and improve public projects through agricultural modernization, foreign investment, new railroads and ports, and more immigration from Europe. Most importantly for Lunfardo, the education system expanded under Mitre. Modeled after the European nation-states, many primary schools were opened to educate the electorate to speak one language. During Mitre's term, the number of schools and teachers doubled, increasing from 600 to over 1,000 schools, and from approximately 900 to 1800 teachers. As a result, youth enrollment in primary schools also increased from 13 percent to 20 percent by 1869 (Jeffrey, 1952, p. 185). Such developments of the Argentinian economic, educational, and political systems were shaped in the image of European systems.

While Buenos Aires blossomed in the public eye, civil conflicts continued in the West. A residual rebel spirit from the Rosas era simmered among provincial *caudillos,* and the Mapuche and Araucana tribes. These groups were viewed as disruptive to national unification by resisting a national consciousness and continuing to fight for (their own)

land in the territories. With Argentina on the cusp of national immigration reform in the 1860's, the *criollo gauchos* and *caudillos* were left to police forces to be "cleaned out" to eradicate national resistance (Jeffrey, 1952, p. 179).

In 1868, President Bartolomé Mitre was succeeded by President Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, a leader of great influence in the evolution of Argentinian philosophical thought and national identity. As a member of a group of influential elites and intellectuals (the so-called Generation of 1837[11]), Sarmiento would become the leading figure in establishing a new political order that discussed, challenged, and fundamentally created Argentinian national identity. A political activist, author, and journalist from a poor family from the hinterland of Buenos Aires, Sarmiento was not considered a sociologist by profession, though he is credited by the first sociologists for his contributions to the knowledge and origins of Argentinian social thought. Much like his predecessor, Sarmiento maintained public education as the highest priority for developing Argentinian citizenry and culture, and believed that only through scholastic instruction could the Argentinian nation be elevated to a condition of civilization. He wrote: *El idioma de un pueblo es el más completo monumento histórico de sus diversas épocas y de las ideas que lo han alimentado*.[12] For Sarmiento, the Spanish language represented an inert culture, "a dead language incapable of expressing modern ideas […] Sarmiento found Spanish to be merely a language of translation, a 'beggar' dependent on the languages of modern civilization such as French and especially English, the language of free institutions,

[11] The Generation of 1837 was an Argentinian intellectual movement that focused on the Revolution as the birth of the country. Its members were some of the first writers. They rejected Argentina's Spanish heritage, while also unacknowledged the indigenous peoples in its national roots (Katra, 1996).

[12] 'The language of a people is the most complete historical monument of its diverse times and of the ideas that have fed it' (my translation) (*El Mercurio,* May 22nd, 1842).

business and government" (Velleman, 2002, pp. 16-17). Esteban Echeverría was a writer, poet, and promoter of national culture who went beyond Sarmiento's ideas, sustaining that 'the Argentine language is not the Spanish language', and stating that its legacy could only be recognized in Argentina 'on condition of its improvement, of its progressive transformation, that is, of its emancipation' (in Velleman, 2002, p. 15).

Beyond the discourse of language as a symbol of nationalism, Sarmiento came to represent progress in a light that reduced ideas of national identity to ethnicity. In one of his later works, *Conflicto y armonías de las razas en América* (1883), Sarmiento planted the issue of nationality: *¿Quiénes somos, adónde vamos; si somos una raza, quiénes son nuestros progenitores; si somos una nación*[13]*, ¿Cuáles son sus límites?*.[14] Early Argentinian sociologist, José Ingenieros, admiringly described Sarmiento as an historical genius, an inventive thinker who *vivió solo entre muchos* ('lived alone among many')—at times expatriated, banned from his own country; a European at home, but an Argentinian abroad; a provincial man among *porteños* and a *porteño* among provincials (1915, p. 12). A man from nowhere, Sarmiento perceived the chaos of his criollo identity as a geographic and ethnic problem from which a nationality could be reborn and civilized.

Sarmiento engaged in the discourse of the time, and was concerned with the dichotomy between civilization and barbarism imbedded in Argentina's peoples and geography, tied to the ideology of geographical pro-determinism. In 1845, he published his canonical work, *Facundo: Civilización y barbarie en las pampas argentinas*, a corner-

[13] Sarmiento's philosophy of "nation" is described as a "community of citizens" ascribed to the modern republican tradition and that founds unity in respect for a common law (Villavicencio, 2008).
[14] 'Who are we, where are we going; if we are a race, who are our parents; if we are a nation, what are its boundaries?' (my translation)

stone of Argentinian national literature whose roots are as famed as they are polemic. Written in exile in Chile during Rosa's regime, Sarmiento gives his account of the controversial rule and downfall of Rosas incarnated by his fictional character, Juan Facundo Quiroga. Facundo is an archetypical Argentinian *caudillo* and *gaucho* outlaw who rejects European ideals as progress in the Latin American context: *Facundo, provinciano, bárbaro, valiente, audaz, fue reemplazado por Rosas, hijo de la culta Buenos Aires, sin serlo él; por Rosas, falso, corazón helado, espíritu calculador, que hace el mal sin pasión y organiza lentamente el despotismo con toda la inteligencia de un Maquiavelo*[15] (Sarmiento, 1845, p. 2). For Sarmiento, Juan Manuel de Rosas epitomizes the barbarism or the inverted progress that he interprets as engrained in Argentina's social and political conflicts, the ultimate obstacle to civilization.

Facundo's character points to a certain type of barbarian, that which is designated to be "gauchos, llaneros, people of African origin, or Native Americans" (Sorensen Goodrich, 1996, p. 10). In Sarmiento's rhetoric, civilization is reflected in Northern Europe, North America, and urban environments, contrasted to the barbarism found in Latin America, Spain, Asia, the Middle East, the countryside, Federalists, Facundo, and Rosas (Ball, 1999). This is represented in the following quotation from *Facundo*:

> *Esa juventud, impregnada de las ideas civilizadoras iba a buscar en los europeos enemigos de Rosas sus antecesores, sus padres, sus modelos: el apoyo contra América, tal como la presentaba Rosas, bárbara como el Asia, despótica y*

[15] 'Facundo—provincial, barbarous, brave, audacious, was replaced by Rosas, son of the cultured Buenos Aires that he was not; by Rosas—false, frozen heart, calculating spirit, who does evil without passion and slowly organizes despotism with all the intelligence of a Machiavelli.' (my translation)

sanguinaria como la Turquía, persiguiendo y despreciando la inteligencia como el mahometismo.[16]

Sarmiento's racist ideology is unequivocally anti-indigenous. He endorsed education as a panacea to racial issues and did not see slavery as a problem in a republic (Hooker, 2017). However, his views about language and multilingualism, especially of indigenous languages, namely Quechua, Guaraní and Araucano, are not mentioned in his ethnic rhetoric. At the time of the novel's publication, the construction of power, prestige, and national community were intersecting topics at the forefront of sociopolitical issues. The underlying threat of barbarism in 19th century philosophy was justified by the idea that the inferior would be elevated from their condition in the civilizing enterprise (Sorensen Goodrich, 1996, p. 9). Expansionism of the west of Argentina connoted ideologies of cultural supremacy and empire.

Furthermore, *Facundo* attempts to elucidate the effects of Argentina's geographical conditions on its national disposition—the "barbaric" nature of its countryside juxtaposed to the "civilized" influence of its city. Ingenieros concurs Sarmiento's view of the countryside as an unpopulated and lonely *extensión sin límites*[17], an immense plain, an uncertain horizon (1915, p. 13). He refers to the un-navigated *ríos inútiles*[18] of the East that connect La Plata to the West. He condemns the North (modern-day Province of Chaco) as a thick and impenetrable forest; the South as an infinite grassland. However, this primitive geographic conflict was based not only on the lay of the land, but also on

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[16] 'That youth, impregnated with civilizing ideas, sought out in European enemies of Rosas their predecessors, their parents, their models: the support against America, as presented by Rosas, barbarian as Asia, despotic and bloodthirsty as Turkey, persecuting and despising intelligence like Mohammedanism.' (Sarmiento, 1845, p. 328, my translation).

[17] 'an extended land without limits' (my translation)

[18] 'useless rivers' (my translation)

the lack of European contact and influence in these regions. The only areas spared from barbaric localness were the river mouth cities of Buenos Aires and Montevideo, privileged because of their contact and commerce with the continent they faced opposite the Atlantic.

Sarmiento's notions of civilization and barbarism in Argentina extend from its topographical portrayals into overtones of the social and mental makeup of its inhabitants. He obsesses over two basic themes that reduce to ethnic circumstances as an explanation for Argentina's problems: 1) its colonial Spanish heritage, and 2) its indigenous miscegenation, which conceived the *raza gaucha* and *los indígenas a caballo.*[19] The urban environment served as a beacon of civilization and the conquest of all that was considered savage in nature. His ideas are typically positivist, making Sarmiento a man of his (European) time, while leaving no space for anything else except for a 'language of civilization'.

Sarmiento was influential in the evolution of the sociological tenets of Argentina's new mestizo race as being responsible for the political anarchy pertaining to the region's military *caudillismo*. The caudillos and gauchos (*criollos*) were social outcasts, blamed as the primary barrier to 19th century organization of new American nationalities. Without nomadic tribes in the Argentinian plains, the *gauchos* and *caudillos* successfully quartered and controlled land far from one another. Society did not have a place amidst such isolation, and anarchy ruled due to a lack of political positivism that could promote unity among the common people and reflect the national mind (Ardao, 1963). The first quarter

[19] 'the natives on horseback' (my translation)

of the 19th century in Argentina was thus formless, lacking a defined economic and political system.

José Ingenieros (1915) obsequiously supports Sarmiento's city-periphery opposition, adding that "las ciudades se europeizan; mientras las campañas por su organización social y por la mentalidad de sus habitantes, se conservan 'coloniales', es decir, hispano-indígenas" (13).[20] Such a conservation of colonial mentality by the so-called "Hispanic-indigenous" race (the *criollo*) also calls upon the *gaucho*, whose ordinary lifestyle is described as having advanced his *facultades físicas, sin ninguna de las de inteligencia. Su carácter moral se resiente de su hábito, de triunfar de los obstáculos del poder de la naturaleza; es fuerte, activo, energético. Sin ninguna instrucción, sin necesitarla, es feliz en medio de su pobreza y sus privaciones…* (*Facundo*, p. 48).[21]

A contentious work of literature that is both admired and condemned in modern Argentina, Sarmiento's *Facundo*, as well as his other literary creations and essays, are part of the foundational national literature that, for better or worse, have defined in some way Argentinian national character. Though Alberdi refuted much of the Eurocentrism that is foregrounded in Sarmiento's writing, their views intersect in an undeniable mutual esteem for Northern European, and especially Anglo-Saxon people and culture, evident in their reliance on English economists, French educators, and North American constitutionalists as inspiration for the Argentinian political and educational model. Ingenieros affirms

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[20] 'the cities Europeanize, while the countryside, due to its social organization and for the mentality of its inhabitants, are preserved colonial, that is, Hispanic-indigenous.' (my translation)

[21] 'physical abilities, without any of those of intelligence. His moral character resents his habit, to triumph over the obstacles of the power of nature; He is strong, active, energetic. Without any instruction, without needing it, he is happy amidst his poverty and privations…' (my translation)

Alberdi's thesis that *somos Europeos adaptados a vivir en América y no indígenas amenazados por el contacto europeo* (1915, p. 73).[22] This posture raises the Argentinian as European and thereby places him on civilized ground, while at the same time rejecting his own native American. Ingenieros further supports Alberdi's position that all that is civilized in America comes from European origins, and is not the person who is *indígena, autóctona,…los hombres de color que habitaban el territorio antes de la primera inmigración europea* (1915, p. 73).[23] He attributes all components of civilized Argentinian culture—*el traje que vestimos, el idioma que hablamos, el libro que leemos, el colegio, la religión, los códigos, las ideas, las industrias, el comercio*[24]—as cultivated directly from a superior European ancestry.

6. Breeding Patriotism: Alternative Discourses of National Character in 19th Century Buenos Aires

At the dawn of the 19th century, *porteño* elites (many of them members and descendants of the Spanish ruling class) sought to shape Argentina as an advancement that surpassed Southern Europe's stagnant and congested society. Echeverría questioned Spain's sociopolitical conditions during the American Revolution for independence, and deemed it "la nación más atrasada de Europa".[25] In his essay, *Antecedentes y primeros*

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[22] 'we are Europeans adapted to live in America, and not natives threatened by European contact' (my translation)

[23] 'indigenous, native, the colored people who inhabited the territory before the first European immigration' (my translation)

[24] 'the clothing we wear, the language we speak, the book we read, the school, religion, codes, ideas, industries, trade' (my translation)

[25] 'the most backward nation in Europe' (my translation)

pasos de la Revolución de Mayo, he claimed: *La nacionalidad española, invocando sus viejos ídolos, el Absolutismo y la Inquisición, se rehízo y volvió a levantarse como en los siglos XVII y XVIII, frenética y salvaje, contra las ideas civilizadoras, borrando con sangre hasta el luminoso rastro de su pasajera conquista* (Echeverría, 1874, p. 243).[26] In such a view that Echeverría shared with other early Argentinian social thinkers, Spain's inclination to its past left it stuck in the Middle Ages of absolutism, which hindered its capability of keeping up with the level of progress in Northern Europe.

Political philosopher and diplomat, Juan Bautista Alberdi warily questioned the blind acceptance of European values in Argentina, and frequently ridiculed the underpinnings of Sarmiento's *Facundo* (Sorensen Goodrich, 1996, p. 11). He proposed his philosophy of the Hispano-American civilization and its problems of the past and future in his work, *Bases* (1852), which made its appearance at the time that the Argentinian constitution was established. In this work, Alberdi contests *la aplicación a nuestra política económica exterior de las doctrinas internacionales que gobiernan las relaciones de las naciones europeas, ha dañado nuestro progreso tanto como los estragos de la guerra civil*. Rather than focusing on the progress of political freedoms as his predecessors (albeit openly and explicitly racist propositions like those of Sarmiento), Alberdi's concerns rested in the social necessities of the nation that were quintessentially Argentinian. His premise rested on the European experience as insightful for national sociology, but insufficient for solving problems that are uniquely Argentinian (1852). More generally, he highlighted the sociopolitical contexts in North America and France as inconsistent with the situation in

[26] 'The Spanish nationality, invoking its old idols, the Absolutism and the Inquisition, was redone and rose again as in the 17th and 18th centuries, frenetic and wild against the civilizing ideas, erasing with blood until the luminous trace of its passenger conquest…' (my translation)

Spanish America. Unlike prior politicians and philosophers, Alberdi was the first to introduce a mission that would arrive to an *argentinidad absoluta*—a definite, uncorrupted, and loyal Argentinian society and identity. In *Facundo y su biógrafo* (1853), Alberdi openly postulates the rejection of European thought in the Spanish American context:

> *Y el buen sentido en Sud América está más cerca de la realidad inmediata y palpitante, que de los libros que nos envía la Europa del siglo XIX, que será el siglo XXI de Sud América. Así el gaucho argentino, el hacendado, el negociante, son más aptos para la política práctica que nuestros alumnos crudos de Quinet y Michelet, maestros que todo conocen, menos Sud América.*[27]

Alberdi's aspirations for Argentinian society converted into a systematic doctrine that influenced the foundation for modern Argentinian sociology (Ingenieros, 1915, p. 65). His writing foreshadows the Cuban philosopher, José Martí's "Nuestra America" (1891), which rejects North American Anglo-Saxon character as true for all American identity, and calls for unification among the people of Spanish America. However, his ideas were not unanimously accepted among all members of the Generation of 1837.

Despite Sarmiento's favorable comments to Alberdi regarding his Bases, the two philosophers had great disagreements over their ideas of national education. Alberdi's elitist philosophy on education policy illuminated in *Bases* (and even prior in his 1845 essay, *La acción de la Europa en América*). As a critical reaction to Sarmiento's call for universal education, he denounced it as "idealistic and providential", lacking in

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[27] '…common sense in South America is closer to immediate, throbbing reality than are the books sent to us by the Europe of the nineteenth century, which will be the Spanish America of the twenty-first century. Thus, the Argentinian gaucho, the landowner, the businessman, are all better suited to practical politics than are our half-baked students of Quinet and Michelet—masters known by all, except South America.' (my translation)

"methodological thrust" (Katra, 1996, p. 168). While Sarmiento viewed universal education as the motor behind societal progress, Alberdi denied the education to all as the solution, particularly to women. He instead elevated industry as the cornerstone to spreading moral doctrine, leaving education in the hands of the few (Katra, 1996, p. 168). *Porteño* pretension compared to Sarmiento's provinciality is evident again in his initiatives for public education, which he claimed *la educación pública (…) no debe tener otro fin que aumentar cada vez más el número de individuos que la posean*, whereas Alberdi stemmed from highbrow opinions evident since Mitre that *el saber condensado en un grupo de individuos obre en la masa de la ignorancia* (Tedesco, 1986).

B. The Second Colonization: Immigration Reform and the European Tidal Wave

Argentina's social thought is grounded in the work of scientists of the 19th century who sought to rewrite Argentinian history. Epitomized in Sarmiento's *Facundo: Civilización y barbarie en las pampas argentinas* and its federal installation into all public primary schools by the late 19th century (Rodriguez, 2006, p. 14), post-independent Argentina[28] was believed to have stimulated a century of barbarism marked by its mixed race of Spanish and indigenous peoples. With the finalized installment of the Constitution of 1853, Argentinian statesmen proclaimed the Republic a proud living testimony of Europe in America. They guaranteed that with promoted European immigration, the uncivilized defects of its native and *mestizo*[29] people would be reworked. This stance of racial dehumanization of its native people and ethnic superiority of a fresh Northern

[28] Argentina was known in its post-independence as the United Provinces of the River Plate, from 1810 until 1831.

[29] *Mestizo* refers to a person of mixed race of Spanish progeny considered tainted by indigenous blood.

European origin would infiltrate much of Argentinian early social and political thought for decades to come, producing social outcomes that ultimately affected the linguistic and cultural makeup of the young nation.

1. Formation of a National Identity

While immigration had been tightly restricted under Rosas, it assumed the forefront of political issues since Mitre and Sarmiento's presidencies. Under Mitre's four-year term immigration rates more than quadrupled (100,000 Europeans came), a national census was imposed for the first time, and there was rapid expansion of transportation facilities and communication to facilitate national development and unify the population. Sarmiento wrote of a better future "awaiting Argentina when it opened its doors wide to European immigration" (Ross, 2003). The Constitution of 1853 afforded the means to modernize the country and arrive to an ideal Sarmentine future achieved by European immigration that would promote free commerce, eradicate regional political governance, and supplant traditional cultures inherited from Spain that had been incorporated into local culture over centuries. This constitution looked to foreign investment and European systems of governance to boost the Argentinian economy and cultivate a nation in the image of European sophistication.

As Argentina approached the 20th century, it was faced with an unforeseen human force that complicated the cohesive imagined national identity that state leaders and elites had envisioned. As a result of the new immigration law, Argentina was the second highest receiver of immigrants globally (second only to the United States), tripling its population from 1.1 million to 3.3 million inhabitants from 1857 to 1890 (Devoto, 2008) Though

such an immigration outcome coincided with those Eurocentrist views that pushed for modernity in the Americas, the nation was forced to suddenly assimilate over three million immigrants, many who were coming from impoverished conditions in Europe.

An influx of Southern European immigrants of poor economic circumstances stirred fear in the new nation. An invasion of their regional languages and cultures brought a consequential sentiment of uncivilized "otherness" that affected the cultural order, as well as the underlying linguistic order (Bletz, 2010).[30] With such rapid influx, immigrants were not fabricated in time and space, and precluded the possibility of a political entity to provide the essential guidelines for national identity in the Argentinian cultural order.[31]

In the legacy of a few philosophers, the immigrant burden was addressed in a positive light. José Ingenieros—an Italian-born physician, philosopher, and sociologist—held a prominent role in the development of 19th century Argentinian social thought and values during impacting immigration reform. A graduate of the University of Buenos Aires School of Medicine, he researched the configuration of an Argentinian national identity through a biological perspective of sociology. His work was marked by an imperialist nationalism that looked to the two prominent immigrant colonies (Italians and Spaniards) as an improved race to replace (and displace) Argentina's indigenous peoples. He viewed the first Latin colonial period in the Southern Cone dominated by the Spanish as sterile and backward, governed by a series of weak feudal oligarchies. However, he perceived the second Latin colony of the late 19th century in a much more positive light, praising its European over Spanish citizenry that he believed would bring a creative workforce to

[30] See Anderson 1983 and 1991 for cultural and linguistic order theory.

[31] "Nationality is a taxonomy of differentiation of individuals as members of such groups, together with essentialized nondifferentiation of individuals within group boundaries" (Silverstein, 2000, p. 111).

Argentina (1915) to stir economic conditions marked by feudalism, and evolve its disorder to favor a capitalist system that would quickly assimilate the psyche of *criollo* descendants: *el extranjero es antiargentino y con razón; el criollo desestima su condición de trabajador, no encuentra a la justicia que reclama y las oligarquías le escatiman la asimilación política que los haría sentirse ciudadanos* (1913, p. 98).[32] Though Ingenieros accepted the *criollo* in the future of Argentina, his vision restored a "neo-Latin" (Europe-oriented) race that in turn had powerful consequences on South American language politics that washed away the multilingualism that existed due to its indigenous peoples for the sake of a common (European) language. This myth of Latin American inferiority and disorder was ascribed by Northern European thinkers who blamed the Spanish inclination to mix with the natives for their colonies' relative weakness in relation to the United States (Kerr, 2017).

2. Importing Whiteness: Rallying European Immigration

In the Post-independence era, Latin American new republics were doubted to succeed on the international stage. Racial mixing of Spanish and indigenous blood was the central argument, as intellectuals such as Arthur de Gobineau, George Gliddon, and Josiah Nott all claimed that racial mixing could have catastrophic consequences for a given people, and the Scottish anatomist/ethnologist Robert Knox specifically scorned the Hispanic hybrid as a degenerate "monstrosity of nature" (Kerr, 2017). Because of this criticism from the western powers, Argentinian intellectuals such as Sarmiento and his successors

[32] 'the foreigner is anti-Argentinian and rightly so; the *criollo* dismisses his condition as a worker, he does not find the justice that he claims, and the oligarchies deny him the political assimilation that would make him feel like a citizen' (my translation)

pursued a reputation for Argentina as a modern nation by ensuring progress and civility brought by recruiting European immigrants and eliminating or domesticating indigenous peoples.

The era of Ingenieros's writing saw an intensification of nationalistic sentiment rooted in a European race and economic development that was being pushed by Argentina's participation in global markets. Since he considered Argentina the land of the greatest economic progress in South America, Ingenieros (1913) fomented national thought that justified Argentinian superiority by means of natural and biological laws: its expansive territory, arid climate, natural resources and the white race of its population. He claimed that these four principal factors in Argentina made it a pristine leader of South American nations: *Por eso la grandeza material de la nacionalidad argentina lleva en si los factores que determinarán en su mentalidad colectiva una franca tendencia nacionalista e imperialista, como de tiempo atrás se observa en los Estados Unidos* (1913, p. 106).[33] He predicted and hoped that Argentina's material resources, and its natural characteristics would bring about a common attitude in its population based on nationalism and imperialism. Influenced by the earliest Argentinian social thinkers such as Bernardino Rivadavia, Esteban Echeverría, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, and Juan Bautista Alberdi, Ingenieros believed that the solution to eliminating South American barbarism depended on racial "rejuvenation" of a white race in the Argentinian population (Rodriguez, 2006). This chauvinistic oratory is clear when he explains the place of black and indigenous races as inferior and outlandish obstructions to national supremacy:

[33] 'That is why the material greatness of the Argentinian nationality carries the factors that will determine in its collective mentality a clear nationalist and imperialist tendency, as it was observed in the past in the United States' (my translation)

> *…si admitimos que la civilización superior corresponde actualmente a la raza blanca, fácil es inferir que la negra debe descontarse como elemento de progreso. Un país donde el corriente es negro o mestizo, no puede aspirar a la hegemonía sobre países donde el negro es un objeto de curiosidad. Tal es el caso de la Argentina, libre ya, o poco menos, de las razas inferiores, donde el exiguo resto de indígenas está refugiado en territorios que de hecho son ajenos al país.*[34]

Just as people of indigenous or African origin were considered inferior, so were the rural mestizos equally suspicious in the eyes of the urban, liberal elites, as the philosophical juxtaposition between progress and backwardness also uncovered a socio-economic clash between city and countryside. Along with the other thinkers from the ruling class before him, Ingenieros and many other liberal modernizers of the Generation of 1880 were interested in the relationship between anarchy and *caudillismo*, and considered these two factors the formula for political and economic peril. They desired to take control from the alleged unruly and unproductive natives, *caudillos*, and *gauchos* to civilize the Pampas plains that lay beyond the growing cosmopolitan center of Buenos Aires. As a leader of sociological study in Argentina, Ingenieros called for a scientific and social reinterpretation of Argentinian history under the pretense to better understand the mestizo influence in the spirit and customs of Argentina. He believed social economy to be conditioned by biological laws, and endorsed that the nation must *asimilar la cultura y el trabajo de las naciones europeas más civilizadas, regenerando la primitiva sangre*

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[34] …if we admit that the superior civilization currently corresponds to the white race, it is easy to infer that the black race should be discounted as an element of progress. A country where the common person is black or mestizo cannot aspire to hegemony over countries where a black person is an object of curiosity. Such is the case of Argentina, already free, or almost, of inferior races, where the meager remnant of indigenous people is taking refuge in territories that are in fact alien to the country. (José Ingenieros, 1913, p. 111, my translation)

hispano-indígena con un abundante transfusión de sangre nueva, de raza blanca (Ingenieros, 1915, p. 60).[35]

Cultural barbarism in Buenos Aires was assumed to be a social and national disease that could only be cured by two mechanisms—1) the institutionalization of public education and 2) European immigration reform. The Argentinian political culture of this time was based on a medical model that defined the social problems of vagrancy, poverty, and crime to be treated by means of programs of social hygiene (Rodriguez, 2006, p. 11). Other studies of the late 19th and early 20th centuries reveal elite members and intellectuals grounding xenophobic ideas in religious and later scientific research that linked whiteness of skin color and European origins to ethnic purity and superior systems of culture, behavior, and values. This was an ideology not specific to Argentina, but common in the western world as well at this time, and well into the 1950's and 1960's, even, in the United States.

Remnants from the distorted racism and racial theory that had surfaced among western imperial powers from political battles fought over the Atlantic slave trade and slavery continued to infect social thought in the Americas during the last decades of the 18th century and the first decades of the 19th. Classic texts of 18th-century European pseudo-scientific racism made acerbic slanders of Africans as incurably inferior and perhaps not even human. The targeting of people viewed as biologically inferior to the rejuvenation of a white European race was also exemplified in Argentina. Luis Jorge Fontana's *El Gran Chaco* (1881) surveyed the Chaco regional landscape and its indigenous people, and

[35] 'assimilate the culture and work of the most civilized European nations, regenerating the primitive Spanish-indigenous blood with an abundant transfusion of new blood, of a white race' (my translation)

measured their intelligence by the size of their heads and feet. Carlos Octavio Bunge's *Nuestra América* (1903) reduced the explanation of the low proportion of people of African descent in Buenos Aires to environmental factors, clarifying that the 'climate has decimated them, because their lungs badly resist the Pampean winds'. Such pseudo-scientific reconstruction was grounded in the labelling of defects of the inhabitants of the rural interior, and associating them with a cultural barbarism that required counterbalancing with assimilated European immigrants.

The substitution of a primitive mestizo (Hispanic-indigenous) race for what was perceived to be a more progressive civilized European heritage was a cornerstone of 19th century Western thought, claimed to obtain among the western powers in North America and Europe (Hill, 2009; Kerr, 2017; Leys Stepan, 1991). Sarmiento's vision of a new political order to achieve the desired ethnic elements in Argentina is explicit in *Facundo* (1845): *El elemento principal de orden y moralización que la Republica Argentina cuenta hoy, es la inmigración europea…y si hubiera un gobierno capaz de dirigir un movimiento bastaría por si solas a sanar, en diez años no más, las heridas que han hecho a la patria los bandidos.* (p. 317).

