

## Discourse Markers in Chicago Spanish: so and entonces

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Early studies of language contact suggested that function words such as discourse markers and connectives were less likely to be borrowed than content words such as nouns and verbs. More recent studies, however, agree that all elements of languages in contact are susceptible to borrowing, and that discourse markers are, in fact, very frequently borrowed.

This project examines the status of the discourse markers *so* and *entonces* in the Spanish spoken by diverse communities in Chicago. The corpus consists of 51 hour-long Spanish interviews with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd generation speakers identify as Puerto Rican, Mexican, or "MexiRican" (individuals with one Puerto Rican and one Mexican parent). Most studies of language contact phenomena report results according to generation, but in our data, the correlation between generation and Spanish proficiency was not dependable. Thus, we looked beyond generation and found a strong correlation between use of *so* and Spanish proficiency. We also found that *so* and *entonces* are not specializing according to function. I will offer some implications of these findings and explore questions such as whether the occurrence of *so* is best understood as borrowing, codeswitching, or the development of a new stable mixed code, and whether the appearance of *so* implies an eventual replacement of *entonces*.