Alberdi postulated ideas of patriotism in *Bases* (1852), maintaining that there could be no nationality without a white race to equalize the millions of indigenous and *mestizo* people incapable of forming part of the civilized, educated, and industrialized population necessary for working human capital. This philosophy was translated into Argentinian politics with the aforementioned National Constitution of 1853's stipulation for immigration from Europe, which was implemented as a national tactic to populate the young republic with a more "civilized" race from the other side of the Atlantic.

Commanded behind President Alberdi's prevailing slogan *Gobernar es poblar*, Article 25 signals the State's push for European immigration as the most enduring objective of Argentina's early government. For Alberdi, constitutional order and freedoms were second to the nation's need for progress through industry, science, and culture. His material sense for progress is displayed in his famous petition for civilized and moral European immigration (1899):

> *Gobernar es poblar, en el sentido que poblar es instruir, educar, moralizar, mejorar la raza, civilizar, enriquecer y engrandecer espontánea y rápidamente como ha sucedido en los Estados Unidos, fortalecer y afirmar la libertad del país, dándole la inteligencia y la costumbre de su propio gobierno y los medios de ejercerlo. Mas para civilizar por medio de la población, es preciso que las poblaciones sean civilizadas; para educar a nuestra América en la libertad y en la industria es preciso poblarla con poblaciones de la Europa más adelantada en libertad y en industria.*[36]

Though he was a vibrant lobbyist of the 'European promise' in Argentina, Alberdi cautioned against a quantity over quality mentality, calling for a scrupulous immigration selection process *sin echar en olvido que poblar puede ser apestar, embrutecer, esclavizar, según que la población trasplantada o inmigrada, en vez de ser civilizada, sea atrasada, pobre, corrompida*.[37] Alberdi's warnings would later resonate as immigrants' numbers in Buenos Aires soared out of control.

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[36] 'To govern is to populate, in the sense that to populate is to instruct, educate, moralize, improve the race, civilize, enrich and enlarge spontaneously and quickly as it has succeeded in the United States, strengthen and affirm the country's freedom, giving it intelligence and custom of his own government and the means of exercising it. But in order to civilize by means of the population, it is necessary that the populations be civilized; to educate our America in freedom and in industry, it is necessary to populate it with peoples from Europe that are most advanced in freedom and in industry.' (Alberdi, 1899, p. 270, my translation)

[37] 'without forgetting that populating can be reeking, brutalizing, enslaving, depending on whether the transplanted or immigrated population is backward, poor, corrupt instead of being civilized.' (my translation)

3. Immigration Reform and the Second Colonization

Italian immigration to Argentina is frequently described in Lunfardo scholarship to be the most impacting force on the linguistic ramifications of the Rio de la Plata region and the birth of Lunfardo. As part of recruitment efforts, the Argentinian Ministry of Agriculture and Department of Immigration released an international statement titled, "Useful Information for Immigrants, Workmen and Capitalists" (1876). This document detailed applicable articles of the Argentinian Constitution of 1853 as a means of disseminating information of the viable open migration policies to promote immigration. The report was published in Spanish, German, Italian, French and English as a strategy to reach its desired European audiences. This yearning for a European matrix to settle and civilize Argentina's "vacant" and wild frontier was made explicit in Article 25 of the Argentinian Constitution, which stated that:

> *El Gobierno federal fomentará la inmigración europea; y no podrá restringir, limitar ni gravar con impuesto alguno la entrada en el territorio argentino de los extranjeros que traigan por objeto labrar la tierra, mejorar las industrias, e introducir y enseñar las ciencias y las artes.*[38]

At the forefront of the Republic's immigration goals to colonize, develop industries, and recruit teachers, was the belief that European descent would bring highly esteemed culture to Argentina. Its plan reveals an attraction to a foreign workforce believed to be more capable than the native Argentinian (the indigenous or *criollo*). This negative stereotype of the native Argentinian was a product of polemic views of the country's *gauchos* and *criollos*. Such heavy-handed Eurocentrism held a strong place in the young

[38] 'The Federal Government shall encourage European Immigration; and shall not restrict, limit or impose any tax on the entrance of foreigners into Argentinian Territory whose intention is cultivating the land, improving industries and introducing and teaching the sciences and arts.' (my translation)

and developing Argentinian national consciousness, whose statesmen and leading elite viewed their nation's struggle as an internal conflict between civilization and barbarity.

4. Immigration Law Provisions

With an open immigration policy, the European was invited to colonize the frontier. Although most immigrants settled in the growing urban hub of Buenos Aires, colonization of the Argentinian frontier was a state priority met with additional governmental support or newly arrived immigrants. With the brisk increase of immigration, methodical provisions were set in place to best receive and accommodate the incoming masses to the Argentinian territory. All immigrants under the age of sixty who could "prove good conduct and fitness for any occupation, art, or useful trade" (Article 14.1) were boarded and lodged at the expense of the State for the first five days upon arrival (Article 45), or longer in the event of a contracted illness (Article 46).

Immigrants were further provided governmental assistance through the Employment Offices or Immigration Commissions to seek employment placement in their preferred art or trade (Article 48), a service that was to be arranged within no more than five days upon arrival to Argentina (Article 49). Furthermore, to promote stable and safe establishment and financial assistance to those newcomers interested in settling on the frontier, single male immigrants or immigrating families desiring to dwell in any of Argentina's interior provinces were offered a subsidized ten day stay in Buenos Aires upon arrival, with room and board included (Article 52). In addition, they were provided free transportation to any locality of their choice within the Republic as a place to establish residency (Article 51).

5. Transatlantic Migration: Arrival of the *güífaros* (‘Italians’)

From 1876-1925, changes in Argentinian immigration laws saw a single overpowering objective that was met with policy change: “the intent to use the law to attract a far greater number of immigrants and to select qualities seen as desirable” (translation by Devoto, 1989).[39] With World War I and economic crises ensuing at home, nationals from Southern Europe took advantage of the immigration summon with hope of landing an opportunity in the flourishing economy of the Southern Cone. European immigration swelled the *porteño* coast, as 2.27 million Italians alone arrived between 1861 and 1914 (Luongo, 2014), with Spaniards’ numbers competing. However, the resulting flood of lower-class Italians into the nation began to brew a changing sentiment towards the newly arrived group.

During the onset of immigration policy change that had catalyzed massive migrations, Northern Italians were the foremost America-bound group attracted by the advertised cheap and available land in Argentina (Nugent, 1992; Devoto, 2008).[40] Deemed by Argentinian historian Fernando Devoto, as ‘the most Italian decade’, the 1880’s first truly massive Italian immigration to Argentina was assisted by the regular steamship link created between Genoa and Buenos Aires, and through the subsidization of immigrants’ passages.[41] By 1876-1880, Liguria’s highest installation of 7,700 residents in Argentina

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[39] The Law of Immigration and Colonization [Law 817] was passed by the Chamber of Senators in 1876.

[40] In the 1870’s, a normal sized farm in Argentina was thirty-four hectares, sold for approximately 100-400 lira (Devoto 2008; p. 115). Italy was recently unified during this time, when many of the world’s leading nations adopted a global gold standard for monetary unification. However, James & Rourke (2011) mention that in Italy’s case, “For most of the period following the re-establishment of the gold standard [in the 1870’s], the lira-sterling and lira-pound exchange rate was very close to parity” although the exchange rate fell sharply after June 1893, reaching lira depreciation of as much as 13 percent” (13).

[41] A third-class ticket during the 1880’s was priced at $50 from Genoa to Buenos Aires (Nugent, 1992).

was closely met by 7,400 Lombards and 6,600 Piedmontese (Nascimbene, 1988, Censuses/ISTATS). From 1901-1913, more than one million Italians immigrated into Argentina, accounting for 38 percent of the total immigration presence in the country, and outnumbering even the Spanish masses that arrived to the Rio de la Plata between 1908 and 1910 (ibid).

Though Northern Italian numbers persisted, at the turn of the 20th century they were soon outnumbered by their southern countrymen by 40 percent (241,000 northerners compared to 389,000 southerners) (Nascimbene, 1988). In 1906-1915, immigration from the southern regions of Calabria, Sicily, and Campania began to soar, prompted by perilous economic conditions and natural disasters that fueled a massive exodus of Italians from all regions of Italy to the Americas.

The largely unrestricted immigration laws had unexpected consequences, and became a defining experience for the young Argentinian nation. Looking to the United States as a parallel with its vast frontier and closely exterminated nomadic natives, Sarmiento viewed the North American massive immigration waves of Northern Europeans (English, German, Swedish, Scottish, and French) with hope in the Argentinian context as the answer to their social problems. However, almost three million of poor and illiterate immigrants from Southern Europe arrived instead (primarily from Italy and Spain). The European outsiders ended up being viewed as having brought another form of barbarism to a country hoping to attain Western modernity.

6. Immigrant Restrictions and Policy Reform: The Foreigners Are Out

Increased delinquency, hardship, and linguistic hybridization as a result from the urban sprawl composed a type of national sickness, an infection by a new Other. The native, the *gaucho*, and the *criollo* were once the explanation to Argentina's backwardness, the obstacle to progress. As immigration reform began to change the makeup of Buenos Aires, immigrants of the lower classes were the next accountable party for the increased poverty and criminality that saturated a city unprepared to absorb their numbers. The once prized immigrant quickly became a squandered opportunity and the new source of the nation's faults: the resulting European immigrant was reframed as the wrong type of European, the Southerner that brought social problems to Argentina. Instead, Northern European immigrant groups such as those that previously fled to the United States, or the small population of wealthy British settlers who had come to Buenos Aires a century before, were still praised as the true representation of civility, a wholesome and adept race.

Most Italian immigrants in Buenos Aires came from humble farming origins and spoke Italian regional languages, namely Genoese, Piedmontese, Lombard, Neapolitan, and Sicilian (Buesa Oliver, 1987). These regional languages came into contact with Argentinian Spanish, and had direct consequences on the multilingualism in the Rio de la Plata region. This situation of language contact led to lexical innovations that would later be studied and branded a sub-lexicon of criminals from the urban center of Buenos Aires—Lunfardo. Though the social stratum of Lunfardo speakers was attributed to delinquents and taboo since its beginning, it also stemmed from a strong association to Southern European immigration and culture in general. A conflated stigma attached to

both immigrant and criminal groups triggered ethnic prejudice in the consciousness of statesmen and elites.

As Buenos Aires began to grow, its conditions also evolved. Crime rose in the crowded urban centers, leading social scientists to investigate the origin of Argentina's social "illness". City filth, illegal activity, and crowded impoverished tenements (known as *conventillos*) 'infected' Buenos Aires, shocking state leaders as an unprecedented and unexpected outcome of the sheer magnitude of inhabitants seeking work and a life in the capital city. The social elites of late nineteenth century Buenos Aires were at the center of diagnosing Argentina's growing social problems. Historian and politician José Maria Ramos Mejía, criminologist Luis María Drago, and sociologist and physician José Ingenieros were the primary intellectuals behind the positivist theory that the study of Argentina's own "national science" would heal and prevent future illness and disorder (Rodriguez, 2006).

Concepts of *argentinidad* were reworked and re-envisioned, as late 19th century leaders and thinkers were forced to reflect on the nation's contemporary social issues. A sense of racial improvement was overshadowed by the State's fear of the social and labor activism imported by immigrants, especially by the Italians and Jews (Bletz, 2010; Ramos Mejía, 1899). Hence, the first issue to address was how curbing immigration would lead to successfully controlling the demographic makeup. Immigration policy amendments were instated to impose increased restrictions on the type of immigrants entering the country, and were modelled after immigration reforms in the United States. A national emergency call for improved public health conditions in 1891 brought the National Department of Hygiene to center stage, instructed to study relative questions of public health and

sanitization at the port of Buenos Aires and to oversee the practices of medicine and pharmacies (Law 2829) (*Sistema migratorio argentino* 1986, p. 73). Two decades later, this legislation was followed by a decree modelled after the United States. Though ethnic quotas were never imposed in Argentina, the government's attempt to control immigration unrest through limitations of the type of immigrant allowed into the country was believed a sufficient measure. At the turn of the 20th century, however, the unspoken end of reducing the dominance of Italian immigration (by about 2/3rds) was still not immediately achieved. Only by the 1930's did immigration to Argentina finally decrease significantly.

C. Language Politics: Lunfardo and the Age of Censorship

An obsession with European ethnic policy bled into language politics, as tension increased between the sovereignty of American Spanish and the political desire to maintain linguistic "purity" of Castilian Spanish. Under the work of President Sarmiento, linguistic apprehensions took a different direction dedicated to legitimizing voices and expressions that were distinctly American. Sarmiento's objective as director of the *Escuela Normal de Maestros en Santiago* (Normal School for Teachers in Santiago) was to spearhead a linguistic reform based on etymology and common usage that would translate to orthographic change, a simplified written word of Spanish in the Americas that would be conceptualized as popular and national (Villavicencio, 2008, p. 138).

In reaction to his pedagogical visit to Spain, Sarmiento published a manual of orthographic and phonetic guidelines for teachers at the University of Chile in 1843. In this orthographic reform, *Instrucciones a las maestros para enseñar a leer por el método gradual de lectura*, Sarmiento denounced the incorporation of linguistic foreign elements

in American Spanish, and viewed it as the State's responsibility to articulate the young Argentinian nation's thought in the literary salon of the Generation of 1837. The manual was used until 1889 (Villavicencio, 2008, p. 132).

Sarmiento criticized Spain's immobilization and anti-progressivism of linguistic systems in *Educación popular* (1849), claiming that *esta lengua ha quedado ligada a un pasado que ya no debe volver*.[42] Here, Sarmiento questions the ideology of *purismo del lenguaje* ('purity of language') and aimed to separate Argentinian language from its Hispanic past. Sarmiento demanded a popular language represented by the people that would bring a new social order to the Republic, and condemned the accusations of linguistic distortion by monarchic colonialism*: Yo he estado esperando ver en España un bando de 'policía ortográfica', imponiendo prisión o multa al que escriba estraño en lugar de extraño* (1889, p. 445).[43] Sarmiento's racist ideology is reflected in his preoccupation for how Argentina's race would be defined—'Are we European? —So many copper-colored faces refute us! Are we Indians? —Disdainful smiles from our fair ladies give the only response. Mixed? No one wants to be it, and there are thousands that will not want to be called either American or Argentine' (1883, p. 1, my translation). However, his anxieties that reveal a struggle between European ethnic purism and a mixed race contrast his clear endorsement for a national language that is uniquely Argentinian, as he suggests frivolity and irrelevance of Spain's obsession with stagnant orthographic rules in the Argentinian linguistic context.

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[42] 'this language has remained linked to a past that should no longer return' (my translation)

[43] 'I have been waiting to see in Spain a faction of 'orthographic police' imposing a prison sentence or a fine on someone who writes *strange* instead of *strange*' (my translation)

1. Lunfardo's Rejection at Home

Despite Sarmiento's efforts to liberalize American Spanish, a counter-current supporting a more refined national language persisted in Argentina into the early 20th century, exacerbated by the elite class and literary authors; Lunfardo found itself at the center of this discussion. Approximately thirty years after Lunfardo's earliest documentation in the 1880's, it was raised to a political platform and became the center of discussion among national writers who debated its place in Argentinian language and society. Elites and political leaders feared the jargon's potential foothold in the early configuring of a national language as it permeated into the idiomatic expression of *porteños* across social classes.

The search for a genuinely Argentinian linguistic expression continued to be heavily debated particularly through the decade of the 1920's. In 1927, there was heated debate about Lunfardo's purpose and place in Argentinian Spanish and heritage. In a 1920's entry from *Crítica*, a Buenos Aires progressive daily newspaper whose reader following was largely comprised of immigrants and their descendants (Oliveto, 2010, p. 2), Argentinian literary authors, philosophers, and patrons of national literature examined and discussed how their national language ought to materialize. Lunfardo was one of the most controversial topics addressed in this intellectual symposium, which included writings from Jorge Luis Borges y Roberto Arlt.

The son of Polish and Italian immigrants, Argentinian writer Roberto Arlt is known for his artfulness in depicting life in the streets of 20th century Buenos Aires. In Las Aguafuertes Porteñas (1928-1942), a column in the *porteño* daily newspaper *El Mundo*, his characters of common men come to life through the employment of Lunfardo. Though

he did not pertain to the working class, Arlt observed and studied the underworld that he wrote about so as to become part of the scenes in his column, thus attributing veracity to his prose (Grines, 2006). Arlt enforces the stereotypes of *porteño* thieves as in *Filosofía del hombre que necesita ladrillos* (1958):

> *Hay un tipo de ladrón que no es ladrón, según muestra su modo de ver, y que legalmente es más ratero que el mismo Saccomano, este ladrón, y hombre decente, es el propietario que roba ladrillos, que roba cal, arena, cemento y que no pasa de allí. El robo más audaz que puede hacer este honrado ciudadano consiste en dos chapas de zinc para cubrir el armazón del gallinero (...)*

Arlt describes this thief with a tone of affection in which he as the narrator becomes embedded in the life of the harmless thief that he portrays. In *Los chicos que nacieron viejos* (1958), Arlt institutes another stereotype of porteño children who do well in school. Arlt depicts this scene from his stance as an observer on a bustling avenue in Buenos Aires:

> *Caminaba hoy por la calle Rivadavia, a la altura de Membrillar, cuando vi en una esquina a un muchacho con cara de jovie; la punta de los faldones del gabán tocándole los zapatos; las manos sepultadas en el bolsillo; el fungi abollado y la grandota nariz pálida como lloviéndole sobre el mentón. (...) Esos pebetes...esos viejos pebetes que en la escuela llamábamos ganchudos (...) y Que concurren a clase con los cuadernos perfectamente forrados y el libro sin dobladuras en las páginas (...)*

Arlt employs a vivid use of Lunfardo terms (*jovie, fungi, pebetes, ganchudos*)[44] in this scene, which contributes to the legitimacy and authenticity of his observation. He uses Lunfardo to appeal and relate to the common reader, and prove his trustworthiness as a voice of the streets of Buenos Aires. Here, he breaches Lunfardo's sociolect boundary as

[44] *jovie* (vesre de *viejo;* uso cariñoso de *padre), fungi (sombrero), pebetes (chicos), ganchudos (aquel que tiene influencia sobre alguien*)

purely a jargon of thieves, as he uses it to portray not a criminal but a snapshot of well-behaved urban school children.

Borges did not share the same value for Lunfardo in his writing as Arlt. Born into an educated middle-class family of *criollos*, Borges was raised travelling to and from Europe and lived in Switzerland for six years as an adolescent. His prized complications of short stories, particularly *El Aleph* and *Ficciones*, contribute to universal literature as they touch upon themes of philosophy, dreams, labyrinths, mythology, and fictional writers. His universality made him a cultivator of a highbrow, even foreign, world. The majority of his work *lo transportan a un mundo que no es el suyo, a un mundo de alienación y desarraigo* (Ricci, 1973). Borges denounced Lunfardo and those who study it, stating that *yo creo que aquellos que se dedican a estudiarlo están haciendo esa broma*, and that *no es posible tomarlos en serio porque no aportan nada*.[45]

Oliveto (2010) uncovers a survey published in *Crítica* (1927) titled, *¿Llegaremos a tener un idioma propio?* The survey's specific examination of popular versus cult linguistic expression in national literature brought debate among various leading authors to contradict the liberal standpoint of the editorial. In the survey, Argentinian theater director and screenwriter, José Antonio Saldías, wrote that the *idioma nacional, en cuyo caso el pueblo será su hacedor…no se crea que por todo lo expuesto yo propicio la adopción o incorporación del 'lunfardo'[…] El lunfardo carece de alcurnia suficiente*

[45] Boletín del Servicio Informativo Continental, *Lunfardo: Broma para unos, efectivo aporte para otros*, Buenos Aires. October, 1970.

para expresar la belleza que enseña a amar a un idioma.[46] Even Argentinian writer and dramatist, Roberto Payró, whose narrative theme centered on the quest for *argentinidad* through the creation of protagonists represented by the *gaucho pícaro*[47], rejected Lunfardo based on its fickle character, *en la imposibilidad de su fijación*.[48] Payró commented in the survey, *Si yo escribiera con el lunfardo de cuando era niño, los arrabaleros de hoy no me comprenderían*.[49] Dramatist and theater director, Enrique García Velloso, contributed to Payró's stance, sustaining that the *barbarismos idiomáticos, vengan del lunfardo o del cocoliche, viven afortunadamente poco […] La traza lunfarda vive lo que dura un 'berretín'*.[50] Though perhaps along the same lines as Saldías, Jorge Luis Borges went much further than Payró and García Velloso in his conviction of the vocabulary in the survey. He discredited Lunfardo's authenticity and denied its place in Argentinian national language by labelling it merely *una jerga artificiosa de ladrones* ('an artificial jargon created by thieves'). He further denounced Lunfardo publicly as vocabulary condemned *a hablar solamente de cárceles, furcas, comisarías, etc.*[51] Avelino Herrero also participated in this debate in an issue of another leading Argentinian daily newspaper, *La Nación* (1927), and argued that:

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[46] 'the national language, in which case the people shall be its creator…Don't you think that because of all that I mentioned before I would favor the adoption or incorporation of Lunfardo [...] Lunfardo lacks the sufficient pedigree necessary to express the beauty that teaches one to love a language' (my translation, *Crítica*, 1927, p. 7)

[47] 'gaucho without scruples' (my translation)

[48] 'in the impossibility of its fixation' (my translation, Oliveto, 2010, p. 4)

[49] 'If I wrote using the Lunfardo from the time when I was a child, today's poor people from the barrio would not understand me' (my translation, 1927, p. 5)

[50] 'idomatic barbarisms, coming from Lunfardo or Cocoliche, fortunately live only briefly [...] The Lunfardo trace lives as long as a 'whim'' (my translation, 1927, p. 9)

[51] 'to speak only of prisons, gallows, police stations, etc.' (my translation, 1927, p. 3)

> *La artificiosa y absurda jerigonza lunfarda, lo más confuso, inexpresivo y pobre que como instrumento verbal se haya empleado en parte alguna. Y sin embargo, ésa es la huella que tienta constantemente y sigue por natural impulso el jovenzuelo que moldea su personalidad, su hombría, más allá de los muros del colegio, a cuyo umbral llega, atiborrado de vulgarismos, de expresiones innobles, de giros torpes, que resuenan después en las aulas con eco de extinguida argentinidad.*[52]

For these literary elites and authors, Lunfardo was much like AAVE or such non-standard varieties of English to purists. It was viewed as "bad" or "corrupted" language, or language with "mistakes" that should not be given status. However, as it transpires through some of the opinions above, it was a powerful force capable of infiltrating and affecting the Argentinian language of youth. Lunfardo's denouncement among leading Argentinian elites, writers, and humanists of the 20th century reveals a deep-rooted past of criticism, and warrants a deeper glance into the effects of this tainted history in the notions of Lunfardo today.

2. The Dawn of Censorship

In 1933, Decree 21.004 was passed, allowing the Argentinian State to regulate radio broadcasting for the first time. The decree contained a series of articles aimed at controlling the radio's functioning and the content of its messages. This measure, together with a series of rules issued by the General Directorate of Post and Telegraph, enabled the government under Agustín Pedro Justo to maintain tight control of information and

[52] The artificial and absurd Lunfardo jargon, the most confusing, expressionless and poor as a verbal instrument has been used anywhere. And yet, that is the trace that constantly tempts and follows by natural impulse the youngster who molds his personality, his manhood, beyond the walls of the school, at whose threshold he arrives, crammed with vulgarisms, ignoble expressions, awkward turns, that resonate later in the classrooms with the echo of an extinct argentinidad. (my translation, cited in Castro, 1941, p. 18)

language influenced by extreme right-wing politics and Catholic Church conservatism. Linguistic censorship was part of this new law, and Lunfardo was one of its primary targets, along with popular regionalisms (e.g., the exclusive use of *voseo* for the second person singular, lenition of intervocalic /s/, and devoicing of /ʒ/ or frication of the palatal liquid, a process known as *žeísmo* in Hispanic linguistics). Such Rioplatense linguistic features were dismissed as linguistic anarchy in *La peculiaridad lingüística rioplatense y su sentido histórico,* authored by one notorious Spanish philologist and cultural historian, Américo Castro. In his book, he claims, *El lunfardo, con sus inversiones de sílabas y sus ampliaciones arbitrarias de cualquier sentido, cultiva y provoca la anarquía* (1941, p. 101). He continues regarding linguistic anarchy in Argentina as evidenced by *voseo* forms (e.g., *tenés, vení, no te metás*) that,

> *… subsistía como arcaico vulgarismo, mientras que en Buenos Aires hasta ha desalojado el* tú *de los más distinguidos, que hace años todavía persistían en mantener una diferencia de educación. En Chile, por ejemplo, la escuela consiguió desterrar el* vos *entre la gente educada. En la Argentina, desde hace mucho se realizan esfuerzos para lograrlo; sus beneméritos intentos se han perdido en el vacío por la indisciplina de los jóvenes, por la de sus familias y por la de la sociedad en general.*[53]

The Spaniard's criticism, however, was felt in local politics prior to the official censorship of the 1940's. Though linguistic censorship did not come into full force until 1943, the same ideologies and measures had been taken to lawfully restrict language in

[53] '…subsisted as archaic vulgarism, while in Buenos Aires it has even dislodged the tú from the most distinguished, who for years still persisted in maintaining a difference in education. In Chile, for example, the school managed to banish *vos* among educated people. In Argentina, efforts have been made to achieve it for a long time; those worthy attempts have been lost in a vacuum due to the indiscipline of young people, of their families and of society in general.' (my translation, Castro, 1941, p. 31)

public education and radio broadcasting a decade earlier (Gobello, 1999; Pascual Vardaro, 2007, p. 74).

Legislation that affected language including Lunfardo was composed in the early 1930's, but it was not forcefully implemented until an era of government instability in the 1940's and a series of military dictatorships. Decree 21.044 instated by the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs was passed in Buenos Aires on May 3rd, 1933, and was published just two years later. This law outlined the sole duty of the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs to oversee and censor radio broadcasting. This was a strategy to cultivate a pure and highbrow Argentinian Spanish to replace the disenfranchised Rioplatense dialect hindering linguistic prestige. The decree included a section of legal instruction called Radio Communication Regulations, which specified technical considerations with which all types of the country's forty existing radio stations—public and private, amateur and experimental—were obligated to comply (Fraga, 2006, p. 40). The efforts of the Argentinian government to control language in radio diffusion reveals the linguistic insecurities of its leading class, manifested from the top down. Radio diffusion was the chief target over other dominions due to its accessibility, making it the most influential vehicle of the spoken word for the time.

Having arrived to Argentina prior to the nation's first television broadcasting in 1951, the partial objective of the radio broadcasting censor called for a ban of certain Lunfardo terminology and other "non-standard" (i.e., non-Peninsular Spanish) linguistic forms as a means of refining artistic and cultural manifestations in Argentina. This phobia of popular language was especially outlined in the *Comisión de 1938*, a diagnostic evaluation that

restricted the content of song lyrics transmitted on the radio, especially in tango songs, and were often returned to the artist or composer for revision (Martinéz Moirón, 1971).

Author and ardent Peronist, Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, wrote political essays during the military Presidency of Ramón Castillo (1942-1943), who maintained political neutrality during WWII, but fell to a military coup in 1943. Sanchez Sorondo (1945) describes the political insecurity and confused sense of nationalism during this time in Argentinian politics and society:

> *Todavía no tiene la Argentina conciencia política de nación. El Estado nación mira hacia afuera, convierte en genio centrifugo, expansivo toda la actividad, todo el calor humano que las fronteras guardan. Este mirar hacia afuera, este encarar el mundo es la actitud de un pueblo que siente la comunidad, que se sabe nación. La política entonces asume el pleno ejercicio de la soberanía: es política exterior, es ensamblamiento de lo individual en lo social bajo el Estado (257).*

Although there was a body in place responsible for the oversight of Lunfardo in radio broadcasting since the 1930's, the strong push for creating punitive legislation did not occur until 1943-1949 under the rule of various military dictators. In 1943, a military coup behind a secret nationalist society of the Argentinian Army formally known as the United Officers' Group (G.O.U.) staged a coup d'état to overthrow constitutional President Ramón Castillo. Though this military junta lasted only until 1945, it gave rise to an era of strict implementation of censorship laws that started being enforced just three days after the coup d'état.

While the G.O.U. military executive power did not craft the decree resulting in censorship, they enforced the laws that had been officially in place since 1935 (Pascual Vardaro, 2007, p. 73). Continuity between the military government era and the 1933 linguistic norms viewed idiomatic vices as capable of deteriorating and corrupting the

buen gusto del pueblo, and believed that *La preservación de la cultura frente a la 'degeneración', concebida como 'misión artística', se entrecruzó con la búsqueda de 'purificación moral' que el gobierno de facto se había adjudicado*" (Fraga, 2006, p. 50)[54]. Boletín de Correos y Telégrafos, número 3204 expressed the linguistic insecurity instilled in government mentality regarding popular language:

> *Los vicios idiomáticos permitidos (en la radiotelefonía) toman lugar en la mente de los radioescuchas en forma tal, que no es preciso mucho tiempo para que lleguen a trocarse en hábito, generando así esa degeneración del idioma que es dable palpar actualmente en todas las esferas de nuestra vida colectiva, casi sin excepción alguna, porque a ella no escapan los círculos de enseñanza secundaria y universitaria.*[55]

This fragment expresses the profound fear among governmental leaders of the radio's influence in educating the Argentinian population and forming part of the country's linguistic culture. Their deep apprehension outlined in the 1943 bulletin indicates the radio's place in society and widespread use across social classes during this time, enabling the spread of Lunfardo beyond its original confines to stigmatize groups since the 1930's and 1940's in Argentina.

Only ten days after the transfer of executive power in 1943, the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs created the Supervisory Council of Radiotelephone Transmissions as the body responsible for controlling and authorizing texts, and for ordering the modifications

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[54] 'The preservation of culture in the face of 'degeneration', conceived as an 'artistic mission', was intertwined with the search for 'moral purification' that the de facto government had taken credit for' (my translation)

[55] 'The allowed idiomatic vices (in radiotelephony) occur in the listeners' minds in such a way that it does not take much time for them to become a habit, thus producing a degeneration of language that is currently tangible in all the spheres of our collective life, almost without exception, because it does not escape the circles of secondary and university education' (my translation, Boletín de Correos y Telégrafos, número 3204, 14 junio 1943).

necessary for their approval to be broadcasted (Fraga, 2006, p. 51). Immediately following, the Bulletin of Posts and Telegraphs n. 3204 and n. 3207 were edited in two circulations that provided proscription for specified words and expressions.

3. Immorality of Language

The ruling military dictatorship demonstrated immediate control and high-stake consequences for Lunfardo. Many of the censured Lunfardo words were not from the criminal ambit, but they pertained rather to everyday semantic fields. In *La prohibición del lunfardo en la radiodifusión argentina: 1933-1953*, Fraga (2006) discusses the first circulation (under the segment titled "n. 133 – radio") that prohibited many common Lunfardisms during this time, for example, *atenti* ("atención/cuidado!" – 'watch out'), *guitas* ("monedas" – 'coins'), and *pibes* ("niños" – 'children'). Though Lunfardisms were the primary target in the efforts to cleanse the national language, they were not the only linguistic items to suffer. Common cases of lenition such as *confesao* ("confesado" – 'confessed') and *disculpao* ("disculpado" – 'forgiven) were referred to as "barbarismos camperos" ('country barbarisms') and were also barred from radio broadcasting. Among other proscriptions were cases of deletion: *pa* ("para" – 'for'), *ta bien* ("está bien" – 'it's ok'); as well as *voseo* (a grammatical paradigm for the second person singular) verbal conjugations: *sos* ("eres" – 'you are'), *sabés* ("sabes" – 'you know'), *salí* ("sal" – 'leave').[56]

[56] Boletín de Correos y Telégrafos, número 3204, 14 junio 1943

Fraga (2006) describes another section added to the Bulletin of Posts and Telegraphs (number 3207) titled, *Nómina de algunas palabras y locuciones mal empleadas que deben proscribirse de la radiotelefonía*.[57] Although the first amends to the announcement encompassed idioms and language from the interior provinces as well as some Lunfardisms, the subsequent instructions advanced to proscribing solely Lunfardo words, such as: *bulín* ("habitación" – 'room'), *escabiar* ("beber" – 'to drink), *funyi* ("sombrero" – 'hat'), *fajar* ("pegar" – 'hit'), *grévano* ("italiano" – 'Italian'), *gil* "tonto" – 'dumb'), *laburo* ("trabajo" – 'job'), *metejón* ("fuerte enamoramiento" – 'strong infatuation'), *milonga* ("baile" – 'dance'), *malevo* ("malandrín" – 'scoundrel'), *manyar* ("comer" – 'to eat'), *marroco* ("pan" – 'bread'), *morfón* ("comilón" – 'glutton'). This indicated sentiment of insecurity demonstrates an attached stigma to the variety during this time in Argentinian history, which occurred over fifty years after Lunfardo's supposed inception.

These proscriptive measures reveal a deep concern and prejudice of popular forms in Argentinian Spanish that were considered low culture by the ruling elite, and thus deemed unfit for the national language. The censored forms were labelled deformations flawed by linguistic influence of foreigners and the "dregs" of Rioplatense society, as well as its rural periphery that were feared to further 'infect' popular speech of the common people outside of these social groups if not properly controlled.

[57] 'Words and Misused Idioms That Should Be Banned From Radiotelephony' (my translation)

4. Tightening the Leash on Radio

Imposing radio communication regulation procedures delivered unequivocal linguistic instruction in radio broadcasting, which insisted on prior authorization of all radio transmission content. Working towards a sophisticated and superior Argentinian Spanish was approached in more ways than through declaring certain lexical items and expressions inadmissible in radio broadcasting. A fixation on presentation and appropriateness overall was also attended to as part of the improvement of an Argentinian popular and national language. In the Bulletin of Posts and Telegraphs n. 3234, resolution 9211 (Boletín de Correos y Telégrafos n. 3234, resolución 9211), many modifications were made regarding language used on radio channels, expanding the censor to linguistic features that went beyond lexicon. The new law prohibited:

> *Los rellenos o números de cualquier índole en que se disfigure sistematizadamente el idioma nacional, so pretexto de retratar ambientes campesinos y de arrabal; también los números cómicos que pretendan obtener hilaridad de sus auditorios mediante recursos de baja comicidad, remedo de otros idiomas, gritos destemplados, carcajadas y exclamaciones atronadoras, mezcla de canciones y ruidos de idéntico tono, y equívocos de dudosas interpretaciones (…).*[58]

This fragment unveils the obsessive tendencies behind the political reinforcement of linguistic norms that introduced regulations extending beyond lexicon and into phonetic and pragmatic patterns of language in radio broadcasting. Furthermore, it demonstrates the dichotomy between a superior national language and the rejected one from the periphery

[58] 'Any interlude or sketch of any kind in which the national language is systematically disguised, under the pretext of portraying slum-like environments; also, the comic numbers that pretend to elicit amusement from their audiences through sources of vulgar humor, parodic imitation of other languages, upsetting shouts, laughter and thunderous exclamations, mixing of songs and noises of identical tone, and misunderstandings of dubious interpretation (...)' (Boletín de Correos y Telégrafos n. 3234, resolución 9211, julio 1943).

and peasantry, a conflict that placed Lunfardo in the trenches of near-invisibility with the goal of exterminating its memory in the popular consciousness.

Signed in 1946 by de facto military president Edelmiro, a series of guidelines were adopted as additional rules for radio broadcasting channels in the *Manual de Instrucciones para las Estaciones de Radiodifusión* (Decree n. 13.474). This manual established even stricter and more precise censoring laws. The manual, in fact, enabled the head of Radio Broadcasting Management to finely filter public language by exercising comprehensive power in all aspects of radio. Article 29's section regarding *Canciones o letras cantables* presents a tone of intolerance for popular expression, warning that *la influencia popular no facilitará la explotación de vulgarismos temáticos o lingüísticos*.[59] It further mandated that:

Las canciones o letras cantables de carácter popular evitarán, en términos generales, las licencias de lenguaje, los modismos y jergas que privan en los bajos fondos, los remedos o imitaciones de idiomas extranjeros, los dichos groseros, las expresiones de mal gusto o de sentido equívoco o dudoso, etc.[60]

As the censorship became more aggressive, it gained an intensified chauvinistic air towards popular language and the role of foreigners in it. At the core of this mindset towards foreign linguistic customs was Lunfardo, a main source of involvement in the

[59] 'popular influence will not facilitate the exploitation of thematic or linguistic vulgarisms' (my translation)

[60] 'Singing songs or popular lyrics will avoid, in general terms, linguistic lawlessness, idioms and slang that trend in the ambits of crime, parodies or imitations of foreign languages, vulgar sayings, expressions in bad taste or that are equivocal or uncertain in meaning, etc.' (my translation)

censorship, oppressing artists and writers for the improperness and distastefulness embedded in its linguistic ties to immigration and criminality.

During this time of polemic censorship, Argentina's youthful character was still under examination, its national identity and values modified or imperiled by a new contingent of European immigrants. Censorship was one of many methods that pointed to state builders' social thought seeking to purify Argentinian Spanish. Such an objective inherently implies the perceived existence of a culprit accountable for the corruption of Argentinian Spanish, an accusation that was most commonly associated with the "Other", The foreigner that once represented a powerful and cultured new generation of Argentinians molded by European immigrants was now considered a notorious figure and creator of the disdainful criminal jargon, Lunfardo.

National stakeholders concerned with what would become of the State's national identity rested behind the linguistic pretense of a strong preoccupation for a national language. Castro (1941) described the "bastardizing" of the Argentinian language as not the fault of all immigrants, but specifically pointed at the rustic Spaniards', namely Galicians', illiteracy and ignorance:

> *El aliento pesado de lo rústico ha infectado de nuevo la ciudad. El hecho, como en el caso del vos, nada tiene que hacer con la inmigración extraña, y revela otra vez el mero predomino de lo plebeyo sobre lo culto, no entendiendo por "culto" el saber escolar, sino el simple prestigio moral de lo de arriba.*[61]

[61] 'The rustic's bad breath has infected the city again. This occurrence, as in the case of the use of *vos*, has nothing to do with foreign immigration: it simply reveals once again the the plebs' predominance over educated people, and "educated" does not mean scholarly knowledge, but simply the moral prestige of the elevated [mind].' (p. 124, my translation)

For the Spaniard, it was not the incoming foreign European people that were the problem of Argentina's linguistic anarchy and ignorance, but rather the education and morality of its local people. His ideas equating civilization with linguistic propriety resonate with Sarmiento's *Facundo*, demonstrating its lingering influence in the intellectual discussions and mindset one hundred years later.

5. Peronism and the Restoration of Lunfardo

The end of Lunfardo censorship and the return of composers' legal rights has been aligned with the political rise of Juan Domingo Perón, and his relationship with popular musicians organized under the union called the Argentinian Society of Authors and Music Composers (SADAIC). Perón's relationship with tango composers such as Canaro, Filiberto, Benard, Manzi, Castillo, Fresedo, Mores, and Discépolo began while he was acting Secretary of Labor in 1944, two years prior to his presidency. Perón's personality, campaign, and politics created a cult-like populist movement, and his relationship with artists and musicians were to prove fruitful for the future of Lunfardo and Argentinian national language.

Perón was elected president in June of 1946. Elected under promises of social justice and economic independence, SADAIC wrote to the General Administrator of Posts and Telecommunications in December of 1848 in their efforts to lift the censored control over radio broadcasting that had hindered their original lyrics incorporating Lunfardo words and other Rioplatense linguistic forms (Fraga, 2006, p. 65). Only months later, President Juan Perón lifted the Lunfardo censorship in response to the union's efforts to bring the new presidential administration to acknowledge Lunfardo's essential place in the

authentic and artistic expression of Argentinian language, culture and music. Newspaper articles below[62] demonstrate evidence of the censorship's progression, from a comment to radio broadcasters of regulation in *La Nación* (June 11th, 1943), to news regarding the censorship lift, with a newfound value for authentic national language, comparing song lyrics to the *inmortal "Martín Fierro"*, the touchstone of Argentinian national identity manifested in literature. One magistrate is cited in the article as expressing *una admiración por los idiomas vivos, manifestando que a los españoles hubieran procedido con restricciones de esa naturaleza* (Clarín, March 26th, 1949). Last, graphic news from two months after the official censorship removal demonstrates an immediate appropriation and valorization of earlier censored linguistic forms. This stance was achieved through headlines praising popular language as *vivo y puro*, complementing this with imagery of a *tanguero*, who implicitly exemplifies tango, Lunfardo, and language from the *calle* (May 13th, 1949).

[62] Pascual Várdaro, 2007, p. 159

Figure 3. Comment to Radio Broadcasters During Censorship
***La Nación*, June 11th, 1943**

LAS RADIODIFUSORAS DEBERÁN OBSERVAR LAS INSTRUCCIONES DADAS

Por una circular distribuída a todas las estaciones radiodifusoras del país, la Dirección General de Correos y Telégrafos ha comunicado que a partir del lunes próximo se harán cumplir rigurosamente las disposiciones referentes a las transmisiones radiotelefónicas insertas en la tercera edición del folleto de la colección de disposiciones vigente, No. 23 B, titulado "Instrucciones para las estaciones de radiodifusión", con las modificaciones dispuestas por las resoluciones insertas en los boletines de Correos y Telégrafos, No. 2930, página 25, y No. 2973, páginas 463 y 465.

Entre las instrucciones a tener presentes, se han recordado especialmente éstas:

Máximo de cien palabras de publicidad comercial que establece el título I, artículo 1o., de ese reglamento, procurando que en ese máximo no se incluya una cantidad tal de diversos motivos de propaganda, que desvirtúe el conjunto armónico de la transmisión.

Las limitaciones prescriptas por el título I, artículo 7o., referentes a la redacción de los textos de publicidad comercial, y muy particularmente, lo que refiriéndose a artículos medicinales, pueda contener declaraciones engañosas.

La enunciación con inflexiones destacadas o intensidad de voz superior al nivel normal, de los artículos o las marcas a que se refiere la propaganda irradiada y muy particularmente, la repetición insistente de una marca o de un artículo, todas estas prohibidas por el título I, artículo 10.

Después de referirse a las prescripciones de los títulos II, artículo 1o.; y III, artículos 1o. y 2o., se recuerda que están totalmente prescriptos los cuadros sombríos, las narraciones sensacionalistas y los relatos poco edificantes.

La circular sigue enunciando las instrucciones, cuya aplicación rigurosa se exigirá a partir del lunes:

Evitar el uso de modismos que bastardeen el idioma y, en particular, lo relacionado con la comicidad de bajo tono que se respalda en remedos de otros idiomas, equívocos, exclamaciones airadas, voces destempladas, etc., que está prohibido en el título VII, artículo 1o., inciso c.

Todo lo referente a propaganda de artículos medicinales, de acuerdo con lo que prescribe el título X, artículo 1o., párrafo 2o. Al efecto, se deberá procurar que al transmitir esa clase de propaganda, el texto a irradiar se ajuste en cuanto sea posible al rótulo que se registra en el envase del respectivo medicamento, sin dejar de observar el proceso de control y las limitaciones que se aplican a dicha publicidad, para no herir la susceptibilidad y el buen gusto con declaraciones inapropiadas para la radiodifusión.

Como normas generales se hace saber a los "broadcasters" que "en toda clase de transmisiones, sin excepción alguna, debe cuidarse con rigurosa escrupulosidad una absoluta corrección en el empleo del idioma castellano, evitando toda palabra del "argot" o bajo fondo y los modismos que lo desvirtúan y son tan comunes en el decir corriente, como el "sall", "andá", etc.".

Aclárase por último que "el titular de una licencia es el único responsable de cuanto se irradia por la estación a su cargo, según está prescripto en el título V, artículo 4o., de las mencionadas instrucciones".

Figure 4. Column of Meeting with President Perón to Lift Censorship *Clarín*, March 26th, 1949

DESAPARECEN LAS TRABAS A LA PROPALACION DE

CANCIONES POPULARES POR RADIOTELEFONIA

ENTREVISTO AL PRIMER MAGISTRADO UNA DELEGACION DE AUTORES Y COMPOSITORES

El primer magistrado de la Nación, general Perón, recibió ayer en su despacho oficial a una delegación de autores y compositores de música, en la que figuraban populares figuras de nuestro cancionero, que interesó al jefe del Estado en la solución del problema que plantea la restricción radiotelefónica impuesta a las letras de las canciones nacionales más difundidas y populares.

Al abandonar la presidencia los integrantes de la delegación expresaron a los cronistas gráficos que en la Casa de Gobierno se les había satisfecho por el interés que había manifestado el primer magistrado en procurarle solución a la cuestión planteada, que tanto afecta la difusión del cancionero nacional por radiotelefonía.

El señor Homero Manzi, que había hablado en nombre de sus compañeros declaró que expuso ante el jefe del Estado en toda sus detalles el problema, manifestándole que esa restricción tenía origen en una vieja resolución que puesta en práctica, había llegado a debilitar en forma ostensible y perjudicial la difusión de las canciones auténticamente argentinas. Agregó el señor Manzi en su exposición ante el jefe del Estado, que se ha exagerado tanto en la aplicación de dicha resolución, que en algunas oportunidades llegó a trabarse la propalación de los versos del inmortal "Martín Fierro".

Dijo después, el conocido autor de populares letras de nuestro cancionero, que el general Perón les había manifestado que desconocía el problema, lamentando que se hubiera llegado a tal situación. Asimismo el primer magistrado les expresó su admiración por los idiomas vivos, manifestando que si los españoles hubieran procedido con restricciones de esa naturaleza, en estos momentos, todos estaríamos hablando solamente en latín. Manifestó luego el señor Manzi, que se expuso en esa oportunidad al general Perón, el problema de la falta de pasta para imprimir discos, circunstancia ésta que pone en peligro el funcionamiento de las fábricas, lo cual afectaría, en caso de cerrarse, no sólo a miles de obreros sino también a unos cinco mil compositores y a gran cantidad de músicos. Finalmente manifestó el señor Manzi, que el primer magistrado les prometió adoptar las medidas tendientes a dar amplia libertad para la propalación de las canciones argentinas y respecto a la otra cuestión, les adelantó que será trasladada para su estudio al Consejo Económico Nacional para que ese organismo procure la solución pertinente.

Integraban la delegación los señores Homero Manzi, Canaro, Pichuco, Charlo, Razzano, Maroni, Bayardo, Cañamero, Vacarezza, Rubinstein, Belamaric, Battistella, Adamiani y otros conocidos autores y compositores.

Figure 5. Graphic News Appropriating Tango as the Voice of Argentinians May 13th, 1949

D. Chapter Summary

This chapter has analyzed rhetorical historical data of Argentinian national figures to examine the milieu of social and language politics that existed when Lunfardo came into being. From post-colonial independence to the development of the early republic, various individuals in positions of power made philosophical proposals for the young Argentinian nation. From the dawn of *caudillismo* and provincial organization, to a long-lasting oppressive national dictatorship under Juan Manuel de Rosas, the new republic's sense of identity was beginning to take shape after wars for independence and civil wars that demolished most native peoples in the territory.

As are most nation-forming discourses especially in the Latin American context, Argentina's national rhetoric among intellectuals and rising political leaders is sated by conversations of mostly ethnic identity, which tangled with the discussion of national language and literature affecting Lunfardo during the modernization period of Buenos Aires. As the first democratically elected president, Bartolome Mitre's government tackled public projects, with particular fervor to introduce an education system modelled after Europe. The subsequent president, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, harnessed the essence of Argentinian identity in literature, transforming the gaucho into the official hallmark of national folklore and character.

The diachronic exploration continues with analysis of the late-19th century massive European immigration waves to Argentina, fomented by an elitist discourse manifested in an official call in the Argentinian Constitution (of 1853) for European immigrants to settle the interior territories. A concern for the growth of national sentiment brought political leaders, philosophers and social scientists to arrive to a constructed sense of *argentinidad*

and the desired social and ethnic elements for this identity. As millions of Southern European immigrants arrived to *porteño* shores, the region felt abrupt ethnic and linguistic change that, as one of many consequences, birthed Lunfardo. While influential members of society were trying to civilize and refine Argentinian nationals and language, Lunfardo's association with the immigrant lower classes and criminals led to its censorship in the mid-20th century under conservative right-wing military governments. By surveying political and sociological discourse data that span nearly 150 years, this chapter has traced the underpinnings of Lunfardo's historical stigma, in order to localize the two subsequent chapters in contemporary Buenos Aires.

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Chapter 3

Quantitative Methods & Data Analysis

Through the lens of sociolinguistics, this contemporary study aims to define the parameters of Lunfardo comprehension and attitudes in Buenos Aires. While phonology is the most studied domain in studies of vernaculars (Labov 1963 & 1966, Milroy 2004, Silverstein 1992, Zhang 2005), nonstandard variation is exhibited in all aspects of linguistics. While Lunfardo's early process of phonological adaptation and incorporation of select lexemes into Argentinian Spanish has been traced (Conde 2011), the variety's most salient feature is lexical. Because Lunfardo is considered an alternative lexical vernacular, it is only logical to investigate its lexical features rather than its phonological characteristics. This chapter describes the experimental methodology used to approximate the following research questions:

1) To what extent do young Argentinian speakers understand Lunfardo tokens?

2) Do social factors influence levels of Lunfardo comprehension among young Argentinian speakers?

3) What are speakers' language attitudes and metalinguistic perceptions towards Lunfardo?

The following sections in this chapter describe data collection sites and participants, outline the experimental design employed for data collection, and last, analyze the results and main effects using statistical methods.

A. Methodology

The research design of this study employs mixed methods. Through the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches, the analysis offers a more comprehensive exploration of the two research goals at hand than either method could yield individually (Creswell, 2014). The mixed methods research design involves the use of quantitative and qualitative strategies in the various phases of research, including data collection and data analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). For this study, I apply survey research—biographic questionnaires, language comprehension questionnaires, and language attitudes surveys; as well as phenomenological research—observation, ethnography, and interviews (presented and analyzed in Chapter 4). Such a multi-faceted data collection has generated several forms of data for analysis—questionnaire data, attitude data, observational data, and interview data. Equally, the multiple forms of data at hand require various forms of analysis—statistical analysis of the survey data using frequencies and conditional inference trees; and thematic development coding (Smith & Firth, 2011) and thematic analysis and synthesis (Thomas & Harden, 2008). Since I chose to conduct both qualitative and quantitative types of research synchronously, and incorporate both forms of data to interpret the results, I am employing *convergent parallel mixed methods* analysis (see Creswell, 2017, p.68).

The present chapter consists of six parts. The first section describes the study design, including methodology for lexeme selection, design of the two survey instruments, and description of the research sites. The second section portrays the demographic information of the participants who delivered survey and interview data, and outlines the process by which participants were selected for the sample. The third section describes the instruments with which data were collected, including comprehension and attitudinal questionnaires. It also offers preliminary descriptive results. The fourth and fifth sections explain the quantitative approaches used to analyze the data, and review the overall results and main effects. Lastly, the sixth section summarizes the chapter and states the conceivable limitations of the study.

1. Data Collection Sites

The nature of Argentina's public education system as free and accessible to all individuals residing in Argentina makes their institutions of higher education an ideal environment for collecting a socioeconomically diverse sample pool. Because higher education tuition is cost-free, many students seeking Bachelor's and technical degrees simultaneously work in part-time or full-time jobs, as well as study. I observed that while most students in higher education live with their family nucleus (usually with their parents or grandparents) until they marry as is the custom, financial pressures are still felt either at home or to purchase textbooks for school despite the matriculation being cost-free. As a result, most students study and work concurrently, simply out of necessity. Due to these two factors—that students more commonly work and study, and do not pay for their higher education degrees—students in Buenos Aires do not face the same pressures to

rush their completion of degrees compared to those studying in universities in the United States. This is reflected in the average age of Argentinian university students compared to those in the U.S. According to the Argentinian National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC), the age range of a student in higher education in Argentina is between 18-29 years old. This age range is approximately seven years older than the average student age in universities in the United States, who tend to complete their degrees in 3-5 years, typically by the time they are 21-23 years old.

The most prestigious university in the country, the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), was the institution from which numerous participants were recruited and where data collection occurred. Located in the center of Buenos Aires, UBA's academic departments are sprinkled throughout various urban, and typically wealthier neighborhoods of the city. Specifically, the data were collected in the departments of Letters, Economics, and Engineering, all which exist in the prestigious neighborhoods of Caballito and Recoleta. Though these residential neighborhoods typically are home to residents and families of the middle and upper-middle classes, most Argentinian students attending UBA do not live in these areas and must thus commute between two to three times a week to university. Their commutes range from 30 minutes to an hour using the Argentinian public transportation systems, which include an intercity express train, a six-line metro (54.9 kilometers that routes through 87 stations), and an extensive bus system, all connecting the city outskirts (Gran Buenos Aires) to the capital center and midtown.

Though UBA was an ideal site for data collection due to its substantial socioeconomic diversity, its ranking as the most prestigious public university places limitations on the student body that is admitted to the university based on academic evaluation. Therefore,

other Argentinian public institutions of higher education were also commissioned as recruitment sites to diversify the factor of academic balance as ostensibly connected to socioeconomic diversity. The second public university included in the study was the Universidad Nacional de San Martín (UNSAM), a public university founded in 1992. Like UBA, UNSAM is also completely free for its students, which removes the economic access barrier to those who attend. This university lies outside of CABA in the Greater Buenos Aires district of San Martin, and primarily serves students who live in the capital city's outer limits, and those who cannot afford the transportation costs to and from the city center.

One trade school was also incorporated as a recruitment site for the study. La Normal 8 is one of thirty-three vocational schools (known as *tecnicaturas*) located in Buenos Aires. La Normal 8 is part of San Cristobal, a neighborhood that—while still within the city center—begins to approximate the poorer southern regions of CABA. These vocational programs provide between two- to three-year degrees for more than 40 professions, including Administration, Information Technology, Tourism, Nursing, Education (K-12), Insurance, Welding, Electrical Engineering, Automation and Robotics, and Telecommunications. At La Normal 8, students mainly prepare to be pre-school, elementary, and high school teachers, the three-year technical degree necessary to be a K-12 educator in Argentina. The student body observably came from more humble circumstances compared to the public university setting. Classrooms were composed largely of Argentinian students, but also had higher ratios of immigrant students from

other South American nations—mainly Peruvians and Bolivians[63]—who were not as visible in the public university setting.

Finally, a small number of participants was recruited for the study from a private university in Buenos Aires. The Universidad de Ciencias Empresariales y Sociales (University of Business and Social Sciences—UCES) served as the only private school from which data were collected. Though the sample size was marginal, it was not the focus of recruitment due to its representation of a socially more homogenous population who could afford private school tuition. There were also noticeably more newly-arrived foreigners in this setting, especially from Colombia where university tuition rivals that of U.S. university. They were not able to be recruited for the study as their knowledge of Lunfardo proved minimal to none in the early phase of the survey.

2. Lexeme Methodological Selection

The most trivial step in the experimental design was the decision as to which lexical items to include for study. This decision was informed in part from a pilot study, which had determined fragment selection for surveys based on a small corpus study of 23,509 words composed of tango lyrics and Argentinian short stories of the early 20th century (Guillén & Urzuá 2017). Based on clarifications from this pilot study and the present study's goals to analyze Lunfardo in the social contexts of youth, it was clear that rational behind the word selection now needed to go beyond historical primary sources of Lunfardo. Instead, more modern resources that were not yet available at the time of the

[63] These Peruvian and Bolivian students' data could not be included in the study due to their limited number of years residing in Buenos Aires. Their results showed little to no knowledge of the Lunfardo lexemes being tested.

pilot study could be utilized to choose tokens more likely represented in speech today. The resource used to cross-examine each Lunfardo token in question was the Corpus del Español (Davies, 2017).

The study benefits from the incorporation of a mix of historical and hypothesized contemporary Lunfardo tokens from newer dictionaries of the 21st century. Thus, the methodology behind the selection of the 25 Lunfardo items that were chosen for investigation in surveys was based on a mix of criteria, of which the word under question met at least one of the following:

- Word appeared exclusively or as a majority in the Argentina/Uruguay geographic boundary in the Corpus del Español (this requirement was for all words + a secondary requirement from below)

- Word received between 30-50% recognition in Guillén & Urzúa B. (2018) pilot study among participants that were 18-29 years old

- Word appeared in the *Diccionario etimológico del Lunfardo* (Conde, 2004) but not in any other older Lunfardo dictionary (used for selection of contemporary words such as *ricotero, rolinga, merquero*)

- Two words were chosen for examples of the *vesre* language game (e.g., *feca con chele* > 'café con leche'; *dogor* > 'gordo')

Words were deliberately drawn from a diverse set of semantic fields. Because Lunfardo is claimed to originate in spaces of underground culture and the criminal world, various words were chosen and cross-referenced with connotations of drugs, sex, and violence (e.g., *merquero, falopa, tarlipes, biaba*). Correspondingly, words belonging to environments of music and nightlife were incorporated (e.g., *rolinga, ricotero, farra*). Though Lunfardo's semantic scope has been largely limited to these realms, words come in higher number in dictionary entries from the realm of the everyday person (e.g., *morar, cabrero, buzarda, mersa, marulo*). However, it is noteworthy that some of these words may be polysemous, as pertaining to multiple -but usually related- semantic fields depending on the context (e.g., *bulín* could mean either a small modest room, or a room rented by the hour for prostitution). Table 1 below demonstrates a list of the 25 Lunfardo tokens chosen, accompanied by their definition in standard Spanish and standard English.

Table 1. Lunfardo Lexeme Glossary

Lunfardo Word	**Spanish Translation** *Definitions from Gobello (2014) and Conde (2004)	**English Translation**
atorrar	dormir, descansar	sleep, rest
bagartero	quien le gustan a mujeres feas	someone who likes ugly women
biaba	golpe; paliza	hit; beating
bulín	empeñar; aprisionar	pawn; imprison
buzarda	estómago	stomach

cabrero	enojado	angry
cachengue	música de fiesta	party music
cafishio	rufian; pimp	ruffian
chanta	una persona poco confiable quien no paga sus deudas (*apocope*. chantapuffi)	untrustworthy person who does not pay their debts
dogor	*vesre*. gordo	fatty
escrachar	exponer publicamente	publically expose
faca	cuchillo	knife
falopa	drogas	drugs
farra	diversión típicamente ruidosa o de la vida nocturna	fun that is typically noisy and related to nightlife
feca con chele	*vesre*. café con leche	coffee with milk
fulero	feo	ugly
marulo	cabeza	head
merquero, ra	adicto a o vendedor de la cocaína	cocaine addict or dealer
mersa	de mal gusto	of poor taste; tacky
morfar	comer	to eat
rati	policía (*vesre*. tira)	police (reverse of ‘gunshot’)
ricotero, ra	fanático de Patricio Rey y sus Redonditos de Ricota	fan of Patricio Rey y sus Redonditos de Ricota
rolinga	fanático de los Rolling Stones	fan of the Rolling Stones

tano	italiano	an Italian
tarlipes	testículos	testicles

3. Survey Design: Comprehension Test

For participant recruitment, each potential subject was first asked basic biographical questions to screen for age and region of domicile. To index participant social class, a pre-task biographical data collection instrument was used to inquire about participant age, gender, occupation and education attainment, as well that of their parents (see Appendix 1). Identifying information such as participant name or birthdate were not collected.

If the participant had met the requirements of age (18-29 years-old) and residency (from Buenos Aires), they were included for participation in the study. The first survey task was a comprehension test of 25 Lunfardo lexical items (with a filler-stimulus ratio of 1:1). Each Lunfardo token was presented in a real language context selected from speech samples publicly displayed on Twitter accounts of Argentinian users. Though nearly all the contexts for the survey originated from Twitter data, three words were not found from Argentinian Twitter users. These contextual fragments were extracted instead from blog data from the Corpus del Español (Davies, 2017)[64], in which queries were narrowed first by dialect—"Argentina"—and second by genre—"Web and Blogs". The criteria for selection of each textual fragment of real language from either Twitter or the Corpus del Español were the following: 1) the fragment contained only one Lunfardo word, 2) the

[64] The Web/Blog genre of the Corpus del Español is comprised of 2 billion words from texts that were collected online from 2013-2014 (Davies, 2017).

context of the Lunfardo word did not contain multiple semantic values, and 3) the average Spanish speaker would not be able to accurately determine the Lunfardo word's meaning based purely on the context given.

Each fragment was presented as a single item in the comprehension test. The test's format was multiple choice, and presented the participant with one correct synonym and three incorrect answers from which choose, as well as a final option in which the participant could admit to not knowing the word in the provided context (see sample question in Appendices 3 and 4). In addition, 25 non-stimuli questions were included in the test, presented in the same format, and mixed with the 25 stimuli in random question order using Excel formulas. To control for the order of test questions as a potential variable, four test versions were created for dissemination. Each of the four versions contained a distinct randomized question order, as well as a randomized order of multiple choice answers.

4. Survey Design: Lexical Attitudinal Ratings

The comprehension test task was followed by a second survey—a ratings task involving the same Lunfardo stimuli from the comprehension test. Participants were presented with one stimulus at a time, and were instructed to evaluate a speaker who uses the given Lunfardo word. Ratings were conducted on a set of five criteria with logical opposite pairs pointing to *competence*, *personal integrity*, and *social attractiveness* (Preston & Robinson 2005). Participants were instructed to rate a person according to five characteristics: 'nice', 'attractive', 'educated', 'rich', 'honest' (*simpatico/a, atractiva, instruido/a, rico/a, honesto/a*) on a 3-point Likert scale. A rating was marked as 'more'

(*más*) of said criterion, ‘less’ (*menos*), or ‘average’ (*ni más ni menos*). These responses were then coded for interpretation with the following correspondences: ‘high’--*más,* ‘low’--*menos,* and ‘medium’--*ni más ni menos*.

The instructions for the ratings task were outlined in writing on the survey, and were also emphasized verbally to the participant in the pre-task phase to avoid anticipated confusion of rating the stimulus rather than a person who uses the word. The decision to rate a hypothetical speaker rather than the stimulus itself in context was determined the best method for the study in order to control for participant bias. Reliance on context to determine meaning is common, especially in non-standard language use. Since language is usually dependent on context, it is never fixed or constant. Bearing this in mind, providing the Lunfardo word in context (in either a written or audio speech sample) to the ratings task would have made controlling what is being rated nearly impossible in the sample — the surrounding context of the Lunfardo word, or the perceived phonetic features of the person using the word, such as tone, volume, pitch, or voice quality. It is acknowledged in the frame of linguistics that adult minds are not a clean slate, and bring with them prior knowledge and experience from their surrounding environment to the study. However unfree from external influences subjects might be, it is necessary for the purposes of this study to extricate or control for these factors that could obstruct or complicate measurements of the Lunfardo words in the experiment.

B. Participants: Independent Variables (social factors)

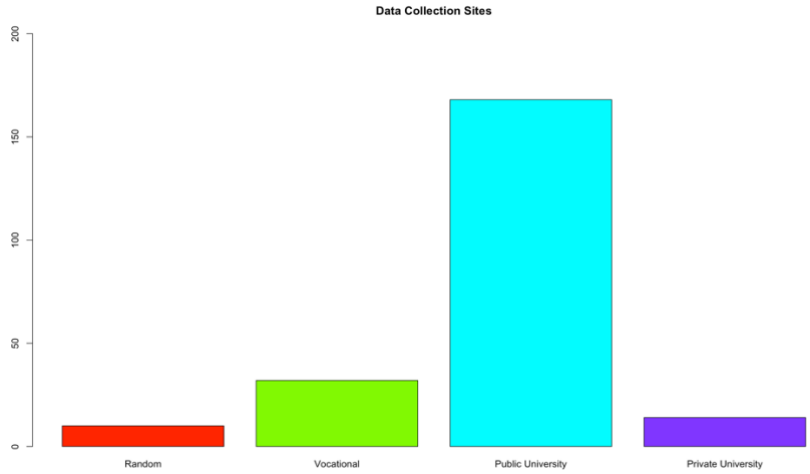
The study comprised of quantitative data offered from 224 participants[65] who were recruited in Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires (CABA), the federal capital city of Argentina. Participants were recruited primarily in institutions of higher education as spaces with increased access to a younger population to study. Sites included two public universities, one private university (UCES), and one vocational school (La Normal 8). The majority of participants were recruited in public universities, with 143 participants recruited in the Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA) (63.8%) and 25 recruited in the smaller provincial Universidad Nacional de San Martin (UNSAM) (11.2%). In the private university setting, 24 participants were recruited at the Universidad de Ciencias Empresariales y Sociales (UCES) (10.7%) but 10 were excluded because they were very recent immigrants to Argentina and thus did not meet the minimum qualification to participate, leaving 6.2% participants from private university. Last, 32 participants were recruited in the trade school setting at the Escuela Normal Número 8 (14.3%).

While participant recruitment targeted higher education institutions to control variability, a small group of 10 participants (4.5%) was also recruited in public spaces and through a chain-referral technique known as snowball sampling (Goodman, 1961; Heckathorn, 1997). This additional group was included not only to increase participation in the study overall, but primarily to contribute to a small control group of participants

[65] The participant pool originally included 246 participants total. However, of this total, the data of 22 participants were not included in the quantitative analysis due to the lack of meeting a determined minimum requirement that the participant needed to have lived in CABA or the Province of Buenos Aires for a minimum of 7 years. These excluded participants were born and had lived the majority of their lives in the following regions or countries: Spain (1 recruit), Colombia (2 recruits), Bolivia (5 recruits), Venezuela (2 recruits), Peru (2 recruits), Mexico (1 recruit), Southern Argentina (1 recruit), Santa Fe (1 recruit), Jujuy/Salta (3 recruits), La Pampa (3 recruits), Misiones (1 recruit).

who were considerably older (at least 50 years of age) than the majority interviewed in universities. These additional recruitments were also from Buenos Aires or had at least been living there for a minimum of seven years. The distribution of participant data collection sites is demonstrated in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6. Data Collection Sites

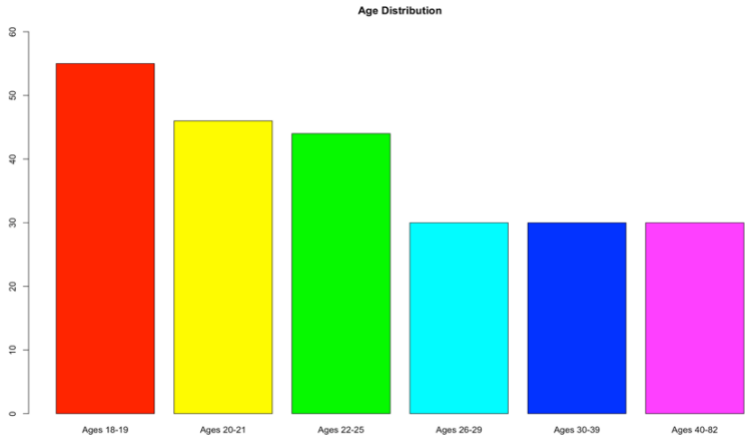


The gender makeup of participants in the study was nearly equally distributed between binary genders. Women were the largest group, with 118 participants who reported their gender as female (52.7%). Men were the second largest group, with 101 participants who reported their gender as male (45.1%). Only 5 participants of the 224 total participants reported their gender as non-binary (2.2%).

The participant pool was split into two age groups whose boundaries were drawn based on data from the Argentinian National Institution of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) (2010). This source affirmed the net enrollment rate in university and vocational schools to be between 19-29 years old. Because all participants except for 4.5% came from universities, the younger group included all participants who reported to be between

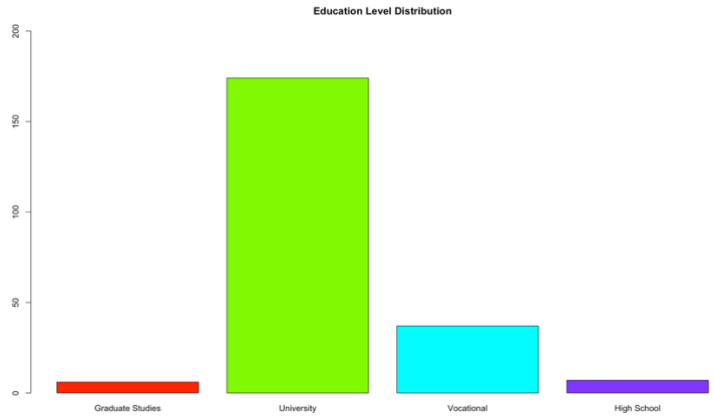
18-29 years old (164 participants, approximately 74% of the recruitments overall). The older group comprised of 60 participants whose ages ranged from 30-82 years old (approximately 26% of the total recruitments) and who were recruited at universities as well as outside the university setting. A less simplified distribution of participant ages is demonstrated below in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Participant Age Distribution



Though participant levels of education were somewhat varied, the majority were expectedly working towards bachelor degrees (77.7%), based on data collection at mainly institutions of higher education. After university students, the next largest group was comprised of students working towards vocational degrees (16.5%). A small percentage completed some graduate studies (2.7%), while others finished studying after high school (3.1%). It is noteworthy that this small percentage of participants who stopped their studies after high school exclusively pertained to the older participant group, whose members were recruited in non-educational public spaces. The education level distribution of participants is displayed below in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Participant Education Levels



Responses for the residency variable were far more diverse than the variables of age, gender, and data collection site. This complication is rooted in the problematic all-encompassing name of *Buenos Aires*, which is used informally to refer to various regions depending on the point of reference of the interlocutor. Though the autonomous city of Buenos Aires gained its formal title, *Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires* in 1996, residents waver between using its abbreviated name, *CABA*, or generalize by referring to it as *Buenos Aires*.

Though Buenos Aires was established as a federal district and removed from the Province of Buenos Aires in 1880, the name Buenos Aires continues to be used colloquially to refer to one residing either in the Province of Buenos Aires or in CABA. The response to this question has much to do with how specific the respondent wants to be, and who the interlocutor is. For example, if speaking to foreigners (non-Argentinians) or Argentinians from provinces outside of the Province of Buenos Aires, a resident from the Province of Buenos Aires is likely to generalize their place of residency as simply *Buenos Aires*. However, if the listener is *porteño* (from CABA), an interlocutor from the Province

of Buenos Aires is likely to specify as being from 'Buenos Aires—the province' (*Buenos Aires—provincia*).

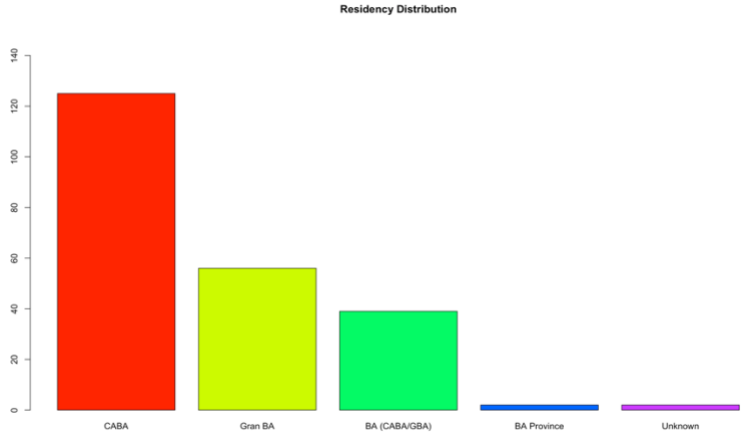
Another layer of terminology further complicates the abstract description of the city limits of Buenos Aires. An urban sprawl in Buenos Aires from 1945-1980 created a vast agglomeration of inhabitants in CABA's periphery. The population of the city of Buenos Aires exploded, pushing over 9 million lower income residents out of the capital city center with an ever-increasing cost of living, and into the city's more affordable, less developed margins. Today, smaller cities make up this conurbation of 24 districts that are regionally distinguished from CABA by its umbrella name, 'Greater Buenos Aires' (*Gran Buenos Aires*). Neighborhood locations in Greater Buenos Aires have been generalized to larger regions referred to by locals and in politics as the 2nd, 3rd , and 4th *cordones*, the number denoting proximity to the city center and increasing the further the area extends from the capital city center.

Though this terminology of *cordones* is still used in political discourse and city affairs, the gradually more accurate indicator of neighborhood wealth is no longer the distance from the capital, but rather its latitudinal markers (north to south). Today, the wealthiest parts of CABA are northbound, which extend to the province of Buenos Aires becoming the 'Northern Zone' (*Zona Norte*), including with it the areas of Vicente López, Olivos, San Isidro, Tigre, and San Fernando (INDEC, 2010). This area encodes residents of the upper class, including celebrities, politicians, and even the president's residency. The 'Southern Zone' (*Zona Sur*), on the other hand, is considered the poorest larger area in Buenos Aires. It is the home of typically lower income residents. It begins in Parque Patricios, Barracas, and La Boca, and extends to Avellaneda, Lanús, Lomas de Zamora,

Quilmes, Florencio Várela, and Berazategui (INDEC, 2010). *Zona Oeste* is one of the most expansive regions of the conurbation of Greater Buenos Aires, including Tres de Febrero, Merlo, Morón, Moreno, General Sarmiento, and La Matanza (INDEC, 2010). Though Greater Buenos Aires is part of the federal capital, it is noteworthy that the majority of *porteño* residents inhabit this area, with nearly 10 million people residing in Greater Buenos Aires compared to only 3 million in CABA.

Because of this complicated orientation of blurred city limits, accuracy of interpreting participant residency was often problematic. The majority of the participant pool was easy to decipher, with 55.8%who reported their residency to be CABA, and 25% reported to reside in Greater Buenos Aires. However, 17.4% of the participants responded that their area of residency was "Buenos Aires", which given the complexity of the aforementioned nature of this regional title, is impossible to distinguish for certain if the participant was from CABA, Greater Buenos Aires, or less likely but still possible, from the Province of Buenos Aires. Only 1% of participants reported residing in the Province of Buenos Aires, and 1% did not report anything for place of residency (labelled "Unknown" in Figure 5). The overall residency distribution of the participants is represented below in Figure 9.

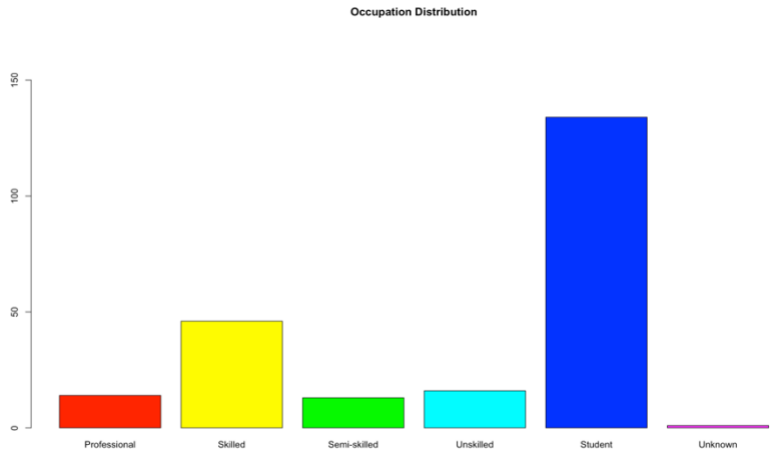
Figure 9. Participant Place of Residency



Most students in the participant pool held part-time or full-time jobs. Though nearly 90% of participants reported that they work and study (88.8% work and study, 11.2% only study), many did not report specifically what their occupation was beyond *student* (nearly 60%). The distribution of occupations aside from those who only reported "student" were 6.2% professional (studying to obtain additional degrees), 20.5% skilled workers, 5.8% semi-skilled workers, 7% unskilled workers, and less than 1% whose occupation was unknown.[66] The participant occupational distribution is demonstrated in Figure 10 below.

[66] Classification of participants' occupation category as professional, skilled, semi-skilled, or unskilled was determined by entries from United States Department of Labor, as well as periodicals (*Houston Chronicle, 2019*).

Figure 10. Participant Occupations

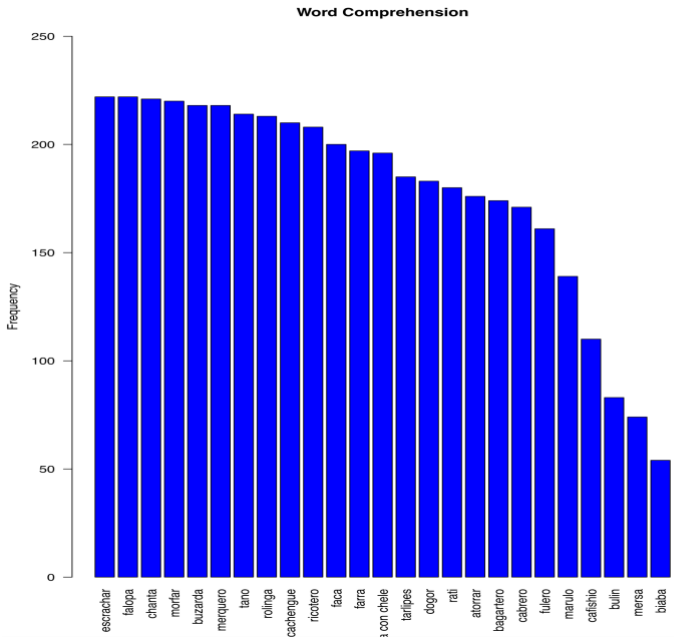


C. Descriptive Results: Comprehension Test and Ratings

The data were first explored through descriptive analysis. Figure 6 below provides a sense of the problematic words in the comprehension test in terms of raw frequencies and percentages. From this graph, it is evident that many of the Lunfardo words tested were understood by almost all of the 224 participants in the study. Six words were correctly understood nearly 100% of the time: *escrachar, falopa, chanta, morfar, buzarda, merquero* (semantic domains described in chapter 5). However, the following words also received majority of correct comprehension in the participant pool, with about 200 of 224 participants correctly answering questions regarding the following lexical items: *tano, rolinga, cachengue, ricotero, farra, faca,* and *feca con chele.* The items *tarlipes, dogor, rati, atorrar, bagartero, cabrero,* and *fulero,* received from 165-180 correct responses. These were a mix of historical and contemporary words. The tokens that received the lowest frequencies of correct responses were *marulo, cafishio, bulín, mersa,* and *biaba,* which all yielded between 150 to as low as 50 correct responses. This was not surprising,

though, since these words are more historical than contemporary. Figure 11 below demonstrates the frequencies of correct responses for each word.

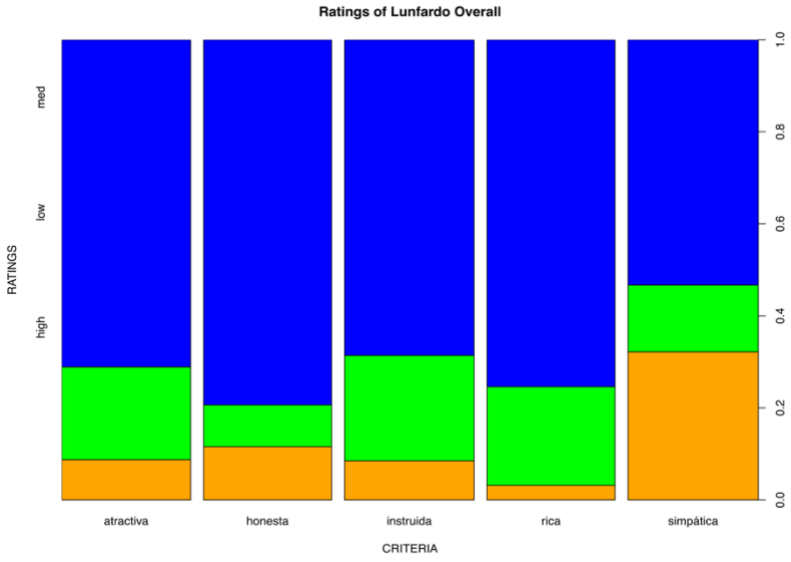
Figure 11. Comprehended Lunfardo Words (frequencies)



The second task in the data collection process instructed participants to provide five ratings for each of the twenty-five Lunfardo words that were tested in the comprehension test. Raters rated each according to a person who uses the word based on a three point Likert scale (high, medium, low) for five criteria, but participants were instructed to leave the question blank if they did not think they understood the meaning of the word. Figure 12 below displays the results overall as proportions for the five criteria: 'attractive' (*atractiva*), 'honest' (*honesta*), 'educated' (*instruida*), 'wealthy' (*rica*), and 'nice' (*simpática*). The blue color in Figure 12 represents ratings for *medium*, which received the most ratings overall in the group, and especially dominated responses for criteria for

'honest'. Green in the graph denotes ratings for *low*, which were relatively few in representation across all the criteria tested. The criteria 'honest' and 'nice' yielded the smallest representation of ratings for *low*, with 'honest' generating about half of the proportion for *low* ratings compared to the other criteria. Finally, the ratings for *high*, denoted in orange, received the lowest proportion across all criteria in the task, except for 'nice' in which *high* comes second to ratings for *medium*; and for 'honest' in which *low* and *high* are nearly equally frequent.

Figure 12. Ratings for Lunfardo Word Users (proportions)



D. Overall Results and Main Effects: Comprehension Test

The overall results and main effects of the comprehension test data were determined using a type of classification or decision tree called conditional inference tree (ctree). Such statistical models that "regress the distribution of a response variable on the status of multiple covariates are tools for handling two major problems in applied research:

prediction and explanation" (Hothorn 2006). Conditional inference trees partition these data to show variable filters with the greatest contrast in distribution of the dependent variable of correct responses (CORRECT). It therefore assumes:

$$H0: \ D(Y|X) = D(Y)$$

In this method, the null hypothesis (H0) predicts that the distribution of the response (Y) conditional on the covariate (X_j) is the same as the distribution of the response without conditioning (Hothorn, Hornik, & Zeileis, 2006). Unlike other types of decision trees, conditional inference trees use a significance test to select variables as measures of association (Strobl et. al, 2008) that employ binary splitting as in the standard CART algorithm (Breiman et. al, 1984) "The p-values have the advantage that they are comparable for variables of all types and can serve as an intuitive and objective means for selecting the variables Z to be conditioned on in any problem" (Strobl et. al, 2008). Hothorn, Hornik, and Zeileis (2006) argue in favor of conditional inference tree testing, stating that:

> While pruning procedures are able to solve the overfitting problem, the variable selection bias still seriously affects the interpretability of tree-structured regression models. For some special cases unbiased procedures have been suggested, however lacking a common theoretical foundation. We propose a unified framework for recursive partitioning which embeds tree-structured regression models into a well defined theory of conditional inference procedures. Stopping criteria based on multiple test procedures are implemented and it is shown that the predictive performance of the resulting trees is as good as the performance of established exhaustive search procedures. It turns out that the partitions and therefore the models induced by both approaches are structurally different, confirming the need for an unbiased variable selection. Moreover, it is shown that the prediction accuracy of trees with early stopping is equivalent to the prediction accuracy of pruned trees with unbiased variable selection (651).

The data consisted of one dependent variable and 14 independent variables, namely participant age; gender; birthplace; residency; education level; occupation; work/study; site

of data collection; mother's education, birthplace, and occupation; as well as father's education, birthplace, and occupation. Of these all, 11 predictors were significant. The dependent variable (DV) being tested was different depending on the task. The DV in the comprehension test was CORRECT with two levels (*yes* or *no*), and the DV in the ratings task was ANSWER with three levels (*high*, *medium*, *low*) and evaluated according to five criteria (*attractive*, *nice*, *educated*, *wealthy*, *honest*). Below in Table 1 are all the predictors and their levels, with their abbreviations as they are displayed in all statistical analysis plots in this chapter.

Table 2. Significant Predictors and Their Abbreviated Levels in Ctree Plots

PROFESSION2	professional (P)	skilled (SK)	semi-skilled (SS)	unskilled (US)	student (ST)	unknown (UK)
BIRTH3	Buenos Aires (BA)	Buenos Aires Province (BP)	Argentina (AR)	not Argentina (NA)	other Argentinian province (O)	-
EDU.LEVEL	graduate studies (GS)	university (UNI)	vocational (V)	high school (HS)	-	
SITE2	private university (PRI)	public university (PB)	vocational institution (V)	other location (RAN)	-	-
AGE.GROUPS	younger (YOUNGER)	older (OLDER)	-	-	-	-
GENDER	male (M)	female (F)	unknown (UK)	-	-	-
MOTHER_ BIRTH3	Buenos Aires (BA)	Buenos Aires Province (BP)	Argentina (AR)	not Argentina (NA)	other Argentinian province (O)	-
MOTHER_EDU	graduate studies (GS)	university (UNI)	vocational (V)	high school (HS)	primary school (PR)	unknown (UK)
MOTHER_ PROF2	professional (P)	skilled (SK)	semi-skilled (SS)	unskilled (US)	unemployed (UE)	unknown (UK)
FATHER_ BIRTH3	Buenos Aires (BA)	Buenos Aires Province (BP)	Argentina (AR)	not Argentina (NA)	other Argentinian province (O)	-
FATHER_EDU	university (UNI)	vocational (V)	high school (HS)	unknown (UK)	-	-

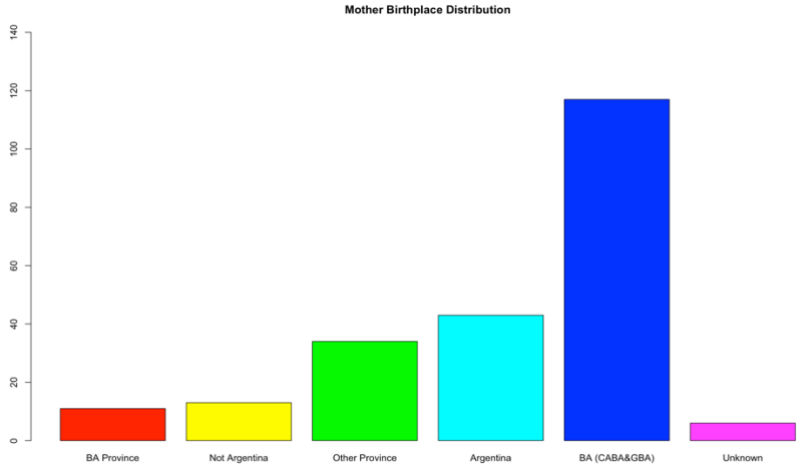
The ctree that analyzes Lunfardo comprehension illustrates that there are significant effects in the data distributions of the dependent variable; however, these patterns do not

lead to significant differences in prediction (Figure 9). Nevertheless, the data was a large set (n=5549 excluding NA's) that did demonstrate significant patterns and are thus worthy of discussion. Comprehension of Lunfardo tokens increased in general when participant occupation was semi-skilled, student, or unknown, and their mother was born in Argentina (or their birthplace was unknown) (nodes 10, 11, 13, 14; n=3524, 63.5%).

Participants of this character who also were older and their mother was born specifically in Buenos Aires understood the most Lunfardo tokens, resulting with over 95% correct responses. However, this subset accounted for a very small number of observations (node 11, n=150, 2.7%). The group with the second highest rate of correct Lunfardo comprehension were males whose occupation was professional, skilled, or unskilled, with less than 10% error (node 6, n=1025, 18.5%).

The ctree model predicts accurate Lunfardo comprehension across all groups. However, there were two groups that performed lower than the rest. The group who understood the least Lunfardo tokens was comprised of individuals whose occupation was semi-skilled, student, or unknown, and their mother was not born in Argentina (node 15, n=150, 2.7%). Still, it is noteworthy that participants whose mothers were not born in Argentina account for less than 6% of the data overall, as exhibited below in Figure 13.

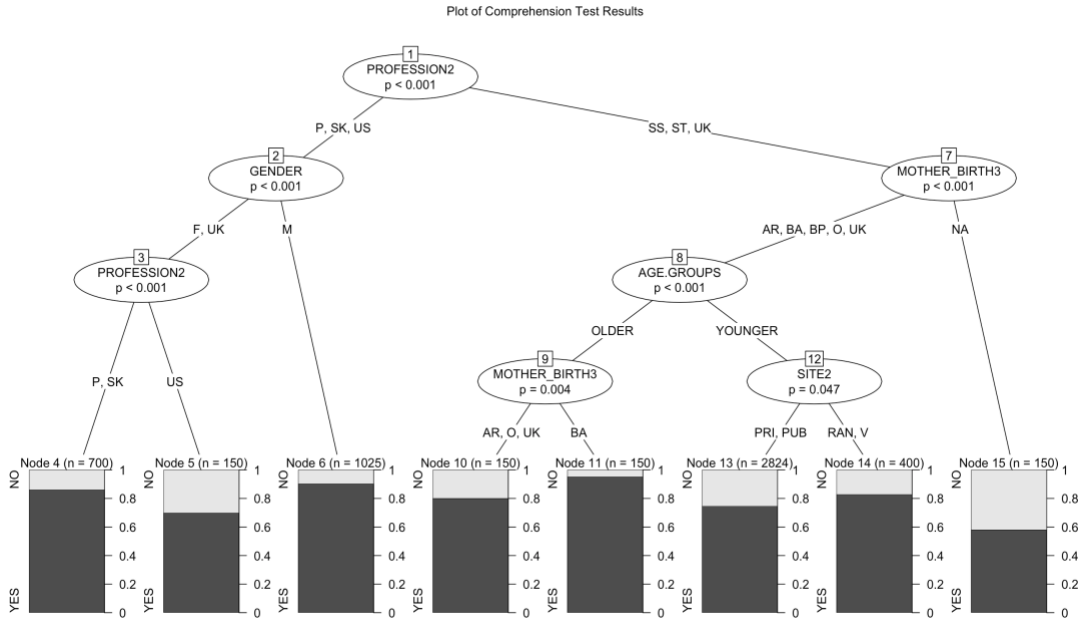
Figure 13. Mother Birthplace



The second group to understand Lunfardo tokens the least is comprised of participants who held unskilled occupations and their gender was female (or unknown) (node 5, n=150, 2.7%). Despite these discussed patterns in the data, at the same time they do not lead to significant prediction outcomes. All comprehension test results are displayed with their partitions clearly in Figure 14 below.

Figure 14. Comprehension Test Ctree

*See legend of predictors on p. 122 (Table 2)



E. Overall Results and Main Effects: Ratings Task

The overall results and main effects of the ratings data were determined using the same method as the comprehension test—conditional inference trees. The dependent variable (ANSWER) has three levels (*low*, *medium*, *high*) whose responses coincide with judgments according to five criteria (*attractive*, *nice*, *educated*, *rich*, *honest*). Participants provided judgements based on individuals in general who use each Lunfardo stimulus. In addition to the independent variable (CRITERION), the dependent variable (ANSWER) was tested when factored by the following social factors and other predictors: the participant's age (AGE.GROUPS); gender (GENDER); education level (EDU.LEVEL); occupation (PROFESSION2); birthplace (BIRTH3); place of residency (RESIDENCY); as well as their mother's birthplace (MOTHER_BIRTH3), education level

(MOTHER_EDU), and occupation (MOTHER_PROF2), and their father's birthplace (FATHER_BIRTH3), education (FATHER_EDU), and occupation (FATHER_PROF2).

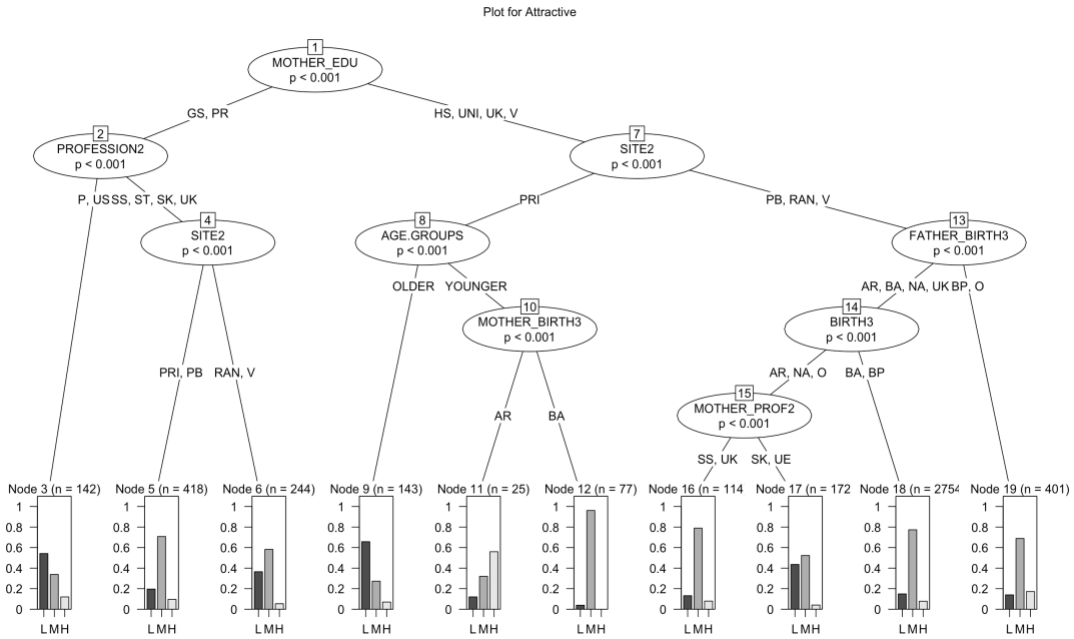
The ctree algorithm is based on significance tests. Due to the large size of the data set (n=4459-4490 depending on the criterion, excluding NA's), and 14 predictors, many containing between four and six levels, there was an increased chance for the model finding significance. This caused the model to initially yield uninterpretable results with too many splits. To address this issue, the significant elements were limited by decreasing the minicriterion (1 - p-value) from .05-.01 (5%-1%) to .005-.001 (.5%-.1%). By modifying the significance level, the ctree algorithm only found splits that were good enough for this more stringent p-value to produce interpretable plots. However, it is acknowledged that this restricts the output to show only the elements that are most significant in the data. Still, this methodology was considered sounder than adopting a more lenient model.

To improve plot legibility, the dependent variable ANSWER was analyzed against one criterion at a time. Results were first analyzed regarding ratings for *attractive* (n=4,490). It is immediately apparent that this model (Figure 12) has more predictive power than that for the comprehension test data (Figure 11). Though the ctree algorithm predicts *medium* in most all cases for *attractive* (nodes 5, 6, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19; n=4180, 96.9%), there are three significant differences in which the model instead predicts *low* or *high* for a very small set of observations. The model predicts *low* when the mother's highest education level is either graduate or primary studies, and the participant's occupation is professional or unskilled (node 3, n=142, 3.2%). The model also predicts *low* when the participant is older, and their mother's highest education level is university, vocational, high school, or

unknown (node 9, n=143, 3.2%). The only case in which the algorithm predicts high attractiveness is if the mother's highest education level is university, vocational, high school, or unknown; the participant is younger; and their mother was born in Argentina. However, this represents the lowest number of observations in the data (node 11, n=25, 0.56%). This tree (attractive) can be analyzed more concisely as this: the nodes have different bar heights, but the model almost always predicts the same rating—*medium*. Ratings for *attractive* are displayed in Figure 15 below:

Figure 15. Ratings Task Ctree for Attractive

*See legend of predictors on p. 122 (Table 2)



The ctree algorithm for *wealthy* makes some distinction, but it never predicts high (n=4459). It predicts *medium* in most all cases (nodes 4, 5, 6, 10, 15; n=4350, 97.6%). It predicts medium all the time when the participant's father's birthplace was reported as

Argentina or Buenos Aires (or unknown) (nodes 4, 5, 6; n=3478, 80%), with only one caveat in which *low* was nearly as frequent as *medium* (node 5, n=286, 6.4%).

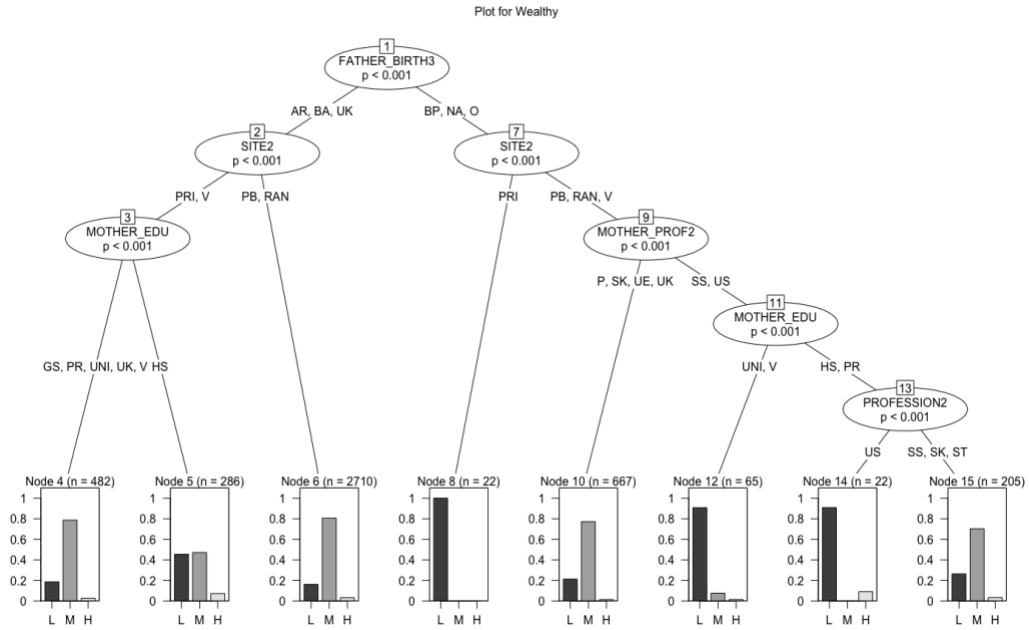
The only variability occurs in three subsets for *wealthy,* in which the model predicts *low,* though these all have very low frequencies (nodes 8, 12, 14; n=109, 2.4%). The model observes *low* 100% of the time when the participant's father was born in an Argentinian province or was not Argentinian-born, and when the data collection site is a private university (node 8, n=22, .49%).

When the data collection site is not private university; the mother's profession is semi-skilled or unskilled; and the mother had university or vocational studies, the model also observes *low* approximately 90% of the time (node 12, n= 65, 1.5%). This result changes only slightly when the mother's education level is instead high school or primary school, and the participant's profession is unskilled. In this set of characteristics, the model predicts *low,* though also based on less than half a percent of the total observations (node 14, n=22, .49%).

This model for *wealthy* can be analyzed more concisely as this: *medium* is nearly always predicted, and *high* is never predicted. Ratings for *wealthy* are displayed in Figure 16 below:

Figure 16. Ratings Task Ctree for Wealthy

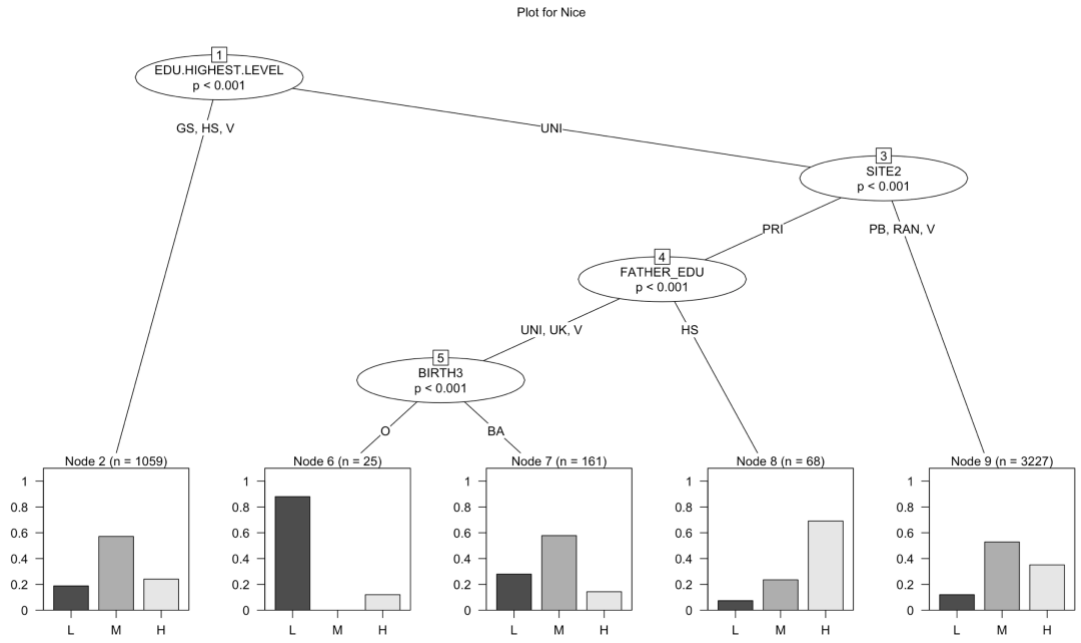
*See legend of predictors on p. 122 (Table 2)



The ctree algorithm for *nice* (n=4540) demonstrates more variability at a glance, but much like the model for *wealthy*, this variability only occurs for very small data subsets. The model predicts *medium*, and observes this rating approximately 60% of the time for 98% of the data (nodes 2, 7, 9; n=4,447, 98%). However, the model also demonstrates two low-frequency caveats. It predicts *low* when the data is collected at universities; when the participant's father's education level is university, vocational, or unknown, and their birthplace was in a province outside of Buenos Aires (node 6, n=25, .55%). *High* is predicted when the father's education level attained is high school (node 8, n=68, 1.5%). The tree for *nice* can be analyzed more concisely as this: *medium* is nearly always predicted, and the little variability that shows does not represent enough items for predictability of *low* or *high*. Ratings for nice are displayed in Figure 17 below:

Figure 17. Ratings Task Plot for Nice

*See legend of predictors on p. 122 (Table 2)



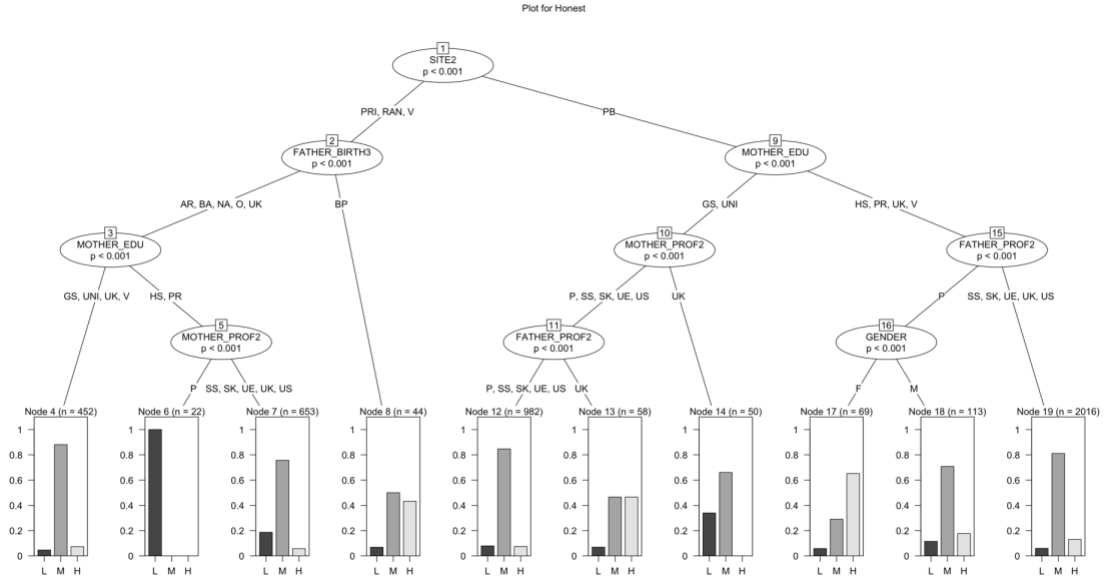
The ctree that analyzes ratings for *honest* illustrates that there are significant effects in the data distributions of the dependent variable, but at the same time, these patterns do not lead to significant differences in prediction (Figure 19). When CRITERION was *honest* (n=4459), ctree always predicts *medium* (nodes 4, 7, 8, 12, 14, 18, 19; n=4310, 96.7%) as has been for the rest of the criteria discussed thus far. However, *medium* is predicted as frequently as *high* when the participants from public universities have mothers who obtained graduate or university studies; when the participant's mother's occupation is professional, semi-skilled, skilled, unskilled or unemployed (all occupation levels except *unknown*); and when the participant's father's occupation is unknown (node 13, n=58, 1.3%). Participants not recruited from a public university and whose fathers are from the Province of Buenos Aires have similar projections, with only marginally lower predictions for high versus medium (node 8, n=44, 1%).

In addition, *high* is observed for honesty approximately 68% of the time specifically when public university female students' mothers' education level is vocational, high school, primary, or unknown; and their father's occupation is professional (node 17, n=69, 1.5%). Finally, the model observes *low* 100% of the time for a very small group represented in the data (node 6, n=22, .49%). *Low* is predicted every time when participants are not recruited at a public university; when their father's birthplace is all levels (Argentina, Buenos Aires, other Argentinian province, not Argentina, unknown) except the Province of Buenos Aires; when their mother's occupation is professional and education level is either primary or high school (node 6, n=22, .49%).

The tree for *honest* can be analyzed more concisely as the following: *medium* is nearly always predicted, and the little variability that shows does not represent enough items for predictability of *low* or *high*. These results are displayed in Figure 18 below:

Figure 18. Ratings Task Plot for Honest

*See legend of predictors on p. 122 (Table 2)



All criteria discussed so far (*attractive, wealthy, nice, honest*) have predicted *medium*. In this regard, the case for *educated* is no different. Though the ctree for *educated* (n=4511) predicts *medium* across most all variables (nodes 4, 9, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21, 24, 26, 29, 30; n=4218, 93.5%), this criterion yielded the most complex results compared to the other four criteria. This variability, however, was based on few observations (never more than 25-72 items per node), and is discussed in the following paragraphs.

The model observes *low* nearly 100% of the time when data is collected at the private university setting (nodes 5, 6; n=97, 2.4%). This prediction differs only slightly when the participant's mother's birthplace is Buenos Aires (node 5, n=25, .55%), versus another province outside of the Province of Buenos Aires (node 6, n=72, 1.6%).

Low is also predicted, though not with strong predictable power, when participants come from a non-private university setting (public university, vocational school, or random site); their mothers were born in Argentina or specifically, Buenos Aires; the participants were born in the Province of Buenos Aires or another Argentinian province; their highest education level is graduate or vocational studies; and their occupation is surprisingly at either end of the occupation category extremes—professional or unskilled (node 12, n=37, .82%).

In addition to these cases of *low* predicted ratings, the model for *educated* predicts *low* as much as it predicts *medium* according to two distinct sets of variable conditions. In the first, the model predicts *medium* at approximately the same degree as it predicts *low* when participants are older; when participants come from a non-private university setting (public university, trade school, or random site); and their mothers are either not born in

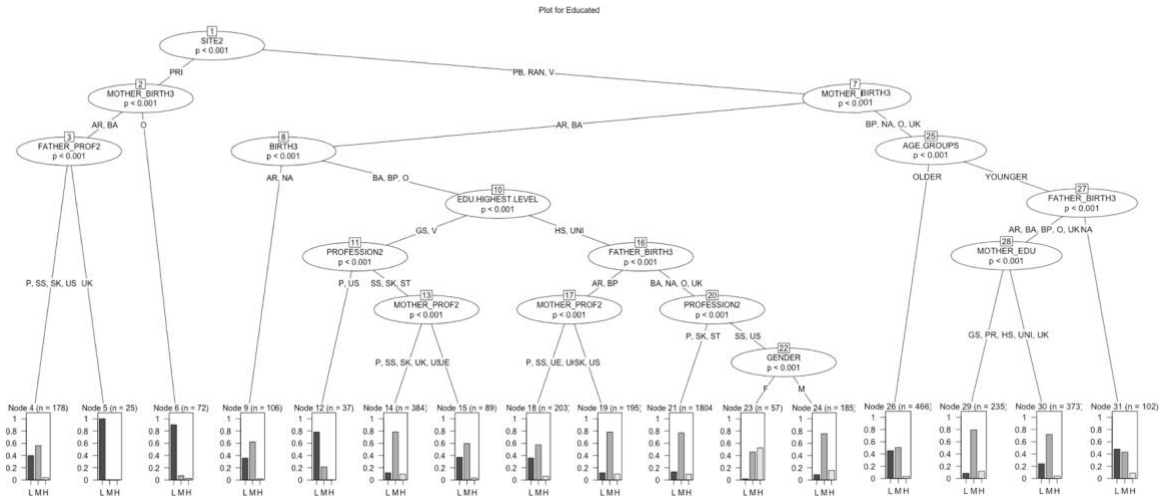
Argentina, are born in Argentina but outside of the capital of Buenos Aires, or their birthplace is unknown (node 26, n=46, 1%).

Alternatively, the model predicts *low* almost as frequently as it predicts *medium* when participants match these aforementioned conditions, but with two differences: they pertain to the younger population and their father was not born in Argentina (node 31, n=102, 2%).

Last, the model only predicts *high* under one set of conditions. Such is the case for female participants who were born in Argentina; whose highest education level is high school or university; whose occupation is professional, skilled, or student; whose mother was born in Argentina; and whose father was born in a province outside of Buenos Aires, in Buenos Aires, not in Argentina, or their birth place is unknown (node 23, n=57, 1.3%). However, as it stands for the other exceptions in the tree, this represents few observations in the data. The tree for *educated* can be analyzed more concisely as this: *medium* is nearly always predicted, but there are not enough items for predictability of *low* or *high* in the little variability that shows (Figure 19).

Figure 19. Ratings Task Plot for Educated

*See legend of predictors on p. 122 (Table 2)



F. Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed data from Buenos Aires collection sites regarding participant comprehension of Lunfardo words and their judgements of Lunfardo users. This section of the study has explored young adult porteño passive engagement with the semantics of Lunfardo words. The test results demonstrated that most young adult porteños can identify the precise meaning of Lunfardo words across social factors with over 50% accuracy, though the level of precision differed from the highest to lowest by approximately 37%. Students who held semi-skilled jobs (or occupation was unknown) had an increased rate of accuracy when their mother was Argentinian-born (or their birthplace was unknown). Predicted accuracy rates were even higher (less than 5% error) when participants with these aforementioned features were also from the older age group (30-82 years old) and their mothers were born specifically in Buenos Aires. The chapter has also measured and analyzed participant attitudes toward the tested Lunfardo words, and has examined significant social factors at play in the stereotyping that may occur

when one uses the tested Lunfardo words in their speech. *Medium* ratings were the dominant force across all criteria on a three-point Likert scale, which is unsurprising given that people usually pick the middle point (on a 3 Likert, the middle point will be most often picked). The fact that 'nice' and 'honest' end up pointing to *medium* highlights in-group solidarity for Lunfardo 'understanders', with *honest* resulting in the highest frequency of all *medium* ratings. Even though *medium* was the overwhelming trend, 'attractive', 'educated', and 'wealthy' point to *low* ratings. This reveals that there is still some sort of stigma attached to Lunfardo's status (power), or at least that it does not point to upper-class, educated, or desirable characteristics. These outcomes underscore again the importance of sociolinguistic informed analysis.

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Chapter 4

Qualitative Methods, Data, and Analysis

As mentioned above, the objective of this dissertation is to determine the status of Lunfardo—whether it has changed historically and what remains of it in the minds of young *porteños* today. To this end, this chapter analyzes interview data collected at various post-secondary education sites and public spaces throughout Buenos Aires. The chapter consists of four sections that review the design of this portion of the study, the theoretical framework applied, the audio and written interview data collected, an extensive analysis thereof, and lastly, a chapter summary. The qualitative data studied in this chapter were collected from semi-structured interviews, as well as ethnographic small group conversations in which *porteño* speakers discussed what they know about Lunfardo and their impressions of its role in Argentinian Spanish. The data involve participants' widespread beliefs, opinions, and local knowledge of the Lunfardo jargon, which therefore call upon notions of language ideology and social representations to guide their analysis.

A. Research Design: Data, Collection, and Limitations of the Study

In addition to the quantitative examination of participants' attitudes toward Lunfardo lexical items on a case-by-case basis (discussed in chapter 3), the data collection included a post-survey questionnaire whose purpose was to examine speakers' language ideologies of Lunfardo (Appendix 6). The questionnaire used the following questions to provide some structure to the interviews and group conversations, that were otherwise open-ended:

1) *What is Lunfardo? What does Lunfardo mean to you?*
2) *Do you use Lunfardo in your speech? In what contexts?*
3) *Who uses Lunfardo in their speech?*
4) *How important is Lunfardo to the people of Buenos Aires?*
5) *How important is Lunfardo to the people of Argentina?*

Though the interviews were started in the same way, speakers were encouraged to elaborate and freely digress. This was carried out in order for the interviews to develop a more ethnographic direction on the topic. It is important to note that perhaps not all participants know what the term 'Lunfardo' refers to, but that the qualitative questionnaires were given after the quantitative data collection; therefore, participants had a good idea of what Lunfardo was in the study.

The interview data analyzed in this chapter is put together from the interviews with 98 participants, collected at institutions of higher education in the city of Buenos Aires. The qualitative portion of this study is comprised of these interviews and questionnaires.

Participants' responses were recorded both in written and audio format for later analysis and make up the qualitative data then elaborated in this chapter.

The data were collected in Buenos Aires over a period of ten weeks in 2018. During this time, I participated in Buenos Aires culture, immersing myself in local, everyday activities. I used the city's public transportation systems daily, riding intercity buses and metros to move to and from the city center and its peripheral neighborhoods. I joined after-work sports teams, frequented hair salons, local cafes, and grocers. I attended local soccer matches and small underground rock shows, two environments from which much of the contemporary usage of Lunfardo has been documented. I often participated in more intimate *porteño* circles on weekends at *asados* (barbecues) in Greater Buenos Aires, which allowed me to observe more organic sociolinguistic interactions among young people outside the higher education settings.

I am a near-native Latin American Spanish speaker, and my physical and ethnic profile are similar to those of the average Argentinian, as I am of Italian descent and have Argentinian heritage. However, I still acknowledge my positionality as a white female from the United States, and a non-group member of the speech community under scrutiny. Regardless of my ability to superficially blend in, my interactions with interviewees in Buenos Aires remain potentially problematic, as the knowledge they express to me is most likely neither neutral nor objective, and potentially depends on the reasons why they decide to share it at all, and with whom (Barker & Galasinski, 2001). Specifically, then, I recognize that there are limitations to the study based on my positionality as a foreigner recognized as such by the local participants in Buenos Aires, and on my academic background and the analytical choices that I brought to bear on this research project.

B. Conceptual Framework: Social Representation and Language Ideology Approaches

Lunfardo has a long history going back to its first official documentation as the jargon used by Buenos Aires thieves and criminals. In chapter 2 above, I documented the grammarians' purist efforts against Lunfardo and the governmental censorship that affected it from the 1930s to at least the 1950s. A few years later, in 1953, the promulgation of the broadcasting law no longer proscribed popular language. With this, books began to appear that dedicated Lunfardo to more serious and less prejudiced analyses. After the lift of censorship, the 1960s witnessed a re-vindication, as well as an admittedly minimal incorporation of certain Lunfardo tokens into contemporary music. Local Argentinian philologists and the last couple of generations have defended Lunfardo as part of the prototypically Argentinian expression and, therefore, important for Argentinian culture and identity. These few sentences schematically summarize Lunfardo origins and use throughout the last 150 years. Its linguistic history is, therefore, extremely dynamic, and it is clearly shaped by conflicting language attitudes towards this socially charged jargon. Moreover, multiple, contrasting points of view about Lunfardo must have existed also synchronically within certain epochs, considering that different views about its appropriateness as a mode of expression are likely to have been marked by distinctions of class, education, urban/rural location, and potentially also ethnic/linguistic origins. Thus, it is important to underline how complex the evolution of language attitudes towards Lunfardo has been, and consequently also how difficult it is to tease apart the different components and strands that must necessarily have contributed to their current

status. For these reasons, I chose to approach the speakers' ideas about language through an interdisciplinary focus taken from sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. Since most of these interview data were collected between the interviewer and interviewee on a one-on-one basis, the resulting data are minimally interactive, and often take on a question-answer style. Though discourse techniques will inform some of the data analysis, it is the representational content in much of the data themselves that is of interest for this study. As such, the data are analyzed from the perspective of social representation theory and language ideology.

Social representation theory as developed by Moscovici (1976, 1984), is concerned with common thinking and social knowledge (Moscovici and Marková, 1998). Its focus is the symbolic world of social actors (Jovchelovitch, 1996) and their interpretations of their surrounding social reality. Moscovici (1993) assigns to social representations the social function to maintain or create collective identities and equilibrium in society. This theory is commonly combined with the notion of language ideology (Cisternas, 2017), and offers an interdisciplinary working definition of the latter (language ideologies) as "systems of social representations about the linguistic market, the speakers and the relations of language-culture and language-identity, which support the status quo of the sociolinguistic relationships, or defy it in order to modify it" (Cisternas, 2017, p. 101). This approach has been used in Latin America and France (Parales Quenza, 2006; Magnabosco-Martins, Camargo & Biasus, 2009; Souza Filho & Durandegui, 2009), and as such, it has been chosen to analyze these qualitative data as a theory that has been adopted and often used in the Latin American context.

Bearing in mind that representations are born essentially through interaction and contact with public discourse, social representation research concentrates on language and speech. Generating these representations stems from a process of descriptive study of social representations as "meaning systems that express the relationships that individuals and groups have with their environment. They are approached as being at once fixed in language and as functioning themselves as language through their symbolic value and the framework they supply for coding and categorizing individuals' environment" (Rateau et. al, 2012). The theory focuses on the social origins of common-sense knowledge, and emphasizes the intertwined and dependent relationship between socio-cultural conditioning and social representations. Qualitative approaches to discourse data collection and analysis constitute the main methodological framework for works carried out in this area, and thus are fitting techniques deployed in this study.

There are apparent differences and real similarities between *social representations*—a qualitative content-focused structured system of beliefs—and *linguistic attitudes*—more discrete, narrowly focused units that can be quantitatively studied in process rather than content (Fraser, 1994, p. 3). While the quantitative attitudinal data discussed in chapter 3 are separated from the qualitative data in this chapter, applying social representations and language ideologies to Lunfardo use and ideas about the jargon among young adults in 21st century Buenos Aires will provide the comprehensive view necessary to more deeply interpret the quantitative findings. The theory provides a conceptual framework to overcome the traditional stances in the mainstream Lunfardo literature, enabling the study to carry out an organic and dynamic analysis of this central yet complex phenomenon in Lunfardo studies regarding the variety's status today.

C. Lunfardo Language Ideologies and Social Representations: From National Discourse to Social Class and Urban Identities

If social representations are understood as an assumption of reality, then language also plays an important role in mediating the appropriation of that reality (Gutiérrez Vidrio, 2006, p. 235). As a sociopsychological construct that performs a symbolic role, a social representation represents something -an object- to someone -a person or group. In this process, the representation substitutes the object it represents, and thus becomes the object itself in the consciousness of the person or group that refers to it (Moscovici, 1961, 1976). The object is only accessed through a representation, and for a given social actor, that representation "is" the object (Abric, 1994a). This theory therefore frames the present study, establishing that it matters less what Lunfardo actually is, and more about how it has been transformed into a symbol of Argentinian-ness.

Social representation theory is not the only acceptable framework from which widespread beliefs around language can be studied, as they have also been examined as linguistic attitudes and/or ideologies. This study employs all three approaches, with the present chapter section analyzing the widespread beliefs at the basis of the qualitative linguistic data. It uses the relevant concepts from these two frameworks (social representation theory and language ideology) to shed light on the shared views of Lunfardo among the young adult *porteño* generation, which will be discussed in the following analysis.

1. National Identity

The Lunfardo jargon reflects its surrounding social world. It is generated as a social representation in *porteño* society through discursive layering of lexical tags that communicate its symbolic construction. One of the key elements to understand Lunfardo's use consists of societal power relationships. For young *porteño* speakers, Lunfardo is intrinsically connected to national identity. When participants were asked about Lunfardo's level of personal importance, most common responses described Lunfardo as the essence of being Argentinian. Interview quotes 1-9[67] illustrate the ideological belief in language as the expression of national identity.

1) *Forma parte de la idiosincrasia argentina.* (12_F23CABA)
2) *Forma parte de nuestra identidad como porteños y argentinos*. (26_F19CABA)
3) *El lunfardo mantiene la esencia de nuestra historia y sociedad*. (65_M23CABA)
4) *Marca nuestra identidad como pueblo argentino*. (133_M24GBA)
5) *Tiene que ver con los orígenes de Argentina como sociedad*. (141_M27CABA)
6) *Construye nuestra identidad*. (142_M28GBA)
7) *El lunfardo significa una esencia argentina*. (145_F19CABA)
8) *Es importante porque considero que intensifica propiedades genuinas del argentino*. (191_M35PBA)
9) *Es parte de la cultura, la identidad, y deja ver formas de pensar, expresarse o reclamar. Creo que es muy importante porque es parte de nuestra identidad*. (177_M20BA)

[67] Each numbered quote from interview data in Chapter 4 contains a participant number followed by a marker of their reported gender (M/F), age, and place of residency (CABA = capital city center, GBA = Greater Buenos Aires, or PBA = Province of Buenos Aires; BA = Buenos Aires in general).

The above data set demonstrates only a small portion of comments that mentioned identity in the entire data set. These fragments were selected for their demonstration of new information, though the complete data set contains many other comments that are similar in nature. In interview fragments 1-9 from young adult *porteño* students, the effects of power by the socio-politically installed institution of the Argentinian nation are traced to a conviction among participants that language is essential to form a sense of patriotism. Curiously, this idea in the Argentinian context goes beyond the shared official language of Spanish, and chooses this particular jargon as a manifestation of uniqueness or individuality of the Argentinian national form of expression. Interviewees insist that Lunfardo is a key linguistic ingredient that expands the scope of their perceived commonality as Argentinians. These participants stress Lunfardo's linguistic authenticity, and attribute a higher degree of genuineness to those Argentinian nationals who use it, a result that goes hand in hand with the higher degree of 'honesty' attributed to Lunfardo users in chapter 3. As an *esencia argentina* (participant 145, quote 7), an intensifier of genuine Argentinian features, Lunfardo takes on a vital and active role in the construction of national identity. This collectivity is exemplified in quote 6 through the use of the first person plural possessive *nuestra*, an ethnic label used to construct unity, sameness, difference, and origin (Wodak et. al, 1999) that the speaker anchors to Lunfardo.

National identity has been construed as a method of unifying cultural diversity (Hall, 1992b, p. 297). In exhibited narratives of unity in the data, Argentinian language and culture are imagined as constant practices with social meaning operating at different levels. However, a lingering tension in the data below demonstrate the conflict between authenticity and a sense of unity required to encompass a national identity. This tension

surfaces in quotes 10-13 below, which express Lunfardo in terms of an ethnic-cultural boundary that allows Argentinians to distinguish themselves from other Latin American cultures, but also *porteños* from other Argentinians.

10) *[El lunfardo] No es necesariamente importante, pero es la parte del lenguaje que nos diferencia de otras culturas*. (37_F21CABA)

11) *Es importante en el sentido de la identidad. El argentino lo necesita como propio para diferenciarse, aunque no sea la mejor manera. Es una cuestión cultural que lo adquiere [sic]*. (143_M20GBA)

12) *Es importante para quienes quieran transmitir la cultura porteña (no argentina, ya que es muy diversa en la extensión del territorio) pues implica una preservación de las raíces*. (137_F22GBA)

13) *Es parte fundamental de la identidad. Ya que al escuchar a una persona, hablar lunfardo, se puede saber de dónde viene*. (179_M26CABA)

Fishman's (1989) definition of ethnic boundaries as most fully articulated with the presence of contrast and opposition of a superior ethnicity and an entity of the "other" (p. 33) are ideas that surface in this data subset. Participants opine about the importance of Lunfardo to the *porteño* community, illuminating the intrinsic connection of language to one's geographical place of origin and roots (participant 179). Participants 37 and 143 demonstrate a similar logical thread, both dismissing Lunfardo in terms of its communal importance or in terms of their personal disapproval of this jargon. Both speakers balance their cynicism (though almost regretfully), by crediting Lunfardo's ability to culturally differentiate the *porteño* people from other Argentinians and other Spanish speakers.

Finally, a 21-year-old Spaniard who had been living in Buenos Aires for ten years (participant 137) emphasizes the use of Lunfardo as the *porteño*'s conscious choice to transmit Buenos Aires culture. By deeming Lunfardo a linguistic tool deliberately used to

preserve *porteño* roots, the speaker attributes an inorganic or unnatural connotation to this part of the jargon. Attributing this level of consciousness or intentionality to the use of Lunfardo subtly challenges its authenticity. These competing narratives and tension between them do not just demonstrate ethnic-cultural boundaries, but also the feeling that Lunfardo *is* important for Argentinian identity. At the same time, it is evident that Lunfardo is not completely free of stigma, and therefore even these participants use hedges to minimize or decrease the importance they themselves attribute to it: 'no necesariamente importante, pero…' (participant 37), 'El argentino lo necesita…. aunque no sea la mejor manera' (participant 143).

2. Formation of a *Porteño* Urban Identity

It is well known that discourses of ethnic supremacy and marginality are commonly articulated with those of nationality (Fishman, 1989). The above data subset does not explicitly define Lunfardo's role in the marking of Argentinian national identity by juxtaposing one ethnic dominant group to a marginal one. However, participants employed discursive strategies of evaluation[68] as a mechanism to articulate their sense of a unique urban identity that separates the residents of Buenos Aires from the rest of the nation. These connections to Buenos Aires and its residents are highlighted, for instance, in quotes 14-19 below:

14) *Forma parte de ser cosmopolita de esta ciudad*. (107_F53PBA)

15) *Es parte del lenguaje. Y es importante porque constituye los vínculos porteños. El lunfardo se usa especialmente en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires*. (156_F33PBA)

[68] Linguistic evaluation in discourse is defined as "the expression of the speaker's stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he/she is talking about" (Hunston & Thompson, 2000).

16) *Es más importante [en Buenos Aires] que en las provincias porque caracteriza al habitante de la capital.* (187_M49GBA)

17) *Se usa mucho actualmente en el habla cotidiana. Acá en Argentina se usa. Viene de la periferia de la Argentina, es bien porteña*. (26_F19CABA)

18) *Es una jerga usada por los porteños*. (102_M21CABA)

19) *Para algunas personas más que para otras pero hace posible la comunicación con la mayoría de los porteños, mantiene un 'espíritu'*. (172_F23GBA)

Participants in the above quotes exhibit stance-taking by expressing opinion vis-à-vis a proposition. They verbalize Lunfardo and its relationship with the capital city of Buenos Aires as a manifestation of their urban identity. This ideology directly supports Guillén and Urzúa B.'s finding that recognition of Lunfardo terms decreased with distance from the capital of Buenos Aires (2018). Other generalizations of Lunfardo included its association to cosmopolitan urban identities in general, and a certain imagined spirit nonetheless claimed as unique to this region. Undeniably, all the comments/adjectives denote positive assessment of being 'urban': progressive, civilized, cosmopolitan, diverse. This indicates that there is still a dichotomy between city/countryside, progress-novelty/tradition-past, where somehow urban-ness and civilization are still juxtaposed to the barbarism of the countryside. However, other participants employed evaluative language by using pragmatic hedges (*para mí, creo que, diría*) that highlight their subjectivity, as seen in the interview fragments 20-23 below:

20) *Para mí mucha [importancia]. Identifica a la gente que vive acá, aunque está generalizado y también se habla en otras partes de Argentina*. (98_F18CABA)

21) *Creo que para la gente de Buenos Aires es importante el lunfardo porque es su lengua propia, con la que se sienten identificados*. (224_F26CABA)

22) *Creo que bastante importante porque contribuye a la construcción de una 'identidad' y a sentirse parte de la ciudad*. (148_M22CABA)

23) *Yo no diría importante, porque es cotidiano, pero sí diría que es algo característico para los porteños*. (15_F18BA)

It is noteworthy that all speakers in these above quotes (20-23) were females. Though their responses reference a demarcated collectivity (*otras partes de Argentina*, *la gente de Buenos Aires*, *los porteños*), their stance-taking was achieved on a personal and subjective level. Participant 98 above reflects on the generalizing nature of the exercise, admitting that Lunfardo can be found in other parts of Argentina beyond Buenos Aires. Participant 224, on the other hand, goes as far calling Lunfardo a *lengua*, thereby attributing increased status to the jargon.

Participant 15 in the above data subset describes the lack of importance of Lunfardo, and attributes this to its association with its popular or everyday use. The speaker distances herself from the jargon by implicitly rationalizing her lack of pertinence to Lunfardo due to her higher socioeconomic status than that of the popular classes. Her lack of personal identification with the jargon contradicts many other participants' comments regarding Lunfardo's innate relationship to residents of Buenos Aires of all social classes. Still, this participant's perspective goes hand in hand with the fact that statistically the use of Lunfardo does not elicit views of sophistication, attractiveness, or wealth. This process of establishing the speaker's perspective allowed for different attitudes to shine through and manipulate the interviewer to interpret and accept a multitude of beliefs around Lunfardo's status in the minds of *porteño* speakers today.

On the other hand, participant 27 describes a view that reverses the attitude of popular class inferiority that participant 15 describes. She states that:

24) *[El lunfardo] es muy importante porque se usa popularmente y es una forma de entender a todos*. (27_F20CABA)

In this fragment, the participant's stance clings to the ideology that what is common or of the popular class would inherently advocate Lunfardo's importance. The use of the collective pronoun *todos* points to the speaker's personal sense of inclusion in Lunfardo's context as a representation of popular culture and relevance to the *porteño*. This regional identity shines through as the language ideology about Lunfardo held and described by *porteños*. To this end, Lunfardo becomes self-defining, a term of equivalency for the everyday linguistic habits of the urban individual in the federal capital. In the perspective of young *porteño* locals, this jargon is part of their urban landscape. It is used to connect residents to one another by enabling mutual linguistic intelligibility and thus contributes to a sense of collective *porteño* identity. In the above data fragment, Lunfardo adopts a social function that aims to create and maintain the equilibrium of *porteño* identity anchored as a social representation. Although this comment incorporated because it is specific for inclusion, most of the other comments in the data that have to do with identity highlight Lunfardo's importance for *porteño* or Argentinian identity, a sense of belonging cemented by the adoption of this formerly disgraced and proscribed jargon.

Another language ideology that echoed among participants was Lunfardo's ability to provide speakers with a sense of belonging to a greater community or group that goes beyond regionalism or nationality. The nature of such a group identity assumed by incorporation or association of Lunfardo was not specified by the speakers in the following quotes (25-30):

25) *Es como un código de pertenencia.* (228_F24CABA)

26) *Da identidad a los que lo usamos*. (95_M18CABA)

27) *Puede ser importante para entender a la gente del lugar donde vivís o los lugares que frecuentás.* (164_M19BA)

28) *Es parte del lenguaje, y en este sentido sí es importante. Conforma mi identidad.* (16_18FBA)

29) *Es importante como parte de mi forma de expresarme*. (159_F45CABA)

30) *Muy importante, es un sello de identidad y uno de los tantos signos distintivos.* (71_M23CABA)

In these above speech fragments, there is a concept of a greater belonging that is not described as necessarily a national collectivity or memory. While regional belonging could be inferred as one of the identity markers that Lunfardo contributes to its speakers (participant 164), it is not an unequivocal constituent. Rather, this data subset offers the widespread belief that Lunfardo is a code of belonging, and as such, it lends a sense of identity to its speakers. Participant 95 offers a robust perspective whose inverse logic allows for the following interpretation: without Lunfardo, there simply is no identity. Though this participant does not elaborate as to what type of identity it is that Lunfardo characterizes, his use of the inclusive subject pronoun *nosotros* allows for inferences of identity that can be assumed from the profile of the participant—an 18-year-old male from Buenos Aires coming from a higher education environment.

Quotes 28-30 above disclose a discourse familiar with a more personal identity, inner psychology, or concept of self that Lunfardo provides to participants. Language has been described as a tool to achieve human purposes (Rorty, 1980)—that it *makes* rather than uncovers one's truth or identity. However, Western popular cultural repertoire aligns with these participants' discourse that believes each human to possess a true self (Barker,

2001). In these data, a timeless essence of the *porteño* self is expressed by the recognizable representation of a language provided by Lunfardo, despite the malleable interactional nature of identity in its social and cultural conjunctures (Barker, 2001, p. 29).

3. Lunfardo as Part of a Greater Historical Past

It was also observed in the data that even among young people, Lunfardo continues to cling to a language ideology that has been claimed in literature over the past century as a jargon that pertains to the historical beginnings and development of Buenos Aires. Lunfardo stands on its own as a variety associated with some distant past in history, a memory that holds on to the nostalgia of Buenos Aires's early development as a port city. This ideology that Lunfardo is a phenomenon of yesteryear is exemplified in the following quotes (31-38):

31) *El lunfardo es una manera de comunicarse que si bien antes se usaba más, aún se la sigue incorporando en nuestro lenguaje.* (224_F26CABA)

32) *Considero que es parte de nuestra historia y tiene una carga cultural*. (6_F20CABA)

33) *Da cuenta de nuestros antepasados inmigrantes...pasado de moda*. (122_M21CABA)

34) *Para mí el lunfardo es muy propio del argentino o el porteño y es importante que aún se mantenga en la cultura.* (172_F23BA)

35) *Para la gente de Buenos Aires creo que es importante porque tiene una historia y marca cultural de épocas anteriores. De todas formas creo que está cayendo en desuso porque como iba de la mano del tango al barrio arrabal, cosas que poco a poco se están extinguiendo ya no tiene tanta aplicación en la actualidad*. (132_CABA)

36) *Para los jóvenes, ya no tanto. Para la gente adulta, un poco más…forma parte de la identidad cultural, la época del tango*. (144_F20CABA)

37) *En una época, era una forma de identificación del porteño. En la actualidad, esa identidad podría darse en el habla del sector referenciado a la música, o a la profesión, o a la "argentinización" de voces extranjeras*. (168_F63CABA)

38) *[El lunfardo] es sinónimo de tango, de Buenos Aires*. (199_M36CABA)

These fragments point to an ideology that Lunfardo belongs to past generations, to the immigrants and ancestors of *porteño* residents today. For the participants of this data subset, Lunfardo's importance is attributed to its role in history, which is conceptualized as an abstract moment in time that created *porteño* culture. Its use was debated, with some ideologies so fixed to its historical significance that they negate Lunfardo's current use or relevance to today's *porteño* society, especially among young people. Others expressed the need or desire for Lunfardo to be maintained, thereby implying its linguistic endangerment or attrition (participant 172). Some described it as relevant only among the elderly. They portrayed Lunfardo's use as more prominent among past generations and decades, but did not reject its continued incorporation into *porteño* Spanish today (participant 224).

It is noteworthy that not a single reference in the data subset above relates Lunfardo to its beginnings as a criminal jargon and consequent stigmatization—clearly revealed in its very first documentation. Considering its past, one of the primary goals of this dissertation was to discover if there continues to be a stigma towards Lunfardo. No such marks of infamy are evident from the above quotes. When the above discourse on its origins is considered on its own, it suggests that Lunfardo's linguistic stigma is not superficially or consciously present, as it was in its early documentation. Nevertheless, when people of this age group and social extraction are directly asked about Lunfardo, its stigma is not present in what they say, but only in how some participants say it, through hedging and evaluative comments, such as in previous quote 11: *El argentino lo necesita como propio para diferenciarse, aunque no sea la mejor manera.*). Therefore, there seem to be covert

traces of yesteryear's stigma (as the quantitative data seem to imply as well). Instead, this historical tie reveals an overt evaluation of the jargon. Participants in the above data set glamorized cultural discourse that highlights Lunfardo's relationship with iconic cultural manifestations, such as the Argentinian tango. Participant 199 went as far as claiming Lunfardo to be a synonym for the tango, while participant 168 demonstrates the idea of Lunfardo as a social representation in the alternative -but very important and iconic- world of music.

4. Lunfardo as Culture: An Imaginary, Ideal, and Authentic Argentina

There was a common rhetoric among many participants in the data that rationalized Lunfardo's importance to the *porteño* community due to its associations with the Argentinian *criollo* and *gaucho*. These views in quotes 39-45 corroborate a post-colonial discourse that positions marginalized populations of Argentina's past (namely, the *criollo*). In this rhetoric, these historical figures are praised for their cultural and linguistic contributions to the Argentinian character, though this character remains undefined in their responses. In addition to themes of creolization, hybridity, race, and nation, the following data subset constitutes the imagery of the urban working class mixed with rural environments and origins.

39) *Es importante porque forma parte del folklore de la clase obrera y el lumpemproletariado*. (40_F26CABA)

40) *Preserva los sociolectos y cronolectos de otras generaciones y productos culturales*. (43_F22GBA)

41) *Permite la deformación y es parte de la construcción de una cultura*. (108_F18CABA)

42) *Sí, es una forma de diversidad*. (131_M26CABA).

43) *Es importante porque es parte de nuestra cultura criolla. Negarla es negar un aspecto histórico que nos constituye…Es importante porque define al argentino de la clase popular*. (134_F21CABA)

44) *Sí, porque es parte de la cultura rioplatense y da cuenta del mestizaje y la mezcla y diversidad de nuestras raíces*. (160_M22CABA)

45) *Es parte de la articulación de una comunicación propia con las costumbres argentinas*. (170_U25CABA)

The above data subset presents a complicated and romanticized vision of Lunfardo as part of Argentinian lineage and traditions. This superficial praising of Argentina's ethnic diversity, made especially visible in the above fragments of participants 131 and 160, is part of a new conversation that contradicts the first Argentinian philosophers of the 19th century who aimed to tear down and eradicate the native peoples blamed for inferior racial mixing of indigenous and Spaniard lineages. Lunfardo's image today shows the instability of meaning in language and culture, identities and identifications as a place of borders and hybridity, rather than fixed entities (Bhabha, 1994).

5. Lunfardo as a Mechanism to Connect and Identify with Others

Rather than connect Lunfardo's importance to any historical or cultural aspects of society, many participants referenced instead the jargon's way of extending the social knowledge of words that stabilize and produce meaning in pragmatic narratives (Barker, 2001, p. 16). Participants claimed that even when there is an element of distance or formality in an interaction, Lunfardo allows speakers to bridge gaps and identify with one another in a deeper or more intimate way. The following data subset (quotes 46-53)

highlight the various aspects of Lunfardo that allow it to facilitate more meaningful interactions and bring *porteños* to forge social bonds and relate to each other.

46) *Ayuda a que el habla sea más fácil y corto.* (4_F18PBA)

47) *Sí, porque mantiene fluida una conversación informal.* (7_F19CABA)

48) *El lunfardo es algo natural, es una manera de relacionarse con otras personas*. (68_F22CABA)

49) *Sí, permite mayores estados de relajación y fluidez en las relaciones*. (126_M25CABA)

50) *Sí, en tanto es parte de nuestro lenguaje y es necesario para comprender lo que quieren decir algunas personas*. (175_M20CABA)

51) *Creo que es bastante importante para construir lazos con gente nueva, resulta simpático y genera confianza o intimidad*. (43_F22GBA)

52) *Es algo básico y común que sirve para relacionarse. Es una manera de desembravecerse socialmente*. (68_F22CABA)

53) *Mucho. Son las expresiones que generan afinidad o rechazo con el otro*. (142_M28BA)

That Lunfardo would help form new relationships, not just solidify pre-existing ones among friends and family, demonstrates a commanding social component of this jargon. Participant 22 claims that it helps make speakers more relaxed and fluent, which resonates with earlier quotes that describes Lunfardo's naturalness and spontaneity. For others, Lunfardo is obligatory for understanding *algunas personas*, as exhibited in quote 50 (participant 175). Finally, common to nearly all the above fragments, was the point of view that Lunfardo generates increased sentiments of friendliness and a deeper personal connection to people; it even provides a way to convey one's linguistic message in a more complete way.

6. Neglect of Lunfardo's Importance

A minority of participants denied Lunfardo's importance for the Río de la Plata region entirely. Their indifference was based on the opinion that Lunfardo is irrelevant to today's speech. Such a view was commonly rationalized by linking Lunfardo to a phenomenon of Buenos Aires's past, or alternatively, to a perceived lack of knowledge that average speakers have on the linguistic topic. These views are expressed in the following quotes (54-57):

54) *Sí, es parte de los cambios y transformaciones del idioma. No creo que sea importante para la gente de hoy en día. Seguro que no sabe qué es bien el lunfardo*. (60_F36CABA)

55) *No, porque prefiero hablar formalmente*. (115_F20CABA)

56) *Creo que es importante porque es una marca actual de cierta época y modas. No considero que sea indispensable*. (132_F23CABA)

57) *Son comentarios simpáticos…es un rasgo cultural argentino. En la actualidad no me parece muy importante. Sirve para diferentes clases o grupos societarios*. (135_M61CABA)

Some participants expressed indifference or even rejection of the jargon, though later contradicted themselves by expressing personal incorporation of Lunfardo words around friends and family members. These contradicting linguistic attitudes reveal that for different reasons, perhaps, there is still a covert stigma attached to Lunfardo. Such was the case for participant 132, who claimed Lunfardo as insignificant to Buenos Aires, but later admitted her personal use of the jargon: *Uso algunas palabras con amigos por diversión*. Other participants showed reluctance to admitting personal incorporation of Lunfardo in their speech due to its lack of formality. This was evident in participant 115's response, who rejected Lunfardo's use in her speech, even though she later-on described the typical

person who uses Lunfardo to be 'any young person'. She distances herself from the very age group to which she pertains, thereby suggesting the possibility of Lunfardo's enduring stigma. Some denied importance to the variety based on its pertinence to other social groups. Participant 135 maintains Lunfardo's features of culture and humor or good disposition, but still deems it irrelevant to today's Argentinian society.

7. Lunfardo as a Fact of Life

Lunfardo was termed recurrently in the interview data as simply a fact of life, an aspect of language and culture that occurs naturally, inevitably, and systematically. Its feature as organic, ordinary language is understood in the following discourse as the very aspect that, contrary to the previous data set, gives it significance in *porteño* life and culture. Various comments aligned with this perspective, and are highlighted in quotes 58-67 below:

58) *Es algo cultural, un hecho que sucede. No sé si es o no importante. Es algo contingente y divertido*. (139_M27CABA)

59) *Sí, lo considero una evolución necesaria e inevitable del idioma, dado que se determina culturalmente. Es la expresión de un momento sociocultural dado*. (171_M28CABA)

60) *Para la gente de Buenos Aires, es importante porque lo sigue usando. Pero me parece que tendríamos que mejorar nuestra forma de comunicarnos. En ocasiones estás hablando y se te sale el lunfardo y no es lo ideal*. (226_F35CABA)

61) *Es un rasgo propio y un valor característico incomparable*. (208_M21PBA)

62) *Es importante pero la mayoría de las veces no se le da importancia porque es usado naturalmente. Pero como dije, es parte de nuestra identidad.* (26_F19CABA)

63) *No creo que los habitantes le dan importancia o no al lunfardo. Simplemente es de uso corriente.* (131_M26CABA)

64) *Se usa bastante así que pienso que es importante.* (159_F45CABA)

65) *Es importante para comprendernos, ya que se usa mucho pero no observo que haya una reivindicación del lunfardo*. (167_U23CABA)

66) *Creo que en general todas y todos lo consideramos importante pero la mayoría no hace un gran esfuerzo para mantenerlo vivo*. (161_F21CABA)

67) *Muy importante, es parte del paisaje*. (107_F53PBA)

Labels in the participants' data such as *inevitable, un hecho,* and the accidental reflexive form of *se te sale* reflect the ideology that Lunfardo is language that happens effortlessly, without a speaker's intention or even awareness of its use. The above participants' dialogue is full of markers of unity that embody the jargon as a social representation of a greater whole—a *porteño,* or possibly, an extension of Argentinian identity in general. Collective verb forms and possessive and personal pronouns that emerged in the data set (e.g., *nuestra identidad, todos, comprendernos, consideramos*) expose Lunfardo's perceived installment in the people of the surveyed region of Buenos Aires, such that it has become part of the sociocultural landscape of the city. Still, participant 226 clearly reveals the stigma viewed by some: Lunfardo is a somewhat inferior form of communication.

8. Purism Still Exists: Dismissal of Lunfardo as a Corruption of Language

Though Lunfardo was originally denounced as a jargon or secret code of criminals, the present interview data suggest an altered legacy of the argot. Many participants who do not belong to the criminal world, but rather to institutions of higher education, appropriate Lunfardo as a compulsory source of their *porteño* identity. However, remnants of the jargon's problematic history of socio-political denouncement from the early to mid-20th

century seems to continue to pervade into the minds of some young adult *porteños*. This pejorative perception of Lunfardo is confirmed in the following quotes (68-71):

68) *Para mí no es importante, es algo que debemos cambiar a través del estudio ya que trae problemas para comunicarnos de manera académica y acorta nuestro lenguaje*. (143_M20GBA)

69) *Destruye el buen lenguaje*. (196_M49BA)

70) *Creo que no es importante, para mí empezó jodiendo y al evolucionar volvió cotidiano en el habla*. (94_F18GBA)

71) *Solemos usar modos de hablar bastante desestructurados*. (7_F19CABA).

These speakers' disapproval of Lunfardo stems from a purist ideology of language. These participants supported their opinions of Lunfardo based on various rationalizations. Its informality was impugned as being unworthy of academic language; participant 143 went as far as blaming Lunfardo for the inability of its users to *comunicarnos de manera académica*. He additionally declared the jargon to be a simplification of language (*acorta nuestro lenguaje*), signifying a view that Lunfardo lacks a certain abstract level of complexity or precision necessary to pertain to a refined or intellectual environment. These are typical accusations of dominant discourses in relation to minoritized languages, such as Basque (Hualde and Zuazo, 2007) or Occitan (Brun, 1923; Eckert, 1983), for instance. Participant 196, a university student considered somewhat older compared to the average participant age in the sample pool, communicated a similar perspective by stating that Lunfardo is a hindrance of *buen lenguaje*. This view is stretched even further in another's comment that describes Lunfardo as 'destructive' (participant 196), or simply is an 'unstructured' way of speaking (participant 7).

Conversely, participant 94 was less scornful of the jargon, but maintained the ideology that Lunfardo is an inadvertent jargon (*empezó jodiendo*) not intended to be taken seriously or valued. She postulates Lunfardo to be an inconsequential linguistic accident that just so happened to make its way into quotidian speech. Though she does not define how this occurred, her discourse resonates that of linguistic appropriation of slang and alternative vernaculars that cyclically pass from stigmatized language to associating certain words or phrases from the variety with cultural phenomena, such as being "cool" (Hill, 2008, p.160-161).

9. Lunfardo: "There is no prototype speaker"

Participant discourse regarding a prototypical Lunfardo user yielded the most fruitful and varied discussion in which many social factors emerged. Many conversed about the relevance of social class in the use of Lunfardo, while others precluded the importance that socioeconomic status plays in one's use of the variety. The latter perspective that negates social status as a relevant factor of Lunfardo usage is evident in the following quotes (72-88):

72) *No lo sé, como que en mi opinión no hay un prototipo de persona que utiliza el lunfardo, no hay algo que los caracterice.* (14_F18CABA)

73) *Todo el mundo (aunque sea en mi esfera social) utiliza lunfardo. Son personas muy diversas como para encontrar un núcleo común.* (36_F20CABA)

74) *Es un dialecto popularizado que puede utilizarlo cualquier persona sin una característica especial.* (27_F20CABA)

75) *El lunfardo puede ser utilizado por cualquiera y no tiene por qué tener una característica determinada.* (68_F22CABA)

76) *Se ve como cualquier persona. No son de un extracto social delimitado.* (107_F53PBA)

77) *Como una persona normal. Son modismos nuestros que no distinguen clases sociales.* (111_F28CABA)

78) *Gente de clase media, alta, media baja y clase baja.* (4_F18PBA)

79) *Cualquiera que puede expresar o hacerse entender.* (124_M23CABA)

80) *No creo que haya una tipificación. Es bastante independiente hasta de la clase social.* (173_F19CABA)

81) *No hay una persona típica, ni en apariencia, ni en diversidad para hablar lunfardo.* (174_F20BA)

82) *La gran mayoría usa lunfardo en algún nivel. Creo que es más fácil caracterizar a quienes lo evitan, que suelen ser personas con pretensiones de intelectualidad y 'mayor altura espiritual.'* (176_U22GBA)

83) *No considero que haya una persona típica que utilice el lunfardo argentino. En ocasiones atraviesa distintas clases sociales.* (188_M29PBA)

84) *Creo que no hay persona típica. El estereotipo es el tanguero que va al berretín [sic] a juntarse con los amigos o escuchar tango; pero no creo que sea así.* (191_M35PBA)

85) *No creo que haya un 'tipo' de persona que utiliza el lunfardo. Es variado y atraviesa a casi toda la sociedad.* (208_M21PBA)

86) *Normal, como cualquier ser humano.* (229_F28CABA)

87) *Creo que es muy importante porque la cultura popular está atravesada por el lunfardo. Aunque la gente no sepa qué es el lunfardo, lo usa constantemente*. (213_F30CABA)

88) *El lunfardo es transversal a las clases sociales y se utiliza en gran cantidad de ámbitos, sobre todo ámbitos coloquiales.* (25_F19CABA)

The discourse among these participants reflects the notion that Lunfardo is not a variety assigned to a specific type of Argentinian. In fact, much of the discourse avoids generalizations completely, some insomuch as repudiating Lunfardo's pertinence exclusively to *porteño* or Argentinian national identity. Participant 176 takes a revealing stance, opining that the significant question is not *who* uses Lunfardo, but rather who 'avoids' it in their speech. This participant echoes the sentiments of many of their peers

that Lunfardo is present in the speech of all Argentinians, such that to reject its presence in one's speech indicates social meanings of pretension or intellect. These participants demonstrate a heightened social consciousness of the deficiencies of stereotypes shown in their resistance to delimiting a person who uses Lunfardo. Many participants referenced social class specifically as an element that does not influence a Lunfardo user; however, participants were never asked to describe social class, but rather to describe a typical person that comes to mind who uses Lunfardo. Even though many rejected the existence of a Lunfardo speaker stereotype, the fact that social class emerged frequently in this data subset without it pertaining to the question conversely suggests that social class may in fact be a subconscious factor in their typification. This idea resonates with the chapter 3 results of the language attitudes data: though Lunfardo users were rated average (i.e., *medium*) for characteristics of in-group solidarity ('nice' and 'honest'), charactersitics that point to power or prestige ('attractive', 'educated', 'wealthy') indicated more *low* ratings, confirming that there is still some sort of social stigma attached to Lunfardo that is also raised in the above qualitative data set.

10. Lunfardo Speakers: The Average *Porteño* or Argentinian

Participants were not willing to submit generalized points of view, or assert such a prototype as existent. Other similar statements described Lunfardo itself as a social representation of the common Argentinian or *porteño*. This supports the prior data subset (quotes 14-19) that found Lunfardo's importance to be rooted in its regionality and relevance to the people of Buenos Aires. This discourse continues in the description of the

typical Lunfardo speaker as a regular person or *porteño*, as described in quotes 89-98 below:

89) *Tradicional, clase media porteño* (22_F18GBA)

90) *Una persona común.* (23_M29BA)

91) *La típica persona es una persona normal que le gusta lo simple.* (133_M24GBA)

92) *Es una persona común y corriente.* (12M27GBA7)

93) *De muchas maneras diferentes. Buscar una persona típica es generalizar demasiado (aunque una imagen que la describa es el trabajador promedio. Un taxista).* (142M28BA)

94) *Una persona típica de mi entorno.* (164_M19BA)

95) *No lo sé. Supongo que como el argentino estereotipo. Ve fútbol y toma Fernet.* (202_M18PBA)

96) *Es el ciudadano común. Entre otros casos, juega con las palabras. Se ve como una persona informal.* (212_F82PBA)

97) *Creo que él que más lo utiliza es el porteño.* (218_F35PBA)

98) *Cualquier persona puede usar lunfardo, de cualquier edad y clase social.* (213_F30CABA)

Some defined the average person who speaks with Lunfardo terminology as *tradicional*, *informal*, *simple*, part of the middle-class, or *el trabajador promedio* whose example is provided as the *porteño* taxi driver (participant 142). It is noteworthy that, as expected, the common Lunfardo user is never mentioned as one pertaining to the upper class, nor to a circle of elites, professionals, or intellectuals. This point is brought home by participant 202, who describes the prototypical Lunfardo speaker as the standard Argentinian stereotype: *Ve fútbol y toma Fernet*.

11. Lunfardo as a Marker of Social Class

The social representations that are layered within Lunfardo use begin to unfold as participants describe it as an indicator of one's social class. The following speakers (quotes 99-103), like the prior data subset above, demonstrate a level of social consciousness or political correctness by *not* claiming directly that Lunfardo is limited to the lower classes (although participant 100 below states that the use of Lunfardo is more frequent among the lower classes).

99) *Es importante para moverse en la ciudad, tener un mayor contacto con las personas. Hay algunas palabras en especial que pueden dar una idea del origen social o grupos de pertenencia (aunque siempre prefiero estar abierta a realmente conocer a lx otrx y no prejuzgar).* (123_F26CABA)

100) *Creo que depende mucho del sector social. En los sectores más populares, o que más simpatizan con estos, el uso es mayor. En otros estratos el uso es mucho más limitado, y suele estar circunscrito a los insultos en general, y en especial para denigrar a otros sectores sociales.* (176_U22GBA)

101) *Depende de la persona y las aspiraciones de formalidad que tenga*. (228_F24CABA)

102) *Sí, es importante porque refleja que el lenguaje es dinámico y que está ligado al monopolio del conocimiento y a la clase social*. (41_F19CABA)

103) *La mayoría de las personas usamos lunfardo en Argentina. Aunque es probable que estas palabras varían respecto a cuestiones de clase.* (167_U23CABA)

Some participants conservatively state that all Argentinian speakers use Lunfardo, though they discern that the jargon likely pertains more to certain social classes over others (participant 167). Other participants ascertained that one's use of Lunfardo depends on the degree of one's life aspirations or goals (participant 228), while others described its use as being limited in some social sectors, and largely restricted to insults (participant 176). These data propose Lunfardo as a social representation of socioeconomic status.

Though no evidence in this subset directly specifies the social class characterized by Lunfardo, it is indirectly depicted here as informal language of the lower or less-educated classes, and thus defers by default to middle-to-lower class usage.

12. Lunfardo: A Lasting Symbol of Working Class Embodiment

Because of this linguistic variety's struggling past that endured censorship and denigration by the elites, remnants of discourse assigning Lunfardo to the lower social stratus were expected to arise in the data. Lunfardo's social class associations are narrowed down in the following data subset to encompass precisely the lower or lower-middle classes. This perspective of Lunfardo being a marker of the Argentinian or *porteño* lower or lower-middle social classes is displayed in the following quotes (104-114):

104) *Canchera, jóvenes, clases más bajas.* (17_F19BA)

105) *Alguien de barrio.* (58_F23CABA)

106) *No sé si hay una típica persona. Lo que se ve es que la parte que vive de forma más humilde en su barrio, es tomado como idea de lunfardo y es estereotipado. Es el pibe fusila[do] [sic] con porro y deportiva.* (107_F43CABA)

107) *Lo he escuchado, en el barrio o a veces en la cancha...Mi abuela hablaba mucho en lunfardo*. (214_M36CABA)

108) *Clases media y baja.* (177_M20BA)

109) *Inculta.* (196_M49CABA)

110) *Es una persona humilde. Que se viste con jeans, zapatillas, gorra, camisetas de fútbol. Para divertirse van a la cancha o al boliche. Se lo suelen mirar como personas inferiores.* (224_F26CABA) -*Informant admits to using it a veces. Con mi familia, novio o amigos.*

111) *Es importante al punto que las clases más altas copian las peores cosas. Los adolescentes y mismo en edad primaria.* (110_F43CABA)

112) *Son parte de la masa de trabajadores.* (40_F26CABA)

113) *Es como hablar sincera, son las clases más populares.* (190_M53PBA)

114) *Suele ser la persona de clase baja, que suele tener un nivel de calidad de vida inferior al de la clase media/alta. Hace lo que puede para divertirse, lo que le dé el ingreso económico.* (41_F19CABA)

Participants who reveal an underlying sense of Lunfardo tied to the popular classes included labeling based on a person's socioeconomic background, attributing such factors as being humble people from the *barrio* (participant 107, 58), the *cancha (de fútbol)* (participant 17, 214), or *inculta* (participant 196) with little education. Participant 190 demonstrates Lunfardo as an indication of genuineness or sincerity in one's speech, which also echoes the linguistic attitudes result in chapter 3 that Lunfardo is rated higher (though still on the middle point) for traits of in-group solidarity, particularly one's honesty, compared to their level of education or wealth. This feature of honesty is linked also here in the above data set to the popular class (participant 190, quote 113). Participant 190's stance highlights a new linguistic ideology in the data that Lunfardo is an icon of morality—in this case, sincerity—which also socially is represented by the popular (working) class. The participant's expression of Lunfardo is twofold, revealing that ethics and the lower social class are socially represented in the variety in the *porteño* consciousness.

Participant 41 describes the typical person who uses Lunfardo as pertaining to the lower class, of an inferior standard of living with little economic resources. However, a later comment from the same participant admits that she uses Lunfardo *con mi familia y amigos, con la gente que me rodea*. This idea shows that though Lunfardo is believed to mark low socioeconomic status, it is still appropriated by young people and even valued as a necessary tool of *porteño* expression.

These fragments above describe a stronger affiliation of Lunfardo among the lower classes, but also maintain that *porteños,* or to some, Argentinians in general, use Lunfardo. The data subset below (quotes 115-119) reveals a more closed representation of language in the Lunfardo context. Though some of these participants continue to describe Lunfardo as used among all, they begin to restrict its greater use to a subdivision of the *porteño* community that is working class.

115) *Para mí no hay un perfil particular, pero usualmente lo utilizan personas de barrios bajos y clase media en general…sí las utilizo con amigos y familia.* (134_F21CABA)

116) *Todos lo utilizamos en mayor o menor medida; aunque es utilizado por lo general, en sectores medios-bajos. Toda clase social crea 'su' propio lenguaje cotidiano.* (138_M24GBA)

117) *Casi todas las personas en Argentina usan lunfardo, solo que en mayor o menor medida. El estereotipo es contingente y el lenguaje depende de la educación recibida, por lo general las personas menos instruidas hacen más uso del lunfardo, pero las instruidas también la usan, aunque menos y para cosas más puntuales.* (139_M27CABA)

118) *La persona típica es el argentino mismo, no pertenece a clases específicas a pesar de que es más 'natural' en clases bajas.* (143_M20GBA)

119) *Mi opinión es que no hay un tipo de persona, todos lo utilizamos, algunos más, sobre todo las clases más bajas y medias*. (220_M38PBA)

Participant 143 above highlights that though Lunfardo signifies the Argentinian in general, it is most natural among the lower classes. The notion that Lunfardo can be and is used by all Argentinians, but that it is more authentically used among the popular class, suggests evidence of linguistic appropriation of Lunfardo in the *porteño* urban linguistic environment.

13. Lunfardo in the Social World: Normalcy and Leisure

In addition to social class, the use of Lunfardo in one's speech was repeatedly expressed among participants as a means of constructing an extroverted identity that embodies light-heartedness, fun, leisure, and humor in an 'attractive' (*se ve bien*, participant 219) or 'cool' (*canchera*, participant 199) way. Based on the following data subset (quotes 120-131), Lunfardo is understood as a social construction of a *porteño* who lives in the moment, frequently partaking in nightlife environments of partying and drinking. However, participant 7 below highlights that this characteristic does not equate also to irresponsibility.

120) *Bastante multifacética, mantiene sus responsabilidades, pero sale a divertirse con frecuencia.* (7_F19CABA)

121) *Está asociado a las clases medias-bajas, al festejo, a la distensión, bailar, cantar, beber.* (160_M22CABA)

122) *Burlona, divertida.* (64_F25CABA)

123) *Me parece una persona divertida de fiesta y es simpática. (140)*

124) *Es una persona común y corriente y quizás usándola suena más divertido o resuelto.* (94_F18GBA)

125) *Pienso que usamos más lunfardo cuando estamos de buen humor y queremos bromear o cuando estamos enojados. Cambia la visión según el contexto.* (117_M26CABA)

126) *Para mí son personas como cualquier otro/a pero por lo general más divertidas y/o simpáticas.* (172_F23BA)

127) *Más bien extrovertido.* (201_M22PBA)

128) *Rea, joduda, canchera*[69]. (199_M36CABA)

129) *Es una persona canchera. Habla mucho y se ve bien.* (219_M69PBA)

[69] The definition of *canchera* in Argentinian Spanish is *hábil, experto en algo,* or *conocedor*.

130) *Hay un lunfardo más popular o extrovertido, y hay palabras más específicas según el contexto social (villero) o etario (juvenil).* (228_F24CABA)

131) *Persona agradable, canchera, más típica en hombres que en mujeres*. (192_M27PBA)

This data subset establishes many social representations of Lunfardo and the type of people who are perceived to use the jargon. Though there is an explicit reference of the prototype Lunfardo user to a relaxed lifestyle full of social nightlife activities (drinking, singing, dancing), these mostly young adult college students view this iconicity largely with a positive perspective, evident by the adjectives used to describe such a person in the participants' discourse: *canchera*, *extrovertido*, *multifacética*, *divertida*, *resuelto*, *común*, *corriente*, *simpática*.

Participants 94 and 201 described the typical person who uses Lunfardo with the masculine gender (*extrovertido*, *divertido*, *resuelto*), despite the interviewer's question that prompted a response employing the feminine gender (quotes 124 and 127, respectively). Though most participants utilized the feminine gender in their descriptions of the *persona típica* who uses Lunfardo, the variability in the two aforementioned participants' responses suggests the possibility that the prototype of a Lunfardo speaker is more likely to be male rather than female (participants 94 and 201). This point of view is officially established in participant 192's comment that explicitly states Lunfardo as more common in the speech of men than women.

14. Lunfardo as a Marker of Youth

Contrary to the expectation that Lunfardo would be associated purely to an older age group (due to its origins as an historical linguistic code among the immigrants of Buenos

Aires), the previous ideology that the jargon encompasses people who regularly partake in nightlife scenes insinuates a deeper connection of Lunfardo to a generally younger demographic. This vision is supported somewhat in the data. According to the following participants, Lunfardo is spoken mostly by young people:

132) *La mayoría son jóvenes.* (115_F20CABA)

133) *Son jóvenes, con 'onda', y usan tatuajes.* (126_M25CABA)

The type of young person that participant 126 describes as the Lunfardo-speaking prototype is one who embodies a 'cool' persona. Furthermore, they may be viewed as more rebellious in character and possibly partake in alternative countercultures—something socially represented by the description that the Lunfardo-speaking prototype is tattooed. Though this type of age-defining discourse surfaced in the data, it was not as common as the aforementioned social class-driven comments or the hints of nightlife culture.

15. Lunfardo, Romanticized Stereotypes and Folklore

In contrast to the two above quotes, many participants also referenced Lunfardo to a generation of older *porteños*. This older generation was described as participants' grandparents, *gauchos, criollos,* or immigrants, particularly the *tano* (Italian immigrant). It was also tied to the realm of the tango. This rather diverse discourse of icons that personify the Lunfardo variety is apparent in the following quotes (134-143):

134) *Juega al buraco (juego de mesa), toma mate y escucha mucho la radio. Son personas mayores que la usan porque surgió en el contexto del tango. Se habla en la ciudad de Buenos Aires.* (43_F22GBA)

135) *Se habla en Buenos Aires, la gente mayor de 40 años con raíces fuertemente criolla.* (57_M22PBA)

136) *Generalmente son personas mayores. Mi abuelo es la única persona que conozco que lo usa y para divertirse pasatiempo con su familia y escucha música o ve deportes.* (161_F21CABA)

137) *El estereotipo refiere a un tanguero que frecuenta milongas, usa sombrero y traje y toma café por los barrios porteños."* (137_F22GBA)

138) *Usado por los inmigrantes en Argentina. Algunas palabras se usan actualmente.* (140_M22CABA)

139) *La imagen del gaucho y del tano que se tuvo que adaptar a la ciudad.* (169_M19BA)

140) *Son en su mayoría inmigrantes italianos. Se divierten hablando en y haciendo humor. Depende a quien se la hacen, es como se ve.* (226_F35CABA-N8)

141) *Baila tango.* (230_F27CABA)

142) *El tanguero.* (187_M49GBA)

143) *En principio vinculado con el hombre de bar, tanguero, fumador, futbolero. Pero luego se volvió más popular y no existe un estereotipo.* (179_M26CABA)

This data subset entails fundamental cultural markers of *argentinidad* that were not included in any prior data subset of the present chapter. This discourse tied Lunfardo to icons of rural Argentinian folklore—the *gaucho* and the *criollo*—outsider identities that acquiesced to the urban ways of life in the beginnings of 20th century Argentinian history and Buenos Aires's development as a prominent urban center. With this imagined time also resonated emblems of the historical figure of the *tanguero* singing or dancing in the *barrio porteño* (such as La Boca). Though participants seemed aware of these stereotypes as historical notions, some related this sense of Lunfardo's past to the older *porteño* of the present: *Juega al burako, toma mate y escucha mucho la radio* (participant 43). This

participant's description of the type of person that employs Lunfardo in their speech could represent any older Argentinian man or woman through the use of such a salient culture activity as passing the time drinking *mate*. Another similar description is displayed in the following quote: *Mi abuelo es la única persona que conozco que lo usa y para divertirse pasatiempo con su familia y escucha música o ve deportes* (participant 161). Here, the participant describes a normal Argentinian person's lifestyle where, like the previous quote, listening to music is still important, She adds the image of watching sports, and since she also references her grandfather, her vision of the prototype Lunfardo speaker is more likely a man. The vision of a man as the prototype Lunfardo speaker is made palpable in participant 179's response: *el hombre de bar, tanguero, fumador, futbolero*.

D. Lunfardo in Context

Linguistic interaction is the most crucial concept when thinking about language and especially language ideology. Nearly all young *porteño* participants expressed that they use Lunfardo in their daily speech, and typically in closed intimate circles of interactions. This was true for participants across social classes and data collection sites, from the more prestigious public and private university settings, to public settings of higher education in Zona Sur and Zona Oeste—the more marginalized and lower income regions of Buenos Aires that were included in the study. Common patterns in the data were references to participants' personal use of Lunfardo with *familia, amigos, conocidos* (participant 97), and *más que nada en el ámbito informal* (participant 179). In addition to inner circle personal relationships, Lunfardo was claimed commonplace *en las redes sociales* (participant 117), *en la calle* (participant 139), *en las canchas de fútbol o cualquier otro*

deporte, en recitales, en el hogar, en espacios de ocio (participant 134), demonstrating Lunfardo's salience in these social and quotidian realms. To show affinity or to describe close friends, some participants actually used Lunfardo terms in their responses: *Las uso con los pibes* (participant 126).

Many participants repetitively underscored that they would not use Lunfardo in an academic or a professional setting, as was made evident in a statement by participant 143: *las uso con las personas que tengo confianza, no en ámbitos educativos ni profesionales*. Since most participants in the study were students, the higher education setting emerged in the data as an example of a place in which it might be considered unacceptable or inappropriate to incorporate Lunfardo terms in conversations between students and teachers or professors, as this participant described she would use Lunfardo *con todos menos los profesores* (participant 4). This demonstrates a socio-pragmatic competence that young adult *porteños* share, perceiving Lunfardo to be unacceptable vocabulary in interactions with superiors or in cases of increased formality.

Though the first data subset (quotes 1-9) displayed the belief that Lunfardo is essentially national language of Argentina, or minimally, of Buenos Aires, the present participant discourse demonstrates that it continues to be considered an informal register likely excluded or unacceptable in circles of increased formality or prestige. Though this was the general pattern in the data, it was not unanimously opined, as some also noted that Lunfardo could conceivably be used with certain professors (*las uso en todos los ámbitos, aunque en algunas clases de la facultad; dependiendo de la onda del profesor o la profesora lo uso menos. Al escribir parciales no lo uso en absoluto*, participant 176).

It is not surprising that participants stemming from educational settings would refer to figures of authority where increased levels of formality are necessary, such as professors, as the type of communicative dynamic that reserves heightened respect in the *porteño* context. However, there was no inclination in the data suggesting that young adults censor their use of Lunfardo in interactions with older generations, an age group that typically commands respect in Latin American countries marked by the formal second person singular pronoun, *usted*. Instead, the data illustrate that Lunfardo is used most frequently among inner circles of intimacy or trust (*con la gente de confianza*, participant 131), including the elderly. This is less surprising when considering the prior data subset in this chapter (quotes 134-143) that reveals tight associations of Lunfardo to *mayores*.

The data suggest that compared to females, males generally feel that their circle of people with whom they can use Lunfardo is a wide, unconstrained network of people. This is evidenced by the most recurring response among male participants to the question 'Do you use Lunfardo in your speech? In what contexts?': *con todo el mundo*. Many males showed little sign of hesitancy or a need to filter relationships when defining with whom they personally use or could use Lunfardo. The following comments (quotes 144-147) demonstrate a few variations of this male perspective of Lunfardo contextually in the data set:

144) *Sí, con todo el mundo, sobre todo con amigos y o en el trabajo*. (191_M35PBA)

145) *Sí, con el mundo*. (206_M21CABA)

146) *En casi todos momentos*. (95_M18CABA)

147) *Con la mayoría de la gente*. (164_M19BA)

These responses reveal not only that males are less likely to specify who their customary interlocutors are when using Lunfardo in conversation, but also that the acceptable contexts in which they could use Lunfardo also are little quantified. Conversely, the data implies that for women, using Lunfardo is something reserved for certain types of relationships or social scenarios. This is illustrated in the following data subset (quotes 148-151) below:

148) *Con mi hermana, mi marido*. (226_F35CABA)

149) *Lo uso con amigas en forma de código*. (230_F27CABA)

150) *Al hablar con mi padre y madre, con amigos, hermanos, compañeros de la facultad, estudiantes de la escuela donde trabajo.* (123_F26CABA)

151) *Con gente de confianza o que ya conozco*. (172_F23BA)

The female informants here (and in the entire data set) never mention the common phrase *con todo el mundo* as numerous males express. Instead, these women meticulously define the parameters with whom they would conceivably use Lunfardo. Such relationships indicated a degree of familiarity as necessary to carry out an interaction in Lunfardo. Acceptable relationships were specified as family members, partners, close friends, or, as in the case of participant 172, only with people *que ya conozco*. Participant 230 even describes Lunfardo as a mechanism of a secret or 'code' language that she uses among her friends, entailing a connotation of exclusivity and clandestine language reminiscent of Lunfardo's beginnings. This difference between male and female parameters of Lunfardo interactional use corroborates the accepted linguistic knowledge that women speak more standardly (less slang, expletives, etc.) than men (Labov, 2001; Lakoff, 1977; Haas, 1979; Trudgill, 1972), though this has been more recently debated

when considering other social factors beyond gender (Hughes, 1992). Still, these data demonstrate from the standpoint of language ideology, and not from that of observed usage, that these ideas of gendered language are entrenched in the young *porteño* consciousness, even for a jargon as symbolic, widespread, and culturally significant as Lunfardo.

E. Chapter Summary

This chapter has investigated young adult *porteños'* covert language attitudes and ideologies around Lunfardo. Through qualitative data analysis based on descriptions that point to traits conventionally known as indexing power (status) and solidarity (Lambert, 1967; Woolard 1989; Park, 2004), the 151 interview fragments presented in this chapter have unveiled the essence of what Lunfardo means to *porteño* young adults in the 21st century. It is evident from these qualitative data that Lunfardo has acquired new social representations and shifted language ideologies around the variety. Participants constructed a national discourse around Lunfardo, claiming how this jargon forms part of a key identifying component of the Argentinian, or more specifically, the *porteño*. In addition to the notion that Lunfardo is a quintessential element of what it means to be Argentinian, the variety has also secured its representation of a person who forms part of the urban makeup of the capital city of Buenos Aires. Other illustrations of Lunfardo displayed continued recognition into the 21st century perspective of youth that Lunfardo is linked to its historical past. Vestiges of *gaucho* and *criollo* folklore are mixed with cultural imagery of the *tanguero*, the most iconic figure of Argentinian character and originality.

A discourse that Lunfardo is simply a fact of life among *porteños* also surfaced in the data, supported by the stance that it is so widespread in speech that it is one in the same with Argentinian Spanish. The iconicity of Lunfardo's presence in speech around the area of the data collection is such that participants opined the lack of awareness that speakers have of the origins or pertinence of Lunfardo to the words they use daily. Still, Lunfardo was described as the connecting force that allows *porteños* to identify with each other, communicate efficiently, and form deeper more organic relationships.

In addition, the neglect of Lunfardo's importance transpired in the data, typically steered by participants' indifference based on the perceived irrelevance of its linguistic substance to the area, or on the dismissal of Lunfardo as corrupted or deformed language. Such a purist ideology hinted to a continued stigma of the variety, though this was a minority view. Many participants disregarded Lunfardo as part of their own speech, distancing themselves from the jargon, though only to condemn it to other types of speakers. Still, the contexts described in which Lunfardo is used proved most common, and was restricted to many familiar and informal environments, even for interviewees who contradictorily refuted the jargon's presence in their personal linguistic variety. This reveals the existence of a confounding narrative around language attitudes, especially when the linguistic variety at hand has suffered a history of stigmatization.

Finally, the interview data demonstrated a diversity of language ideologies in place around Lunfardo and its prototype speaker. While many equated the average Lunfardo speaker to the *porteño*, or to Argentinian national in general, many others denied the existence of a prototypical speaker at all. However, when representation of language layered with social class, a more vivid portrayal of Lunfardo's place in society became

clearer. As expected, the jargon was most frequently associated with the following terms indicating socioeconomic status: working class, lower class, or lower-middle class. Despite associations with the poorer social classes, there was no sign of discourse that was pejorative or centered around the debate of cultural and linguistic inferiority. In fact, attitudes linked lower social classes to the average person, and prized the popular class as more original or authentic. Though these imagined prototypical figures who speak Lunfardo were characterized with normally structured lives, they were described above all as extroverts with a heightened sense of humor, tied to environments of uninhibited fun, leisure, and nightlife. These people were described as younger in age, a description that contrasted with the romanticized historical stereotype of a *tanguero* from the *barrio porteño*. These diverse social representations of Lunfardo demonstrate the young adult generation's attachment to some recurring ideas about this part of Argentinian Spanish, but overall, display at least a partial overcoming of its past stigma and restriction to low socioeconomic status and delinquency.

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Chapter 5

Conclusions

Through mixed-methods analysis, this dissertation has contributed to the understanding of *argentinidad* through the lens of language, as well as extrapolated the imports of sociolinguistic consciousness in group and national identity. It has analyzed historical data as well as quantitative and qualitative data from contemporary young adult *porteños* that were collected in the form of surveys and interviews. It has reviewed the foundations of Argentinian sociological thought as a mechanism that shaped political leaders' views and initiatives for nation-forming of a people and national language during Lunfardo's beginnings in the late 19-century, and through its censorship into the mid-20th century. As a historical language variety that is nearly 150 years old, the investigation carried out a quantitative analysis of Lunfardo comprehension levels among young adult *porteños* from CABA and the conurbation of Buenos Aires to examine the extent of the jargon's intelligibility and part of working knowledge among young *porteño* generations. Due to Lunfardo's past stigma and historical association with lower-class and criminal jargon, these quantitative data were also collected and examined to discover participants' language attitudes towards the variety. Finally, qualitative data were collected and

analyzed in semi-structured interviews to provide a comprehensive vision to this puzzling question of Lunfardo's sociolinguistic status among the average young adult speaker in Buenos Aires today.

A. Lunfardo in the Making: Argentina's History of Social Thought as a Stimulus for Language Stigma

Historical data of Argentinian national figures' rhetoric from post-colonialism and independence to the development of the early republic reveals a background of social and language politics in place when Lunfardo came into being. From the dawn of *caudillismo* and provincial organization, to a long-lasting oppressive national dictatorship under Juan Manuel de Rosas, the new republic's sense of identity began to take shape after independence and civil wars that demolished most native peoples in the territory. This consequentially led to an economic demand and elite ethnic desire for an order to repopulate the republic with European recruits.

Argentina's national rhetoric among intellectuals and rising political leaders of the 18th century was marked by concern for the republic's mixed ethnic identity—a nation-forming discourse diffused not only in Argentina, but deep-rooted in the framework of the Americas in general. *Porteño* philosophers of the Generation of 1837 discussed the future of their republic, its people, political system, and development of infrastructure. They were comprised of locally-born descendants of European immigrants; many were *criollos*, or descendants of Spanish settlers from the colonial period. As negative sentiments towards Spain and its monarchial rule brewed in the post-colonial period, this group of influential leaders is marked by a debate around the discovery of national qualities and

adequate political systems necessary for the building of the Argentinian nation. Though they explicitly rejected Spain in their early political and sociological writings, these philosophers were greatly influenced by Western philosophy of the Enlightenment era, looking to France, Northern Europe, and North America as they deliberated their public systems for the Argentinian Republic. The first democratically elected president, Bartolome Mitre, introduced an education system entirely modelled after Europe. The subsequent president, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, harnessed the essence of Argentinian identity in literature, transforming the *gaucho* into the official hallmark of national folklore and character. Foreign investment in the new nation came from European companies that founded the banking system in Argentina, as well as constructed the republic's first major transportation systems that connected Buenos Aires to the western frontier.

The late-19th century massive European immigration waves to Argentina, fomented by an elitist discourse manifested as an official call in the Argentinian Constitution (of 1853) for European immigrants to settle the interior territories. A concern for the growth of patriotism brought political leaders, philosophers and social scientists, such as Juan Bautista Alberdi and José Ingenieros, to arrive to a constructed sense of *argentinidad* that analyzed desired social and ethnic elements for national character. As millions of Southern European immigrants arrived to *porteño* shores, the region felt abrupt ethnic and linguistic changes that consequentially led to the beginnings of the Lunfardo variety in this urbanized and exploding space of single male southern European immigrant workers.

Influential members of society sought to civilize and refine Buenos Aires's booming population and national language, as communication among the newly arrived immigrant

lower classes suddenly transformed the region into a site of vast multilingualism. Italian regional languages in contact with Spanish budded a hybridized code of words that through a series of momentary criminologist studies would come to be known popularly as "Lunfardo." Deemed a codified language or jargon of criminals by the late 18th century, Lunfardo wore an official insignia of stigmatized language representing the *porteño* lower social stratum. Though tango composers popularized and diffused Lunfardo into the quotidian *porteño* home during tango's golden age of the 1920's and 1930's, right-wing military governments of the time revealed a continued obsession with linguistic purity among conservatives. Their vision for the national language was officially manifested through a censorship of Lunfardo and other sub-standard phonetic and morphological variations from 1938-1944. This survey of political and sociological data spanning nearly 150 years traces the underpinnings of Lunfardo's historical stigma, thereby locating the subsequent quantitative and qualitative data in time and space among young Argentinians today.

B. Lunfardo Prevails Among Young Porteño Generations: A Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data results analyzed in chapter 3 uphold the impressions of local Argentinian linguists' prior work—that Lunfardo continues to be a thriving variety that is comprehended at a high level even by the younger generations living in Buenos Aires today. Whether young *porteños* are fully conscious of their knowledge or use of the Lunfardo variety, these data indicate that the great majority of young adults within the ambit of cost-free higher education in Buenos Aires have working and passive knowledge

of many Lunfardo words. The current experiment focused on a control group of young adult *porteños*, due to their near-invisibility in the Lunfardo academic community and prior research. These data were collected for quantitative analysis in the form of 1) a comprehension test—to explore the level at which Argentinian speakers comprehend historical and contemporary Lunfardo tokens, and 2) a ratings task—to tap into Argentinian speakers' implicit language attitudes toward individuals who use Lunfardo items that are both contemporary and those of yesteryear.

The Lunfardo tokens incorporated in the data collection materials were carefully chosen from a variety of admired and respected Lunfardo dictionaries (Conde, 2004; Espíndola, 2002; Gobello, 2014) to integrate lexical entries from the diverse existing depository of encyclopedic Lunfardo knowledge, and to avoid personal, ill-defined inclinations of the selection. These words were cross-referenced with the largest Spanish language corpus to date, the Corpus del Español (Davies, 2017), for assurance that they were exclusive to or epitomized by Spanish from Argentina. Words were additionally selected to represent diverse semantic domains that could conceivably be shared by any speaker. Words from semantic ambits of everyday life included words describing the body (*marulo, buzarda, tarlipes*), as well as normal human necessity verbs such as *morfar* and *atorrar*. Other quotidian words included *chanta, mersa, godor,* and *feca con chele*. Words that projected a more specific lifestyle related to nightlife or the criminal world of drugs and the law were the following: *falopa, farra, cachengue, merquero, tano, ricotero, rolinga, faca, rati, cafishio* (see Appendix 2 for translations).

The comprehension test was analyzed using state-of-the-art statistical analysis testing to best analyze all predictors' effects and interactions. The test results demonstrated that

most young adult *porteños* are amply aware of the meaning of Lunfardo words. The model predicted over 50% participant accuracy across all social factors, and even 75%-85% precision in most cases. According to this statistical test, participants whose occupational category was semi-skilled, student, or unknown; and whose mother was born in Argentina comprehend the most Lunfardo, with nearly 100% accuracy. Accuracy rates were highest when participants with these features were also older and their mothers were born in Buenos Aires. Males whose occupation was professional, skilled, or unskilled resulted with the second highest accuracy of Lunfardo comprehension.

Participants who correctly comprehended the fewest Lunfardo items (though they still reached a majority of 50% correct comprehension) were those whose occupation was semi-skilled or student, and their mother was not born in Argentina. This result is provoking, as it suggests the significance of the mother's role in the participant's ability to demonstrate increased passive knowledge of Lunfardo words, which points to the importance of child-rearing conventionally by mothers and its possible effects on language. Even though this was the highest rate for error across all predictors in the data, it is noteworthy that the participants whose mothers were not born in Argentina account for less than 6% of the data overall. Participants who correctly comprehended the second fewest Lunfardo items were those with the following profile: 1) those who held unskilled occupations, and 2) those whose gender was female (or unknown). Though these test results do not demonstrate significant difference from the female population, they do suggest a potential dynamic of gendered language, and thus present an area of future study insomuch as the use of Lunfardo and gender.

In sum, the model for the comprehension test data demonstrated an exceptionally high level of Lunfardo comprehension across socioeconomic predictors. All groups correctly understood Lunfardo words at least 60% of the time, and in many cases as high as 85%. Significant predictors exposed variation in the levels of correctness, namely the participant's occupation and location of their mother's birth. When occupation was semi-skilled or student, combined with a mother who was not born in Argentina, the results yielded lower Lunfardo comprehension. The female gender combined with an unskilled occupation were also significant predictors of lower Lunfardo comprehension. However, even in such instances of lower levels of correctly comprehended Lunfardo tokens, all participants still performed beyond the minimum 50% margin for majority, demonstrating a model that would predict correct comprehension across all predictors. The predictors with the highest Lunfardo comprehension were older semi-skilled workers or students whose mothers were not only Argentinian-born, but specifically were born in Buenos Aires. Though the occupational result as well as the mother's birth place are surprising, the result's significance insomuch as age and the geographical factor of Buenos Aires further support Guillén and Urzúa B. (2018).

The second task in the data collection process instructed participants to provide five ratings for each Lunfardo word in a set of twenty-five Lunfardo tokens (the same tokens that were tested in the comprehension test). Participants were instructed to provide ratings of five criteria (attractive, honest, educated, wealthy, nice) on a three-point Likert scale (high, medium, low). The five criteria received a pronounced tendency towards medium. Criteria of 'honest' and 'wealthy' yielded medium ratings most frequently. Low ratings were relatively less frequent across all the criteria, though low ratings for 'attractive',

'educated', and 'wealthy' received the most occurrences (approximately 20%). Importantly, the ratings for high received the lowest frequency across all criteria except for the criterion 'nice'. This suggests that *porteño* speakers who use Lunfardo in their speech may not be regarded with high esteem or be viewed to have socioeconomic advantages in terms of wealth, education, or attractiveness. These data demonstrate that though the variety can indicate suppositions of lower wealth, educational background, or attractiveness, it nevertheless signals increased pleasant or enjoyable personal traits of a speaker.

The rating task results are overwhelmingly skewed towards the center scale. That the great majority of answers were rated medium indicate a large degree of indifference, a neutral reaction on the part of the participants to people who use Lunfardo words in their speech. Though the results suggest variation among the criteria that provided the basis for ratings, in all these wavering cases, the number of observations supported by the significant effects was very small (between 22 and ~100). These results demonstrate a change in the way the younger generations view Lunfardo speakers today compared to intellectuals and authors of the late-19th and early-20th century.

C. Who Owns the Language? Social Representations of Lunfardo and the Common Porteño

The qualitative data in chapter 4 revealed the essence of what Lunfardo means to *porteño* young adults in the 21st century. These interview data demonstrated that Lunfardo has acquired new social representations and that some language ideologies around the variety have changed. Participants constructed a national discourse around Lunfardo,

claiming how this jargon forms part and parcel of Argentinian identity, or more specifically, the *porteño*. Along with the widespread belief that Lunfardo is a prototypical component of what it means to be Argentinian, the variety has also secured a social representation of a *capitaleño*, a person from the capital city of Buenos Aires. This social representation was also quantified in the attitudinal data, in which people who use Lunfardo in their speech were rated average on a three-point scale of social qualities for wealthy, educated, attractive, honest, and nice. These quantitative data contribute to the qualitative data of Lunfardo as a marker of common people of the Buenos Aires area.

Lunfardo as a fact of life among *porteños* emerged in the data—a notion supported by the stance that the variety has permeated into Argentinian speech such that it is considered synonymous with Argentinian Spanish. Lunfardo's iconicity in speech in the conurbation and capital city center is such that many participants disclosed a lack of cognizance of the origins of the variety or its association to the words they use daily. Nevertheless, participants maintained on many accounts that Lunfardo is the connecting force that allows *porteños* to identify with each other, communicate effectively, and interact linguistically in a deeper and more natural manner.

Though Lunfardo emerged in the Porteño context over 100 years ago, it has clung to its historical representation in the minds of many *porteño* young adults today. Lunfardo lives on today as a vestige of *gaucho* and *criollo* folklore mixed with cultural imagery of the *tanguero*, the most iconic symbol of Argentinian authenticity and charm. Furthermore, some participants denied Lunfardo's significance—a perspective that was typically accompanied by a personal indifference towards the variety. Lunfardo's lack of importance to some participants seemed to be rooted in a variety of ideologies, including:

its perceived linguistic irrelevance to contemporary Argentinian Spanish; its pervasive presence in Argentinian Spanish use such that it is possible many participants don't realize what Lunfardo refers to; or its dismissal as tainted or degraded language. This final ideology hinted at linguistic purism and a lingering stigma of the variety. Many participants disregarded Lunfardo as pertaining to their own speech, thereby distancing themselves from the variety. However, many of these cases paradoxically described the jargon's presence in most familiar contexts, and even admitted that people within their social circle, including immediate family members, do indeed use Lunfardo in their speech. The claim that Lunfardo resides in quotidian contexts, restricted to familiar and informal environments, prevailed in much of the data. This was true even for interviewees who contradictorily refuted the variety's presence in their personal linguistic variety, thus revealing the perplexing discourse around language attitudes, especially when the language has a history of stigmatization.

Lastly, the data confirmed a multiplicity of language ideologies in place around discourse about Lunfardo and its prototype speaker. Although many participants drew connections between the standard Lunfardo speaker and the *porteño*, there also was a strong trend in the data that denied the existence of a prototypical speaker at all. However, when depictions of the jargon layered with social class, Lunfardo's place in *porteño* society and culture became elucidated and simplified. Evidently a remnant of its polemic past, the variety was most frequently associated with the following socioeconomic terms: working class, lower class, or lower-middle class. Despite such recurrent associations with the lower social classes, there was no sign in the discursive data that was depreciatory or positioned around the debate of linguistic subordination and inadequacy. Moreover,

linguistic attitudes towards Lunfardo related its speakers to the average person—members of the popular class. This social class was upheld in the data as the social class with most originality and authenticity, and the jargon celebrated for its pertinence to the masses. Though these prototypes were imagined and characterized as having ordinary lives no different from the interviewees, at the same time, they were habitually described as extroverted and with a heightened sense of humoristic acumen. Participants associated Lunfardo speakers with environments of unrestrained fun, nightlife, and leisure. Such characteristics both implicitly and explicitly in the data referenced speakers as also younger in age, thereby offering a contrasting description to the romanticized historical stereotype of the older *tanguero* from the *porteño barrio*. Lunfardo's diverse social representations that emerged in the qualitative interview data demonstrate the young adult *porteño*'s attachment to some historical and chronic ideas about the variety, but overall, their discourse displays Lunfardo's social progress in overcoming its past stigma of restriction to lower socioeconomic status, poverty, and delinquency.

D. Concluding Remarks

This research has implications not only in the Argentinian milieu, but in any context shaped by the languages and cultures of immigrants. It has proven a timely contribution not only to the academic literature of Lunfardo studies and the Argentinian linguistic environment, but also to the study of slang, alternative jargons, and other substandard language from a diachronic and synchronic perspective. Its framework within social representation and language ideology theory enabled to group context themes in the data, and considered the participants' ways of thinking and justifying their responses. This

involved the complicated analytic process of unveiling the historically embedded and culturally shared presuppositions behind Lunfardo, which were taken for granted and consequently reinforced in the participants' discourse. These results indicate that new methods and approaches can both corroborate and problematize longstanding consensus about Lunfardo, and expose new perspectives of the jargon. This original research reframes previous analyses of Lunfardo status, ideology, and social representations in Argentina today, and contributes to the field of sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. In particular, it is important to underline the fact that the evaluation of its contemporary status had been hampered in previous research by Lunfardo's dynamic history: from criminal/secret jargon of the *barrios bajos* of Buenos Aires and mixed language of immigrants, to a proscribed variety that could not be used openly and in polite society (radio, upper classes), but at the same time part and parcel of iconic musical expression (tango) and unpretentious working-class Argentinian-ness (*lengua de todos*). Just as the tango has recently undergone a revival (Collier, 2000) among Argentinian younger generations as part of Argentinian identity, Lunfardo was slowly but surely appropriated as the most characteristic part of the Argentinian Spanish lexicon, a symbol of national or at least of *porteño* identity - and then pars pro toto - Argentinian identity. It is thanks to the mixed methods approach and its theoretical underpinnings that this study was able to overcome the problems of previous research. The experimental part enabled me to collect and quantify actual comprehension of key Lunfardo terminology by the participants, and the qualitative analysis is in line with their quantitative results vis a vis overt and covert attitudes revealed in the population studied.

As indicated by the quantitative and qualitative results, this study supports the conclusion that the generation of young adult *porteños* today understands and incorporates Lunfardo in their Argentinian Spanish variety. The jargon is overtly celebrated, and manifested in the speech of the average *porteño* person; at the same time, the study reveals a degree of covert negative attitudes, due to a long-lasting stigmatization upheld by perspectives that value linguistic purism. In addition, the study indicated the possibility of Lunfardo iconizing masculinity, an aspect that would benefit from future investigation of Lunfardo and its interactional use, particularly around gender.

Perhaps two of the most important steps forward in Lunfardo studies provided by this study are the data-driven approach of polling actual speakers from the younger generations, and the application of social representation theory to the qualitative data. This allowed the study to reveal that regardless of the speakers' awareness of Lunfardo's origins and of the multiple historical narratives and stereotypes associated with it and absorbed -often contradictorily- also by the younger generations of Argentinians, Lunfardo jargon has been re-appropriated by the younger generations as an exclusively Argentinian feature of Spanish, inclusive of the majority of the Argentinian population regardless of class and origin, and thus as a fundamental part of Argentinian identity.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Biographical Questionnaire

Edad: _____ Género: _____

Lugar de nacimiento: _____

Años que has vivido en CABA/la Provincia de Buenos Aires:

_____

Escolaridad (grado más alto): _____

Ocupación: _____

Lugar de nacimiento de tu padre: _____/ madre:_____

Ocupación de tu padre:_____ / madre:_____

Escolaridad de tu padre:_____ / madre:_____

Lugar de nacimiento de tus abuelos:_____

Appendix 2. Lunfardo Lexeme Glossary

Lunfardo Word	**Spanish Translation** *Definitions from Gobello (2014) and Conde (2004)	**English Translation**
atorrar	dormir, descansar	sleep, rest
bagartero	quien le gustan a mujeres feas	someone who likes ugly women
biaba	golpe; paliza	hit; beating
bulín	empeñar; aprisionar	pawn; imprison
buzarda	estómago	stomach
cabrero	enojado	angry
cachengue	música de fiesta	party music
cafishio	rufian; pimp	ruffian
chanta	una persona poco confiable quien no paga sus deudas (*apocope*. chantapuffi)	untrustworthy person who does not pay their debts
dogor	*vesre*. gordo	fatty
escrachar	exponer publicamente	publically expose
faca	cuchillo	knife
falopa	drogas	drugs
farra	diversión típicamente ruidosa o de la vida nocturna	fun that is typically noisy and related to nightlife

feca con chele	*vesre*. café con leche	coffee with milk
fulero	feo	ugly
marulo	cabeza	head
merquero, ra	adicto a o vendedor de la cocaína	cocaine addict or dealer
mersa	de mal gusto	of poor taste; tacky
morfar	comer	to eat
rati	policía (*vesre*. tira)	police (reverse of ‘gunshot’)
ricotero, ra	fanático de Patricio Rey y sus Redonditos de Ricota	fan of Patricio Rey y sus Redonditos de Ricota
rolinga	fanático de los Rolling Stones	fan of the Rolling Stones
tano	italiano	an Italian
tarlipes	testículos	testicles

Appendix 3. Sample of Lunfardo Comprehension Test Stimuli

A. Instrucciones: Selecciona la mejor definición o palabra sinónima para cada palabra que está en **negrita y subrayada**.

Yo no soy **rolinga**, soy una piba normal.
loca
drogada
roquera
genio
No entiendo la palabra como está usada aquí.

En cambio el viejo y querido **bagartero**, logra tener un abanico ENORME de posibilidades...
quien le gustan personas ricas
quien trabaja en un bar
quien trabaja horas largas
quien le gustan personas feas
No entiendo la palabra como está usada aquí.

Appendix 4. Sample of Lunfardo Comprehension Test Filler (Non-stimulus)

A. Instrucciones: Selecciona la mejor definición o palabra sinónima para cada palabra que está en **negrita y subrayada**.

La **yerba mate** en saquito no tiene estos beneficios.

a) una especia
b) una bebida
c) una fruta
d) una vitamina
e) No entiendo la palabra como está usada aquí.

Appendix 5. Sample of Lunfardo Rating Task

Instrucciones: Pon una "X" en la caja que corresponde al grado (más, menos, ni más ni menos) de la característica especificada en la primera columna de cada tabla, como en el ejemplo:

EJEMPLO:

Según tu opinión, ¿cómo te parece que sea una persona que usa la palabra **mate**, según las características especificadas en la tabla?

Si no conoces la palabra, salta a la próxima pregunta.

Una persona	Más	Menos	Ni más ni menos
atractiva			**X**
simpática			**X**
instruida	**X**		
rica		**X**	
honesta			**X**

Según tu opinión, ¿cómo te parece que sea una persona que usa la palabra **cachengue**, según las características especificadas en la tabla?

Si no conoces la palabra, salta a la pregunta **#2**.

Una persona	Más	Menos	Ni más ni menos
atractiva			
simpática			
instruida			
rica			
honesta			

Appendix 6. Interview Questionnaire

¿Consideras que hablas el español de Buenos Aires?

¿Hablas otros idiomas o español de otras partes de Argentina?

¿Has oído del *lunfardo?*

¿Qué sabes del *lunfardo?* (¿Dónde se usa? Se usa actualmente?)

¿Conoces a personas que utilicen palabras lunfardas en su español?

1. ¿Cómo es la persona típica que usa *lunfardo*? (¿Qué hace para divertirse? ¿Cómo se ve?)

a. ¿Podrías dar unos tres ejemplos de palabras o expresiones típicas del lunfardo que te vengan a la mente y usarlas en una oración?

b. ¿Usas esas palabras normalmente?

c. ¿En qué situaciones las utilizas o no las utilizas?

7. ¿Para ti, es importante el *lunfardo*? ¿Por qué o por qué no?

8. ¿Qué tan importante es el *lunfardo* para la gente de Buenos Aires?